

# Friday Harbor

## People and Place

### Location

Friday Harbor is on the southeastern side of San Juan Island, the geographic and commercial center of a chain of 172 islands spanning the U.S.-Canada border in the northern Puget Sound. Situated in San Juan County, the community encompasses 1.4 square miles of land and 0.1 square miles of water. The nearest major U.S. city is Seattle, a 105-mile drive southwest but also reachable by plane or a combination of boat and land transport. Friday Harbor's geographic coordinates are lat 48°32'04"N, long 123°00'57"W.

### Demographic Profile

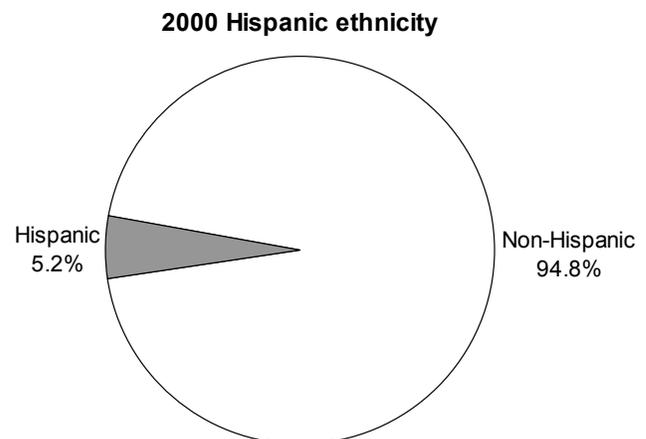
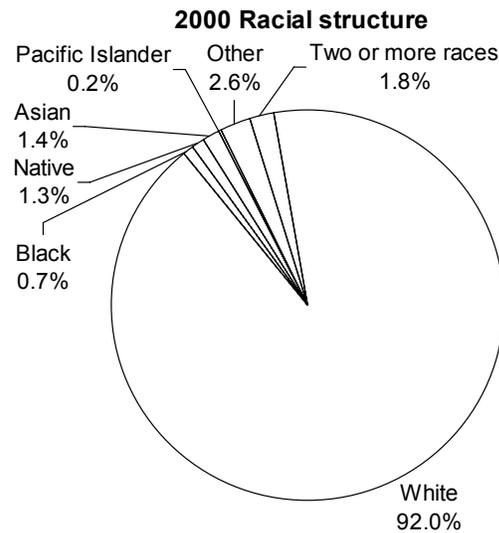
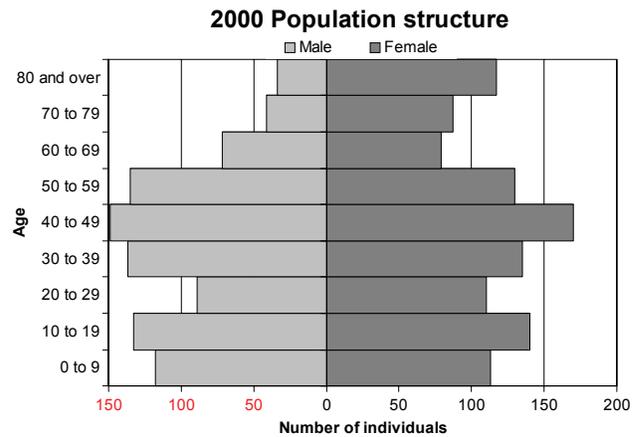
According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Friday Harbor's population was 1,989, an increase from 1,492 in 1990. The gender composition was 54% female and 46% male. The median age of 40.6 years was notably higher than the national average of 35.3. The age structure of Friday Harbor reflects that the town is a popular site for second homes among middle age professionals and retirees. Of the population 18 years of age and older, 88.1% had a high school education (including equivalency) or higher, 25.4% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher, and 7.7% had attained a graduate or professional degree; the national averages were 79.7%, 22.3%, and 7.8% respectively. For 33.2% a high school degree (including equivalency) was the highest level of educational attainment.

The vast majority of Friday Harbor's racial structure recorded by the 2000 U.S. Census was white (92%), followed by people who identified as another race (2.6%), people who identified as two or more races (1.8%), Asian (1.4%), American Indian and Alaska Native (1.3%), black (0.7%), and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (0.2%). Ethnicity data indicate that 5.2% identified as Hispanic. In 2000 7.3% of the Friday Harbor population was foreign-born. The majority of the foreign-born population was from the Americas outside of the United States, followed by people from Asia. The largest numbers of people denoting ancestry were German, English, and Irish.

In 2000 96% lived in family households.

### History

The San Juan archipelago is part of the traditional area of the Central Coast Salish, collectively 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 in British Columbia, 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 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 supplemented their diet with other finfish 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.

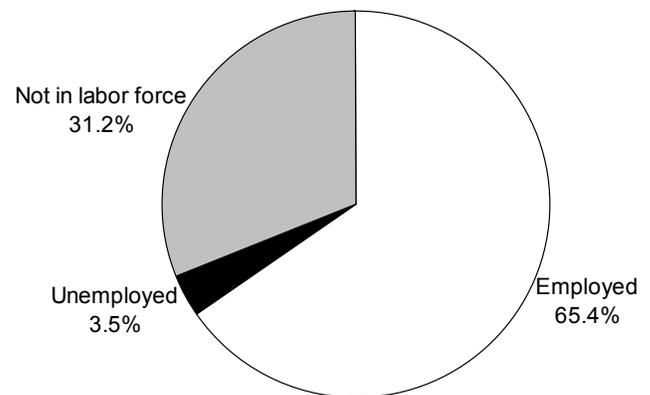
In 1791 Spanish explorer Juan Francisco de Eliza was the first European to chart the San Juan Islands. During the era of European exploration Spanish, British, French, Russian, and later, Americans, entered the region, integrating it into extensive fur-trade networks. Europeans settled the area by the 1800s. However the national border between the United States and Canada was not defined until after a protracted territorial disagreement that lasted from 1845 to 1872 was resolved.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently the area became notorious for smugglers trafficking in illicit goods, including alcohol during prohibition, and facilitating the crossing of illegal aliens. Friday Harbor has been the commercial and social hub of the San Juan Islands since the 1890s.<sup>2</sup> By 1900 Friday Harbor was a busy seaport with a population of 300 or 400 and a large salmon cannery among other facilities. Eventually 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.<sup>3</sup>

## Infrastructure

### Current Economy

At the time of the 2000 U.S. Census, 65.4% of Friday Harbor's potential labor force 16 years of age and older were employed, 3.5% were unemployed, and the unemployment rate was 5% (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). In addition, 31.2% were not in the labor force in 2000, compared to the national average of 36.1% for the same year. The

**2000 Employment structure**



main employment sectors were construction and retail (each with 17%), arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodations (15.5%), and local, state, and federal governments (12%). Natural resource jobs including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting employed only a very small percentage, but this percentage may be artificially low given that many fishermen are self-employed and are underrepresented in these data.

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 that would then transport salted and packed fish to the Hudson's Bay Company in Victoria, British Columbia. The local fishing industry grew alongside increasing technological and infrastructural capacities that supported a booming population. The dominant industry in San Juan County is now tourism and recreation, which continue to expand as tourism attracts people nationally as well as internationally to the Pacific Northwest.<sup>4</sup> Friday Harbor is the tourism hub of the San Juan Islands and one of the premier visitor destinations in the Northwest.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the per capita income in 1999 was \$19,792 and the median household income was \$35,139. In 1999 12% lived below the poverty level, comparable to the national average of 12.4%. In 2000 there were 1,053 housing units in Friday Harbor, with 49.9% owner occupied and 50.1% renter occupied. The housing unit vacancy rate was 14.9%, with 43.9% due to seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

### Governance

Incorporated in 1909, Friday Harbor is a fourth-class municipality or town. The Town of Friday Harbor is organized as a mayor-council form of government.

Under this system, the mayor and each council member are elected for 4-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% lodging tax. See the Governance subsection (page 43) in the Overview section for a more detailed discussion of taxes affecting fisherman and processors in Washington.

The nearest National Marine Fisheries Service Regional Office and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services District Office are in Seattle. Meetings of the Pacific Fishery Management and North Pacific Fishery Management councils are routinely held in the Seattle-Tacoma area. The nearest Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife office is 87 miles southeast in Mill Creek. Friday Harbor is under the jurisdiction of the nearest U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Station Bellingham, which was established in 1947 and has six vessels. The station's area of responsibility includes the San Juan Islands north to the Canada border and south to Admiralty Inlet. The USCG works in close partnership with the Canada Coast Guard and is 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 provides 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, British Columbia. International seaplane facilities are available at Friday Harbor. 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. The nearest major airports are the Vancouver International Airport in British Columbia and Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

The San Juan Islands School District has one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school. The town provides residents with water, sewer, garbage, and storm-water services, while the county operates a solid-waste transfer station and a recycling facility. The San Juan County Sheriff and the Friday Harbor Fire Department administer public safety. St. Joseph's Hospital in Bellingham (65-mile drive and ferry trip northeast) offers a full range of inpatient and outpatient services, but usually requires helicopter emergency services. The tourism industry in Friday

Harbor is 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 more than 45-feet long. The year-round, all weather marina services include charters and cruises, vessel repair, fuel dock, and a U.S. Port of Entry.

## Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

### Commercial Fishing

Of the 36 unique vessels that delivered nonconfidential landings to Friday Harbor, 18 were commercial vessels, 16 were tribal commercial vessels, and 2 were for personal use. Recorded data indicate landings in the community were in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represent 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, including 13 vessels that participated in the federally managed groundfish fishery. 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.<sup>5</sup>

No Friday Harbor residents owned federally managed groundfish fishery permits in 2000. The number of Friday Harbor residents holding permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: 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.<sup>6</sup>

According to available data, 52 state permits were registered to Friday Harbor residents in 2000. 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.<sup>7</sup>

There were no seafood processors operating in Friday Harbor in 2000. The tribal commercial fishery plays a significant role in the local 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,<sup>8</sup> 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 in British Columbia 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 River, 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 there were three licensed agents selling fishing permits in Friday Harbor. In 2003 there were 6,014 sportfishing license transactions valued at \$77,915.16.

In Catch Record Card Area 7 (San Juan Islands) the 2000 sport catch, based on catch record cards, was 7,178 fish, including 4,495 Chinook salmon, 2,644 coho salmon, 21 chum salmon, and 18 sockeye salmon. In 2000 marine anglers made 30,627 trips in the sport salmon fishery. Boat-based anglers caught 5,897 bottomfish in Area 7. The recreational harvest of clams (pounds) and oysters (number) for Area 7 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. 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. Community members landed fish in the following North Pacific fisheries (data shown represent 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.

Friday Harbor residents held 39 state and federal permits in 2000, including 24 individuals who held state permits and 13 individuals who held federal permits (note: it is possible for individuals to hold more than one permit at a time). Friday Harbor residents 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. Community members held 703,178 halibut and 2,968,988 sablefish individual fishing quota shares.

In 2000 31 Friday Harbor residents held crew member licenses for North Pacific fisheries.

## Sportfishing

Friday Harbor residents purchased 78 Alaska sportfishing licenses in 2000.

## Notes

1. Friday Harbor. No date. History and stories. Online at <http://www.fridayharbor.com/ihistory.cfm> [accessed 31 January 2007].
2. National Park Service. No date. San Juan Island: Administrative history. Online at [http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/sajh/adhi2.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/sajh/adhi2.htm) [accessed 31 January 2007].
3. Town of Friday Harbor. No date. History. Online at <http://www.fridayharbor.org/about%20the%20town/AboutTheTown1.htm> [accessed 31 January 2007].
4. Whatcom County Profile. 2001. Labor market and economic analysis branch, Employment Security Department. Online at [http://www.workforceexplorer.com/aspdotnet/search/adSearch.aspx?quickSearch=Whatcom County](http://www.workforceexplorer.com/aspdotnet/search/adSearch.aspx?quickSearch=Whatcom%20County) [accessed 31 January 2007].
5. 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.
6. See note 5.
7. See note 5.
8. Center for Columbia River History. No date. Boldt Decision. Online at <http://www.ccrh.org/comm/river/legal/boldt.htm> [accessed 31 January 2007].