

# Pilot Point

## People and Place

### Location

Pilot Point is located on the northern coast of the Alaska Peninsula, on the east shore of Ugashik Bay. The community lies 84 air miles south of King Salmon and 368 air miles southwest of Anchorage. The area encompasses 25.4 square miles of land and 115.1 square miles of water.

### Demographic Profile

In 2000, Pilot Point had 100 inhabitants. The population growth in the community has been historically dependent on the state of the fishing and processing industries. The community is primarily of Alutiiq ancestry, with some Yup'ik Eskimo residents. Approximately 86% of residents were Alaska Native or American Indian, and 14% were White.

All residents lived in households rather than group quarters. There were 40 vacant houses due to seasonal use. In terms of gender ratio, in contrast to most Alaskan communities, women comprise the majority of the population (56%). The median age of the community was 29 years, significantly younger than the U.S. national median of 35.3 years.

In terms of educational attainment in Pilot Point, of the population age 25 and over, about 87.3% had graduated from high school or gone on to further schooling. About 12.7% had not completed the 12th grade.

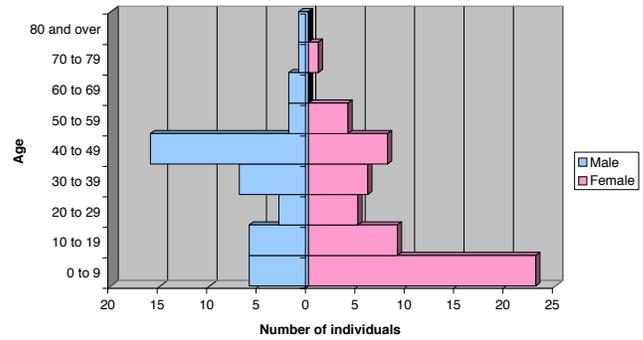
### History

According to most accounts, Pilot Point originated as a village surrounding a processing plant, which was founded in 1889. At that time, it was called “Pilot Station,” after the river pilots stationed here to guide boats upriver to a large cannery at Ugashik.

The area, which has abundant natural resources, is believed to have been inhabited as a seasonal fish camp for thousands of years. In 1892 Charles Nelson opened a saltery which was sold to the Alaska Packer’s Association in 1895. The saltery continued to expand, and by 1918, developed into a three-line cannery that attracted immigrants from all over. Reindeer herding experiments at Ugashik helped to repopulate the area after the devastating 1918 flu epidemic. The herding experiments, however, eventually failed. Until the epidemic, the main settlement, with a blossoming

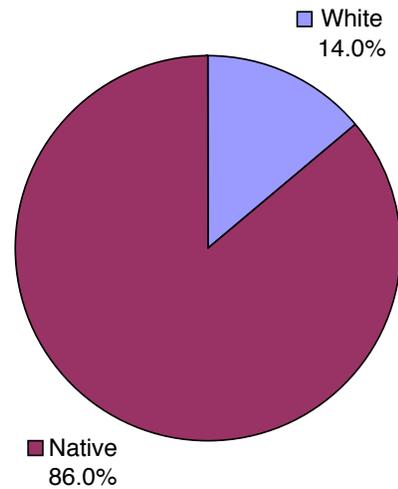
**2000 Population Structure  
Pilot Point**

Data source: US Census



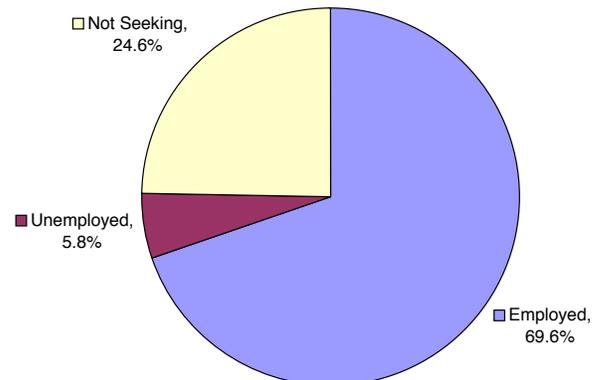
**2000 Racial Structure  
Pilot Point**

Data source: US Census



**2000 Employment Structure  
Pilot Point**

Data source: US Census



cannery industry, was upstream at Ugashik. A post office was established in the town in 1933, and the name was changed to Pilot Point.

The prosperity of the community has always been linked to the fishing industry. In the 70s the deterioration of the harbor, among other factors, forced the last cannery effort to close. Pilot Point incorporated as a city in 1992 as a way to generate resources for the community through taxation.

## Infrastructure

### Current Economy

The two main components of Pilot Point's economy are commercial fishing and government jobs. In 2000, 69.6% of the total workforce was employed, 5.8% was unemployed, and 24.6% was not seeking a job. Approximately 32% percent of the workforce worked for the government. The annual per capita income was \$12,627 and the median household income was \$41,250. An astonishing 20.8% of the population lived below the poverty line.

Subsistence practices are present in the area and play a significant role on the local economy. Trapping is a source of income during the off-season. Salmon, caribou, moose, goose, and porcupine are harvested.

### Governance

Pilot Point was incorporated as a second-class city in 1992. It is under the jurisdiction of the Lake and Peninsula Borough. It has a strong mayor form of government with a seven-member city council. The city imposes a 3% tax on raw fish and the borough administers a 6% tax on accommodation.

The Bristol Bay Native Corporation is the regional for-profit Native corporation of the area. The Alaska Peninsula Corporation is responsible for the management of approximately 99 acres of land under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). This community is part of the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation (CDQ) and receives community development quotas from this organization. The city also has the Pilot Point Village Council, which is recognized by BIA as a traditional council. Pilot Point is also a member of a regional nonprofit organization, the Bristol Bay Native Association.

The nearest Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) offices are located in Chignik and

King Salmon. The nearest Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) office is in Kodiak, Unalaska, or Anchorage. NMFS has its closest quarters in Kodiak, Unalaska, or Homer.

### Facilities

As with most of the communities of the Aleutian Islands and the Alaskan Peninsula, Pilot Point is not accessible by land. It has a gravel airstrip that receives two air taxis, six days per week, from King Salmon. These flights are part of the mail service. There is a second airstrip managed by the bureau of land management 10 miles to the southeast (Ugashik). The price of a roundtrip ticket by plane from the community to Anchorage, connecting in King Salmon, is approximately \$597.

The sea is the other main connector with the outside world. A barge service provided from Seattle serves the community twice a year, in spring and fall. It is chartered from Naknek. The village has a natural harbor with one accessible dock. The community does not have ground transportation services.

There are two lodges available for accommodations. The Pilot Point School has two teachers and 25 students of all ages. Health care in the community is provided by the Pilot Point Health Clinic. Pilot Point has also its own police station (State VPSO). The water, on an individual basis, is provided by wells, and there is not a central sewage system.

## Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

### Commercial Fishing

The Ugashik River produces a very important part of the Bristol Bay salmon fishery, and the privileged location of the town next to the river defines the structure of Pilot Point's fishing industry.

In 2000, Pilot Point had 21 commercial permit holders with a total of 30 permits. In Pilot Point, 33 individuals were registered as crewmen and there were two federal fisheries vessel owners plus nine owners of salmon vessels. Pilot Point's fleet was involved, in one way or another, in the following Alaskan fisheries: halibut, herring, other groundfish, and salmon. The following is a breakdown of the commercial permits issued to Pilot Point residents in 2000.

*Halibut:* Five permits issued for halibut, all of which were for longline vessels over 60 feet with

statewide range (two fished).

*Other Groundfish:* Two permits issued for herring roe gillnet, one in Security cove and one in Bristol Bay (none fished).

*Salmon:* Salmon permits accounted for the bulk of Pilot Point's issuance. These included 9 drift gillnet permits for Bristol Bay (8 fished), and 11 set gillnet permits for Bristol Bay (6 fished).

*Herring:* There were three herring permits issued, including one gillnet permit in Security Cove (not fished), and two gillnet permits for Bristol Bay (one fished).

There were no processing plants and no landings in Pilot Point in 2000. Pilot Point received a direct allocation of \$61,235 in federal salmon disaster funds, and the Lake and Peninsula Borough received \$442,002. These allocations were to compensate for losses due to plummeting prices in the international market. This allocation was implemented in 2003.

The Lake and Peninsula Borough and the BBECDC (CDQ) received \$29,832, and \$75,026 respectively to reduce the impact of Steller sea lion protective regulations that came up after the inclusion of this species into the endangered species list. This allocation, under ESA regulations, was implemented in 2002.

The funds not directly allocated to the city were added to the general budget of the borough or the CDQ and helped to compensate the decline on fish taxes income and to relieve the budgetary tensions of the institutions of the area.

### **Sport Fishing**

In 2000, this community issued three sport fishing licenses. The area, however, is visited by numerous

outsiders that get their permits elsewhere. Locals rely mainly on subsistence fisheries. One company offers freshwater fishing services to outsiders.

### **Subsistence Fishing**

In a survey conducted in 1987 in Pilot Point by the ADF&G, all households reported using subsistence resources of some sort. 100% of households used subsistence salmon, 94.1% used non-salmon fish (including herring, smelt, cod, flounder, halibut, char, grayling, pike, and trout), 52.9% used marine mammals, and 64.7% used marine invertebrates. The per capita harvest of subsistence resources was 383.7 lbs in 1987.

In terms of the composition of the subsistence diet, it was comprised of salmon (24.7%), other fish (4%), land mammals (62.4%), marine mammals (1.2%), birds and eggs (4.4%), marine invertebrates (1.6%), and vegetation (1.5%).

In 1999 Pilot Point had 13 salmon household subsistence permits; the catch was mainly sockeye. In addition, the inhabitants of this community (rural residents or members of an Alaska Native tribe) are eligible to harvest subsistence halibut by holding Subsistence halibut Registration Certificates (SHARCs). 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.