

# Hood River & Wasco Counties Regional Profile

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## Demographics

### Population growth

- Regional population grew by 23% from 1990 to 2010, a bit lower than the 35% increase observed across the state overall <sup>1</sup>
- Growth in the region during this period was mostly due to net in-migration (as opposed to natural increase – the excess of births to deaths) <sup>2</sup>

### Change in ethnic composition <sup>1</sup>

- The size of the Latino population grew more than two times between 1990 and 2010, from 9.9% to 21.7%, and represents the largest population of color in the region
- Over the last 3 decades, this region has consistently had greater representation of Latinos than the state, and in 2010 was nearly double that observed across the state (Latinos were 12% of Oregon population in 2010)

### Age <sup>3</sup>

- The region is a bit older than Oregon overall, and is aging at the same pace as the state

## Employment & Labor

### Unemployment <sup>4</sup>

- Since 2000, the region has had consistently lower unemployment than the state (by two to three percentage points)
- In contrast to the state, unemployment has actually decreased slightly since 1990 – from about 9% in 1990 to about 8% in 2009-13. During this period, unemployment in the state nearly doubled from 6% to 11%.

### Sources of income <sup>4</sup>

- The majority of households (about 72%) get income from wages and salaries, which is on par with the state percentage (about 73%)
- About 34% of households get income from social security (higher than state percentage), followed by 22% that get income from retirement (higher than state percentage), and about 5% that receive income from public assistance programs (slightly higher than state percentage)

#### Industries employing regional residents: <sup>4</sup>

- Between 1990 and the 2009-2013 period, the industry in which the highest proportion of regional residents worked did not change. At both times, the highest proportion of employed residents worked in the Education, Health, and Social Services industry (18% in 1990; 22% in 2009-13)
  - Note: Education, Health, and Social Service industry employment includes work in the public and private sectors
- In 1990, about 51% of regional resident workers were employed in the top three industries of 1) Education, Health, & Social Services, 2) Retail Trade, and 3) Agriculture, Forestry, & Fishing. By 2009-2013 that had declined only slightly to 47%, due to declines in the percent employed in Retail Trade.
- The region has experienced decline in Manufacturing employment from 1990 to the 2009-2013 period; from 15% to 8% of employed residents. This decline was on par with the decline Oregon overall experienced.
- Between 1990 and the 2009-2013 period, the region saw significant increases in the percentages of workers employed in the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Accommodation as well as the Professional, Science, Management, and Administration industries

#### Local jobs: <sup>5</sup>

- Consistent with the employment figures above, in 2013, the highest proportions of jobs located in the two-county region were in the private sector health care/social assistance and retail trade industries. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of all the full and part time jobs in the region in 2013 were in these two industries.
- Between 2001 and 2013 the most significant decline occurred in the proportion of local jobs that were in the government sector (decline of about 4 percentage points)
- Between 2001 and 2013, the most significant increase occurred in the proportion of local jobs there were in the private sector health care/social assistance industry (increased by about 4 percentage points)

#### Commuting patterns: <sup>4</sup>

- Since 1990, there has not been much change in resident commuters' travel times to work in this region
- The vast majority (about 71%) of commuters travel fewer than 20 minutes to work

## Agriculture

#### Agricultural Economy:

- In 2012, Hood River County ranked 13<sup>th</sup> in the state for gross farm and ranch sales (\$112,094,000), and Wasco County ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the state (\$107,891,000) <sup>6</sup>
- In 2012, gross crop sales were 28 times higher than gross animal product sales in the two-county region <sup>6</sup>
- There was a 51% decline in animal product sales between 2000 and 2012, in inflation-adjusted dollars <sup>6</sup>
- There was a 68% increase in crop sales between 2000 and 2012, in inflation-adjusted dollars<sup>6</sup>

- At the same time, there was a sizeable increase (47%) in the number of harvested acres between 2000 and 2012 <sup>6</sup>
- Just as the state overall has seen continued declines over the last 23 years, this region's timber harvest in 2013 was about 36% of its 1990 level in 1,000s of board feet <sup>7</sup>

Land cover change: <sup>8</sup>

- Between 2000 and 2011, there was no change in the percent of land that was developed with residential or commercial properties in this region (1.8%)
- At the same time, there was a slight down-tick in the percent of land cover that was forest (32.9% to 31.5%) and a slight up-tick in the percent of land cover that was cultivated (7.6% to 7.8%)

## Striking Statistics (areas where region stands out from state)

### Challenges

- Higher than average teen pregnancy rate <sup>13</sup>
- Higher than average rate of traffic fatalities per 100,000 people <sup>12</sup>
- Higher than average percentage of students eligible for the Free & Reduced Price Lunch Program <sup>17</sup>
- Below average percentage of adults with a 4-year degree or more education
- Higher than average high school dropout rate <sup>17</sup>
- Lower than average minority income as a percentage of white income <sup>4</sup>
- Lower than average wages (per covered worker) <sup>5</sup>

### Strengths

- ✓ Higher than average prevalence of farmers markets, per 1,000 population <sup>10</sup>
- ✓ Lower than average percentage of babies born with low birth weight <sup>13</sup>
- ✓ Lower than average incidence of the most common communicable disease (Chlamydia) <sup>13</sup>
- ✓ Below average rate of child abuse <sup>13</sup>
- ✓ Lower than average index crime arrest rate <sup>14</sup>
- ✓ Lower than average percentage of individuals who are food insecure <sup>15</sup>
- ✓ Better than average coverage of the social service system – ratio of people seeking social services (via 211*info*) to social service providers was lower in the region than the state overall <sup>16</sup>
- ✓ Lower income inequality as measured by the Ratio of Mean Annual Income and the Modified Palma Index <sup>4</sup>
- ✓ Higher than average labor force participation among Latinos <sup>4</sup>
- ✓ Higher than average number of childcare slots per 100 children <sup>18</sup>
- ✓ Recent increase (2009-2012) in the percentage of land in farms (while the state saw a slight decline) <sup>19</sup>

## Sources

Data come from a variety of sources, as reported on the Rural Communities Explorer (<http://oe.oregonexplorer.info/rural/CommunitiesReporter/>)

- <sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau, Decennial Census
- <sup>2</sup> Population Research Center, Portland State University
- <sup>3</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey & Decennial Census
- <sup>4</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey
- <sup>5</sup> US Bureau of Economic Analysis
- <sup>6</sup> Oregon Agricultural Information Network, Oregon State University Extension Service
- <sup>7</sup> Oregon Department of Forestry
- <sup>8</sup> National Land Cover Database, Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium US Department of the <sup>9</sup> Interior & US Geologic Survey
- <sup>10</sup> Oregon Farmer's Market Association and U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
- <sup>11</sup> Yellow Pages
- <sup>12</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation
- <sup>13</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services
- <sup>14</sup> State of Oregon Criminal Justice Commission
- <sup>15</sup> Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap
- <sup>16</sup> *211info*
- <sup>17</sup> Oregon Department of Education
- <sup>18</sup> Child Care Research Partnership and Oregon Employment Department
- <sup>19</sup> USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Census of Agriculture