

# Port Angeles, Washington

## People and Place

### *Location*

The City of Port Angeles is located in Clallam County in the rain shadow of the Olympic Mountains. As the largest City on the north Olympic Peninsula, Port Angeles has a moderate climate with approximately 25 inches of rainfall yearly. Ediz Hook, a 2.5-mile-long sand spit that curves eastward around Port Angeles, creates one of the deepest harbors on the West Coast. The area encompasses approximately 10 square miles of land and 53 square miles of surface water. Port Angeles is located approximately 80 miles northwest of Seattle via the Edmonds/Kingston Ferry and 170 miles southwest of Vancouver, British Columbia, via the Port Townsend/Keystone Ferry. The City of Port Angeles lies at 48°07'06"N, 123°25'46"W.

### *Demographic Profile*

According to the 2000 U.S. Census the population of Port Angeles was 18,397. Between 1990 and 2000 the population of Port Angeles increased by 3.9% according to the U.S. Census. In 2000 the percentage of males and females was 47.9% and 52.1% respectively. The racial composition of the population in 2000 was predominantly White (91.4%), followed by American Indian and Alaska Native (3.3%), Asian (1.3%), Black or African American (0.7%), and Pacific Islander (0.2%). Less than one percent (0.4%) classified themselves as belonging to some other race. Overall, 2.8% of the population identified themselves as belonging to two or more races. A small percentage of the population (2.3%) described themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

The median age of the population was 39.9, which was slightly higher than the national median of 35.3 for the same year. In 2000 approximately half (48%) of the population was between 22 and 60 years of age. A small percentage (3.4%) of the population was foreign-born; of the foreign-born population about one third (32.5%) were from Asian countries. Approximately 77.1% of the population of Port Angeles in 2000 was living in family households. The 2000 U. S. Census reports that 83.4% of the population over 18 years of age had received a high school degree or higher, 16.9% had received a Bachelor's degree or higher, and 6.7% received a graduate or professional degree; as compared to the national averages of 79.7%, 22.3%, and 7.8% respectively.

### *History*

Clallam County, named after the Indian word Clallam, meaning "strong people," was created by the Washington Territorial Legislature in 1854. The City of Port Angeles has a long history prior to this date, when the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe lived in a fishing village on what is now called Hollywood Beach. The city pier and waterfront trail can be found on the site today. Franz Boas, an anthropologist who studied Indian life on the Olympic Peninsula, estimated that in 1780 there were approximately 2000 Clallam (along with their sub tribes) spread in 17 villages from Discovery Bay to Clallam Bay.<sup>1</sup> The mouth of Ennis Creek was also a culturally significant site for the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe. Y'innis, a large settlement located near the estuary, was home to the Lower Elwha Klallam Indians for thousand of years. "Y'innis, which means 'good beach,' was one of two Klallam village located in what is today Port Angeles harbor."<sup>2</sup>

The interactions of Klallam Tribal members with Europeans have not always been cordial. In 1936 approximately 30 Klallam families living on or near Ediz Hook in Port Angeles

were evicted by the City. Despite the 353 acres of land in the Lower Elwha River Valley that were purchased and put in trust for the tribal community in 1937, the reservation was not established until 1968. After entering into a self-governance compact with the federal government in 1992, tribal operations have expanded to include a police department, court system, health and social services, and several natural resource programs including fisheries. Today the federal government recognizes three politically distinct bands or villages of the Klallam people: the Elwha, Jamestown, and Port Gamble (i.e., Little Boston). There are roughly 708 members registered with the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe whose reservation, federal trust lands, and fee lands pending trust status, comprise 609 acres located at the mouth of the Elwha River and the bluffs 8 miles west of Port Angeles.<sup>3</sup>

In 1885 the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe signed the Treaty of Point No Point with the U.S. Government, retaining their right to fish the Elwha River in perpetuity. Today, the tribal economy is based on its commercial fishery, although most fishing activities are subsistence oriented.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, as one of three federally recognized tribes serving on the Point No Point Treaty Council, they are currently engaged in several projects to promote finfish and shellfish fisheries in the region and restore salmon habitat, particularly along the Elwha River. The Elwha and Glines Canyon Dams, which effectively negated the Tribe's treaty rights by blocking fish passage to more than 90% of the historic fish population, are scheduled to be removed in 2007. The federal government agreed to fund several projects associated with the dam removal including a water-treatment plant for the City of Port Angeles and a sewer system, fish hatchery, and levee for the Tribe.<sup>5</sup> The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe maintains a membership with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

In 1791 the deep-water harbor in Port Angeles was discovered by the Spanish Captain Don Francisco de Eliza. Over fifty years later in 1862, a customs inspector named Victor Smith, stole the U.S. customs house from Port Townsend and moved it to Port Angeles. The same year that Smith stole the customs house Abraham Lincoln declared Port Angeles and Ediz Hook military reservations. Lincoln then declared Port Angeles the "Second National City" in 1890; for fear that Washington D.C. could fall to the Confederate Army. As a "National City" the government could use money from land sales to support war efforts.<sup>6</sup> The U.S. military held on to its land ownership, due to its strategic location at the entry to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, until it decided to sell plots of land in 1894.<sup>7</sup> Due to the lack of foresight, the City was built too close to the water and in 1914 the town was flooded at high tide. Instead of relocating the town "a plan was devised to use seawater to wash dirt from a nearby hillside into a series of dams that would trap dirt and raise the level of the town 14-16feet."<sup>8</sup> Today visitors can access underground tunnels and storefronts that were once at street level.

The forest and fishing industries played major roles in the development of the area's economy. In 1912 the City was home to the world's largest sawmill and in 1920 a large pulp and paper mill was built by the Washington Pulp and Paper Company. Today the mill is owned by Daishowa America. Taking advantage of the areas natural deep-water harbor, the Port of Port Angeles was formed in 1922. However today, with major shifts in the fishing and timber industries – declining salmon runs and the closing of the Rayonier pulp mill in 1997 – the City of Port Angeles is turning its economy towards tourism. Tourism spending on recreation in Clallam County increased 56% between 1991 and 2002 and the County generated \$10.5 million in tax revenue from travel spending in 2002.<sup>9</sup>

## **Infrastructure**

### *Current Economy*

At the time of the 2000 U.S. Census 20.2% of the employed civilian population 16 years of age and over was employed within local, state, or federal governments. The majority of Port Angeles's employed male civilian population 16 years of age and over (24.3%) was employed in "production, transportation, and material moving occupations," while the majority of the females in the same age category (36.9%) was employed in "sales and office occupations." The economy of Port Angeles also relies on tourism, forest products, and sportfishing. Natural resource jobs including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting employed 2.6% of the population in 2000. The City's top employers are the Olympic Medical Center (892) and Peninsula College (645).<sup>10</sup> Several shipbuilding and repair companies are located in Port Angeles, including Fletcher Boats Inc. and Armstrong Marine.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census a total of 53.4% of the potential labor force was employed and there was an eight percent unemployment rate. A seemingly high 41.9% of the population over 16 years of age was not in the labor force as compared to the national average of 36.1%. The 2000 U.S. Census reports that in 1999 the income of 13.2% of the population was below the poverty level. The median household income in 1999 was \$33,130 and the per capita income was \$17,903. In 2000 there were 8682 housing units in Port Angeles. The percentages of occupied housing units that were owner versus renter occupied were 58.5% and 41.5% respectively. About 7.2% of the housing units were vacant, of which 11.8% were vacant due to seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

### *Governance*

The City of Port Angeles, incorporated on 15 June 1890, is one of three incorporated cities (including Sequim and Forks) in Clallam County. The City utilizes the Manager-Council form of government. Seven City Council members are elected by the public and serve 4-year terms. The Council elects a Mayor and Deputy Mayor from the council to serve 2-year terms. Clallam County levies an 8.3% sales tax 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.<sup>11</sup> Those who both catch and sell fish in Washington are eligible for a Multiple Activities Tax Credit (MATC).<sup>12</sup>

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."<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup>

Seattle, approximately 80 miles southeast of the City, is home to several organizations and services including a National Marine Fisheries Service Regional Office, North Pacific Fisheries Management Council meetings, and offices of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. There is a Department of Fish and Game office located about 130 miles south in Montesano, Washington. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Group/Air Station in Port Angeles is home to several USCG cutters and a Dolphin Helicopter. The Station is responsible for marine safety westward to Pillar Point on the Strait of Juan de Fuca, north to the Canadian border, east to the western shore of Whidbey Island, and south through Admiralty Inlet to Olele Point.

### *Facilities*

Port Angeles serves as a base for residents and visitors exploring the Olympic National Park and as a port for ferries crossing the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Victoria, British Columbia. The City is accessible by ground, sea, and air. The main road connecting Port Angeles to neighboring communities is state highway 101 east to Sequim and south to Shelton and Olympia. Throughout the year the Victoria Express provides ferry service to Victoria, British Columbia, and Friday Harbor in the San Juan Islands. The Coho Ferry operated by Black Ball Transport, Inc. also provides service between Port Angeles and Victoria, B.C. The nearest airport certified for carrier operations is located in Port Angeles, the William R. Fairchild International Airport, and is serviced by San Juan Airlines and Kenmore Air Express. Sea-Tac International Airport, 80 miles to the southeast in Sea Tac, Washington, is the closest airport offering international service to destinations other than Canada.

The Port Angeles School District offers 6 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, 1 public high school, and 1 alternative high school. Peninsula College, located in Port Angeles, has an enrollment of over 2300 students. The City's Public Works and Utilities Department is responsible for providing electricity, water, wastewater, and solid waste service to city residents. Public safety in Port Angeles is administered by the City of Port Angeles Police Department. Port Angeles supports a local medical center, Olympic Medical Center, but the nearest hospital is Jefferson General Hospital, situated 45 miles east in Port Townsend. The tourism industry in Port Angeles is fairly developed with over 20 hotels in the City. There are several community businesses including the Fiero Marine Life Center on the City pier, the Clallam Art Gallery, the Museum of the Clallam Historical Society, North Olympic Library System, and several places of worship.

Several non-profit organizations work in Port Angeles focusing on fishery-related issues, including the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative through which a local marine resource committee (MRC) was created to bring a scientific and grassroots approach to protecting and restoring marine resources in the area. Serving on the MRC are representatives from the scientific community, local and tribal governments, and economic, recreational, and conservation interests. The Clallam County MRC is actively working with several local groups including: the Dungeness River Management Team, the Elwha-Morse Management Team, the

Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 19 Watershed Team, the Sequim-Dungeness Clean Water Work Group, and the Salmon Recovery Lead Entity Group.

The Port of Port Angeles owns and operates two deep-water terminals. The Port offers a range of services including topside and voyage ship repair, cargo shipment and discharge, warehouse storage, and berthing for vessels up to 1200-feet in length. The main cargo products shipped through the Port of Port Angeles are forest products in the form of logs and lumber. The Port of Port Angeles Boathaven, located on the south side of the harbor, has moorage available for over 520 pleasure and commercial boats. Adjacent to the Boathaven, the Port Angeles Boatyard provides for the maintenance and repair of small vessels. The Port also operates the John Wayne Marina on the western shore of Sequim Bay, providing over 250 permanent and 22 transient moorage slips. Port Angeles also offers several retail stores specializing in marine and fishery supplies.

The aquaculture industry in Port Angeles is steadily increasing. Cypress Island Inc., based in the city, has one lease in Port Angeles harbor. The company owns the Scatter Creek hatchery and all the Atlantic salmon net pens in Puget Sound, producing 15 million pounds of Atlantic salmon a year.<sup>16</sup> Ocean Spar Technologies, a sea-cage manufacturing company, has one lease by Whiskey Creek near Port Angeles for research and development trials, but currently it is not in use.<sup>17</sup> In 2004 the City was in the process of assessing the possibility of establishing a public cold storage facility and processing facilities, to create a shellfish and groundfish marine aquaculture and fishery industry in the City.<sup>18</sup> It is estimated that the proposed aquaculture operation would produce 120 jobs and a “supply chain management of 20 million lbs of farmed fish in ten years.”<sup>19</sup> Peninsula College also offers a hands-on Aquaculture Technician training program.

## **Involvement in West Coast Fisheries**

### *Commercial Fishing*

In 2000 a total of 525 vessels delivered landings to Port Angeles including: 350 tribal commercial, 102 commercial, and 73 personal use vessels. According to recorded data landings were in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represents landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels landing): crab (18 t/\$84,232/15), groundfish (504 t/\$1,443,727/91), highly migratory species (46 t/\$86,725/4), salmon (353 t/\$769,044/225), shellfish (80 t/\$1,074,033/39), shrimp (2 t/\$7568/5), and other species (99 t/\$404,611/66)

Port Angeles residents owned 29 vessels in 2000. Community members owned 11 vessels that participated in the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. Recorded data indicates that the number of vessels owned by Port Angeles residents participating in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (4/0/0), groundfish (12/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/0/NA), salmon (7/6/0), shellfish (NA/0/NA), shrimp (NA/0/0), and other species (17/0/0).<sup>20</sup>

Seven Port Angeles residents held a total of six Federally Managed Groundfish fishery permits in 2000. In the same year recorded data indicates that the number of Port Angeles residents holding permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (4/0/0), groundfish (5/0/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (11/5/1), shellfish (0/0/NA), and other species (17/0/0).<sup>21</sup>

According to available data, 65 state and federal permits were registered to Port Angeles residents in 2000. Recorded data indicates that the number of permits held by these community members in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (7/0/0), groundfish (16/0/0),

highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (13/0/1), shellfish (0/0/NA), and other species (22/0/0).<sup>22</sup>

In 2000 there were at least four seafood processors operating in Port Angeles. In the same year approximately 63 individuals were employed by these processors. The estimated total weight of their processed products in 2000 was 5,283,535 pounds, valuing \$12,077,976. In 2000 the top two processed products in the community, in terms of both pounds and revenue earned were salmon (4,278,932 lbs/\$8,153,631) and sablefish (confidential/confidential). In 2004, due to the downturn in the salmon fishery and the low prices for salmon, only one fish processing facility remained within the City of Port Angeles, High Tide Seafoods.<sup>23</sup> “Salmon hit rock bottom in 1995-1996. But I guess I was just too stubborn to quit,” says High Tide’s co-owner Jim Shefler, who works with Native American commercial fishers.<sup>24</sup> “When I started in the mid-1970s, wild coho went for \$1 a pound. But with farmed salmon, the price is now 25 cents a pound, so we have had to diversify with crab and black cod. If we tried to do what we did 15 years ago, we would have gone out of business.”<sup>25</sup> The company, founded in 1976, currently employs approximately 40 individuals. High Tide Seafoods also has 2 buying stations located in Neah Bay and La Push employing eight and six people respectively. High Tide purchases salmon, black cod, Dungeness Crab, and halibut from tribal (80%) and nontribal (20%) commercial fishermen and distributes frozen and live product to distributors primarily within Washington State (J. Shefler<sup>26</sup>). Additionally there are several businesses in the community engaged in seafood retail and distribution.

As seen above, in the number of tribal commercial vessels delivering to Port Angeles, the tribal commercial fishery plays a significant role in the Port Angeles commercial fishing industry. The usual and accustomed fishing grounds of the Lower Elwha Tribe extend from the Hoko River to Hood Canal.<sup>27</sup> The Lower Elwha are also engaged in chum, coho, and steelhead salmon aquaculture. Initially established as a chum facility in 1976, the Lower Elwha Fish Hatchery currently serves as the major production source of winter coho and winter steelhead salmon for the Elwha River. Their Chum Enhancement Program is designed to assist in the recovery of chum salmon stocks in the Elwha River while minimizing adverse ecological effects upon listed Chinook salmon. The estimated annual release goals for winter coho, winter steelhead, and chum salmon are 750,000 and 120,000 yearling smolts, and 75,000 eggs respectively.<sup>28</sup>

### *Sportfishing*

Sportfishermen in Port Angeles are involved in both West Coast and Alaskan fisheries. In 2000 at least six salmonid charter fishing operators serviced sportfishermen and tourists, offering ocean, lake, and river fishing excursions. In 2002 there was at least one non-salmonid charter fishing operator in Port Angeles. One year later at least six salmonid charter fishing businesses operated in Port Angeles. Crabbing for Dungeness is also quite popular among local anglers. The direct ferry link between Victoria, British Columbia, and Port Angeles allows anglers to enjoy sportfishing in both Canadian and Washington waters.

There are three licensed agents selling fishing permits in Port Angeles. In 2003 a total of 11,685 sportfishing license transactions occurred in Port Angeles, valuing \$186,516. In Catch Record Card Area 6 (East Juan de Fuca Strait) the 2000 sport salmon catch based on catch record cards was 4334, including 1138 Chinook and 3196 coho. In 2000 there were approximately 26,777 marine angler trips in the sport salmon fishery in Area 6. In the same year nine steelhead were caught in the sportfishery and the coastal bottomfish catch for Area 6 was 5340. The

recreational harvest of clams (lbs) and oysters (#) for the same area in 2000 was estimated to be 23,015 and 24,993 respectively; harvest occurred over an estimated 3996 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. Lower Elwha Klallam tribal members are highly engaged in subsistence fishing for fin and shellfish. However subsistence fishing is not discussed in detail in this Community Profile due to the lack of available data.

## **Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries**

### *Commercial Fishing*

In 2000 Port Angeles residents owned 38 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): finfish (2 t/\$2520/9), Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish (33 t/\$155,740/8), halibut (74 t/\$429,910/7), salmon (354 t/\$628,550/20), and shellfish (confidential/confidential/2).

In 2000 51 Port Angeles residents served as crewmembers in North Pacific fisheries. In the same year 36 community residents held registered state permits and 47 held registered federal permits.

A total of 80 state and federal permits were registered to Port Angeles residents in 2000. In the same year community members held two crab and 11 groundfish License Limitation Program permits. In 2000 Port Angeles residents held 2 crab, 1 finfish, 7 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands groundfish, 12 halibut, 1 herring, 24 salmon, and 5 shellfish Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission permits. The halibut and sablefish individual fishing quota shares for people residing in the community were 1,847,479 and 485,856, respectively.

### *Sportfishing*

While the majority of anglers in Port Angeles generally target West Coast fisheries, 246 Alaskan sportfishing licenses were purchased by community members in 2000. At least two sportfishing businesses in Port Angeles participated in Alaskan fisheries in the same year.

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<sup>3</sup> Scrol, A. No date. The Community Dynamics of Source Water Protection: The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.sfaa.net/eap/scrol/scrol.pdf> (access date - August 2004).

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<sup>5</sup> Tribnet.com. 2004. Goodbye and good riddance to dams on the Elwha, [Online]. Available: URL: [www.tribnet.com/opinion/v-printer/story/5408597p-5344661c.html](http://www.tribnet.com/opinion/v-printer/story/5408597p-5344661c.html) (access date - August 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Pitcher, D. No date. Port Angeles: Introduction, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.nwsources.com/travel/> (access date - August 2004).

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