

Fisheries: Astoria came in 10th with 94 million pounds

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Astoria was 10th
Alaska's Dutch Harbor led the pack in commercial fishery landings with 769 million pounds in 2017 — 1 million pounds less than in 2016. Astoria came in 10th with 94 million pounds, ahead of Newport, which recorded 77 million pounds landed.

In terms of value for the commercial catch, New Bedford, Massachusetts, logged \$390 million, coming in first place ahead of other communities for the 18th year in a row. Newport beat Astoria with \$53 million, up from 2016's \$48 million. Astoria came in at \$40 million in 2017, \$2 million less than what was recorded in 2016.

The country's highest-value commercial species include many that are particularly important to North Coast fishermen, such as salmon, crab and shrimp. But on the West Coast, in general, commercial land-



Workers at Bell Buoy Crab Co. offload crab at the Port of Chinook.

Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

ings of salmon were down even as values remain high.

In Oregon, commercial salmon landings hit 18,757 pounds in 2016 — not far off from what was landed in 2008, but well below the nearly 57,000 pounds landed in 2013.

"Decades of habitat modification, hatchery practices, harvest and grow-

ing competition for water have affected the viability of salmon stocks and made them more vulnerable to adverse environmental conditions," the federal economics study noted.

Fishery managers struggled to conduct salmon fisheries around major drought issues in 2015, and salmon stocks are still feeling the

effect of several years of anomalous warm water conditions. Some salmon runs returned to the Columbia River far below what was forecast for this year.

On Washington state's Long Beach Peninsula, the smaller combined ports of Ilwaco and Chinook came in last for value of the catch, staying stable at \$22 million

in both 2016 and 2017. They saw an increase in landings, however, from 13 million pounds in 2016 to 16 million pounds in 2017.

Catches of rockfish, sablefish, mackerel, tuna, Pacific flounder and halibut continue to dominate the West Coast commercial catch by pound. In the recreational fisheries, rockfish make up the majority of the by-pound catch.

The nation's largest commercial fishery remains Alaska pollock, which experienced near-record landings of 3.4 billion pounds in 2017.

The Pacific whiting, or hake, fishery was a bright spot for West Coast fishermen, with both landings and revenue up in 2016.

Aquaculture

The economics report notes the growing importance of aquaculture in the fishing industry, though the United States is not a major producer, ranked 16th

worldwide in production.

Aquaculture remains an important part of the landscape, however, said Michael Liddel, a statistician in NOAA's Office of Science and Technology and editor of the fisheries report. Study authors estimate that over half the seafood that the country imports and consumes comes from aquaculture.

The Pacific region accounts for about one-third of the overall marine aquaculture production in the United States, and 41 percent of the volume. In Washington state, the rearing of non-native Atlantic salmon came under fire after a net pen failed in 2017, releasing as many as 250,000 fish into Puget Sound.

Washington was the only state on the West Coast that still allowed net pen farming of Atlantic salmon. Earlier this year, state leaders decided to phase out this particular aquaculture practice by 2022.

Wauna: Is replacing the traditional 'teller row' inside its new locations

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Center. Blumberg had been speaking with the Lums for several years about moving to their property until they recently agreed, he said.

The new Astoria branch will only be about 2,000 square feet, with additional office space for online banking, mortgages, commercial loans and other expanding businesses, said Debi Smiley, Wauna's chief marketing officer. The credit union has also considered building apartments on the second floor.

The new location is on the site of a former gas station.

The Lums have already had underground tanks decommissioned, but Wauna needs to do more cleanup before construction can begin, Blumberg said.

Wauna's top priority is a new branch breaking ground in February in Forest Grove, a foothold to expand the company's business in Washington County. Next comes a new location in Scappoose and the relocation in Astoria.

Wauna is also planning to break ground in 2020 on a new branch in Seaside, where it recently bought a smaller lot at the corner of Avenue C and U.S. Highway 101.

Wauna has more than 1,200 customers in South County who were clamoring for a local branch, Blumberg said. The location will also serve as a bridge to another location Wauna wants to build in Cannon Beach.

"As these big, regional, national banks pull out of these areas, that leaves these communities underbanked," Blumberg said. "And so we're looking at building inexpensive, smaller branches that are full-ser-

vice, using technology to reach our members."

As much of daily banking has shifted online, Wauna has also focused more on technology to serve customers, from more interactive ATMs to mobile phone applications that allow remote contact with tellers. Only 12 percent of transactions are done over the counter, Smiley said.

Wauna is replacing the traditional "teller row" inside its new locations with problem-solving pods, while

cross-training employees in different aspects of banking.

"When somebody comes to a branch, they're coming for a reason," Blumberg said. "They're coming

to solve a problem or they're coming to open an account, or a loan or something like that. So we're adjusting the whole credit union to adjust to that philosophy."



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