

Friday Harbor, Washington

People and Place

Location

Friday Harbor is located on the southeastern side of San Juan Island, the geographic and commercial center of a chain of 172 islands in the northern reaches of the Puget Sound which span the Canadian/U.S. border. The area encompasses 1.4 square miles of land and 0.1 square miles of water. Friday Harbor lies at 48°32'04''N and 123°00'57''W. At a driving distance of 105 miles from San Juan Island, Seattle is reachable by a combination of boat and land transport, or by plane, and is the nearest major U.S. city.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census the population of Friday Harbor was 1989, an increase from the population of 1492 recorded ten years earlier. The 2000 U.S. Census record shows that 54% of Friday Harbor's population was female and 46% was male. The median age of the population was 40.6 years, which is notably above the national average for that year of 35.3 years. The age structure of Friday Harbor demonstrates that the town is a popular site for second homes among middle age professionals and retirees. A total of 96% of the population lived in family households in 2000.

The majority of the population of Friday Harbor recorded by the 2000 U.S. Census were White (92%). Other racial categories with which people identified were Black or African American (0.6%), American Indian and Alaska Native alone (1.3%), and Asian alone (1.4%). Additionally, a portion of the population identified with Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, with some other race alone (2.8%), or with two or more races (1.8%). Of the total population of Friday Harbor surveyed by the 2000 U.S. Census, 5.2% identified as Hispanic or Latino.

A sample of Friday Harbor's population surveyed by the 2000 U.S. Census indicates that 7.3% of the population was foreign-born. The majority of the foreign-born population were from the Americas outside of the United States, followed by people born in Asia. The largest numbers of people denoting ancestry associated themselves with German, English, and Irish backgrounds.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, of the surveyed population 18 years and older, 88.1% had a high school education (including equivalency) or higher, 25.4% had earned a Bachelor of Arts degree or higher, and 7.7% had attained a graduate or professional degree. For 33.2% of the surveyed population, a high school degree or equivalent was the highest level of educational attainment.

History

The San Juan archipelago is part of the traditional area of the Central Coast Salish, which collectively is made up of five component language groups: Squamish, Halkomelem, Nooksack, Northern Straits, and Clallam. These five groups traditionally occupied the southern end of the Strait of Georgia, the lower Fraser Valley, and lands in and around the Strait of Juan de Fuca, including portions of the Olympic Peninsula and the entire San Juan archipelago. Within those five groups, there are several different associated groups; the Songhees, Saanich, Lummi, and Samish all had winter villages in

the islands. Two other groups from the islands are believed to have joined the Lummi during the period of European settlement: the Klalakamish from the north end of San Juan Island and the Swallah from East Sound on Orcas Island. Long before the development of commercial fisheries or marine-oriented tourism in the area, salmon, other fin fish, and orca whales were central to the survival and worldview of local people. The principle tribe in the area, the Lummi, harvested salmon year-round and supplementing their diet with other fin fish and shellfish as well as deer, elk, waterfowl, and roots and berries. Frequent trade between the tribes and with settlers was facilitated by cedar canoes.

The first European to chart the San Juan Islands was Spanish explorer Juan Francisco de Eliza in 1791. During the era of European exploration Spanish, British, French, Russian, and later, Americans, entered the region, integrating it into extensive fur trade networks. Europeans settled the area by the 1800s. However, not until a protracted territorial disagreement which lasted from 1845 to 1872 was resolved was the national border between the United States and Canada defined.¹ Subsequently, the area became notorious for smugglers trafficking in illicit goods, including alcohol during the prohibition, and facilitating the crossing of illegal aliens. By the mid-1900s, however, the area had become an industrial center of the Pacific Northwest. Friday Harbor itself has been the commercial and social hub of the San Juan Islands since the 1890s.² By 1900, Friday Harbor was a busy sea port with a population of three or four hundred and a large salmon cannery among other facilities. Eventually, however, the economy stabilized and gradually declined; the local canning industry became obsolete when advances in processing, transportation, and refrigeration allowed it to be shifted to the mainland where costs were cheaper.³

Infrastructure

Current Economy

Agriculture, limestone mining, fishing, and now tourism have each flourished at points during San Juan's economic history. Small sailing vessels fished the waters around the San Juan Islands for commercial purposes as early as 1850, delivering to larger vessels which would then transport salted and packed fish to Hudson's Bay Company in Victoria, B.C. The local fishing industry grew along side increasing technological and infrastructural capacities which supported a booming population. The dominant industry in San Juan County is now tourism and recreation, which continues to expand as tourism attracts people nationally as well as internationally to the Pacific Northwest of the U.S.⁴ Friday Harbor is the tourism hub of the San Juan Islands, and is probably the premier visitor destination in the Northwest.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census natural resource jobs including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting employed only a very small percentage of the population. The 2000 U.S. Census reports that in Friday Harbor, 12% of the employed civilian population 16 years of age and over was employed within local, state, or federal governments. The main employment sectors were: "construction," with 17% of the workforce; "retail," also 17%; and "arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodations", 15.5%.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census data for the Town of Friday Harbor, 65.4% of the potential labor force was employed and there was a 5% unemployment rate (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). A total of 31.2%

of the population over 16 years of age were not in the labor force as compared to the national average of 36.1% for the same year. The 2000 U.S. Census reports that in 1999 the income of 12% of the population was below the poverty level. The median household income in 1999 was \$35,139 and the per capita income was \$19,792.

In 2000 there were a total of 1053 housing units in Friday Harbor, 85.1% of which were occupied. Of the occupied housing units, 49.9% were owned and 50.1% were rented. Of the vacant housing units, 43.9% were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

Governance

The Town of Friday Harbor is a Fourth Class Municipality, and was incorporated in 1909. Friday Harbor earns its classification as a Fourth Class Municipality, or Town, because of its small population and because they do not operate under the Optional Municipal Code which was created in 1967 and provides an alternative to the basic statutory classification system of municipal government. It was designed to provide broad statutory home rule authority in matters of local concern. The Town of Friday Harbor is organized as a Council-Mayor form of government. Under this system, the Mayor and each Council member are elected for four-year terms. The Mayor is the chief executive officer and presides over Council proceedings. Friday Harbor is the only incorporated town in San Juan County. San Juan County, including Friday Harbor, levies a 7.7% retail sales tax and a 2% hotel/motel tax.

Several taxes directly impact commercial and recreational fishermen in Friday Harbor. Commercial fishermen operating in Washington waters are subject to the Business and Occupation (B&O) tax under the “extraction” classification (0.48%); those fishing outside of Washington waters but selling fish within Washington are subject to the tax under either the “wholesaling” or “retailing” classifications (0.48% and 0.47% respectively), unless the fish are sold in interstate or foreign commerce.⁵ Those who both catch and sell fish in Washington are eligible for a Multiple Activities Tax Credit (MATC).⁶

Washington State levies a Food, Fish, and Shellfish Tax, paid by the first commercial processor of food fish or shellfish, including: Chinook, coho, and chum salmon or eggs (5.62%); sockeye and pink salmon or eggs (3.37%); oysters (0.09%); sea urchins/cucumbers (4.92%); and shellfish and other food fish or eggs (2.25%). Tuna, mackerel, and jackfish are exempt from this tax. Additionally, there is an Enhanced Food Fish Tax, which applies to the “first possession of enhanced food fish by an owner in Washington State” and is based on the “value of the enhanced food fish at the point of landing.”⁷ The rate of the tax depends upon the species of fish or shellfish.

Vessels used for commercial fishing purposes part-time are subject to an annual Washington State Watercraft Excise Tax levied at 0.5% of the fair market value of the boat. Vessels used for commercial fishing purposes full-time are subject to personal property taxes at the base rate levied by the state. Washington also levies a 10% excise tax on fishing equipment, a three percent tax on electric motors and sonar fish finders, and import duties on tackle and pleasure boats to fund sportfish restoration programs.⁸ Washington State levies a tax of \$0.28 per gallon on motor vehicle fuel. Since most of this tax is used to maintain terrestrial roadways, Washington boaters are entitled to a refund of about \$0.17 per gallon. The difference includes state sales tax and a penny per

gallon contribution to a Coastal Protection Fund. Most diesel fuel sold at docks has already had this tax removed.⁹

There is a National Marine Fisheries Service Regional Office on the mainland in Seattle. The nearest North Pacific Fisheries Management Council meeting also takes place in Seattle. There is a Department of Fish and Wildlife office located about 87 miles away in Mill Creek, Washington. The nearest U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is located in Seattle. The nearest U.S. Coast Guard Station (USCG), located on the mainland in Bellingham, was established in 1947 and provides six vessels. The USCG Bellingham Station's area of responsibility includes the San Juan Islands north to the Canadian border and south to Admiralty Inlet. They work in close partnership with the Canadian Coast Guard and are occasionally involved in international search and rescue and law enforcement operations.

Facilities

Friday Harbor on San Juan Island is accessible by sea and air. Washington State Ferries provide access to Friday Harbor from Anacortes and passenger ferries are available from Seattle, Port Angeles, Port Townsend, Everett, Bellingham, and Anacortes. Ferry transportation is also available from Victoria, B.C. International seaplane facilities are available at Friday Harbor, and a small airport, with good but limited facilities, provides passenger and freight service as well as connects San Juan Island to Anacortes, Bellingham, and Seattle with daily scheduled commuter services. Additional nearby airports include Vancouver International Airport in British Columbia and SeaTac International Airport in Sea Tac, Washington.

The San Juan Islands School District provides two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The Town provides residents with water, sewer, stormwater, and electrical services while the County supplies solid waste and recycling facilities. Public safety in Friday Harbor is provided by the San Juan County Sheriff. Medical helicopter services provide access to St. Joseph's Hospital in Bellingham which offers a full range of inpatient and outpatient services. The tourism industry in Friday harbor is very well developed with numerous options for accommodations across a range of prices.

The Friday Harbor marina has 500 boat slips for commercial and pleasure boats. There is space available for 150 visiting boats ranging in size from dinghies to 150-foot yachts. Southern breakwaters are reserved for vessels over 45-feet in length. The year-round, all weather marina services include charters and cruises, vessel repair, fuel dock, and a U.S. Customs Port of Entry.

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Of the 36 unique vessels that delivered non-confidential landings to Friday Harbor, 18 were commercial vessels, 16 were tribal commercial vessels, and two were for personal use. Recorded data indicates landings in the community were in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represents landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels landing): crab (20 t/\$100,584/8), salmon (11 t/\$21,744/8), shrimp (5 t/\$41,282/7), and other species (29 t/\$73,686/13).

Friday Harbor residents owned 37 vessels in 2000. In that year, community members owned 13 vessels that participated in the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. According to recorded data the number of vessels owned by Friday Harbor residents participating in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (4/0/0), groundfish (4/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/0/NA), salmon (12/0/0), shellfish (NA/0/NA), shrimp (NA/0/0), and other species (19/0/0).¹⁰

No Friday Harbor residents owned Federally Managed Groundfish fishery permits during the course of 2000. In the same year, recorded data indicates that the number of Friday Harbor residents holding permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was as follows: coastal pelagic (1/0/0), crab (3/0/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (22/0/0), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (3/0/0), and other species (13/0/0).¹¹

According to available data, 52 state permits were registered to Friday Harbor residents in 2000. Recorded data indicates that the number of permits held by community members in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (1/0/0), crab (4/0/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (25/0/0), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (3/0/0), and other species (19/0/0).¹²

There were no seafood processors operating Friday Harbor in 2000. Evidenced by the number of tribal commercial vessels delivering to Friday Harbor cited above, the tribal commercial fishery plays a significant role in the local commercial fishing industry. The Lummi Natural Resource Department has offices in nearby Bellingham encompassing several divisions including Natural Resource Harvest Management, Shellfish Operations, and Water Resources. The Shellfish Operation provides a sustainable shellfish program through the sale of oyster and clam products using the shellfish hatchery, Lummi Island Sea Pond, and tribal tidelands.

According to the Boldt Decision,¹³ in addition to several reef net locations (i.e., Orcas, San Juan, Lummi, and Fidalgo Islands, and near Point Roberts and Sandy Point), the usual and accustomed fishing places of the Lummi Indians at treaty times included the marine areas of Northern Puget Sound from the Fraser River south to the northern outskirts of Seattle (as they existed in 1974), and particularly Bellingham Bay. Freshwater fisheries included the river drainage systems, especially the Nooksack, emptying into the bays from Boundary Bay south to Fidalgo Bay.

Sportfishing

Sportfishing is an important activity to residents and visitors in Friday Harbor. In 2000 there were at least five salmonid charter fishing operators in Friday Harbor. As of May 2005, three licensed agents sell fishing permits in Friday Harbor. In 2003 there were 6014 sportfishing license transactions valuing \$77,915.16 in Friday Harbor. In Catch Record Card Area 7 (San Juan Islands) the 2000 sport salmon catch, based on catch record cards, was 7178, including: 4495 Chinook, 2644 coho, 21 chum, and 18 sockeye. In 2000 there were approximately 30,627 marine angler trips in the sport salmon fishery. In the same year a total of 5897 bottomfish were caught by boat-based anglers in Area 7. The recreational harvest of clams (lbs) and oysters (#) for the same area in 2000 was estimated to be 115,273 and 0 respectively; harvest occurred over an estimated 19,752 user trips.

Subsistence

Subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering activities are fundamental to the way of life of some coastal community members. Both tribal and nontribal individuals participate in subsistence fishing. Today, members of the Lummi Tribe and other nontribal subsistence fishermen obtain fishery resources from the waters surrounding Friday Harbor. Subsistence fishing is not discussed in great detail in this Community Profile due to the lack of available data.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

In 2000, Friday Harbor residents owned 25 vessels that were involved in North Pacific fisheries. In the same year community members landed fish in the following North Pacific fisheries (data shown represents landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels landing): crab (confidential/confidential/2); Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) groundfish (confidential/confidential/1), other finfish (confidential/confidential/1), Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish (confidential/confidential/2), halibut (confidential/confidential/2), herring (79.49 t/\$17,970/4), salmon (1,047.06 t/\$927,650/19), and shellfish (confidential/confidential/1).

In 2000 31 Friday Harbor residents served as crewmembers in North Pacific fisheries. In the same year 24 community residents held registered state permits and 13 held registered federal permits.

A total of 39 state and federal permits were registered to individuals in Friday Harbor in 2000. In the same year residents of Friday Harbor held three groundfish License Limitation Program permits. In 2000 Friday Harbor residents held 2 BSAI groundfish, 2 halibut, 6 herring, 18 salmon, and 6 shellfish Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission permits. The halibut and sablefish individual fishing quota shares for people residing in the community were 703,178 and 2,968,988, respectively.

Sportfishing

A total of 78 Alaska sportfishing licenses were sold to Friday Harbor community members in 2000. That year no local sportfishing businesses participated in Alaskan fisheries.

¹ Friday Harbor.. No date. History and Stories, [Online]. Available: <http://www.fridayharbor.com/ihistory.cfm> (access date - March 2005).

² National Park Service. No date. San Juan Island: Administrative History, [Online]. Available: URL: http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/sajh/adhi2.htm (access date - February 2005).

³ City of Friday Harbor. No Date. History, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.fridayharbor.org/history.htm> (access date - February 2005).

⁴ Whatcom County Profile. 2001. Labor Market and Economic Analysis Branch, Employment Security Department, [Online]. Available: URL: http://www.workforceexplorer.com/admin/uploadedPublications/413_sanjuan.pdf (access date - March 2005).

⁵ Washington State Department of Revenue. 2004. Commercial fishing, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://dor.wa.gov/content/taxes/Industry/Fish/default.aspx> (access date - 2004).

⁶ Washington State Department of Revenue. 2002. Information on Washington's Tax Structure: Fish Taxes, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://dor.wa.gov/content/taxes/industry/fish/default.aspx> (access date - July 2004).

⁷ Washington State Department of Revenue. 2001. Commercial Fishing, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://dor.wa.gov/content/taxes/Industry/Fish/default.aspx#enhanced> (access date - July 2004).

⁸ National Conference of State Legislatures. 2004. Environment, Energy, and Transportation Program: Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/esnr/FISHHUNTWILD.htm> (access date - July 2004).

⁹ Washington State Department of Licensing. 2003. Fuel Tax Frequently Asked Questions, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.dol.wa.gov/vs/ft-faq.htm> (access date - July 2004).

¹⁰ 'NA' refers to data which was not available, for example, due to few or no recorded permit numbers, or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.

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¹³ Center for Columbia River History. No date. Boldt Decision, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.ccrh.org/comm/river/legal/boldt.htm> (access date - October 2004).