

Dillon Beach

People and Place

Location

Dillon Beach is located on the northern coast of Marin County, approximately 60 miles north of San Francisco and 4 miles west of U.S. Highway 101. It covers 3 square miles of land. The geographic coordinates of Dillon Beach are lat 38°14'59"N, long 122°57'50"W.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of Dillon Beach was 319. The gender composition was 51.1% female and 48.9% male. The median age was 51.5, significantly higher than the national median of 35.3. Approximately 53% of the population was between the ages of 30 and 59. Of the population 18 years of age and older, 97.3% had a high school education or higher, 47.7% had bachelor's degree or higher, and 21.5% had a graduate or professional degree; the national averages were 79.7%, 22.3%, and 7.8% respectively.

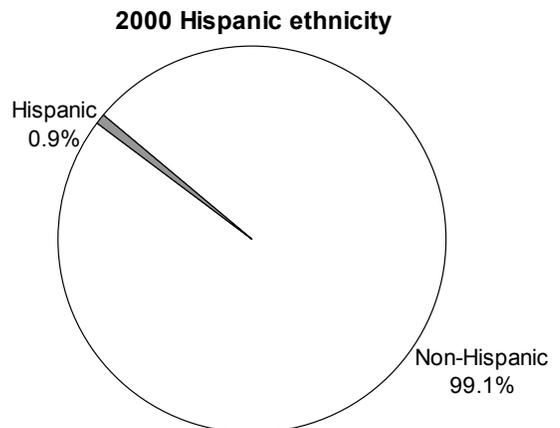
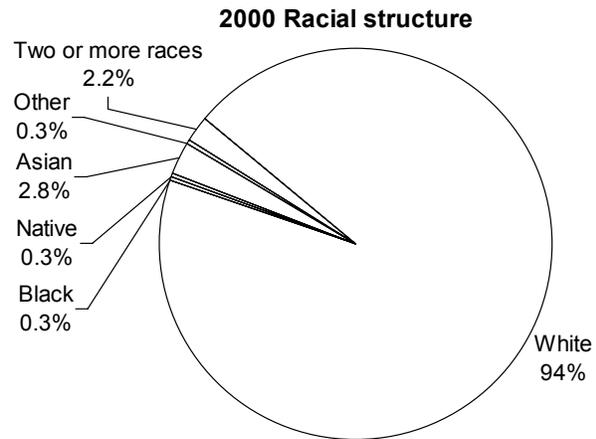
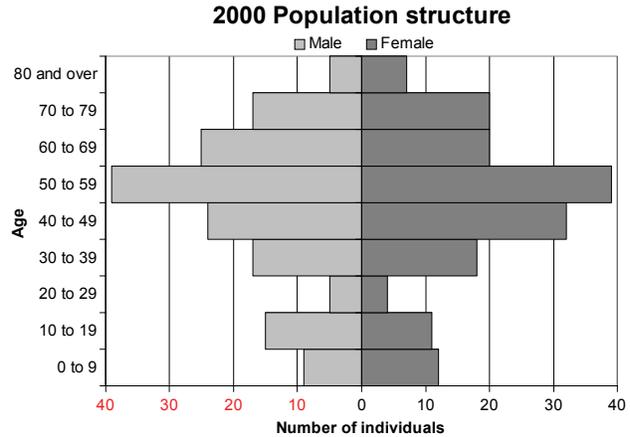
The majority of the racial composition of Dillon Beach was white (94%), followed by Asian (2.8%), individuals who identified with two or more races (2.2%), black (0.3%), individuals who identified with some other race (0.3%), and American Indian and Alaskan Native (0.3%). Ethnicity data indicate that 0.9% identified as Hispanic. Of the foreign-born population (3.3%), all were born in the United Kingdom.

In 2000 80.9% of the population lived in family households.

History

The first inhabitants of the Dillon Beach area were Miwok Indians. The Coast Miwok, called Olamentke by early writers, are part of the Penutian language family.¹ They occupied territory bounded on the north by Cosumnes River, on the east by a ridge of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, on the south by Fresno Creek, and on the west by the San Joaquin River.² The Miwok was the largest "nation" in California. A member of any of the Miwok tribes or settlements apparently could travel from the Cosumnes to the Fresno and be understood without difficulty, so uniform was the language.³

The Coast Miwok inhabited about 885 square miles of Marin and southern Sonoma counties. In 1800 there were approximately 3,000 Miwok in about 40 villages; each village consisted of 75–100 persons.⁴ By 1910 the Miwok population had declined to an estimated 699.⁵

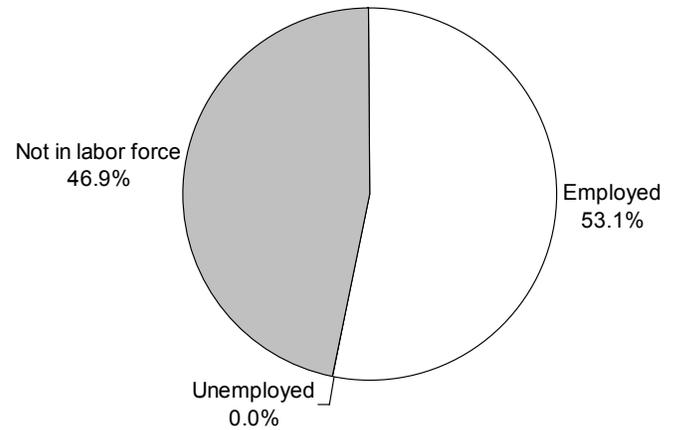


The Miwok traveled in tule reed boats around Bodega Bay and to Angel Island, the largest island in San Francisco Bay.⁶ Their diet consisted primarily of nuts, pinole (a meal made of plant seeds), roots, fruit, jackrabbit, deer, sea lions, seals, sea otters, fish, and shellfish.⁷ According to evidence from several archaeological sites, the Miwok used the sand dunes and a small valley on the south slope of Little Sugar Hill for drying shellfish, the basis for trade with inland tribes.⁸ Fish were taken by gorge-hook (made from bone), spear, dip nets (bags of netting attached to wooden frames on a handle), and narcotization. They used woven surf nets along the open beaches.^{9, 10}

The Miwok's first contact with Europeans occurred in 1579 when Sir Francis Drake, the first Englishman to sail around the world, was greeted upon his arrival by Indians in a village near Tomales, 4 miles inland from Dillon Beach. Later, in 1775, Father Vincente, who arrived to claim San Francisco Bay with Captain Ayuala, described the Coast Miwok as "humorous, with courteous manners."¹¹ During the Spanish Mission Era, the Coast Miwok learned how to build with adobe and cultivate new food crops, which they traded to the Spanish missions.¹² For decades the Coast Miwok resisted the Spanish and Mexicans but fell before European weapons. In 1953 Congress passed Public Law 280 which turned over law enforcement on California reservations to state and county agencies. By 1958, the federal government had terminated recognition of several tribes including the Coast Miwok.¹³ In December 2000 legislation was signed granting full recognition to the Federated Indians of the Graton Rancheria, formerly known as the Federated Coast Miwok. Today there are more than 500 registered tribal members.¹⁴

In the early 1800s, the Dillon Beach area was inhabited by Russian fur trappers from the Fort Ross area to the north, but the trappers left in the mid-1800s when otter populations plummeted. In 1859 the Irish immigrant George Dillon settled in the area. Dillon Beach is named for him. He built a small, successful hotel and in 1903 began selling some of his beachfront holdings. John Keegan purchased a section of beachfront in 1903 and laid out the plans for a village. Keegan then sold his interests to the California Eucalyptus Plantation Company of San Francisco in 1911. In 1923 Sylvester Lawson of Sacramento leased the town from the California Eucalyptus Plantation and, with the help of his sons, purchased the resort in 1926. In 1933 the Lawson family loaned one of its buildings to the University of California and in 1948 a Marine Biological Station was established. Many students and scientists came to the area to study area marine life until the station closed in the late 1970s. In the mid-1960s, the Oceana Marin

2000 Employment structure



subdivision was constructed just north of the Dillon Beach Village and many homes continue to be built in this area.¹⁵

Today the Dillon Beach community is comprised of five areas. Agricultural lands to the north and east of the town are primarily dairy farms. Oceana Marin, with more than 250 homes, is a private, relatively new subdivision in the hilly, northern part of the community. The residential neighborhood in the center of town is referred to as the "Village" and consists of more than 150 homes. Lawson's Dillon Beach Resort is located south of the Village and north of Lawson's Landing. Within this 64-acre area are Lawson's Store, Dillon Creek, a beach parking lot and restrooms, a 17-lot residential subdivision, and extensive undeveloped areas. Lawson's Landing refers to a private beach, bay front, and campground that extend from the resort on the north to Tomales Bay on the south.¹⁶

The Dillon Beach area is rich with natural resources. Its steep coastal bluffs, long sand beach, tall dunes, wide esteros (coastal lagoons), streams, tidal estuaries, fishing grounds, and extensive clam beds together form a unique coastal area in Marin County. The town is home to a dune system, the Tomales Dunes, that is privately owned. Most of the dunes are within the 980-acre Lawson's Landing property.¹⁷

Infrastructure

Current Economy

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 53.1% of the potential labor force 16 years of age and older were employed and the unemployment rate was zero (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). However, 46.9% were not in the labor force, higher than the national average of 36.1%. The primary employment sectors were management,

professional, and related occupations (28.3%), sales and office occupations (27.5%), production, transportation, and material moving occupations (17.4%), and local, state, or federal government (8%). No one worked in natural resource jobs such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining, but this may be inaccurate because many fishermen are self-employed and are underrepresented in the data.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the per capita income of Dillon Beach in 1999 was \$39,475, the median household income was \$47,679, and 1.3% lived below the poverty level. In 2000 there were 415 housing units in Dillon Beach, of which 37.3% were occupied and 62.7% were vacant. Of the occupied units, 87.1% were by owner and 13.5% were by renter. Of the vacant housing, 95.4% were due to seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

Governance

Dillon Beach is a Census Designated Place (CDP) with a 7.25% sales and use tax on regular purchases. Marin County levies a 10% transient lodging tax.^{18, 19} See the governance subsection (page 43) in the Overview section for a more detailed discussion of taxes affecting fishermen and processors in California.

The National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) Southwest Fisheries Science Center has laboratories located 134 miles south in Santa Cruz. A NMFS Regional Office is located 456 miles south in Long Beach. The California Department of Fish and Game has a marine field office located about 82 miles south of Dillon Beach in Belmont. San Francisco is home to the nearest U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Pacific Fishery Management Council meetings are held approximately 81 miles south in Foster City. The Dillon Beach area falls under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office San Francisco Bay, one of the largest and busiest marine safety units in the Coast Guard.

Facilities

Dillon Beach is accessible by U.S. Highway 101 north to Santa Rosa and south to San Francisco. Golden Gate Transit makes two trips daily on weekends only between San Rafael and Inverness, at the southern end of Tomales Bay. There is no public transportation between Point Reyes Station and Dillon Beach. The Marin Senior Coordinating Council provides specialized van service for eligible elderly and disabled individuals in Dillon Beach. San Francisco International Airport is 60 miles south.

Dillon Beach is in the Shoreline Unified School District. Students attend Tomales elementary and high

schools. The nearest college is Sonoma State University, 20 miles away. Two private water companies, Coast Springs Water Company and Estero Mutual Water Company, supply water. Sewage treatment and disposal services are supplied by several independent systems including a centralized sewer system and individual septic systems.²⁰ The Marin County Sheriff's West Marin substation in Point Reyes and the Tomales Fire Station administer public safety. Dillon Beach residents utilize Marin and Sonoma county medical services.²¹ The nearest hospital is Palm Drive Hospital 15 miles northeast in Sebastopol. Additional local facilities include a popular campground at Lawson's Landing, Dillon Beach Vacation Home Rentals, and several bed and breakfasts. In business since 1957, Lawson's Landing has boat rentals, a bait shop/snack bar, and a fuel dock, the only one located on Tomales Bay. Lawson's also operates a grocery store located about 1 mile inland.

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

No seafood processors operated in Dillon Beach in 2000. Landings data for Dillon Beach were recorded as part of the Other Sonoma and Marin County Outer Coast Ports group, which includes the nearby communities of Bolinas, Cloverdale, Corte Madera, Drakes Bay, Forest Knolls, Greenbrae, Guerneville, Hamlet, Healdsburg, Inverness, Jenner, Kentfield, Marconi, Marshall, Millerton, Mill Valley, Muir Beach, Nicasio, Novato, Occidental, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, San Rafael, San Quentin, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma, Stewart's Point, Stinson Beach, Tiburon, and Windsor.

Reported landings for this port group in 2000 were in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represent landings in metric tons/value of landings/number of vessels landing): coastal pelagic 135 t/\$116,723/15; crab 6 t/\$42,768/7; groundfish 1 t/\$1,704/9; highly migratory species confidential/confidential/1; salmon 5 t/\$31,805/4; shrimp 3 t/\$23,875/6; and other species 4 t/\$23,656/16. See the Corte Madera, Novato, Santa Rosa, and Sebastopol community profiles for additional information.

There were no landings made in Dillon Beach in 2000. However, residents owned four vessels that participated in West Coast fisheries. The number of vessels owned by Dillon Beach residents that participated in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab 0/0/1, groundfish 0/0/NA, highly migratory species NA/0/NA, salmon 0/0/2, shellfish NA/0/NA, and shrimp NA/0/0.²²

In 2000 one Dillon Beach resident held a single federally managed groundfish fishery permit. The number of Dillon Beach residents holding permits in

each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic 0/0/1, crab 0/0/4, highly migratory species NA/0/0, salmon 0/0/7, shellfish 0/0/NA, and other species 0/0/2.²³

According to available data, 20 permits were registered to 13 Dillon Beach residents in 2000, including 19 state registered permits. The number of state permits held by these community members in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic 0/0/1, crab 0/0/4, highly migratory species NA/0/0, salmon 0/0/12, shellfish 0/0/NA, and other species 0/0/2.²⁴

Sportfishing

Sportfishing on Tomales Bay is very popular among north Marin County residents. Surf fishing for redbtail and rubberlip perch is popular in the spring, along with salmon and halibut. Pier fishing for perch and crab and clamming is also popular among residents and visitors. The nearest charter fishing businesses are Wills Fishing Adventures and the Bodega Bay Sport Fishing Center, both 16 miles north of Dillon Beach. Lawson's Landing offers boat launching and rentals. Dillon Beach has two sportfishing license agents.

Subsistence

Specific information on subsistence fishing in Dillon Beach is not discussed in detail due to the lack of available data. The California Department of Fish and Game uses the term "recreational" for fishermen who do not earn revenue from their catch, but fish for pleasure or to provide food for personal consumption. Information on subsistence fishing in California is captured to some degree in the sportfishing data.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

According to available data for 2000, Dillon Beach residents were not involved in North Pacific commercial fisheries.

Sportfishing

One Alaska sportfishing license was purchased by a Dillon Beach resident in 2000.

Notes

1. E. Curtis. 1924. The Miwok. Online at <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/history/curtis/> [accessed 14 February 2007].

2. Access Genealogy. 2004. California Indian tribes. Online at <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tribes/californiatribes.htm> [accessed 14 February 2007].

3. See note 2.

4. Rohnert Park Historical Society. 2000. Miwok villages. Online at <http://www.rphist.org/html/miwok.html> [accessed 14 February 2007].

5. See note 1.

6. Angel Island Association. 2003. Miwok information. Online at <http://www.angelisland.org/miwok.htm> [accessed 14 February 2007].

7. See note 6.

8. The Marin County Planning Department and Wallace, Roberts & Todd. 1989. Dillon Beach community plan. Online at http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/CD/main/pdf/planning/Dillon_Beach_Community_Plan_1989.PDF [accessed 14 February 2007].

9. See note 1.

10. Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin. No date. History of the Coast Miwok at Point Reyes. Online at http://www.pointreyesvisions.com/NewFiles/Science_Folder/Coast_Miwok.html [accessed 14 February 2007].

11. R. Walker. 2001. A hidden geography. Online at http://geography.berkeley.edu/PeopleHistory/faculty/R_Walker/AHiddenGeography.html [accessed 14 February 2007].

12. Novato Chamber of Commerce. No date. Novato's history. Online at <http://www.novatochamber.com/> [accessed 14 February 2007].

13. See note 10.

14. See note 10.

15. Oceana Marin Real Estate. No date. A brief history of Dillon Beach. Online at <http://www.oceanamarin.com/dillon.html> [accessed February 2005].

16. See note 8.

17. Environmental Action Committee of West Marin. No date. Comments. Online at http://www.eacmarin.org/campaigns/tomales_dunes.php [accessed 14 February 2007].

18. California State Board of Equalization. 2004. California city and county sales and use tax rates. Online at <http://www.boe.ca.gov/pdf/pub71.pdf> [accessed 14 February 2007].

19. California State Board of Equalization. 2001. California counties transient lodging tax revenue, rate and date for the fiscal year 2000-01. Online at <http://www.sco.ca.gov/ard/local/locprep/adhoc/county/0001cotranslodgtax.pdf> [accessed 14 February 2007].

20. See note 8.

21. See note 8.

22. 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.

23. See note 22.

24. See note 22.