

Clatskanie

People and Place

Location

Clatskanie is located on U.S. Highway 30 in Columbia County between Rainier and Astoria, approximately 62 miles northwest of Portland and 53 miles northwest of Vancouver, Washington. Clatskanie encompasses 1.2 square miles of land. Its geographic coordinates are lat 46°06'05"N, long 123°12'20"W.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of Clatskanie was 1,528, a 6.2% decrease from 1990. The gender composition was 52.5% female and 47.5% male. The median age was 35.7, close to the national median of 35.3. The 2000 U.S. Census reported 29.6% of the population was under the age of 18, 44.5% was between the ages of 25 and 59, and 12.2% was age 70 or older. Of the population 18 years of age and older, 85.2% had a high school education or higher, 10.9% had a bachelor's degree or higher, and 2.7% had a graduate or professional degree; the national averages were 79.7%, 22.3%, and 7.8% respectively.

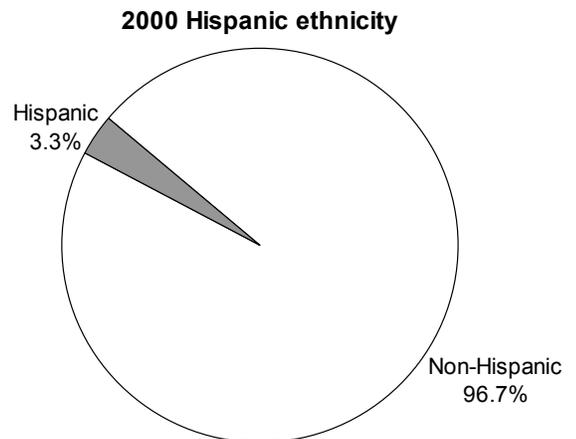
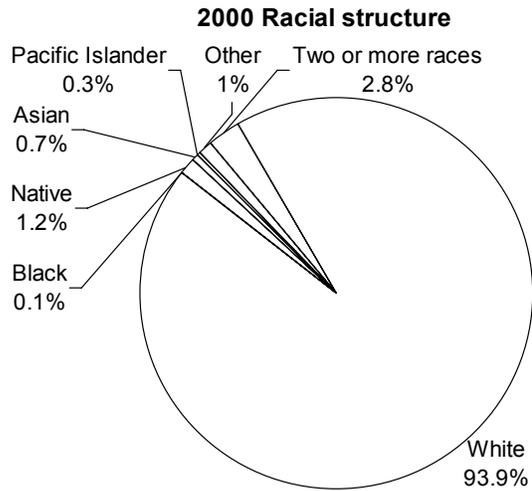
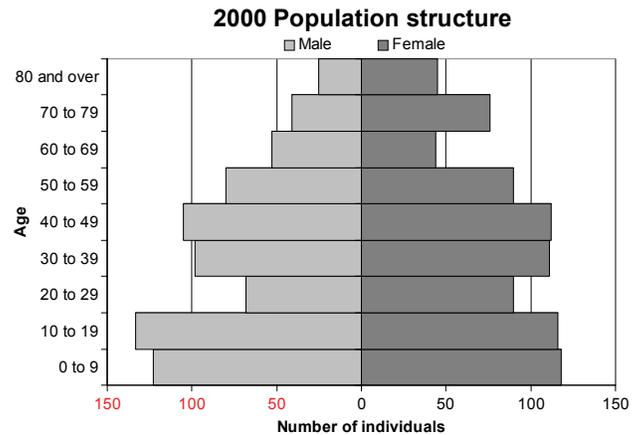
The majority of Clatskanie's racial structure was white (93.9%), followed by people who identified with two or more races (2.8%), American Indian and Alaskan Native (1.2%), people who identified with another race (1.0%), Asian (0.7%), Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (0.3%), and black (0.1%). In 2000 3.3% identified themselves as Hispanic and 1.1% were foreign-born, including 33.3% who were born in Canada.

In 2000 82.9% of the population lived in family households.

History

The Clatskanie Indians (also spelled Tlatskanai), who spoke an Athapascan language, occupied the lower Columbia River area prior to European contact. Their population was originally concentrated near the mouth of the Skookumchuck River in present-day southern Washington State on the north bank of the Columbia. They moved across the Columbia River into present-day Oregon in search of more productive game hunting, and have resided along the Clatskanie River, a tributary of the Columbia River, ever since.¹

Captain Robert Gray sailed into the mouth of the Columbia River on an exploration mission in 1792, investigating areas only a short distance from the coastline. Captain Nathan Winship arrived along the



Columbia River aboard the *Albatross* in 1810 with a small crew and members of his family. They planted what is considered the earliest garden in Oregon territory and constructed a small log structure at a point on the river they called Oak Point. After the late spring floods of that year inundated their settlement, they abandoned it.²

More widespread settlement occurred in the area following the Land Donation Act of 1850, and skirmishes with Indian tribes, including the Clatskanie and the Chinook, were frequent. By the 1850s, the Clatskanie Indian Tribe, once numbering up to 3,000, had died off almost entirely due to a smallpox epidemic. The surviving members were incorporated into other nearby tribes.

Columbia County was formed in 1854 by annexing parts of Washington and Clatsop Counties. In 1852 Enoch Conyers and other Euro-American settlers, along with their families, traveled by boat down the Columbia River to settle the area surrounding present-day Clatskanie. The Conyers family home served as a stopping point for many of the early settlers. The Conyers also built Clatskanie's first steam boat, *The Novelty*, which carried passengers, mail, lumber, and supplies out to the Columbia River where it connected with larger river boats. In 1918 the Columbia River Highway was completed, linking Clatskanie to the growing towns of Portland and Astoria.³

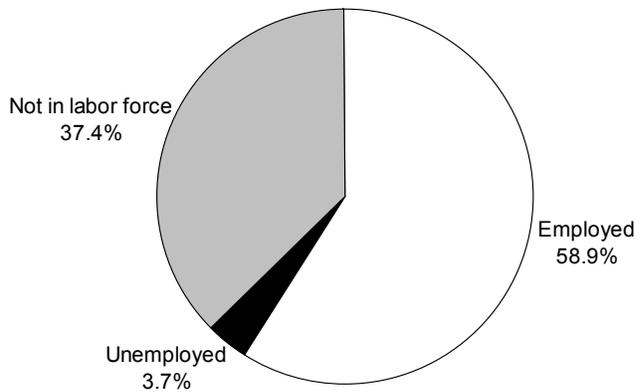
Clatskanie has been an important hub for the logging industry. Commercial fishing, farming, and timber processing also make up a large share of historical economic activity. Beach seining and the gillnetting of salmon were significant industries historically, and gillnetting continues today. Beach seining with horses continued until the 1940s or early 1950s.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 58.9% of Clatskanie's potential labor force 16 years of age and older were employed, 3.7% were unemployed, and the unemployment rate was 5.9% (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). In addition, 37.4% were not in the labor force, compared to the national average of 36.1%. The top employment sectors were educational, health, and social services (23.4%), manufacturing (19.4%), and local, state, or federal government (16.7%). Natural resource jobs including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting employed 16.7%, but this percentage may be artificially low because many fishermen are self-employed and are underrepresented in these data.

2000 Employment structure



Field work indicated a cogeneration plant was under construction at Port Westward on the Columbia, just upstream from Clatskanie. Construction is scheduled to begin on a new industry, an ethanol plant, at the Port Westward site. New subdivisions also are going in, one in town and another immediately east of town named Clatskanie Woods.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the per capita income in 1999 was \$16,717 and the median household income was \$35,833. In 1999 11.5% lived below the poverty level. In 2000 there were 659 housing units in Clatskanie, of which 92.3% were occupied and 7.7% were vacant. Of the occupied units, 66.8% were by owner and 33.2% were by renter.

Governance

Clatskanie City is governed by a mayor, a six-member city council, and a city manager. The State of Oregon has no general sales tax but levies a 1% overnight lodging tax that funds the Oregon Tourism Commission. See the Governance subsection (page 43) in the Overview section for a more detailed discussion of taxes affecting fishermen and processors in Oregon.

The National Marine Fisheries Service, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and U.S. Coast Guard all have offices in Astoria, 35 miles west of Clatskanie. Meetings of the Pacific Fishery Management and North Pacific Fishery Management councils are held in Portland, approximately 62 miles southeast of Clatskanie.

Facilities

Clatskanie is accessible by ground, water, and air, and is located on U.S. Highway 30. Greyhound provides bus service to nearby communities and to metropolitan areas. The Kelso-Longview Amtrak Station is located 15 miles east of Clatskanie, providing rail transport. The

nearest small airports are the Kelso-Longview airport, 15 miles northeast of Clatskanie, and the Astoria Regional Airport, 35 miles west. The nearest major airport is located in Portland.

Clatskanie has one elementary school and one middle/high school.⁴ The city's People's Utility District provides electric and water utilities. Fieldwork indicates there is a small family medical clinic in town and St. John's Hospital is nearby in Longview. The Clatskanie Police Department, the Columbia County Sheriff Department, and Clatskanie's volunteer fire department administer public safety. Clatskanie has two motels.

There are two locations in the Clatskanie area where gillnetters unload their catches and where landings are identified, recorded, and transported to processing facilities in Astoria and Ilwaco, Washington. These receiving stations are located on the banks of the Columbia River outside of the Clatskanie city limits, however they have Clatskanie addresses. Two more stations are located 9 miles west of Clatskanie in Mayger and two are located at the mouth of the Clatskanie River where it enters Wallace Slough, approximately 4 miles northwest of the city. Fieldwork shows that there is currently only one station operating in each location.⁵

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

According to available data, no seafood processors operated in Clatskanie in 2000 and no vessels delivered landings. However, 25 commercial vessels were owned by Clatskanie residents in 2000, 7 of which participated in the federally managed groundfish fishery. Recorded data indicates the number of vessels owned by Clatskanie residents in 2000 that participated in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: groundfish 00/NA, highly migratory species NA/0/NA, salmon 0/29/0, shellfish NA/0/NA, and shrimp NA/0/0.⁶

In 2000 no federal groundfish permits were held by Clatskanie community members. The number of Clatskanie residents holding permits in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab 0/1/0, highly migratory species NA/0/0, salmon 4/30/0, and shellfish 0/0/NA.⁷

According to available data, at least 40 state commercial fishing permits were registered to Clatskanie residents in 2000. The number of state permits held by Clatskanie residents in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab 0/1/0, highly migratory species NA/0/0, salmon 5/34/0, and shellfish 0/0/NA.⁸

Sportfishing

Sport fishermen actively fish for salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon in the waters surrounding Clatskanie, and at least one registered sportfishing charter business operates out of Clatskanie. Clatskanie residents owned one licensed charter vessel in 2000; the vessel operated out of Depoe Bay. Two sportfishing licensing agents were located in Clatskanie in 2000; they sold 1,017 sportfishing licenses at a value of \$16,792. The Bonneville Power Administration funds a bounty program on northern pikeminnows.

Astoria is the nearest port to Clatskanie that reported catch in the 2000 Oregon recreational catch reports. The 2000 recreational salmonid catch in the Ocean Boat Fishery was 766 Chinook and 13,712 coho salmon. The recreational nonsalmonid catch in this fishery was a total of 1,533. The top species landed was black rockfish (82.8%).

Subsistence

Subsistence harvest by both tribal and nontribal fishermen for marine species may exist in the Clatskanie area. Specific information on subsistence fishing in Clatskanie is not discussed in detail in this community profile due to a lack of available data.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Clatskanie residents owned 10 vessels in 2000 that participated in North Pacific fisheries. The vessels landed 204 tons in the Alaska salmon fishery at a value of more than \$307,390. In 2000 one vessel owned by a Clatskanie resident made landings of "other finfish" in the North Pacific, but specific information (landings in metric tons/value of landings) is confidential.

A total of 10 community residents held state permits and 2 residents held federal permits for Alaska and North Pacific fisheries respectively. A total of 12 commercial fishing permits were held by Clatskanie residents in 2000, including 10 Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission salmon permits and 2 groundfish License Limitation Program permits.

Fieldwork conducted after 2000 indicates Clatskanie residents are finding it increasingly difficult to participate in the North Pacific salmon and groundfish fisheries due to competition with imported farmed salmon, co-op marketing errors, and rising fuel costs.⁹

In 2000 27 residents held crew member licenses for North Pacific fisheries.

Sportfishing

Clatskanie residents purchased 26 Alaska sportfishing licenses in 2000.

Notes

1. Access Genealogy Indian Tribal Records. No date. Oregon Indian tribes. Online at <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/oregon/> [accessed 10 January 2007].
2. P. Parrish. 1931. Before the covered wagon. Binford and Mort, Portland, OR.
3. C. Rea and L. Rea. No date. The founding of Clatskanie. Online at <http://www.twrps.com/ccor/clat.html> [accessed 10 January 2007].
4. National Center for Education Statistics. No date. Search for schools, colleges, and libraries. Online at <http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/> [accessed 10 January 2007].
5. Field notes, fisherman, Clatskanie, OR. May 2006.
6. NA refers to data that were not available, for example, due to few or no recorded permit numbers, or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.
7. See note 6.
8. See note 6.
9. See note 5.