

Clam Gulch

People and Place

Location

Clam Gulch is located on the Kenai Peninsula, 24 miles south of the city of Kenai via the Sterling Highway. The area encompasses 13.7 square miles of land.

Demographic Profile

In 2000, there were 173 residents in 67 households in Clam Gulch. All residents lived in households rather than group quarters. The gender composition of the community was slightly skewed, at 51.4% male and 48.6% female. The racial makeup of Clam Gulch is predominantly White (92.5%), with small Alaska Native (2.9%) and Asian (1.2%) populations. Approximately 3.5% of the population consists of residents of two or more races, primarily White and Alaska Native. A total of 5.8% of the population recognized themselves as all or part Alaska Native or American Indian. In addition, 1.7% of residents were of Hispanic ethnicity. The median age of the community is 37.5 years, slightly older than the U.S. national average of 35.3. The community has grown steadily, more than tripling its population since 1970. Census data was not collected in Clam Gulch prior to 1970. The educational situation is such that 89.7% of residents have a high school diploma or higher educational attainment.

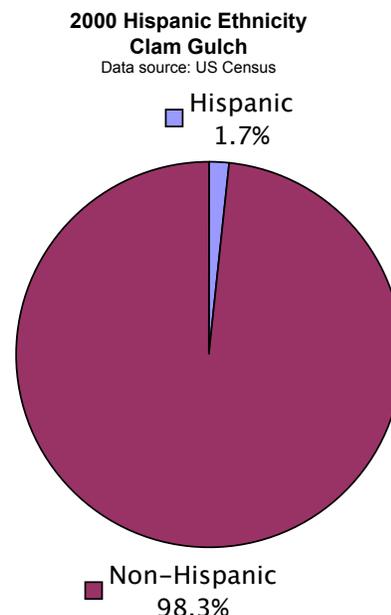
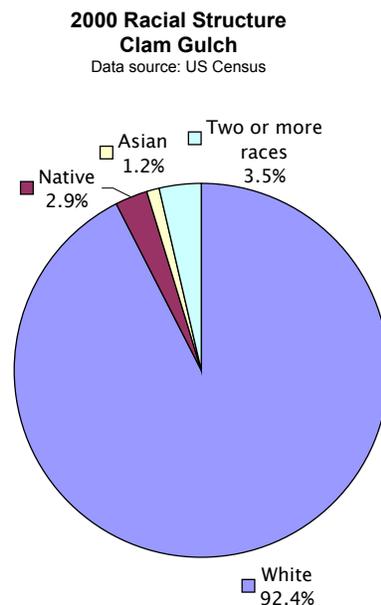
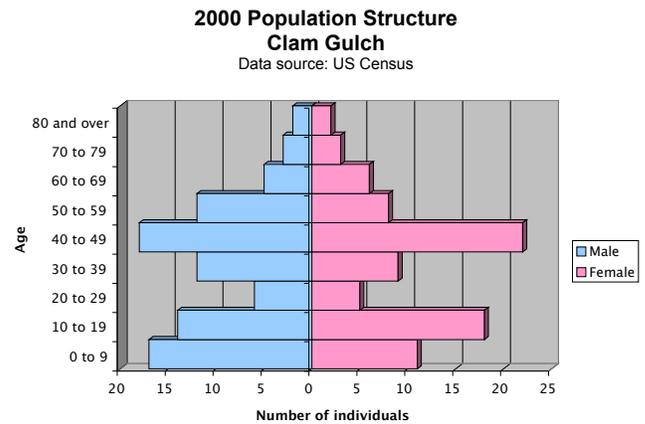
History

Although the Kenai Peninsula itself has been occupied by Athabascan people for thousands of years, there were no known early settlements in the vicinity of Clam Gulch. It has only been permanently occupied by White settlers since the early 20th century. The present-day community gets its name from the abundant razor clams that thrive along the area's sandy shorelines. A post office was established in the community in 1950.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

The economy of Clam Gulch revolves around commercial fishing, primarily in the Cook Inlet salmon and halibut fisheries. In addition, many residents seek employment in the larger economy of nearby Kenai.



Other employment opportunities include a tourist lodge and post office.

In 2000, the average per capita income was \$17,983, and the average household income was \$37,500. Approximately 15.3% of the total potential labor force is unemployed, and 43.1% of residents 16 years of age and older were not in the labor force (i.e. not employed and not seeking work). Approximately 8.1% of residents were living below the poverty level.

Governance

Clam Gulch is an unincorporated city under the jurisdiction of the Kenai Peninsula Borough. The borough administers a 2% sales tax and a 0.65% (6.5 mills) property tax. Schools in Clam Gulch are operated by the Kenai Peninsula School District. There is an office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game located nearby in Kenai. The nearest National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) office and U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services office are both located in Anchorage.

Facilities

Clam Gulch is accessible by road from Anchorage via the Sterling Highway. The nearby airport in Kenai provides access to communities throughout Alaska. Roundtrip airfare from Kenai to Anchorage is \$134.

Most homes use individual wells and septic tanks. Electricity is supplied by the Homer Electric Association, which uses both hydroelectric power stations and natural gas generators. The nearest health care services are at Central Peninsula Hospital in Soldotna. There are no schools located in Clam Gulch; students attend school in nearby Kenai.

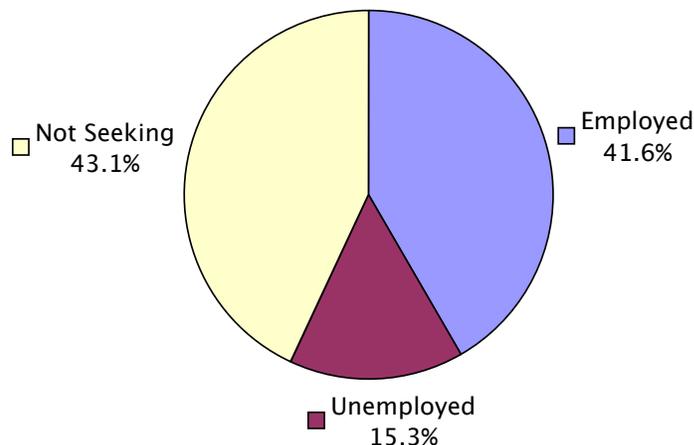
Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing, particularly in the salmon fishery, is a major part of the local economy of Clam Gulch. In 2000, there were four vessel owners operating in federal fisheries who resided in the community. There were 35 registered crew members. During the same year, 29 local residents held a total of 46 commercial fishing permits, and 29 of these permits were actually fished. This section contains a detailed description of commercial fishing activities.

Halibut: Seven local residents held a total of seven permits for the halibut fishery, and six permits

**2000 Employment Structure
Clam Gulch**
Data source: US Census



were fished. A detailed breakdown of the permits is as follows: three halibut longline permits for vessels under 60 feet in statewide waters (two fished); and four halibut longline permits for vessels over 60 feet in statewide waters (four fished).

Herring: Five local residents held a total of six permits for the herring fishery, but no permits were fished. A detailed breakdown of these permits is as follows: two herring roe purse seine permits for Cook Inlet (none fished), and four herring roe gillnet permits for Cook Inlet (none fished).

Other Groundfish: Three local residents held a total of three permits for the groundfish fishery, but only one permit was actually fished. All three permits were for miscellaneous saltwater finfish, for longline vessels under 60 feet in statewide waters.

Salmon: Twenty-eight residents held a total of 30 permits for the salmon fishery, and 22 permits were fished. A detailed breakdown of these permits is as follows: two salmon purse seine permits for Cook Inlet (none fished), one salmon purse seine permit for Kodiak (one fished), three salmon drift gillnet permits for Cook Inlet (three fished), and 24 salmon set gillnet permits for Cook Inlet (18 fished).

There were no processors and no registered landings for Clam Gulch in 2000. In 2002, the Kenai Peninsula Borough was granted \$810 in federal funds to compensate for fisheries losses due to Steller sea lion habitat protection under the Endangered Species Act. In 2003, the Kenai Peninsula Borough was granted \$623,295 in federal disaster funds to compensate for falling salmon prices. A portion of this sum will likely be used for programs that affect Clam Gulch.

Sport Fishing

The area is a major destination for sport fishermen around the world who come to fish in Cook Inlet for halibut and in the Kenai River for salmon. There is also sport fishing for trout in the nearby Kasilof and Ninilchik Rivers. The Major sport fish species include halibut, Chinook, Coho, Pink and Sockeye salmon, rainbow trout, steelhead, and Dolly Varden.

In 2000, a total of 290 sport fishing permits were sold in Clam Gulch, including 144 to non-Alaska residents. In 2002 there were three registered freshwater sport fishing guides in Clam Gulch and six saltwater guides.

Subsistence

Because of its location on the populous Kenai Peninsula, Clam Gulch is ineligible for subsistence fishing in federal waters.