**Silvana**

**People and Place**

**Location**

Silvana is near the mouth of the Stillaguamish River in the northern Puget Sound region. Situated in Snohomish County, the area encompasses 1.5 square miles of land. The nearest major U.S. city is Seattle, a 45-mile drive south. Silvana’s geographic coordinates are lat 48°12′09″N, long 122°15′09″W.

**Demographic Profile**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Silvana’s population was 97. The gender composition was 50.5% female and 49.5% male. The median age of 38.3 was slightly higher than the national median of 35.3. There was an even age distribution between males and females, with 66% between the ages of 18 and 60.

The vast majority of Silvana’s racial structure recorded by the 2000 U.S. Census was white (93.8%), followed by people who identified with another race (4.1%), and American Indian and Alaska Native (2.1). Ethnicity data indicate that 6.2% identified as Hispanic.

Approximately 82.5% lived in family households.

**History**

The area surrounding Silvana was home to Native Americans, primarily of the Stillaguamish and Skagit tribes. The Stillaguamish Tribe is composed of descendents of the 1855 Stoluck-wa-mish River Tribe that resided on the main branch and north and south forks of the Stillaguamish River.\(^1\) Historically tribal members made their living fishing for salmon, hunting for deer, and gathering berries and roots. The tribe was party to the Treaty of Point Elliot in 1855. There were no separate reservations established for the Stillaguamish Indians at the time of the treaty. Some tribal members have moved to the Tulalip Reservation but the majority live in the aboriginal area along the Stillaguamish River. In 1970 the tribe was granted 58,600 acres from the federal government in northern Snohomish County. Tribal headquarters, including a Natural Resource Department, are located in Arlington, about 7 miles east of Silvana. There are 237 individuals enrolled as tribal members. For more information on the Skagit Tribe, see the La Connor community profile.

The first European American settlers to arrive in the Stanwood and Silvana areas came in the 1850s and were primarily homesteaders from Utsalady on the north end of Camano Island. In 1864 the first logging camps and
farms were established around a trading post named Florence, located 9 miles northwest of Silvana on the Stillaguamish River. Over the next 10 years, Florence competed with another trading post to the north, named Stanwood. Eventually Stanwood became the largest community at the mouth of the Stillaguamish River, home to two lumber mills and canneries. Meanwhile settlers established several other small but thriving communities with their own stores, churches, and schools including the community of Silvana, a largely Scandinavian farming community. Farmers sold their oats, hay, and shingles for cash. In the late 1890s the area was one of the largest settlements of Norwegian immigrants in the West. The Old Silvana General Store and the Bricky Brack ’n Bait Shop are in the oldest building in town, built in 1896 by a Norwegian immigrant.

Located along Pioneer Highway in the Stillaguamish River delta, Silvana is surrounded by farmland that is heavily affected by the flooding of the Skagit and Stillaguamish rivers. The town was named after the Roman god Silvanus, the god of forests and the protector of homesteads, herds, and flocks. Silvana boasts the Little White Church on the Hill that overlooks the scenic Stillaguamish River Valley. The church was built in 1890 with funds raised by the ladies aid of the congregation that formed in the early 1880s.

Silvana was once popular for rock ’n’ roll dances at the Viking Hall in the 1950s and 1960s, seasonal floods in the fall, and a well ingrained Scandinavian agricultural heritage. But today it has been suggested that the town is becoming the “car-culture capital of Snohomish County.” Visitors are drawn to the town for the salmon runs and over the summer months for community events. In May the Old Silvana General Store sponsors the Old Silvana Motorcycle and Car Show. The Silvana Bridge beach is popular with locals during the summer months and in July visitors come to the town for the annual Silvana Community Fair.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

At the time of the 2000 U.S. Census, 44.8% of Silvana’s potential labor force 16 years of age and older were employed and the unemployment rate was 0%. In addition, 55.2% were not in the labor force, as compared to the national average of 36.1%. The major employment sectors were state government (48.8% in health care support occupations [67.7%, females]), office and administrative support occupations (32.3%), and installation, maintenance, and repair occupations (27.9%). Natural resource jobs including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting employed 0%, but this percentage may be artificially low given that many fishermen are self-employed and are underrepresented in these data. Local businesses include the Old Silvana General Store, Bricky Brack ’n Bait, Silvana Meats, Gabe Gile’s Aggressive Offroad, Willow and Jim’s Country Café, an antique mall, and gift shops.

The per capita income in 1999 was $21,070 and the median household income was $33,274. In 1999 0% lived below the poverty level. In 2000 there were 42 housing units in Silvana, with 65.8% owner occupied and 34.2% renter occupied. The housing unit vacancy rate was 9.5%.

Governance

Silvana is a census defined place and therefore has no formal government structure. Snohomish County levies an 8.3% sales and use tax and a 2% lodging tax. See the Governance subsection (page 43) in the Overview section for a more detailed discussion of taxes affecting fisherman and processors in Washington.

The nearest National Marine Fisheries Service Regional Office and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office are in Seattle. Meetings of the Pacific Fishery Management and North Pacific Fishery Management councils are routinely held in the Seattle-Tacoma area. The nearest Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Regional Office is in Mill Creek, 30 miles south. The U.S. Coast Guard Station Bellingham, home to six vessels, is responsible for the Silvana area. The station’s area of responsibility includes the San Juan Islands north to the Canada border and south to Admiralty Inlet.

Facilities

Silvana is accessible by ground. The small community is located on Washington Highway 530, 2
miles west of Interstate 5 (north-south) at the Arlington exit. There is no public transportation in Silvana; residents travel to Stanwood, 8 miles northwest, or Arlington, 7 miles east, to utilize county bus services. The Snohomish County Airport Paine Field in Everett, 18 miles south, is the nearest airport certified for carrier operations. The Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is the nearest major facility.

Children in Silvana attend schools in Arlington and Stanwood. Combined the districts serve more than 5,000 students. The Stanwood-Camano School District operates five elementary schools, one high school, and one alternative high school for students who benefit from nontraditional educational experiences. The Arlington School District consists of five elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, one alternative high school, and a support center for home-schooling families. Columbia College, 13 miles south in Marysville, was founded in 1980 and offers associate, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees. Everett Community College serves more than 8,000 students. The Pilchuck Glass School in Stanwood was founded in 1971 by artist Dale Chihuly. The Snohomish County Public Utility District administers electricity and water services. Puget Sound Energy offers natural gas service. Silvana has a fire station but no local police department. The Washington State Patrol and police from Stanwood and Arlington who occasionally drive through Silvana administer public safety. The Cascade Valley Hospital is in Arlington. Currently there are no hotels or motels located in Silvana, however there is one local park for recreational vehicles. There are two primary community centers in Silvana, Viking Hall and the Peace Lutheran Church.

There are several environmental groups active in Snohomish County and the Silvana area in particular. The Cascade Land Conservancy (CLC), based in Seattle, is active in the Silvana region. CLC has negotiated several conservation easements with landowners along the Stillaguamish River and is working to restore hydrologic connectivity to stream segments north of the town of Silvana. The Stillaguamish Implementation Review Committee, concerned with issues regarding salmon recovery, water quality, and watershed restoration efforts, meets regularly at the Peace Lutheran Church in Silvana. The Stilly Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force, based in Everett, also is active in the Silvana region through a channel rearing habitat restoration project along Glade Bakken.

The Snohomish County Marine Resources Advisory Committee (MRC), based in Everett, is an 11-member group of citizen volunteers established in 1999 to address local issues related to marine resource management and advise county officials. Of the upper Puget Sound counties, Snohomish County is the most populous and has the largest amount of modified shoreline (99 miles of a total 133 miles), which is mainly due to the railroad bed that has been in existence for more than a century. The Snohomish MRC has been involved in several projects including: a Dungeness crab stewardship plan for Snohomish County, nearshore restoration projects, juvenile crab habitat projects, as well as numerous public involvement and education activities.4

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Recorded data indicates that in 2000 there were zero West Coast fishery landings in the community. Additionally there were no vessels owned by Silvana residents. The number of vessels owned by Silvana residents in 2000 that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: groundfish 0/0/NA, highly migratory species NA/0/NA, shellfish NA/0/NA, and shrimp NA/0/0.5

Data indicate that in 2000 the number of Silvana residents holding permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: highly migratory species NA/0/0, salmon 1/0/0, and shellfish 0/0/NA.6

According to the Boldt Decision,7 the usual and accustomed fishing grounds of the Stillaguamish Tribe, based in Arlington, include the entire Stillaguamish watershed. Though the tribe has rights “there is little participation [in commercial fishing] because of the [poor] market prices.”8 The Stillaguamish Tribe does not have a fish processor. The tribe operates a hatchery and a smolt trapping system on the Stillaguamish River; the smolt trap is located in Silvana.

Sportfishing

There is one licensed agents selling fishing permits in Silvana. In 2003 there were four sportfishing license transactions valued at $56. In Catch Record Card Area 8-2 (Port Susan and Gardner) the 2000 license year (1 April–31 March) sport catch, based on catch record cards, was 12,798 fish including 3,208 Chinook salmon, 9,574 coho salmon, 4 chum salmon, and 12 pink salmon. Marine anglers made 33,536 trips to Area 8-2 in 2000. Fishermen caught 70 sturgeon in Area 8-2. Boat-based anglers caught 1,449 bottomfish in Puget Sound within areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island, and Skagit Bay) and 8-2. No recreational harvest estimate of clams and oysters for Area 8-2 was recorded in 2000.
Subsistence

Subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering activities are fundamental to the way of life of some coastal community members. Tribal and nontribal individuals participate in subsistence fishing. Members of the Stillaguamish Tribe are engaged in subsistence fishing for salmon and shellfish in the Stillaguamish River near Silvana. However, subsistence fishing is not discussed in great detail in this community profile due to the lack of available data.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Silvana residents owned one vessel in 2000 that was involved in North Pacific fisheries.

In 2000 one Silvana resident held a registered state permit and three residents held federal permits (note: it is possible for individuals to hold more than one permit at a time). The state permit was a salmon Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission permit. Residents held 1,112,115 halibut and 478,316 sablefish individual fishing quota shares in 2000.

Two Silvana residents held crew member licenses for North Pacific fisheries in 2000.

Sportfishing

Silvana residents purchased four Alaska sportfishing licenses in 2000.

Notes


5. 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.

6. See note 5.

