

Olympia, Washington

People and Place

Location

Olympia is located along the southernmost tip of Puget Sound and covers approximately 16.7 square miles of land and 1.8 square miles of water. Olympia, situated in Thurston County, is approximately 60 miles south of Seattle and 113 miles north of Portland, Oregon. The geographic coordinates of Olympia, Washington, are: 47°03'80" N, 122°89'90"W.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of Olympia was 42,514, a 25.6% increase from the 1990 U.S. Census. In 2000 the gender structure was evenly divided with slightly more females (52.2%) than males (47.8%). The 2000 median age was 36.0, comparable to the national median of 35.3 for the same year. According to the same data, 17.4% of the population was 14 years of age or younger and 56.0% was between the ages of 22 and 59. For the population 18 years and over, 90.4% had a high school education or higher, 36.0% had attained a Bachelor's degree or higher, and 12.8% earned a graduate or professional degree; as compared to the national averages of 79.9%, 22.3%, and 7.8% respectively. The highest level of educational attainment was a high school diploma/equivalency for 32.0% of the population. In 2000, 96.9% of the population lived in family households.

The 2000 U.S. Census shows that the racial composition was predominantly White (85.3%), followed by Asian (5.8%), Black or African American (1.9%), American Indian and Alaskan Native (1.3%), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (0.3%). Overall, 1.7% classified themselves as belonging to some other race and 3.8% of the population identified themselves with two or more races. A total of 4.4% identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. Of the total population 6.6% was foreign-born, 59.8% of which were born in Asian countries.

History

The first Euro-American settlers claimed the site of what would become Olympia in 1846. The town became the County Seat of the new Thurston County in 1852. One year later Washington Territory was formed and Olympia was named as the provisional territorial capital. By 1853 there were approximately 996 Euro-American settlers in Olympia. By the mid-1850s, Olympia had developed around the waterfront and was a hub of maritime commerce.¹ Overland travel was difficult at the time, and required struggling through dense forests. This resulted in waterways being the primary transportation routes for the region. In 1860 Sam Percival built the first dock in Olympia. Known as Percival's dock, it quickly became the hub of a thriving steamboat trade that serviced the area transporting passengers, cargo, and mail throughout Puget Sound. Percival Landing Park, a public boardwalk, stands on the site today and offers "fabulous harbor views, extensive public artwork, and historical markers that detail the city's maritime past."²

The shores of Budd Inlet, near modern-day Olympia were a prime shellfish gathering site for Coastal Salish tribes including the Duwamish, Squaxin, and Nisqually.

The falls of the Deschutes River may have been a permanent Nisqually site for the harvesting of salmon and shellfish for over 500 years before the arrival of Euro-American settlers.³ The 1854 Treaty of Medicine Creek, signed by numerous Puget Sound tribes now known as ‘Treaty Tribes’, ceded most of Puget Sound and the Olympic Peninsula to the U.S. Government. The Nisqually were left with a 5105-acre reservation in what is today Pierce County. In 1917 the U.S. military took 3370-acres of this reservation for the Fort Lewis Military Reserve. The Tribe adopted a constitution in 1946 and an elected Tribal Council carries out most of the governmental affairs of the Tribe.⁴ Today almost 300 Nisqually have returned to their reservation and begun to re-establish their community and culture. Total enrollment in the Tribe is over 500 members. The Tribe is the primary caretaker of fisheries on the Nisqually River and maintains fish hatcheries on Kalama and Clear creeks. In addition, as a ‘Treaty Tribe’ the Nisqually are entitled to half of the harvestable fisheries resources form their “usual and accustomed” fishing grounds as stated in the 1974 Boldt Decision.⁵

Infrastructure

Current Economy

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 64.2% of the potential labor force was employed and there was a 4.9% unemployment rate (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force), slightly lower than the national average of 5.7%. Of the population over the age of 16, 32.5% were not in the labor force. Of the employed civilian population, 23.4% worked in ‘Educational, health and social services’ the majority of those falling under ‘Health care and social assistance.’ ‘Public Administration’ and ‘Retail trade’ contributed 19.9% and 10.0% to the civilian workforce respectively. A total of 15.1% of the employed civilian population worked within the government at some level (local, state, or Federal); 1.6% of which reported working in ‘Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting.’ Approximately one percent (1.1%) of the employed civilian population over the age of 16 was involved in ‘Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting’ according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

Olympia’s per capita income in 1999 was \$22,590 according to the 2000 U.S. Census, while the median household income was \$40,846. In 1999, according to the 2000 U.S. Census, 12.1% of the population was below the poverty level, slightly lower than the national average of 12.4%. In 2000 there were 19,738 housing units in Olympia, 94.6% were occupied and 5.4% were vacant. Of the occupied housing units, 50.3% were owner occupied while 49.7% were renter occupied. Of the vacant housing units 58.9% were for rent and 14.1% were for ‘sale only.’

Governance

The City of Olympia, incorporated on 28 January, 1859, serves as the capitol of Washington State. Olympia is a Code City with a Council-Manager form of government. The Council is comprised of an elected mayor and six at-large representatives; Council members serve staggered four-year terms. A City Manager is appointed by the Council to administer day-to-day operations and to carry out Council policies. Olympia levies an 8.4% sales and use tax rate and a 2% lodging tax.

Several taxes directly impact commercial and recreational fishermen. 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.⁶ Those who both catch and sell fish in Washington are eligible for a Multiple Activities Tax Credit (MATC).⁷

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.”⁸ 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.⁹ 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.¹⁰

The nearest federal fisheries enforcement office is located in Seattle and is the Northwest Enforcement Office of the National Marine Fisheries Service. The closest regional office for state fisheries, the Coastal Office of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is located 39 miles west in Montesano, Washington. Meetings of the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and Pacific Fisheries Management Council have been held in both Seattle and Tacoma. Also located in Seattle are the headquarters of the 13th U.S. Coast Guard District and the District Office of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Facilities

Olympia lies at the junction of Highway 101 and Interstate 5. The nearest major airport, Sea-Tac International Airport, is located 50 miles to the north in Sea Tac, Washington. Both the Olympia Airport and Aero Plaza Airport serve Olympia and Thurston County.

The Olympia’s public school system offers numerous elementary, middle, and secondary schools. Olympia also provides a number of private schools at all grade levels. Olympia is home to Evergreen State College and the South Puget Sound Community College. Olympia offers municipally-operated water, sewer, and garbage service, as well as a curbside recycling program through the City’s Public Works Department. Public safety is administered by the City of Olympia’s Police and Fire Departments. Twenty-four hour emergency services and in- and out-patient care facilities are available at the

local hospital and medical centers. The tourism industry in Olympia is well developed with dozens of hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts.

The Port of Olympia has a 60-acre marine terminal consisting of three deepwater berths, a container yard, as well as various intermodal transport facilities. The Port also oversees the Swantown Marina and Boatworks. Swantown has 656 permanent moorage berths and offers over 50 slips for guest moorage. As south Puget Sound's premier recreational marine facility, Swantown Boatworks is a full-service facility with haulout and storage coupled with a variety of repair and retail services in the emerging marine business district.¹¹

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Two hundred and twenty-eight vessels delivered landings to Olympia in 2000, including: 5 commercial vessels, 13 personal use vessels, and 209 Tribal commercial vessels. In 2000 landings in Olympia were made in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represents landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels landing): crab (confidential/confidential/1), salmon (13 t/\$23,581/24), shellfish (301 t/\$2,077,362/99), and other species (confidential/confidential/2).

There were 32 commercial vessels owned by Olympia residents in 2000; 10 vessels participated in the federal groundfish fishery. According to recorded data the number of vessels owned by Olympia residents that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (3/0/2), crab (23/0/0), groundfish (9/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/0/NA), salmon (30/2/0), shellfish (NA/0/NA), shrimp (NA/0/0), and other species (21/0/0).¹²

In 2000, two federal groundfish permits were held by two community members. In the same year, recorded data indicates that the number of Olympia residents holding permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (2/0/2), groundfish (1/0/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (12/2/1), shellfish (1/0/NA), shrimp (1/0/0), and other species (14/0/0).¹³

According to available data there were at least 72 commercial fishing permits registered to Olympia residents in 2000; 70 were registered state permits. Recorded data indicates that the number of state permits held by Olympia residents in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (17/0/4), groundfish (3/0/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (14/0/3), shellfish (1/0/NA), shrimp (1/0/0), and other species (27/0/0).¹⁴

There were at least two seafood processors operating in Olympia in 2000. Oysters were the primary product of these processors, but specific details (landings in pounds/value of landings) are confidential.

Sportfishing

In 2000 at least three salmonid sportfishing charter businesses operated out of Olympia. There are eight vendors licensed to sell sportfishing permits in Olympia. In 2003 Olympia vendors made 9362 sportfishing license transactions valuing \$156,637. The annual sport salmon catch in Washington State's Catch Record Card Area 13 (South Puget Sound) was 5131 during the 2000-2001 license year. Based on catch card data, during 26,089 marine angler trips, anglers took 1649 Chinook, 2226 coho, and 1256

chum salmon. The sport bottomfish catch for Area 13, during the 2000-2001 license year, totaled 8025. The recreational harvest of clams (lbs) and oysters (#) for the same area in 2000 was estimated to be 30,147 and 65,007 respectively; harvest occurred over an estimated 7065 user trips. Two types of clam, Littleneck and Manila, accounted for 45.6% and 32.2% of the clam harvest respectively.

Subsistence

Subsistence harvest for marine species may exist in the Olympia area. However, the extent of subsistence harvesting is difficult to quantify due to a scarcity of data.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

In 2000 there were 34 vessels owned by Olympia residents that participated 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/1), other finfish (confidential/confidential/3), Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish (confidential/confidential/3), halibut (confidential/confidential/3), salmon (841 t/\$763,500/13), and crab (50 t/\$183,810/5).

Seventy-eight Olympia residents served as crewmembers on vessels involved in North Pacific fisheries in 2000. In the same year, 36 community residents held state permits for Alaska fisheries and 20 residents held federal permits for North Pacific fisheries.

A total of 79 commercial fishing permits for North Pacific fisheries were held by Olympia residents in 2000. In the same year Olympia residents held 550,844 halibut and 700,093 sablefish Individual Fishing Quota shares. In 2000 Olympia residents held 9 crab, 1 other finfish, 11 Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Groundfish, 7 halibut, 23 salmon, and 13 shellfish Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permits. Two crab License Limitation Program (LLP) permits and eight groundfish LLP permits were held by Olympia residents in 2000.

Sportfishing

In 2000 at least one sportfishing business in Olympia was involved in Alaskan fisheries. In the same year a total of 844 Alaskan sportfishing licenses were purchased by Olympia residents.

¹ City of Olympia. No Date. History of Olympia, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.ci.olympia.wa.us/information/history.asp> (access date - September 2004).

² Thurston Regional Planning Council. 2001. City of Olympia's Historic Places: Percival Landing, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.trpc.org/external/programs/historic+preservation/olyhistoric/o4.htm> (access date - September 2004).

³ City of Olympia. No Date. History of Olympia, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.ci.olympia.wa.us/information/history.asp> (access date - September 2004).

⁴ Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board. 2003. Nisqually Tribe, [Online]. Available: URL: http://www.npaihb.org/profiles/tribal_profiles/Washington/Nisqually%20Tribal%20Profile.htm (access date - September 2004).

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- ⁵ Online Highways. 2004. Nisqually Indian Tribe, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.ohwy.com/wa/n/nisqintb.htm> (access date - September 2004).
- ⁶ Washington State Department of Revenue. 2004. Commercial fishing, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://dor.wa.gov/content/taxes/Industry/Fish/default.aspx> (access date - July 2004).
- ⁷ 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).
- ⁸ 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).
- ⁹ 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).
- ¹⁰ 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).
- ¹¹ Port of Olympia. No Date. Port of Olympia, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.portolympia.com/home.asp> (access date - September 2004).
- ¹² '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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