



# THE DALLES *and* WASCO COUNTY OREGON



Gateway of  
Columbia River Basin

*Facts  
and  
Information*

- ★ Site of The Dalles Dam
- ★ Hydro Electric Power
- ★ Seaport Serving an Empire
- ★ Hub of Transportation
- ★ Logical Site for Industry
- ★ Land of Scenic Grandeur



**ORIGIN OF NAMES—**

The name The Dalles is derived from the French word “dalle”, meaning flag-stone, and was applied to the narrows of the Columbia River, above the present city of The Dalles, by French-Canadian employees of the Fur Companies. Among other things, “dalle” meant a stone used to flag gutters, and the peculiar basalt formation along the narrows doubtless suggested gutters. The word “dalles” signified, to the voyageurs, the river rapids flowing swiftly through a narrow channel over flat basaltic rocks. The narrows of the river are generally known as The Dalles of the Columbia, and this collective term describes the geographic features from the Big Eddy, just above The Dalles, to Celilo Falls, about ten miles above The Dalles.

The name Wasco, which is now applied to the County, is the modern name for a tribe of Indians. The Wasco Indians were a Chinookan tribe, formerly living on the south side of the Columbia River, in the vicinity of The Dalles. The name “Wasco” is said to be derived from the Wasco word “wacq-o”, meaning a cup or small bowl made of horn.

**LOCATION—** The Dalles is located 190 miles from the Pacific Ocean and on the south shore of the Columbia River. It is 87 miles east of Portland, Oregon on Highway U. S. 30, and on Union Pacific Railroad. It is 296 miles southwest of Spokane Washington; 286 miles north of Klamath Falls, Oregon; and 103 miles south of Yakima, Washington.

Latitude 45° 36' 24" North and Longitude 121° 11' 14" West.

**ALTITUDE—**Average in business district 100 feet; range in residential sections is from 150 to 700 feet.

**AREA—** City of The Dalles 2.88 square miles; Wasco County 2387 square miles.

**CLIMATE—**The Dalles is on the west edge of the semi-arid region between the Cascades and Rocky Mountains. Mean temperature 52.9, Mean Maximum 64.0, Mean Minimum 41.8; Prevailing winds are westerly. Annual precipitation 15.92 inches. Clear days 189, partly cloudy 107, cloudy 69. Growing season averages 195 days.

**POPULATION—** The Dalles, 1950 Census 7933; increased from 1940 - 26.6%. Wasco County, 1950 Census 15,552; increase over 1940 - 19%.

**FORM OF GOVERNMENT—** Corporate name of city is Dalles City, Oregon. Geographic name is The Dalles, Oregon. Form of government— Council-manager, composed of Mayor and five councilmen, all elective, and Manager appointive.

**THE DALLES MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS—** Fire Department; 11 full-time and 33 call firemen. Gamewell Municipal Box fire alarm system in commercial district. Modern equipment. Three-way radio station. Police Department; equipped with three-way radio. Parking meters maintained in business district. Planning Commission is advisory group of eight non-salaried members. Civil Service Commission. Recreation Commission.

**ASSESSED VALUATIONS—** The Dalles, 1951, \$7,119,289.02. Wasco County, 1951, \$21,525,849.83. Port of The Dalles, 1951, 15,818,377.50.

**TAX RATE—** The Dalles, in mills 60.09. County tax rate varies in different districts of County.

**BONDED INDEBTEDNESS:**

The Dalles—General Obligation \$47,500, retired by taxation; Bancroft Bonds \$15,500; Water Bonds \$160,000, retired by revenues only.

The Dalles School District— \$331,000, retired by taxation.

Port of The Dalles— Total Bonded debt \$186,000, of which \$130,000 is being retired by rentals, balance \$56,000 by taxation.

Wasco County— No bonded indebtedness.

**THE DALLES STREET SYSTEM—** 23 miles paved, 14 miles graveled.

**THE DALLES SANITATION SERVICES—** City served with sanitary gravity sewer system. Major portion served by separate storm sewer system. Fund being created by tax levy for construction of future sewage treatment plant.

**THE DALLES WATER SUPPLY—** Municipally owned and operated. Gravity supply from mountain stream south of the city. Supplemented by wells. Maintained by revenue from sale of water. Filtration plant completed 1950 at cost of \$200,000. Pressure 60 lbs. Fire and emergency pressure 125 lbs. Value physical property and equipment January 1952 - \$1,370,000.

**WATER CONNECTIONS—** January 1952 were 2908. Domestic rates not metered, per month \$2.00. Business and commercial metered within city— first 7500 gallons at \$2.00; next 5,000 gallons at 12c per thousand; next 7,500 gallons at 8c per thousand; over 20,000 gallons at 5c per thousand. Water service outside city limits 1½ times city rates.

**BUILDING PERMITS—** 1950— \$1,515,034.00; 1951— \$1,433,674.00.

**POSTAL RECEIPTS—** 1930, \$46,443.04; 1950, \$99,518.72; 1951, \$103,292.81. Post Office rated first class. Federal Post Office Building.

**POSTAL SAVINGS:** 1936, \$303,038.00; 1950, \$598,346.00; 1951, \$539,850.00.

**FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS:** Two commercial banks, combined deposits, December 31, 1951, \$20,767,655.16. State Bank at Dufur, Oregon, deposit December 31, 1951, \$2,074,898.99. Savings and Loan, locally owned and directed, assets December 31, 1951, \$877,666.30. Savings Accounts \$743,553.85. Home Loans \$641,785.17. Agricultural financing - Mid-Columbia Production Credit Association farmer cooperative, serving seven counties, Net Worth, December 31, 1951 - \$306,102; loaned 1951 - \$2,044,000. National Farm Loan Association, through which Federal Land Bank farm loans are made available to farmers and stockmen. Serves five counties, has 270 participants.

**AUTOMOBILES:** Registration - Wasco County, December 1949, passenger 5588. Trucks 1687, others 111. Due to change in registration methods later statistics not available.

**NEWSPAPERS:** One Daily, except Saturday - circulation December 1951, 4250; Sunday 4320; photo engraving. One Weekly - on Thursday morning - circulation averages 2260, principally rural.

**RADIO:** Station KODL, 1230 K. C., 250 watts daytime, 100 watts night time.

**TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH:** Telephones in service, January 1, 1952, 4212. Served by Bell System. City on dial system, and 60 percent of rural lines. Telegraph and cable services throughout the world.

**THEATERS:** Two - seating capacity 1,368. One drive-in theater located west of The Dalles.

**HOTELS:** Two leading hotels with 150 rooms. Several small hotels and rooming houses.

**MOTELS:** Five leading motels.

**AUTO COURTS AND CAMPS:** Four in and adjacent to The Dalles with varying types of accommodations, including hot water, gas, electricity, laundry. Some with trailer accommodations.

**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Wasco-Sherman Counties maintain joint public health department with Health Officer, Sanitarian, 2 Nurses and Clerk. Birth rate, 1951, 19.46 per 1,000; Mortality rate, 1951, 7.6 per 1,000; Infant mortality, 1951, 49 per 1,000 live births.

**HOSPITALS:** 1 General Hospital; 1 privately owned and operated; 1 State Tuberculosis Hospital; 1 County Hospital. The Dalles Vocational School for Practical Nurses, operated under the auspices of School District and State Board of Vocational Education, a division of State Board of Education. This school of practical nurses is also under supervision of Oregon State Board of Examination and Registration of Nurses. Affiliated in Pediatrics at Doernbecher Memorial Hospital, Portland.

**EDUCATION:** Four elementary schools with a new six-room addition in 1951. One Junior High School, one Senior High School of ultra-modern design. High school gymnasium has one of the finest basketball courts in the state, with a seating capacity of 1600. 1951 enrollment, high school 433; junior high 285; elementary grades 850. Faculty and staff consists of superintendent-clerk, secretary, 6 principals; 70 instructors. The Dalles High School fully accredited standing in Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Institutions. 6-2-4 program - six grades in elementary schools, two in junior high, and four years in high school. 1952— Assessed valuation of district, \$8,374,611.89. Bonded indebtedness \$331,000. Original cost of school plants and equipment, \$1,259,375.00.

St. Mary's Academy, Catholic private school, with curricular for grade and high school students, boys and girls. Girls are accepted as boarders. Institution established 1864, by Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

**WASCO COUNTY LIBRARY:** Serves entire county; branch libraries at Antelope, Dufur Maupin, Mosier, and Tygh Valley; station libraries at Chenoweth Store, Rowena, Friend, Shaniko, Wamie, and Wapinitia. Teachers within county receive school room collection every six weeks.

Volumes owned July 1, 1951, 41,203. Volumes circulated to July 1, 1951, 89,897. Books available from State Library, Portland Public Library, the Universities, and Pacific Northwest Bibliographic Center, University of Washington.

**RELIGION:** Sixteen denominations. Five new churches completed or under construction.

**RECREATION:** One 9-hole golf course. One Natatorium AAU Standard, 50 Meter; Yacht Club. Riding Club. Three parks. Two baseball fields. Tennis courts. Two outdoor handball courts.

**ELECTRICITY:** Power and light service supplied by one privately owned and operated utility; one Peoples Utility District, publicly owned and operated. Rates vary with type of service and quantity of energy supplied. Schedule of rates furnished on request. Federally owned transmission system from Bonneville Dam supplies power to sub-station on edge of city. Wasco Electric Cooperative, farmer owned and operated, has 1046 miles of rural lines connected with Federal power transmission system; 1537 members. Investment \$2,061,000.

**FUEL:** Butane Gas supplied through gas mains, 1100 B. T. U. and 512 meters. Rates vary with class of service and quantity used . . . Liquefied Petroleum Gas for customers off of city mains. Gas supplies its own pressure from steel cylinders delivered each customer. Wood and coal for domestic and industrial uses available. Petroleum, such as fuel, diesel and stove oil, and gasoline available in any quantity through distributors.

**TRANSPORTATION:** The Dalles directly served by Union Pacific Railroad, which provides transcontinental freight and passenger service. Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad on north shore of Columbia River reached from The Dalles by ferry. The Dalles is hub of transcontinental and border to border highways. Motor bus and motor transport freight service available. The Dalles is located at upper limits of Columbia River deep draft ship channel extending from Pacific Ocean, a distance of 192 miles. Above The Dalles, Columbia is navigable for inland water craft to Pasco, Washington. Water transportation companies operate powered boats and non-propelled barges on demand service basis for all commodities. United Air Lines serves The Dalles daily through scheduled stops of east and west bound air transports making connections with other schedules, National and International. Charter plane services provided by private operator.

**AIRPORT:** Municipal Airport, one and one half miles from city center; owned and operated by city of The Dalles. Three hard surfaced runways 150 feet width and ranging from 4100 to 5200 feet in length. Administration Building with facilities for passengers. Civil Aeronautics Communication Station in Administration Building. One machine shop on field. Area of airport approximately 1,000 acres.

**PORT OF THE DALLES:** Port District comprises one-third the area of Wasco County. Governed by an elective non-salaried Board of five commissioners. Created to develop and advance maritime commerce. Publicly owned and operated general cargo wharf, 1100 feet length with two transit sheds having 85,560 square feet, with loading capacity of 15 000 tons. Two bulk grain



elevators, 900,000 bushels capacity. River front area 25 acres available for industrial and port development . . . One privately owned and operated grain elevator, with interchange capacity of 1,000 tons in 8 hours. One private petroleum terminal with 13 bulk storage tanks, capacity 2,250,000 gallons. All facilities connected by railway and highway. Berthing space for ocean vessels and all types of shallow draft vessels.

**THE DALLES BRIDGE:** Under construction by Wasco County as a publicly owned toll bridge, eventually to be toll free. Anticipated completion mid-summer 1953. Crosses Columbia River 2½ miles east of city center, connecting main north-south and east-west highways of Oregon and Washington.

**THE DALLES FERRY:** Modern equipment. Owned and operated by Wasco County. Providing service across Columbia River, connecting U. S. Highway 30 in Oregon with U. S. Highway 830 in Washington. Operates between foot of Union Street in The Dalles and connecting road on north shore of Columbia River. Continuous day and night service for vehicular and motor transport traffic of all types.

**INDUSTRIES & SERVICES:** Ten manufacturing plants, consisting of flour mill, wood preserving plant, fish and fruit cannery, three fruit processing plants, two creameries, one lumber manufacturing plant, and one boat and barge building plant. The Dalles is headquarters of one navigation company and freight division of Union Pacific Railroad. Commercial salmon fishing is an important activity. Oregon Employment and Payrolls, published by State Unemployment Compensation Commission, reports covered employment by industry in Wasco County including The Dalles, during fiscal year July 1, 1950 to June 30, 1951, as follows:

Industry Description:	Employees	Payroll
Contract Construction .....	169	\$ 637,529
Manufacturing .....	761	2,499,794
Transportation, Communication, and Other Public Utilities .....	264	799,743
Wholesale and Retail Trade .....	888	2,514,763
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate .....	52	157,142
Service Industries .....	343	790,830
Miscellaneous .....	9	24,202
<b>TOTAL .....</b>		<b>\$7,424,003</b>

Above is limited to data reported by Employers subject to Oregon Unemployment Compensation Law requiring coverage of employers hiring four or more workers, except agriculture, interstate railroads and some personal services.

**AGRICULTURE:** Ranges from intensive cultivation of irrigated truck garden lands along the Columbia and small tributaries, through fruit orchards at slightly higher elevations, and expanse of grain fields on rolling uplands, to forest stock ranges at elevation of 4,000 feet. Irrigated tracts are supplied with water from streams and from wells. Wheat farms range from a few hundred to several thousand acres. Wheat provides the greatest single source of farm income. Livestock, mostly beef cattle, poultry and hogs raised on wheat ranches as sideline. Livestock also grown as principal crop on open range in southern part of county. Dairying, an important industry along irrigated valleys. Cherries, major fruit crop, followed by apricots, peaches and prunes. Truck farms produce vegetables with advantage

of early maturity and quality. Growing season at The Dalles 195 days. Income from major crops in 1951, \$9,326,500 (wheat \$3,976,000; livestock \$2,712,000; fruit \$1,631,000; dairy and poultry \$531,000; hay, forage, and seed crops \$345,000; truck crops \$56,500; and farm timber \$75,000). The Dalles is the home of annual Oregon Wheat Growers League Junior Livestock Show. Agricultural services extended through County Extension Agent, County Club Agent; County Home Demonstration Agent, and Soil Conservation Service.

**MARKET AREA:** Retail trading zone population 50,000. Trade area radius approximately 75 miles.

#### RETAIL TRADE (U. S. Census of Business 1948):

	Establish-ments	Sales	Payroll	Prop-rietors	Empl-oyees
The Dalles	155	\$18,186,000	\$1,793,000	149	747
Remainder					
Wasco County	62	2,870,000	215,000	63	110
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>\$21,056,000</b>	<b>\$2,008,000</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>857</b>

#### WHOLESALE TRADE (U. S. Census of Business 1948):

	Establish-ments	Sales	Payroll	Prop-rietors	Empl-oyees
The Dalles	26	\$ 7,697,000	\$ 506,000	21	183
Remainder					
Wasco County	9	2,902,000	156,000	4	59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>\$10,599,000</b>	<b>\$ 662,000</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>242</b>

#### SELECTED SERVICE TRADES (U. S. Census of Business - 1948):

	Establish-ments	Receipts	Payroll	Prop-rietors	Empl-oyees
The Dalles	45	\$ 828,000	\$ 283,000	53	127
Remainder					
Wasco County	23	385,000	95,000	26	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>\$ 1,213,000</b>	<b>\$ 378,000</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>168</b>

**BONNEVILLE DAM:** On Columbia River, 45 miles downstream from The Dalles. Navigation and power project. Constructed and operated by Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army. Power capability 518,400 k. w. Power transmitted throughout area on Federal high voltage transmission system and sold under Bonneville Power Act. Ship lock for navigation 76 ft. width; 500 ft. length; depth over lower sill 27 feet. Permits transiting of ocean vessels and ocean barges and shallow draft river craft. Migratory fish pass the dam through modern fishways. Total fish over ladders during 1950 - 827,552, all species, principally famous Columbia River Salmon.

**THE DALLES DAM:** On Columbia River, 3 miles above the city of The Dalles. Construction of project began February 1952. Estimated cost of project \$350,000,000. Estimated time of construction approximately six years for main structure and several years more for installation of power generating units. Initial firm power capability 1,000,000 k. w.; ultimate power capability 1,700,000 k. w. Navigation lock 86 ft. width; 675 ft. length; depth over lower sill 15 ft. Normal lift 87½ ft. Will be rated as among the highest single lift locks in the world. Modern fishways for passage of migratory fish. Back water from Dam will extend upstream to mouth of John Day River, approximately 31 miles. First power production anticipated late 1957.

**JOHN DAY DAM:** On Columbia River, 35 miles above The Dalles, and at head of pool of The Dalles Dam. Authorized by Congress 1950. No funds yet appropriated

for construction. Estimated cost of project \$420,000,000. Initial firm power capability approximately 1,000,000 kw. Navigation lock 86 ft. width; 675 ft. length; depth over lower sill 14 ft.; normal lift approximately 76 ft. Modern fishways for passage of migratory fish; back-water from dam will extend upstream approximately 75 miles, to base of McNary Dam. When constructed this project will complete Columbia River plan of development from head of tide near Bonneville to Priest Rapids on Columbia, approximately 251 miles.

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:** 5 CPA; 3 Public Accountants; 14 Attorneys; 11 Physicians and Surgeons; 3 Osteopaths; 3 Chiropractors; 1 Naturopath; 12 Dentists; 5 Optometrists; 2 Veterinarians.

**CIVIC AND SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS:** Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club and Auxiliary, 20-30 Club, Toastmasters Club, Business and Professional Women's, Soroptimist Club, American Association of University Women, Garden Club, Beta Sigma Phi, Yacht Club, Country Club, Wasco County Pioneer & Historical Society, Red Cross, Wasco County Public Health Association, D'Art Club.

**YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS:** The Dalles Girl Scouts Council, Boy Scouts, Sea Scouts, Campfire Girls.

**VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS:** American Legion and Auxiliary, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary, Spanish-American War Veterans and Auxiliary, American Gold Star Mothers, Navy Mother's Club.

**FRATERNAL:** Elks, Eagles and Auxiliary, I. O. O. F. and Encampment, Rebekah Lodge, Knights of Pythias and Pythian Sisters, All Masonic Branches, Order of Eastern Star, Rainbow Girls, DeMolay, Gaspar White Shrine, Knights of Columbus, Woodmen of the World, Neighbors of Woodcraft, Degree of Honor, United Artisans, P. E. O. Sisterhood, Mid-Columbia Shrine Club.

**CULTURAL:** Parent-Teachers Association.

**RELIGIOUS:** Ministerial Association.

**PROFESSIONAL:** Mid-Columbia Dental Society, Mid-Columbia Medical Society, Seventh Judicial District Bar Association.

**AGRICULTURAL:** Pomona Grange and affiliates, Wasco County Farmers Union and Affiliates, Wasco County Farm Bureau and Affiliates, Wasco County Fruit and Produce League.

**MILITARY:** Company B, 162nd Engineers, Oregon National Guard.

**VARIOUS:** Rod and Gun Club, Skeet Club, Rifle and Pistol, Central Labor Council, The Dalles and Wasco County Real Estate Board, Retail Merchants Credit Association, Brotherhood Railway Trainmen, Fort Dalles Riders, Oregon State Employees Association.

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