

Metlakatla

People and Place

Location

Metlakatla is located on the west coast of Annette Island, 15 miles south of Ketchikan. The area encompasses 130.2 square miles of land and 83.8 square miles of water.

Demographic Profile

As a federal Indian reservation, Metlakatla is a predominantly Tsimshian Indian community. In 2000 there were 1,375 residents in 469 households. All residents lived in households rather than group quarters. In 2000 the racial composition of Metlakatla was as follows: American Indian and Alaska Native (81.8%), White (9.5%), two or more races (7.9%), Black (0.2%), Asian (0.1%), and other (0.5%). A total of 89.7% of the population recognized themselves as all or part Alaska Native or American Indian. In addition, 1.8% of residents were Hispanic. The gender makeup of the community was slightly skewed, at 52.0% male and 48.0% female. The median age was 31 years, somewhat younger than the U.S. national average of 35.3 years. In terms of educational attainment, 80.3% of residents aged 25 years or older held a high school diploma or higher degree.

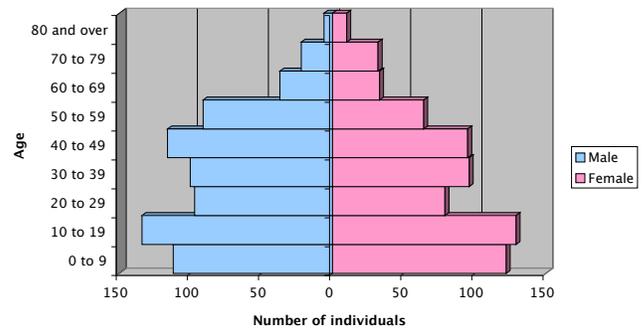
History

This area of southeast Alaska was the traditional territory of Tlingit Indians. Reverend William Duncan, a Scottish lay priest in the Anglican Church, undertook missionary work in British Columbia and Southeast Alaska among the Tsimshian Indians, beginning in 1857. Eventually, a group of Tsimshian left their homes near British Columbia's port of Prince Rupert, settling on Annette Island and founding Metlakatla, which means "saltwater channel passage," in the Tsimshian language. Duncan personally lobbied U.S. President Cleveland to grant the Indians a land claim, and a reservation was set aside by Congress on Annette Island, in 1887 (Mahler). Residents built a church, a school, a sawmill, and a cannery, removing old totem poles left behind by Tlingit Indians and shipping them to a museum in Sitka (Halliday 1998: 21).

During WWII, the U.S. Army constructed a large air base near Metlakatla. The U.S. Coast Guard also had a base on Annette Island until 1976. The Annette Island Reserve is today the only federal reservation for

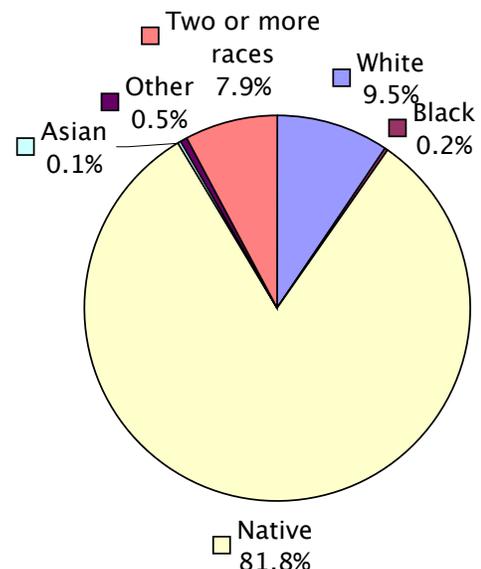
**2000 Population Structure
Metlakatla**

Data source: US Census



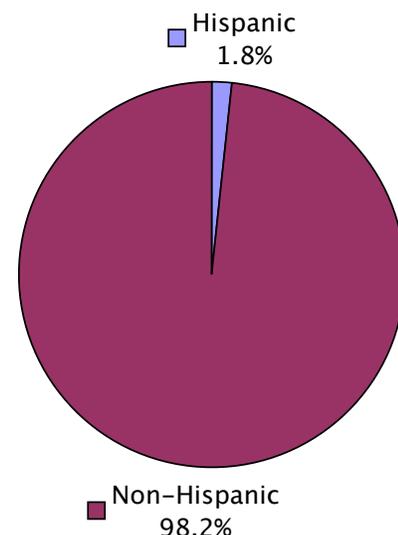
**2000 Racial Structure
Metlakatla**

Data source: US Census



**2000 Hispanic Ethnicity
Metlakatla**

Data source: US Census



indigenous peoples in Alaska. The 86,000 acre island reservation and surrounding 3,000 feet of coastal waters are under local control and not subject to state jurisdiction.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

The largest employer is the Metlakatla Indian Community, which operates the hatchery, the tribal court, and all local services. The Annette Island Packing Company is a cold storage facility owned by the community. In addition, commercial fishing and timber harvesting play important roles in the local economy. Tourism is also a growing source of revenue; many cruise ships now stop in Metlakatla, patronizing local businesses and services, and many visitors make the short trip from Ketchikan to get a taste of Tsimshian culture.

In 2000, the median per capita income was \$16,140 and the median household income was \$43,516. The unemployment rate was 13.4%, and 35.5% of residents aged 16 years and older were not in the labor force (i.e. not seeking work). Approximately 8% of residents were living below the poverty level.

Governance

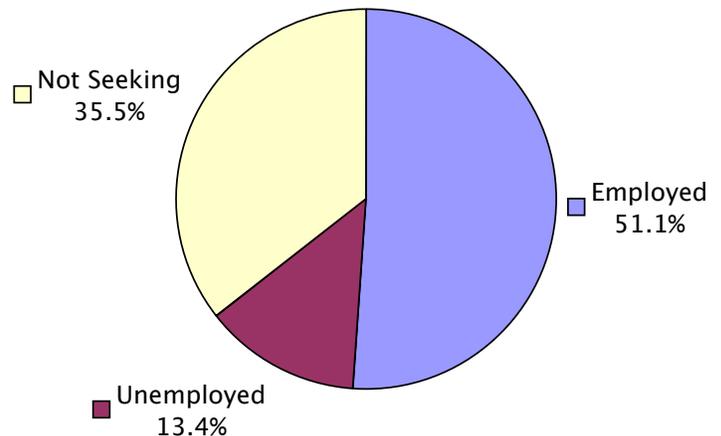
Metlakatla was incorporated as a city in 1944. As the only federal Indian reservation in Alaska, the community is governed by a tribal council. The community is not located within an organized borough. The community was not part of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971, since the tribal reservation was already in existence at that time.

There is an office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and an office of the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) located nearby in Ketchikan. The nearest National Marine Fisheries Service office is located in Petersburg.

Facilities

Metlakatla is accessible by air and water. The community owns and operates a local airport with two runways. In addition, there are two seaplane bases—one owned by the state and one owned by the community. Roundtrip airfare to Anchorage, via Ketchikan, is approximately \$317. There is a deepwater

**2000 Employment Structure
Metlakatla**
Data source: US Census



port on the island with a dock and barge ramp, two small boat harbors, and two marineways. A state ferry serves Metlakatla from Ketchikan between spring and fall; capital improvements to the ferry facilities are currently underway. In addition, a 14.7 mile roadway connecting Annette Island to Ketchikan is currently under construction and scheduled for completion in 2007.

All homes in Metlakatla are connected to a piped water and sewer system. Water is provided by a dam on Chester Lake. Metlakatla Power and Light, a community-owned company, provides electricity using both hydroelectric and diesel power. The Annette Island Family Medical Center is owned and operated by the community. The community also provides police services.

There are three schools located in Metlakatla: one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school. There are a total of 31 teachers and 287 students.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial

Commercial fishing, particularly in the salmon fishery, is an important part of Metlakatla's economy. In 2000 there were 16 vessel owners with operations in federal fisheries and 27 vessel owners with operations in state fisheries who resided in the community. There were 99 registered crew members in Metlakatla. In 2000, 48 local residents held a total of 86 commercial fishing permits, with the salmon fishery comprising the bulk of these permits. The following section contains

a detailed description of commercial permits issued to Metlakatla residents in 2000.

Crab: One resident held one Dungeness crab permit. The permit was for 75 pots or 25% maximum capacity in the southeast region. The permit was not fished.

Halibut: Nine residents held a total of nine permits in the halibut fishery. These permits included the following: five halibut longline permits for vessels under 60 feet in statewide waters (five fished), and four halibut longline permits for vessels over 60 feet in statewide waters (three fished).

Herring: Ten local residents held a total of 12 permits in the herring fishery. These permits included the following: one herring roe purse seine permit for the southeast region (one fished), eight herring roe gillnet permits for Cook Inlet (seven fished), one herring roe gillnet permit for Security Cove (one fished), one herring roe gillnet permit for Bristol Bay (one fished), and one purse seine permit for food/bait herring in the southeast region (not fished).

Other Finfish: Seven local residents held seven freshwater fish beach seine permits for statewide waters (none fished).

Other Groundfish: Eight local residents held a total of 11 permits in the groundfish fishery. These permits included the following: four miscellaneous saltwater finfish longline permits for vessels under 60 feet in statewide waters (none fished), two miscellaneous saltwater finfish longline permit for vessels over 60 feet in statewide waters (none fished), three demersal shelf rockfish hand troll permits in the southeast region (one fished), one demersal shelf rockfish mechanical jig permit for the southeast region (not fished), and one demersal shelf rockfish longline permit for vessels over 60 feet in the southeast region (not fished).

Other Shellfish: Nine local residents held a total of 14 commercial permits for other shellfish. These permits included the following: one geoduck clam permit for diving gear in the southeast region (not fished), four shrimp pot gear permits for the southeast region (three fished), six sea cucumber permits for diving gear in the southeast region (two fished), and two sea urchin diving gear permits for the southeast region (none fished).

Salmon: Twenty-nine local residents held a total of 32 commercial permits in the salmon fishery. These permits included the following: seven salmon purse

seine permits for the southeast region (nine fished), three salmon drift gillnet permits for the southeast region (three fished), one salmon set gillnet permit for the Kodiak fishery (one fished), 19 salmon hand troll permits for statewide waters (none fished), and two salmon power gurdy troll permits for statewide waters (one fished).

In 2000 there was one commercial fish processing plant located in Metlakatla. In accordance with privacy requirements, no detailed information on landings is available.

Sport Fishing

In 2000, sport fishing license sales totaled 101, and 82 of these were issued to Alaska residents. There were three registered saltwater sport fishing guides and one freshwater fishing guide in the community. Major sport species in the area include all five Pacific salmon species and halibut.

Subsistence Fishing

Subsistence resources are an important part of the local economy and cultural identity of Metlakatla. As a sovereign Native tribal community, Metlakatla's subsistence resources are governed locally and are not subject to state or federal control. The ADF&G's Division of Subsistence reported in 1987 that 100% of households in Metlakatla used subsistence resources. Approximately 82.1% of households used subsistence salmon, and 81.8% used non-salmon subsistence fish (especially herring, halibut, rockfish, and char). Approximately 4.0% of households used marine mammals for subsistence and 82.7% of households used marine invertebrates.

The annual per capita harvest of subsistence foods for Metlakatla in 1987 was 70.1 lbs, and was comprised of the following resources: salmon (29.0%), non-salmon fish (24.8%), land mammals (15.4%), marine mammals (1.2%), birds and bird eggs (1.7%), marine invertebrates (21.0%), and vegetation (7.0%).

Residents of Metlakatla who hold a valid Subsistence Halibut Registration Certificate (SHARC) issued by NMFS, are eligible to harvest subsistence halibut. These allocations are based on recognized customary and traditional uses of halibut. Regulations to implement subsistence halibut fishing were published in the Federal Register in April 2003 and became effective May 2003.