

49. SOCIOECONOMICS

49.1 Introduction

The socioeconomic baseline study was undertaken to collect borough-level information on the demographics and economy in the Cook Inlet drainages study area. This study area includes the Kenai Peninsula Borough, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and the Municipality of Anchorage. Demographic information researched includes population, age, and race. The discussion of the economy includes personal income, employment, earnings, and unemployment.

The socioeconomic baseline description includes the most recent demographic and economic data available publically at the time of writing. Commonly used sources include the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and the federal Bureau of Economic Analysis. Long-term historical trend analysis relies on 1990 and 2000 U.S. census data. Data-specific references are provided in the full-length chapter of the environmental baseline document. Please note that some data are for years more recent than the standard 2004 through 2008 study period.

49.2 Results and Discussion

The Kenai Peninsula Borough is a second-class borough covering approximately 16,000 square miles of land. The borough is bordered on the east by Prince William Sound. To the west, the borough straddles Cook Inlet.

The 2009 population of the Kenai Peninsula Borough was 53,578 people. Approximately half of the borough's population resides in the greater Kenai/Soldotna area, while 20 percent resides in the greater Homer area. The 2008 population of the Kenai Peninsula Borough was mostly white, while 10 percent of the population was Alaska Native or American Indian. In 2009, 72 percent of the population of the borough was age 20 or older. The 2000 median age in the borough was 36.3 years.

Personal income earned by residents of the Kenai Peninsula Borough totaled \$1.9 billion in 2007, and per capita income was \$35,415. Average monthly employment in the borough in 2008 was 18,663 jobs, with a total annual payroll of \$725.1 million; the average monthly wage and salary income of workers in the borough was \$3,238. The 2009 average unemployment rate in the Kenai Peninsula Borough was 10.1 percent.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough is a second-class borough that encompasses 24,700 square miles of land. The borough is bordered by the Denali Borough to the north, the Valdez-Cordova Census Area to the east, and the Kenai Peninsula Borough and the Municipality of Anchorage to the south.

The population of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough totaled 84,314 residents in 2009. The borough has been one of the fastest-growing areas of the state. Between 2000 and 2009, the area's population increased by 24,992 residents, or 42 percent. In 2008, 85 percent of the population of the borough identified themselves as white, and just over 9 percent of the population was identified as Alaska Native or American Indian. In 2009, roughly one quarter of the population was under the age of 15, approximately one third was age 15 through 39, another approximate quarter of the population was between the ages of 39 and 55, and 19 percent of the population was 55 or older. The median age in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough in 2000 was 34.0 years.

Personal income earned by Matanuska-Susitna Borough residents totaled \$2.8 billion in 2007, and per capita income was \$34,341. Monthly employment in the borough in 2008 averaged 18,648 jobs, with a total annual payroll of \$659.5 million; the average monthly wage and salary income of workers in the borough was \$2,942. The 2009 average unemployment rate in Matanuska-Susitna Borough was 9.3 percent.

The Municipality of Anchorage covers roughly 1,700 square miles at the northeastern end of Cook Inlet. The population of Anchorage in 2009 totaled 290,588 residents. Approximately 42 percent of Alaska's population resides in the Municipality of Anchorage. In 2008, whites comprised 75 percent of the population, Alaska Native or American Indians comprised 11 percent, and the combination of black, Asian, and Pacific Islander made up the remaining 14 percent of the population. The median age of residents of the municipality in 2000 was 32.4 years. In 2009, approximately one quarter of the population was under the age of 15, over one third was 15 through 39 years old, roughly another quarter of the population was 40 through 54, and 18 percent of the population was 55 or older.

Personal income earned by Anchorage residents totaled \$12.8 billion in 2007. Anchorage accounts for 47 percent of all personal income earned by Alaska residents. Per capita income for Anchorage residents in 2007 was \$46,243.

The Anchorage economy is broadly diversified. Anchorage is Alaska's service, supply, and financial center. The military, oil, transportation, tourism, health care, education, and government sectors all play significant roles in the municipality's economy. Monthly employment in the Municipality of Anchorage averaged 150,133 jobs in 2008. Income from wage and salary jobs in 2008 totaled over \$7.2 billion, and monthly wage and salary income in Anchorage averaged \$4,011. The 2009 average unemployment rate in the municipality was 6.6 percent.