

Siletz

People and Place

Location

Siletz is a few miles inland from Oregon's north coast in Lincoln County, 8 miles northeast of Newport. The town is 132 miles southwest of Portland. Siletz encompasses 0.6 square miles of land and its geographic coordinates are lat 44°43'19"N, long 123°55'08"W.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of Siletz was 1,133. The gender composition was 48.9% female and 51.1% male. The median age was 36.1, close to the national median age of 35.3. Of the population 18 years of age and older, 71% had a high school education or higher, 6.5% had a bachelor's degree or higher, and 1.6% had a graduate or professional degree; the national averages were 79.7%, 22.3%, and 7.8% respectively.

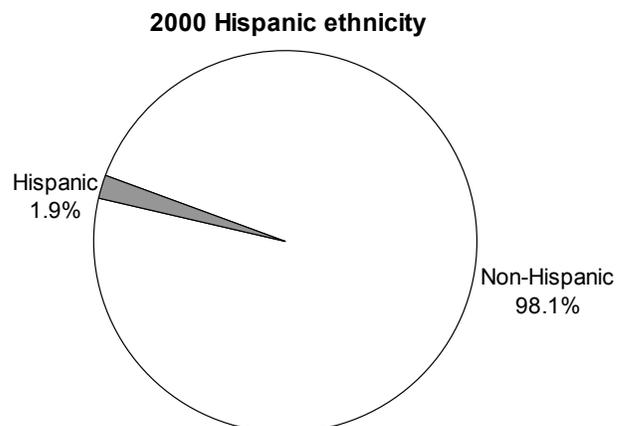
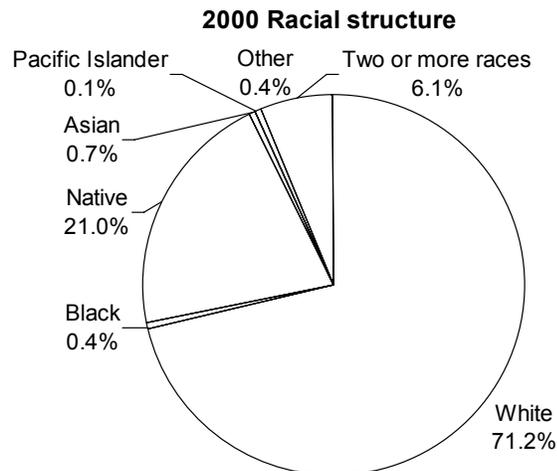
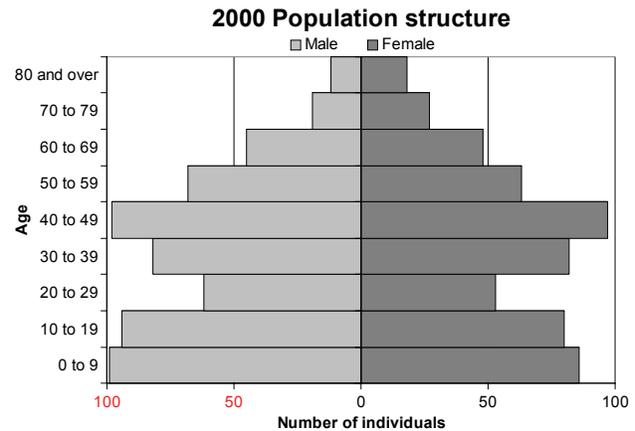
The majority of Siletz's racial structure was white (71.2%), followed by American Indian and Alaska Native (21%), people who identified with two or more races (6.1%), Asian (0.7%), black (0.4%), people who identified with some other race (0.4%), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (0.1%). Ethnicity data indicate 1.9% identified as Hispanic. A small percentage (2.1%) of the population was foreign-born.

In 2000 88.1% of the population lived in family households.

History

The roots of the Siletz peoples lie in 27 tribes that once populated the coastal areas of Lincoln, Tillamook, and Lane Counties. In 1851 the U.S. Government forced the Indians of western Oregon onto reservations as a way of reducing conflicts between the Indians and the flood of Euro-Americans who came following the discovery of gold.¹

Over the years the size of the Siletz Reservation has been reduced. A railroad to the coast split the reservation in the late 1860s and large sections were opened to white settlement. During the next several decades, parts of the reservation were closed and the Dawes Act of 1887 replaced tribal lands with allotments. Lands not eventually allocated to Indians went into the public domain and were sold to white settlers. In 1956 the Western Oregon Termination Act declared the people of the Siletz Tribe were no longer Indians. As a result more of their land was sold to settlers and given to the town of Siletz. In 1977 the Siletz Tribe, with the enactment of the



Siletz Restoration Act, regained recognition. The reservation now includes approximately 39 acres near town and 3,630 acres of timberland throughout Lincoln County. In 1991 the tribe built a 13,500 square foot tribal health clinic. The clinic is a valuable asset to the community as it serves tribal members and nonmembers. The Siletz community hosts several events throughout the year, including an annual powwow in July. Today the Confederated Tribes of Siletz plays an important role in the area.

Native Americans relied on natural resources long before the arrival of Euro-American settlers, subsisting by fishing, hunting, and gathering. In recent times, they gathered a variety of plants, hooked and trapped lamprey, caught salmon, collected freshwater mussels, and hunted deer. However, recent declines in lamprey and salmon populations have reduced access to these two important traditional food sources.² Although Oregon does not recognize the tribe's coastal fishing rights today, the tribe believes they are legitimized through treaty rights.^{3, 4, 5}

Euro-American settlers continued to enter the Siletz area throughout the latter 1800s. They established general stores in the community. Pack trains brought supplies to homesteaders who settled in rural areas outside of town. Siletz was similar to the rest of Lincoln County in that its major industries were logging, lumber, farming, rock crushing, reforestation, gathering native flora, and cascara bark peeling. The town of Siletz was established in 1910 and the community was eventually incorporated in 1946. In the early days travel in the Siletz area was difficult, primarily by foot or horse. A ferry aided those who crossed the Siletz River.⁶ The 29 June 1939 edition of the Lincoln County Leader describes Siletz as a center of trade and logging, because much of the timber headed for California and many eastern ports at that time came from the area.

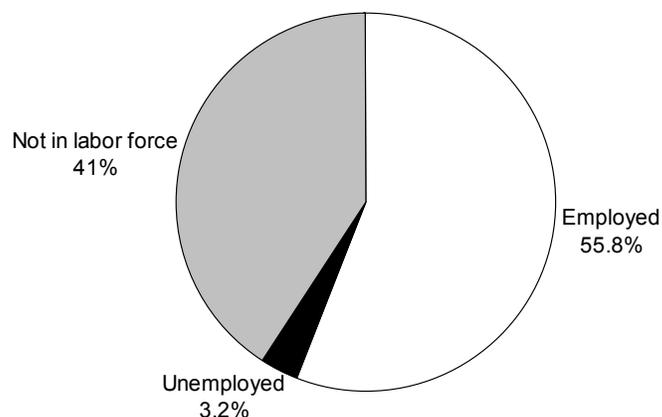
Infrastructure

Current Economy

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 55.8% of the potential labor force of Siletz 16 years of age and older were employed, 3.2% were unemployed, and the unemployment rate was 5.5% (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). In addition, 41% were not in the labor force. A top employment sector was government (21.8%). Natural resource jobs including agriculture, fishing, forestry, or hunting employed 4.8%, but this percentage may be artificially low because many fishermen are self-employed and are underrepresented in the data.

While many residents work in the nearby cities of Newport and Toledo, some are still involved with the

2000 Employment structure



area's traditional industries, logging and agriculture. One of the area's major employers is the Georgia Pacific Pulp and Paper mill nearby in Toledo; Koch Industries purchased the mill from Georgia Pacific in 2005.

At present Siletz is home to more than 1,300 people. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the per capita income was \$14,690, compared to the national per capita income of \$21,587, and the median household income was \$38,542. In 1999 15.4% lived below the poverty level. In 2000 there were 468 housing units in Siletz, of which 89.7% were occupied and 10.3% were vacant. Of the vacancies, 22.9% were due to seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

Governance

The City of Siletz, incorporated in 1946, has a mayor-council form of government. The Confederated Tribes of Siletz is a federally recognized confederation of 27 bands historically ranging from Northern California to Southern Washington. In 1992 congress legislated the tribe's self-governance, enabling the tribe to compact directly with the federal government, giving them control over funding and programming.

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 nearest office of the National Marine Fisheries Service is 15 miles away in Newport, which is also home to a U.S. Coast Guard station. The closest marine resources program of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is in South Beach. Portland is home to the district office of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Meetings of the Pacific Fisheries Management and North Pacific Fisheries Management councils are also held in Portland.

Facilities

The nearest airports to Siletz are in Newport and Corvallis, 15 miles and 47 miles away respectively. The nearest major airport is Portland International Airport.

Siletz has a charter school with 227 students enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade. The community's high school students may attend several schools in Lincoln County, including Toledo High School, Newport High School, and Eddyville Charter School.

The Central Lincoln Public Utility District provides electricity and the City of Siletz provides water and wastewater treatment. The water supply comes from surface sources and the Siletz River. At present the city has no storm drainage system. The Siletz Tribal Police Department and the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office administer public safety. Hospitals are located 27 miles away in Lincoln City and 11 miles away in Newport. The closest regional hospital is 51 miles away in Corvallis. While Siletz has no overnight accommodations, the nearby cities of Newport and Toledo have 23 hotels and 1 hotel respectively.

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Siletz is landlocked so there were no fish landed in the town in 2000, although community members did participate in the region's commercial fisheries. Siletz residents owned 13 vessels that fished in West Coast fisheries, including 7 that made landings in the federally managed groundfish fishery. The number of vessels owned by residents of Siletz in 2000 that participated in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic 0/1/1, crab 0/7/0, groundfish 0/0/NA, highly migratory species NA/0/NA, salmon 0/10/4, shellfish NA/1/NA, and shrimp NA/3/0.⁷

In 2000 seven community members held six permits for the federal groundfish fishery. The number of residents holding state permits in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic species 1/1/2, crab 1/6/0, highly migratory species NA/0/1, salmon 0/9/5, shellfish 0/1/NA, shrimp 1/3/1, and other species 0/2/0.⁸

At least 26 permits were registered to community members in 2000 and 20 were for state fisheries. The number of state permits held by community members in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic 1/1/3, crab 1/0/0, highly migratory species NA/0/1, salmon 0/0/9, shellfish 0/1/NA, and shrimp 1/0/2.⁹

Sportfishing

In 2000 three sportfishing outfitters were based in Siletz, including one charter business that based its vessel in Newport.

Subsistence

The Siletz Tribe has rights to fish for salmon in several of the area's freshwater environments. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife issues the tribe 200 salmon tags, which they reissue to tribal members for use during the fall cultural fishing season. The tribe may receive up to 4,000 pounds of surplus salmon annually from the State of Oregon. Tribal members also have rights to gather eels, seaweed, and fresh water mussels within Lincoln County for noncommercial purposes. The tribe may also ask the state to issue special gathering permits for sea anemones, rock oysters, and saltwater mussels within Lincoln County.¹⁰

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Residents of Siletz owned four vessels that participated in North Pacific fisheries in 2000. 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): Bering Sea/Aleutian Island (BSAI) groundfish confidential/confidential/2, Gulf of Alaska groundfish confidential/confidential/2, halibut confidential/confidential/1, salmon confidential/confidential/1, and other finfish confidential/confidential/2.

Nine community members held federal permits and 10 held state permits during the same year. In 2000 11 residents held crew member licenses for North Pacific fisheries.

Siletz residents held 20 commercial permits for North Pacific fisheries in 2000. Residents held four groundfish License Limitation Program permits, one halibut Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit, eight BSAI groundfish CFEC permits, one salmon CFEC permit, and two shellfish CFEC permits. In addition, community members held 45,750 halibut individual fishing quota shares.

Sportfishing

Siletz residents purchased 19 licenses to recreationally fish in Alaska in 2000.

Notes

1. Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. 2003. Confederated tribes of Siletz Indians-Tribal profile. Online at <http://www.npaihb>

- .org/profiles/tribal_profiles/Oregon/Confederated%20Tribes%20of%20Siletz%20Indians%20Tribal%20Profile.htm [accessed 26 January 2007].
2. R. Garono and L. Brophy. 1999. Rock Creek (Siletz) watershed assessment final report. Online at <http://www.earthdesign.com/rockcreek/DRAFT.PDF> [accessed 26 January 2007].
 3. Field notes, Siletz Tribe Fish and Wildlife Officer, Siletz, WA, 23 August 2004.
 4. Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board. 2003. Confederated tribes of Siletz Indians. Online at http://www.npaihb.org/profiles/tribal_profiles/Oregon/Confederated%20Tribes%20of%20Siletz%20Indians%20Tribal%20Profile.htm [accessed 26 January 2007].
 5. The Confederated Tribes of Siletz. No date. Confederated Tribes of Siletz-History and Culture. Online at http://www.ctsi.nsn.us/History_and_Culture.html [accessed 26 January 2007].
 6. G. Castle and V. Kentta. 1976. History of the Siletz area, Number VIII. Document obtained from Jodi Weeber, Oregon Coast History Center, Newport, OR.
 7. 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.
 8. See note 7.
 9. See note 7.
 10. The National Tribal Justice Resource Center. 1999. The Confederated tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon: Tribal government operations. Online at <http://www.tribalresourcecenter.org/ccfolder/silcode14huntingcord.htm> [accessed 26 January 2007].