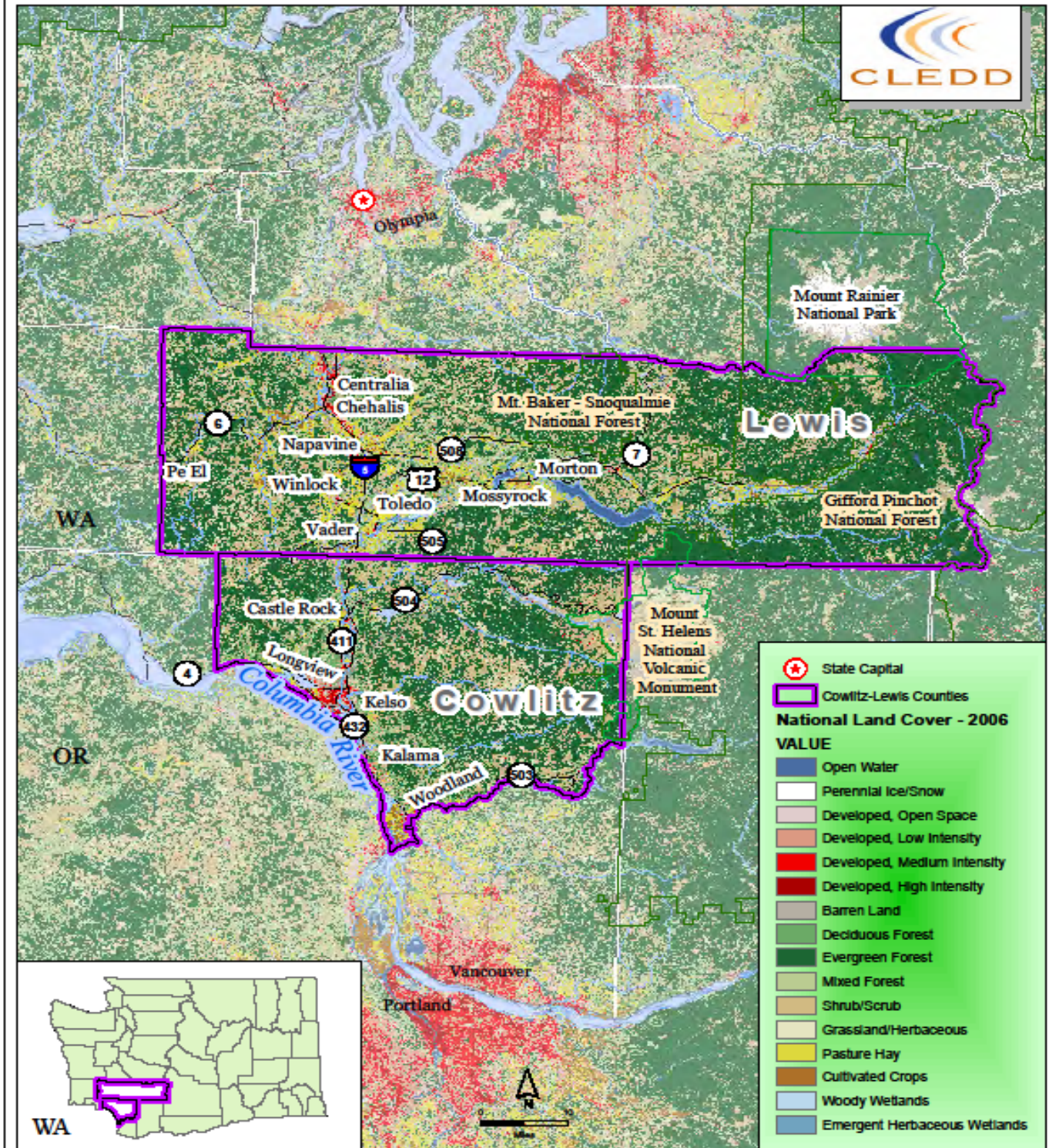


**Cowlitz-Lewis Economic  
Development District  
CEDS Action Plan  
2012**



# Cowlitz-Lewis Sustainable Communities Plan



The local governments, non-profit agencies and private representatives in Cowlitz and Lewis Counties comprise the Economic Development District (CLEDD). The district was designated in July 1998. Funding for the CLEDD is from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) is the lead agency.

Through this designation and funding, the CLEDD members are able to target investments in business and industry infrastructure as well as coordinate business development, infrastructure planning and construction activities.

The CLEDD has progressed into a regional organization seeking new and innovative economic opportunities. Based on a history of timber and natural resource production, the region is seeking new technologies, entrepreneurial opportunities and providing a skilled educated workforce.

In 2008, the CLEDD Board, the Cowlitz CEDS Committee and the Lewis CEDS Committee identified the CLEDD vision and mission. The CLEDD Board advances these values, along with the goals and objectives, through projects and plans to support the overall regional goal of advancing economic opportunities in Cowlitz and Lewis Counties.

*The **vision** for the Cowlitz Lewis Economic Development District is to achieve economic prosperity while maintaining our rural quality of life.*

*The **mission** of the CLEDD is to promote the creation of family wage jobs; diversification of the economic base; and growth, development and retention of business and industry within the Cowlitz- Lewis County region.*



The Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District (CLEDD) is administered by the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments through the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The CLEDD wishes to acknowledge the EDA's continued support. For more information about the CLEDD, visit [www.cwcog.org/cledd](http://www.cwcog.org/cledd).

## 2011-2012 Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District

### Board Members

**2011-2012 CLEDD Chair: Commissioner Mike Karnofski**

**2011-2012 CLEDD Vice- Chair: Commissioner Ron Averill**

### CLEDD Meeting July 1, 2011- June 30, 2012

Member	Organization
<b>1. Government Representatives (46%)</b>	
Mike Karnofski	Cowlitz County (Chair)
Ron Averill	Lewis County (Vice-Chair)
Dan Keahey	Port of Centralia
Daryl Lund	Port of Chehalis
Mike Mask	City of Castle Rock
Harlan Thompson	City of Centralia
Bob Spahr	City of Chehalis
Pete Poulsen	City of Kalama
David Futcher	City of Kelso
Bob Gregory	City of Longview
Nick Bozarth	City of Napavine
Don Hanson	City of Vader
Glen Cook	City of Winlock
Chuck Blum	City of Woodland
Liz Newman	Port of Kalama
Dan Buell	Port of Longview
Dale Boon	Port of Woodland
Taylor Aalvik	Cowlitz Tribe

<b>2. Non-Government Representatives (Private Sector) (5%)</b>	
**Unoccupied**	Weyerhaeuser
Judy DeVaul	DeVaul Printing
<b>2. Non-Government Representatives (Stakeholder Organization) (44%)</b>	
Ted Sprague	Cowlitz EDC
Dick Larman	Lewis County EDC
Mary Brown	Southwest Washington Workforce Development
Mike Vorse	Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce
Jim Valley	Centralia- Chehalis Chamber of Commerce
Paul Stewart	East Lewis Chamber of Commerce
Brad Whittaker	Kalama Chamber of Commerce
Rick Winsman	Kelso-Longview Chamber of Commerce
Mike Fairhart	Morton Chamber of Commerce
Cy Meyers	South Lewis Chamber of Commerce
Joel Lengyel	Woodland Chamber of Commerce
**Unoccupied**	Small Business Development Center- Cowlitz
David Baria	Small Business Development Center- Lewis
Don Frey	Centralia College
Brendan Glaser	Lower Columbia College
Gary Fredricks	WSU-Cowlitz
Sheila Gray	WSU-Lewis
<b>3. At-Large Representatives (5%)</b>	
Tani Gunn	The Lending Network
Ilona Kerby	Lower Columbia CAP

**Goal 1: To provide economic opportunities, diversification and retention for business development in the region.**

**Objectives**

1. Expand and further develop existing port facilities and industrial sites.
2. Attract a range of businesses that support or enhance the existing industrial base to reduce cyclical swings of traditional industry clusters.
3. Direct new and expanding businesses to The Lending Network and Longview RLF for potential low interest, flexible funding sources.
4. Encourage start-up and existing businesses to seek assistance through Economic Development District partnerships including, but not limited to EDCs, SBDCs, the EDA, and the SBA.
5. Promote streamlined permit processes to include online permitting options and clear, consistent development regulations.
6. Identify and maintain a regional inventory of areas suitable for future industrial development.
7. Encourage the creation of a regional identification for Cowlitz and Lewis counties.

**Goal 2: To achieve sustainable economic growth through public-private partnerships.**

**Objectives**

1. Employ local, state, and federal governmental, non-governmental, and private sector programs, resources, and funding sources to approach immediate and long-term economic needs.
2. Maintain and strengthen existing economic development organizations and partnerships between public, private and non-profit sectors.
3. Build partnerships between local, state, and federal agencies to affect long-term economic development and diversification.

**Goal 3: To emphasize regionalism between Cowlitz and Lewis Counties that supports quality of life issues.**

**Objectives**

1. Support programs for the elderly, youth and those in poverty in the region.
2. Assure affordable housing opportunities in close proximity to employment areas and public services.
3. Encourage educational opportunities for all residents in the region.
4. Promote cultural amenities, not limited to the arts, theatre, or historical locations and informational centers
5. Support and encourage health care and substance abuse opportunities to the region.

**Goal 4: To provide adequate public services, facilities, and infrastructure to support and complement economic growth.**

**Objectives**

1. Identify opportunities to improve telecommunications for global networking, communications and regional competitiveness.
2. Work to improve available services and infrastructure to expand business development potential.
3. Consider access and capacity improvements to I-5 interchanges and all State Routes that support long-term growth.
4. Evaluate opportunities, and where appropriate, implement expansion of aviation facilities serving the region.
5. Improve the capacity of existing waste water and water systems to meet present and future industrial, commercial and general population growth.
6. Coordinate, where opportunities exist, regional planning efforts for sewer, water, storm drainage, energy, solid waste, and transportation with land use planning.
7. Capitalize on opportunities to attract major public facilities that generate revenue and provide secure, long-term employment.
8. Focus development and job creation to take advantage of the I-5 corridor capacity.



City of Castle Rock is completing a multi-phase infrastructure project throughout its downtown



Port of Chehalis received an EDA grant to complete the first phase of the Port's Incubator Facility that will focus on energy in conjunction with the Centralia College Center of Excellence for Energy



Longview Outdoor Galery, a civic business organization, have organized an outdoor art display throughout the Downtown area

**Goal 5: To develop a regional work force to support economic growth, diversity, and family wage jobs.**

**Objectives**

1. Encourage schools, training centers, skills centers and employers to develop opportunities that benefit employees through workforce development, re-training, internships, apprenticeships, entrepreneur education, and training to assist re-entering and new workforce employees.
2. Encourage work opportunities for women, minorities and the elderly.
3. Encourage improved and expanded day-care centers, particularly twenty-four hour care facilities, in close proximity to employment centers to assist persons in securing and holding employment.
4. Encourage adult education at high schools, community-based organizations, and community colleges.
5. Encourage state agencies to continue financial support for persons entering full employment from welfare or vocational rehabilitation/training programs.
6. Encourage or expand opportunities and networks in education, languages, job training and search services to assist immigrants and minority groups in the region.
7. Support K-12 programs that enhance the employability of the future.

**Goal 6: To increase the region's recreation and tourism activities, and destinations for the arts, markets, and unique shopping experiences.**

**Objectives**

1. Market the region's natural beauty and recreational potential.
2. Capitalize on the region's rivers, lakes, other natural resources, and tourism-related facilities.
3. Encourage and enhance visitor information and interpretive facilities.
4. Support community events that provide a variety of economic opportunities consistent with the local character and capacity to provide public services.
5. Promote community and downtown revitalization to assist in tourism and marketing opportunities.
6. Promote development of outdoor recreation facilities and activities such as parks and trails.
7. Support and market regional arts, festivals, theatre and other cultural facilities and events.
8. Support regional athletic opportunities.



Cowlitz County Tourism Bureau launched the Adventure Passport in 2011.



Centralia-Chelalis Steam Train is one of the few remaining steam-powered passenger railroads in the State of Washington. The route has been re-established through multiple funding sources after the 2006 floods destroyed much of the track.

STEM project in Cowlitz County were conducted by the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council with the SEMI Tech U. Students from many of the high schools in the county participated in the event.



Cowlitz High Tech U graduates

**Goal 7: To maintain and develop new opportunities for renewable and natural resource industries to provide a growing and sustainable economic base.**

**Objective**

1. Promote opportunities for renewable, alternative energy industries.
2. Encourage workforce training and development programs to expand “green collar” job skills.
3. Support value-added activities that diversify economic benefits for natural resource industries.
4. Focus on retaining renewable and natural resource industrial jobs.

**Goal 8: To reduce impacts of flooding on industry and business.**

**Objectives**

1. Provide assistance and seek funding opportunities to businesses impacted by storm and flood damage.
2. Identify local, regional, state and federal programs to assist business owners in flood recovery.
3. Refine/further develop options for structural solutions for businesses in flood prone locations.
4. Assist and support efforts to create a regional Flood Mitigation District.
5. Evaluate a variety of regulatory, non-regulatory and infrastructure projects for flood mitigation and reduction efforts.
6. Work with federal, state and local leaders for dike stabilization and levee certification.

## Political Geography

The CLEDD contains 14 incorporated communities which has 177,868 persons. Lewis County's nine incorporated communities have 75,455 residents of the population, while Cowlitz County's five incorporated communities have 102,410 residents. The unincorporated populations in Cowlitz and Lewis Counties account for 45.3% and 59.5% of the population respectively.

The unincorporated communities of Cowlitz County include Ariel, Cougar, Lexington, Rose Valley, Ryderwood and Toutle. The county has three public port districts; the ports of Woodland, Longview, and Kalama. Each port is governed by three elected commissioners, and each has a full-time administrator and support staff. Cowlitz County has a three-member board of commissioners, an elected sheriff, auditor, treasurer, assessor, prosecutor and clerk.

The unincorporated communities of Lewis County include Adna, Ethel, Glenoma, Mineral, Onalaska, Packwood, Randle and Salkum. The county has two port districts, the ports of Centralia and Chehalis. Each port is governed by three elected port commissioners and have full time administrators and support staff. Lewis County has a three-member board of commissioners, an elected assessor, auditor, clerk, prosecutor, sheriff, treasurer and part-time coroner.

## Legislative Districts

As of 2002, a portion of three Washington State Legislative Districts (18, 19, and 20) are located within the CLEDD, resulting in representation from three Senators and six members of the House of Representatives in Olympia. At the federal level, the CLEDD is represented by Washington State's 3<sup>rd</sup> District Congressional Representative and two U.S. Senators. The current efforts to redistrict in Southwest Washington will change the layout of these congressional districts and will be addressed in the 2012-2013 CLEDD Action Plan.



## Tribal Lands

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis have traditional hunting and fishing grounds located within the CLEDD. The Cowlitz Tribe is an active member of the CLEDD.

## Regional Economic History

Access to water and abundant natural resources are fundamental elements within the economies of the Cowlitz-Lewis region. For centuries, cyclic trade networks have thrived along the Columbia and Chehalis rivers and their tributaries. Along the Columbia, in what is now Cowlitz County, once was part of the native Columbia-Plateau trade network that transferred and exchanged natural resources from along the coast to the intermountain west. Along the Chehalis River, in what is now Lewis County, native trade networks transferred goods from the Puget Sound, Cascade Range, and coastal regions, mainly by water.

- In the 1790s, European and American traders began to engage regional native trade networks in search of furs and other valuable natural resources.
- During the mid-1800s, immigrant settlements in the region increased dramatically creating the need for reliable lumber and food supplies.
- In the late 1800s, several investors had capitalized on the region's abundant timber and transportation resources.
- The transcontinental railroad network developed due to the timber industry and transportation needs.
- By the late 1880s, up to 35 fish processing and canning operations were scattered along the shores of the Columbia River in Cowlitz County.
- Dairy and other small-scale farm operations sprouted up throughout the region.
- Coal mining became a viable economic activity in the coal fields of Lewis County.

By the 1920s, the region's economy had evolved from primary resource extraction industries of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to secondary economic activities such as timber and agricultural processing and related manufacturing.

- In the 1920s, the Long-Bell Company Mill and the Weyerhaeuser Company Mill were built in Longview.
- During the postwar period (late 1940s and early 1950s), timber-related employment reached 8,500 jobs in Cowlitz County, while Lewis County experienced great increases in private timber land operations and timber mill development.
- By 1978, a 30-year trend of workforce growth peaked with 9,700 timber-related jobs in Cowlitz County and 5,240 in Lewis County.
- In the early 1980s, compounded by major reconstruction of timber-related industries, a sharp 25% decrease in jobs struck the region in the midst of the recession.
- In the 1990s, diversification within the manufacturing sector, increased mobility and expansion of service and trade markets, and increased in-migration of retirees helped urban areas within the region emerge as a hub for tertiary economic activity.

This economic trend is likely to continue as Cowlitz and Lewis counties remain one of the few rural counties along the Interstate 5 corridor between Everett, Washington and Eugene, Oregon.



## 2011 Notables

- The City of Woodland completed the first phase of the Schurman Way/Guild Road improvements with Schurman Way infrastructure and roadwork being completed. Guild Road will begin in early 2012.
- Cowlitz and Lewis Counties partnered with Clark and Skamania Counties on the Fire and Ice Scenic Loop for coordination of tourism and economic development opportunities.
- Port of Chehalis was awarded a grant from EDA to fund the development of an Incubator Feasibility Study.
- I-5/SR-432 roadwork was completed to improve safety and traffic flow through Kelso-Longview.
- Cameron Glass Factory, located at the Port of Kalama, was bought and currently is in the process of being refurbished for a new glass production company to open in 2012.
- Trans Alta Industrial Land Bank completed its last hurdle in permitting and is working towards completing needed infrastructure in 2012.
- Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District submitted a HUD Sustainable Communities Grant application in October 2011. The Cowlitz-Lewis Regional Sustainability Development Plan will have the following anticipated objectives and results:

### Objectives:

- × Provide educational opportunities for the public to increase their knowledge of sustainability principles and practices, particularly those who are marginalized in traditional governmental planning processes--elected officials, and local government staff.
- × Facilitate development of a Regional Vision for creating sustainable rural communities.
- × Outline public goals and strategies for achieving the regional vision.
- × Establish performance metrics to determine how well the region is meeting its established goals.
- × Provide technical assistance to communities in pursuit of implementation of sustainability strategies.

### Results:

- × Development of a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development that serves as a guide or toolkit to incorporate sustainability principles into local plans and codes.
- × Development of a Sustainability Checklist to help public and private sector evaluate projects to determine the extent to which they promote sustainable practices.
- × Completion of a series of economic studies including a strategic plan, industry cluster analysis, workforce development plan, and sub-regional plans to support community and economic vitality.
- × Completion of an Affordable Housing Model to assist in locating housing where it sustainably meets the needs of the region's citizens.
- × Develop an Aging Readiness Plan to identify steps needed to support aging in place.
- × Community engagement that results in on-going involvement in community improvement and governance.

## Demographics

Following is a snapshot of demographic patterns found within the CLEDD in 2011 based on 2010 U.S. Census and 2005-2009 American Community Survey data. Information conveying characteristics of population, housing, and personal income trends and forecasts are organized by county.

In general, the district's population growth can be characterized as steady with periods of pronounced growth and decreases in response to fluctuations within cyclic natural resource and manufacturing-based markets.

### County Statistics

	<b>Cowlitz County</b>	<b>Lewis County</b>
Population	102,410	75,458
Percent Change in Population 2000-2010	10.20%	10.00%
Total Households	40,244	29,743
Average Household Size	2.51	2.51
Total Household Units	43,450	34,050
Occupied Housing Units	40,244	29,743
Owner Occupied Units	26,477	20,793
Rental Occupied Units	13,767	8,950
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	2.10%	2.70%
Rental Vacancy Rate	6.70%	7.40%
Population in Owner Occupied Units	67,561	52,134
Population in Rental Occupied Units	33,642	22,380

### City Statistics

<b>City</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>Total Vacant Units</b>	<b>Average Household Size</b>	<b>Average Age</b>
<b>Castle Rock</b>	1,982	784	863	79	2.5	39.3
<b>Centralia</b>	16,336	6,640	7,265	625	2.4	34.8
<b>Chehalis</b>	7,259	2,868	3,131	263	2.4	33.5
<b>Kalama</b>	2,344	967	1,070	103	2.4	41.4
<b>Kelso</b>	11,925	4,720	5,139	419	2.5	34.6
<b>Longview</b>	36,648	15,281	16,380	1,099	2.3	39.6
<b>Morton</b>	1,126	461	535	74	2.3	46.3
<b>Mossyrock</b>	759	272	302	30	2.8	32.9
<b>Napavine</b>	1,766	609	662	53	2.9	32.9
<b>Pe Ell</b>	632	259	290	31	2.4	40.0
<b>Toledo</b>	725	274	304	30	2.7	35.2
<b>Vader</b>	621	228	258	30	2.7	41.4
<b>Winlock</b>	1,339	475	535	60	2.8	34.0
<b>Woodland</b>	5,509	1,965	2,108	143	2.8	32.9

## Age

The 2010 Census states the median age in Cowlitz County as 40.2 and Lewis County as 41.5. These are significant increases to the median age in the region. In 2000, the Cowlitz County median age was 36.9 and the Lewis County median age was 38.4.

Age	Cowlitz County	Lewis County
Under 5	6,564	4,885
Age 5-9	6,760	4,539
Age 10-14	6,994	5,094
Age 15-19	7,157	5,311
Age 20-24	5,683	4,242
Age 25-29	5,702	4,269
Age 30-39	12,096	8,321
Age 40-49	13,657	9,765
Age 50-59	15,179	10,971
Age 60-69	11,986	9,285
Age 70-79	6,346	5,412
Age 80+	4,286	3,495

Race	Cowlitz County	Lewis County
White	91069	67712
Black/African American	642	405
American Indian	1570	1073
Asian/ Pacific Islander	1500	664
Other	3822	2437
Two or More	7975	6527
Hispanic	3575	3047

## Population Race and Ethnicity

Overall, the population of the CLEDD is predominantly White Caucasian. In comparison to state and national averages, the CLEDD possesses an under representation of Black/African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic populations.

## Economics

### Employment Trends

Since the recession of the 1980s, the employment base of the county has diversified transferring dependence on goods-producing and government sectors into a spectrum of service sectors. For example, in 1990 goods-producing jobs (natural resource, mining, manufacturing, and construction) made up 37% of total jobs. By 2000, that number had declined to 33% and in 2007 declined further to 29% of all jobs. These decreases are nearly offset by growth occurring in service-based sectors. The fastest-growing include wholesale trade (3.7% annual rate), transportation, warehousing and utilities (2.2% annual rate), and financial-insurance-real estate services (2.0% annual rate).

Sector	CLEDD Employment
Total Nonfarm	58,250
Total Private	48,770
Service-Providing	43,990
Private Service Providing	20,900
Goods Producing	14,260
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, Warehousing	12,690
Manufacturing	9,060
Education and Health Services	5,300
Government	9480
Retail Trade	7970
Natural resources and mining	5,200
Non-Durable Goods	3,500
Leisure and Hospitality	3,300
Information and Financial Activities	840
Wholesale Trade	550

## Housing Costs

A significant factor impacting the retention, expansion, and development of private industry in Washington State is the cost and availability of housing. Over the last year, housing markets remain unsteady. Comparing September 2010 and 2011, listings in the two counties have declined by 15.5% in Cowlitz County and 11.34% in Lewis County. Pending sales, however, have increased 13.85% in Cowlitz and 10.14% in Lewis over the last year, yet the median price has continued to decline 5.54% in Cowlitz and 12.28% in Lewis. The median sale price for a home in Cowlitz County is \$145,000 and \$149,522 in Lewis County.

## Personal Income Trends

### *Median Household Income*

Throughout the region, median household income was far below that of the state of Washington and of the United States. Cowlitz County is 18.8% below the state's median value and 8.7% below the national median. Lewis County fairs worse with 25% below the state's median value and 16% below the national value.

The region has some dynamic fluctuations in median income. For example, Mossyrock in Lewis County has a median income that is 50.2% of the median household income for all of Lewis County. Morton, a nearby community in Lewis County, has a median income that is 83.7% of the county's median income. In Cowlitz County, the city of Kelso has a median income of 83.5% of the county's median household income.

City	Median Income	City	Median Income
Castle Rock	\$45,326	Pe Ell	\$34,583
Centralia	\$35,064	Toledo	\$37,917
Chehalis	\$44,045	Vader	\$41,964
Kalama	\$45,909	Winlock	\$36,000
Kelso	\$38,255	Woodland	\$48,531
Longview	\$38,963	Cowlitz County	\$45,839
Morton	\$35,469	Lewis County	\$42,365
Mossyrock	\$21,250	Washington State	\$56,479
Napavine	\$49,605	United States	\$50,221

## Per Capita Income

Lewis and Cowlitz counties have experienced increases in per capita income, illustrated below. From 2001 to 2006, Lewis County experienced an average annual per capita growth rate of 14.63% while Cowlitz County experienced a 7.14% rate of growth, both below the statewide annual average growth rate of 18.3%. From 2000 to 2005, Cowlitz County continued to experience a growing gap in per capita incomes with statewide averages though at a slower rate.

Per Capita Income	
<b>Cowlitz County</b>	\$22,679
<b>Lewis County</b>	\$21,689
<b>Washington State</b>	\$29,320
<b>United States</b>	\$27,041

## Federal Poverty Rates

Since 2000, Cowlitz County experienced an increase in poverty levels of just over 2% while Lewis County experienced a decrease of 2%. This pattern indicates the two counties are experiencing distinct patterns of poverty level change and that CLEDD averages should be evaluated at the county level to determine underlying patterns of change.

	Poverty Rates	
	Individual	Families
<b>Cowlitz County</b>	15.8%	11.0%
<b>Lewis County</b>	13.4%	9.6%
<b>Washington State</b>	11.8%	7.9%
<b>United States</b>	13.5%	9.9%

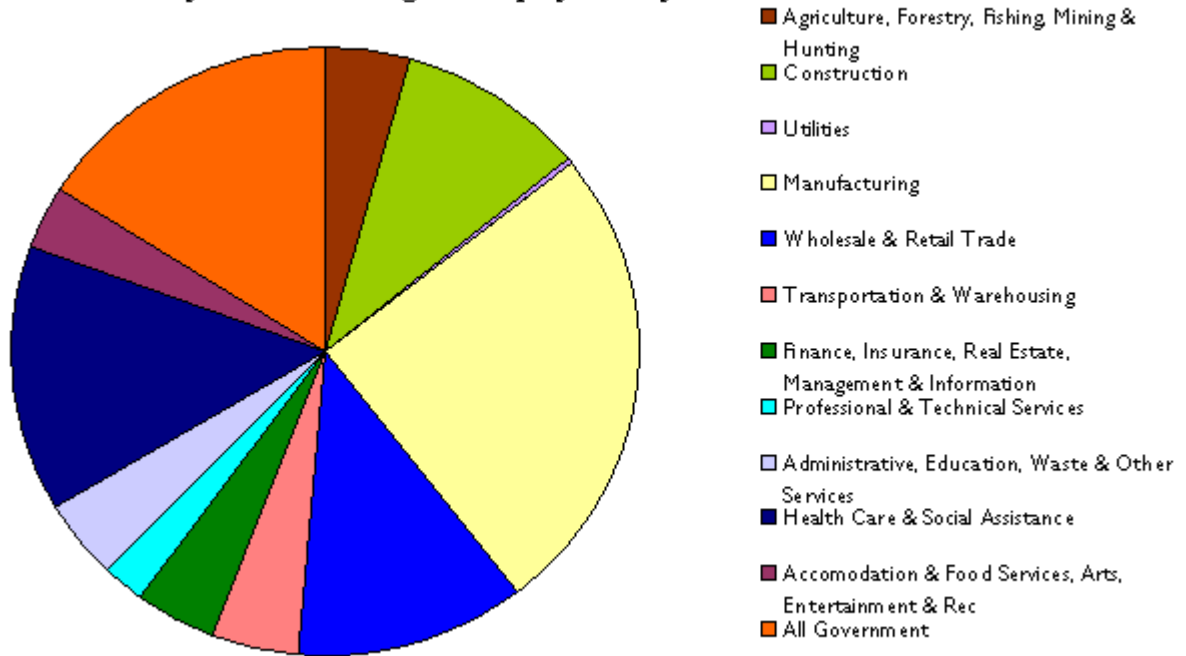
## Self-Sufficiency Standard

The Self-Sufficiency Standard measures how much income is needed for a family (of a certain composition) to adequately meet their basic needs, without public or private assistance.

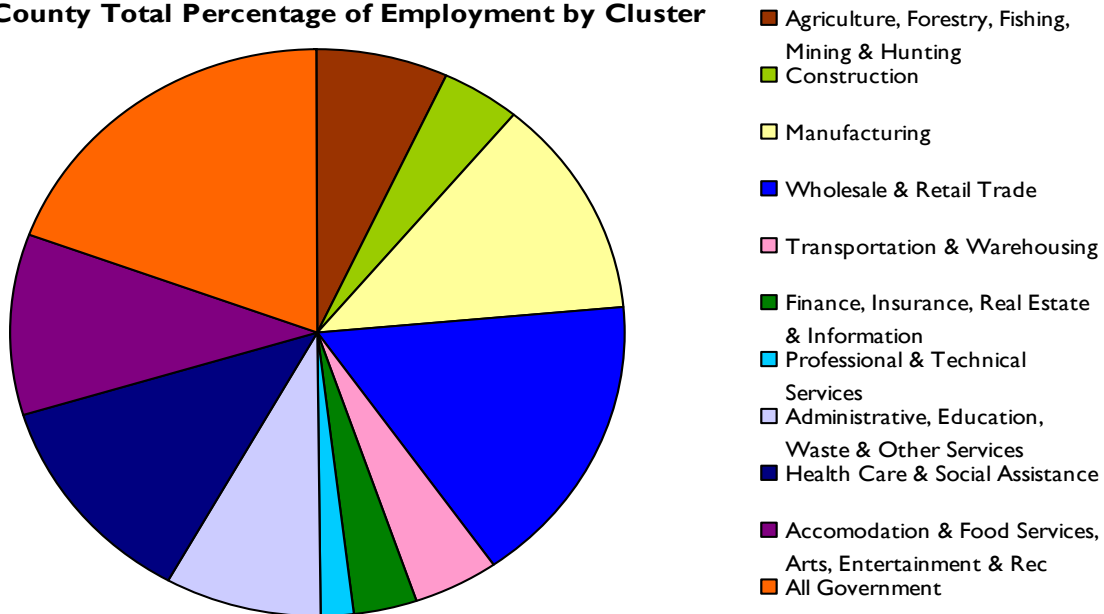
Self-Sufficiency Standard for Cowlitz and Lewis Counties, 2009								
Wage	Adult	Adult + Preschooler	Adult + Infant + Preschooler	Adult + Preschooler +Schoolage	Adult + Schoolage teenager	2 Adults + Infant	2 Adults + Preschooler Schoolage	2 Adults + Infant Preschooler Schoolage
<b>Cowlitz</b>								
Hourly	\$8.31	\$13.81	\$19.51	\$16.95	\$12.94	\$9.34 / adult	\$10.43 / adult	\$14.19 / adult
Monthly	\$1,462	\$2,431	\$3,434	\$2,983	\$2,277	\$3,287	\$3,673	\$4,995
Annual	\$17,547	\$29,176	\$41,207	\$35,793	\$27,319	\$39,441	\$44,073	\$59,943
<b>Lewis</b>								
Hourly	\$8.46	\$14.36	\$19.14	\$17.76	\$13.52	\$9.10 / adult	\$10.63 / adult	\$13.83 / adult
Monthly	\$1,489	\$2,528	\$3,368	\$3,126	\$2,380	\$3,203	\$3,742	\$4,869
Annual	\$17,868	\$30,332	\$40,417	\$37,518	\$28,556	\$38,436	\$44,899	\$58,427

## Cluster Employment

**Cowlitz County Total Percentage of Employment by Cluster**

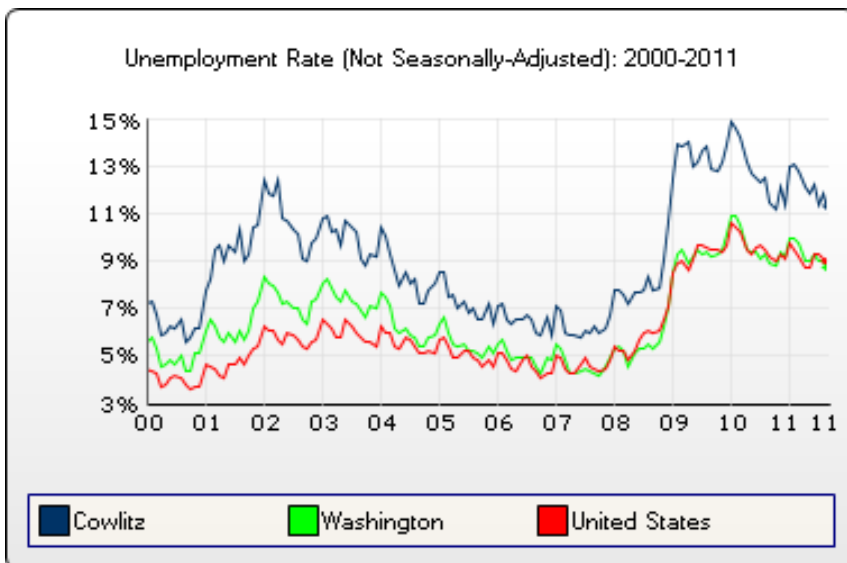


**Lewis County Total Percentage of Employment by Cluster**

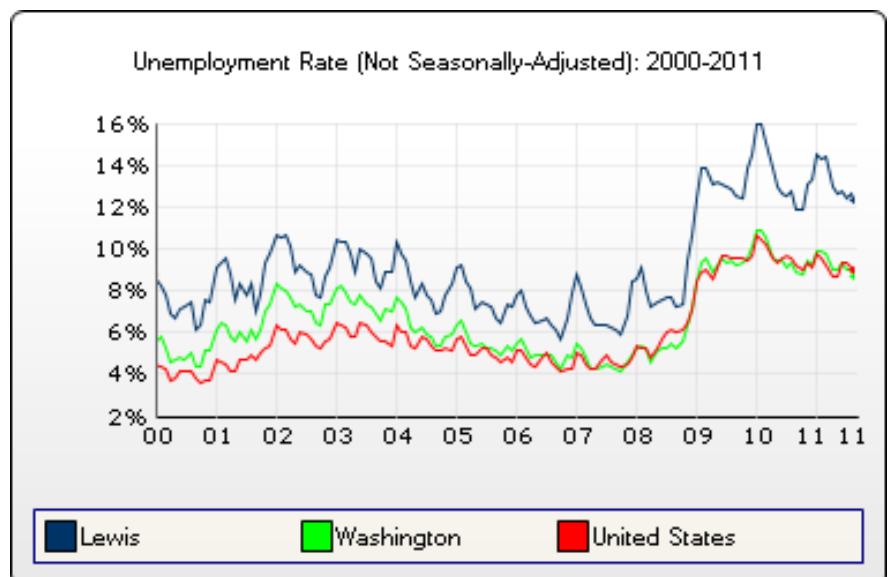


## Unemployment

For multiple decades, the CLEDD has experienced cyclic unemployment trends well above statewide averages. In 1982 Lewis County endured an annual unemployment rate of 19.2% that dropped to below 8% by 1990. This pattern occurred to a lesser degree in Cowlitz County with a 1982 unemployment rate of over 17% to a 1990 rate below 7%. Cyclic patterns continued into the 1990s and 2000s with unemployment rates between 6 and 11 percent.



While recent unemployment rates have continued to increase throughout the Great Recession, Cowlitz and Lewis counties still remain listed as distressed counties by the state of Washington. Distressed counties are defined as counties that have experienced an unemployment rate that runs 120% above the state average for three consecutive years.



## Educational Attainment

The CLEDD civilian labor force (25 years of age and older) who have a high school diploma accounts for 81.9%, which is above the U.S. average of 80.4%, but lower than the statewide average of 87.1%. According to 2000 Census data, 13.1% of the population 25 years of age and older possess a Bachelor’s degree, which is below the national average of 24.4% and below the statewide average of 27.7%. However, the percentage of adults over age 25 who possess an Associates Degree is 0.2% above the state and 1.9% above the national average. This pattern indicates that labor force demands in the region include a variety of employment types other than typical Bachelor or advanced degree holders.

Trends in education attainment are fairly consistent at the county level, with slightly higher levels of education attainment found in Cowlitz County. Maintaining access to vocational skills training in the CLEDD is an important goal in the development of a sustainable long-range economic development strategy. Resources such as high school vocational programs, Lower Columbia College, Centralia Community College, as well as access to regional colleges and university extensions have potential to improve education attainment over time.

**Educational Attainment 2005-2009**

	<b>Cowlitz</b>	<b>Lewis</b>
Population 25 years and over	66,614	49,498
Less than 9th grade	2,680	2,125
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	6,868	5,478
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	20,522	16,642
Some college, no degree	19,738	13,553
Associate's degree	7,204	4,102
Bachelor's degree	6,552	4,763
Graduate or professional degree	3,050	2,835



Partner	Project/Plan Title	New/ Update	Regional/ Local	Start Date	Completion Date	Overall Cost
City of Kalama	NW Third St. Industrial Waterline	New	Regional	2012	TBD	\$500,000
	Downtown Design Standard Implementation & Beautification	New	Regional	2012	TBD	\$1,500,000
	Todd Road Sewer Line and Pump Lift Station	Update	Regional	2011	2015	\$1,600,000
	Kalama River Road Million Gallon Water	Update	Regional	2011	TBD	\$3,000,000
	Meeker Drive Sewer Line & Kalama River Road Sewer Lift Station	Update	Regional	2011	TBD	\$3,000,000
	Standby Generators	Update	Regional	2011	TBD	\$200,000
	Water Filter	New	Regional	2011	TBD	\$700,000
	Sewer Line Replacement	Update	Regional	2011	2015	\$3,000,000
Lewis County	Toledo Airport	New	Regional	NA	NA	NA
	South Lewis Sub Area Plan	New	Regional	2011	2012	\$60,000
	Winlock Industrial Park	New	Regional	2012	2015	\$7,500,000
	Packwood Sewer Treatment Plant	New	Regional	2012	2014	\$3,500,000
	South Lewis County Utility Plan	New	Regional	2011	2012	\$90,000
	Trans Alta Industrial Park	New	Regional	2012	2020	\$25,000,000
	North County Interchange design	New	Regional	2012	2015	\$4,000,000
City of Kelso	N. Pacific Ave Sewer Extension	Update	Local	2012	2014	\$3,000,000
	SW WA Regional Airport Enhancement	Update	Regional	2011	2013	\$1,280,000
	Talley Way Improvements	Update	Regional	2013	2014	\$7,500,000
	Allen Street Flood Prevention Improvements	Update	Local	2013	2014	\$1,020,000
	West Main Street Re-Alignment	Update	Regional	2005	2013	\$15,500,000

Partner	Project/Plan Title	New/ Update	Regional/ Local	Start Date	Completion Date	Overall Cost
City of Kelso	North Kelso Sewer Rehabilitation Phase V & VI	Update	Local	2011	2014	\$1,980,000
	Yew Street reconstruction	Update	Local	2009	2012	\$1,750,000
Port of Chehalis	Downie Road Extension	New	Regional	2012	2012	\$200,000
	McBride Court Industrial Incubator Facility	New	Regional	2012	2012	\$150,000
Port of Chehalis	Rail Reload Facility	Update	Regional	2012	2012	\$60,000
City of Chehalis	Chehalis Renaissance	Update	Regional	2009	TBD	\$26,000,000
City of Longview	7th Avenue & California Way Traffic Improvements	New	Local	2012	2013	\$1,000,000
	Beech Street Extension	Update	Local	2013	2014	\$2,800,000
	Beech Street Storm Drain Improvements	New	Local	2012	2014	\$1,700,000
	Columbia Heights Road	New	Local	2013	2014	\$2,500,000
	Longview Downtown Revitalization	Update	Local	2012	2014	\$2,000,000
	Mint Farm Golf Course Irrigation System	New	Local	2013	2014	\$2,200,000
	Highlands Neighborhood Street lighting	New	Local	2013	2014	\$2,719,000
	Lake Sacajawea Flushing	New	Local	2012	2013	\$1,080,000
	Fixed Base Radio Meter Reading System	New	Local	2012	2013	\$3,000,000
	R.A. Long Park/ Civic Center Circle Improvements	Update	Local	2012	2014	\$1,625,000
	Sewer Lift & Pump Stations Rehabilitation & Upgrades	New	Local	2012	2014	\$15,000,000
	West Longview Sewer Lagoons	New	Local	2012	2015	\$4,700,000
	Fire Station- New, Renovation and Replacement	New	Local	2013	2024	\$40,500,000

Partner	Project/Plan Title	New/ Update	Regional/ Local	Start Date	Completion Date	Overall Cost
City of Centralia	Reynolds Avenue Sewer extension	New	Local	2013	TBD	\$5,000,000
	Harrison Avenue Sewer Extension	New	Local	2012	TBD	\$4,000,000
	Long Road Levee and infrastructure redevelopment	New	Local	2012	TBD	\$5,000,000
	Underground Electric Lines	New	Local	2013	TBD	\$3,000,000
City of Toledo	Water and Waste Water Infrastructure	New	Local	2012	TBD	\$7,000,000
City of Winlock	Industrial Park Infrastructure	New	Local	2012	2016	\$7,500,000
Industrial Park at TransAlta	Infrastructure development and Improvements	New	Local	2012	2020	\$25,000,000
Port of Centralia	Infrastructure Improvements	New	Local	2011	TBD	\$15,000,000
Port of Kalama	North Port Bulk Handling Terminal		Regional	on going	2014	\$13,000,000
	1-5 Business Park	New	Regional	on going	NA	\$40,000,000
	Interpretive Center	New	Regional	on going	2012	\$2,600,000
City of Woodland	SR 503 Widening and Channelization	Update	Regional	2012	NA	\$11,300,000
	Rotary Sports Complex	New	Local	2012	NA	\$3,000,000
	East West Local Street Connection	New	Local	2013	2013	\$275,000
	Scott Avenue Crossing Development Plan	Update	Regional	2015	2017	\$67,000,000
	SR 503 Route Development Plan	New	Regional	2012	NA	\$200,000
	South Pekin Road Widening	New	Local	2013	NA	\$500,000
CWCOG/ CLEDD	Fire and Ice Scenic Loop Corridor Management Plan	New	Regional	2012	2014	\$224,000
	Cowlitz County Strategic Tourism Plan	New	Regional	2011	2012	NA
	Sustainable Communities Plan	New	Regional	2012	2014	\$1,500,000
	Cowlitz County Vulnerable Populations Emergency Planning	New	Regional	on going	NA	NA

Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District

**2012 Comprehensive Economic Development  
Strategic Action Plan**

