

Wrangell Alaska Economic Conditions Report 2025

Prepared for

CITY & BOROUGH OF



Wrangell

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Prepared by
Rain Coast Data

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Wrangell Economy 2025 Summary

The *Wrangell Alaska Economic Conditions Report* provides a baseline summary of the local economy to guide planning, inform decision-making, and support strategies to stabilize and grow Wrangell's economy into the future.

In 2025, Wrangell's economy is marked by contrasts. The community is grappling with population decline—especially among working-age residents—low salmon returns and values, and a shrinking maritime sector. At the same time, Wrangell is benefiting from a robust and expanding healthcare industry and its strongest tourism sector in two decades.

Tourism is Growing: Tourism is entering its strongest period in twenty years. Wrangell is projected to host more than 45,000 cruise visitors in 2025 and nearly 80,000 in 2026. Tourism jobs grew by 13 percent and wages by 46 percent between 2019 and 2024, positioning the sector as a key driver of Wrangell's future growth. But in order to fully benefit from this influx, the community must develop more shore-excursions to better accommodate higher-volume ships.

Demographics Drive Economic Weaknesses:

Population loss is Wrangell's most serious long-term challenge. The community has declined by 15 percent since 2012 and is projected to lose another 34 percent of its residents by 2050. Aging is accelerating the shift: residents over 60 now comprise 37 percent of the population, compared to just 10 percent in 1990, while the number of children and working-age adults continues to shrink.

Healthcare Economic Cornerstone of Community:

Healthcare has become Wrangell's largest industry. In 2024, the sector generated \$15.2 million in wages—more than government or seafood—and supported 171 jobs. Since 2016, healthcare employment has expanded by 53 percent, anchored by SEARHC's Wrangell Medical Center. Healthcare now provides both economic stability and essential community services.

Seafood Continues to Struggle: Seafood remains central to Wrangell's economy, providing 18 percent of jobs and 20 percent of wages in 2024. But the sector has suffered deep declines, with ex-vessel values at historically low levels. The Port of Wrangell's seafood ex-vessel value in 2024 was 50 percent below 2019 levels, as weak salmon runs, global oversupply, and depressed prices reshape the industry in the short-term. Dungeness crab now accounts for nearly half of the community's fishery value.

Business Climate: Wrangell businesses reported the second-poorest business climate in the region in 2025, with 60 percent rating current conditions poor or very poor. The poor rating was led by those in Wrangell's blue economy. Outlook is more positive: 60 percent expect good or improving conditions in the coming year, led by optimism in the tourism sector.

2019-2024

46%

tourism wage
increase
2019-2024, jobs
up by 13%

25%

Decline of
children in
community
2019-2024

25%

of all Wrangell
wages come
from
healthcare

50%

Port of Wrangell
seafood value
decline

A History of the Wrangell Economy

The City and Borough of Wrangell—situated on Wrangell Island near the mouth of the Stikine River—accounts for roughly 3 percent of the population and 2 percent of jobs and wages in Southeast Alaska. Over time, Wrangell has restructured its economy and identity many times.

Fur, Fort, Gold: In the early 1800s, Wrangell's economy was built on the fur trade. Russian traders established a stockade in 1811, the Hudson's Bay Company leased it in 1840, and the United States established a military post in 1868. Through the late 1800s, the community grew as a supply hub for gold prospectors.

Timber: The area's abundant spruce and hemlock supported a century-long timber industry. By the early 1990s, timber provided one in five local jobs and nearly a third of all direct wages. When the Alaska Pulp Company mill closed in 1994, Wrangell's economy collapsed. A smaller logging operation persisted between 1998 and 2008 before closing.

Seafood: Wrangell's canneries and fisheries, which developed in the 1800s, became a cornerstone of the local economy. However, when the timber industry collapsed, falling salmon prices compounded the community's hardship, and its largest processor eventually filed for bankruptcy. The seafood sector rebounded in the 2010s but faltered again when the primary processor closed at the end of the 2019 season, later reopening in 2023.

Tourism: Wrangell is known for its authentic "working waterfront" character. Historically, the Wrangell tourism sector centered on ferry travelers, small ships, and independent visitors—but ferry tourism has declined by 92 percent over the past decade. Large cruise ships visited for three seasons in the early 2000s, then stopped for nearly two decades until 2024. A record number of cruise passengers is expected in 2026, with 13 visits from large cruise ships planned.

Healthcare: Healthcare emerged as Wrangell's largest economic sector in the 2020s. Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) took over the city-owned Wrangell Medical Center in 2018. Between 2016 and 2024, healthcare jobs in the community grew by 53% to 171 jobs, accounting for a quarter of all local workforce earnings.

City and Borough of Wrangell Economic Initiatives 2025: The City and Borough of Wrangell continues to pursue economic initiatives identified through long-term community planning, including stimulating housing development in the Alder Top Village (Keishangita.'aan) subdivision; expanding waterfront infrastructure with a second cruise dock in partnership with American Cruise Lines; relocating industrial waterfront activities, such as barge operations, from downtown to the Six Mile area; and investing in both new and existing public infrastructure—such as harbor basin renovations, road replacements, and the completion and ongoing maintenance of the new water treatment plant.

Wrangell is facing economic challenges moving forward. To succeed, the community will need to continue to pursue new growth opportunities, maintain critical infrastructure, nurture established industries, and foster a community environment that is attractive for workers and young families.

Changes in Wrangell: 2015 to 2024

This table tracks key economic indicators in Wrangell in 2015, 2019, 2021, and 2024, along with associated changes.

Demographics	2015	2019	2021	2024	% Change 2019-2024
Wrangell Population	2,310	2,174	2,103	2,030	-7%
65+ year olds	469	528	526	573	9%
Median Age Wrangell (AK overall is 35.5)	47.8	47.5	48	49.1	3%
K-12 Students	272	308	179	259	-16%
18 and under	518	540	426	404	-25%
General Economic Conditions	2015	2019	2021	2024	Change
Total Annualized Jobs	1,215	1,143	1,031	1,073	-6%
Total Job Earnings	\$46,507,622	\$49,804,705	\$47,279,823	\$59,839,672	20%
Annual Average Wage	\$38,278	\$43,574	\$45,858	\$55,756	28%
Annual Unemployment Rate	7.6%	7.8%	8.6%	5.4%	-2%
Health Care Sector	Top Industry: 25% of all employment earnings				
Total Healthcare Employment	<i>Confidential or combined with CBW data 2015-2021</i>			171	NA
Total Healthcare Payroll				\$15,224,440	NA
Government	Public Sector: 21% of all employment earnings				
Total Government Employment	309	234	187	199	-15%
City and Tribal Employment	235	174	134	138	-21%
Total Government Payroll	\$14,291,774	\$11,070,750	\$10,189,605	\$12,605,205	14%
Maritime Economy	Top Sector: 21% of employment earnings				
Seafood Employment (annualized)	281	198	181	194	-2%
Seafood Earnings	\$13,371,074	\$10,528,260	\$9,784,855	\$11,946,767	13%
Other Maritime (Boatbuilding, etc.)	47	51	39	30	-41%
Other Maritime Earnings	\$1,620,018	\$1,573,899	\$1,442,157	\$859,753	-45%
Commercial Fish Vessels Homeported	233	214	187	181	-15%
Port of Wrangell: Total Seafood Pounds	3,079,439	2,338,822	1,471,085	1,309,681	-44%
Port of Wrangell: Total Seafood Value	\$2,659,211	\$4,770,389	\$4,613,561	\$2,374,059	-50%
Visitor Industry	Key Industry: Top Growth Industry				
Visitor Industry Employment	95	110	103	124	13%
Total Visitor Industry Wages/Earnings	\$2,093,291	\$3,077,530	\$3,189,000	\$4,503,247	46%
Total Passenger Arrivals	28,653	39,084	16,018	36,901	-6%
Air Passengers	12,512	14,637	11,897	14,297	-2%
Cruise Ship Passengers	10,011	21,540	3,350	21,207	-2%
Alaska Marine Highway System	6,130	2,907	771	1,397	-52%
Other Selected Statistics	2015	2019	2021	2024	Change
Sales Tax Receipts Fiscal Year	\$2,681,435	\$2,850,003	\$3,215,708	\$4,067,508	26%
Housing Starts	13	4	7	1	-86%
Total Assessed Property Value millions	\$140.8	\$153	\$151.9	\$255.2	68%

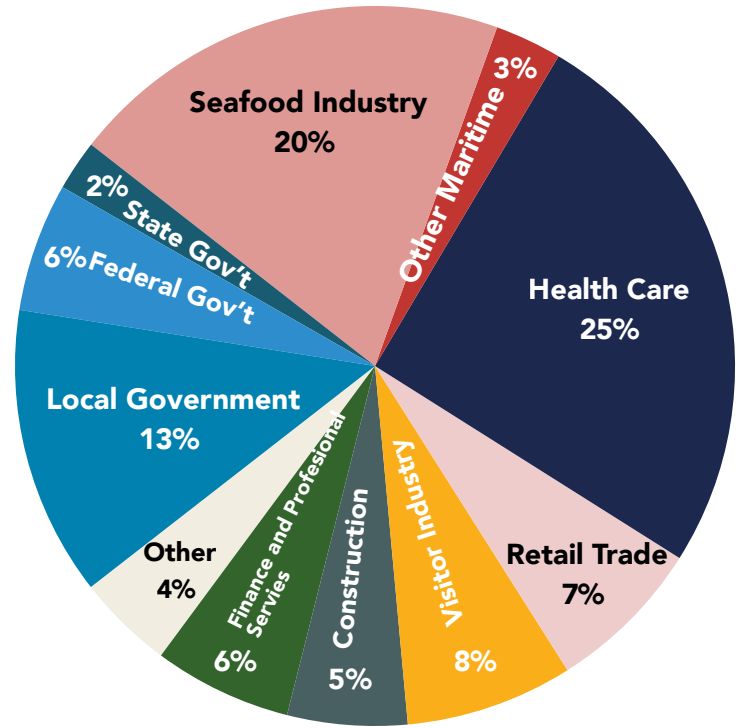
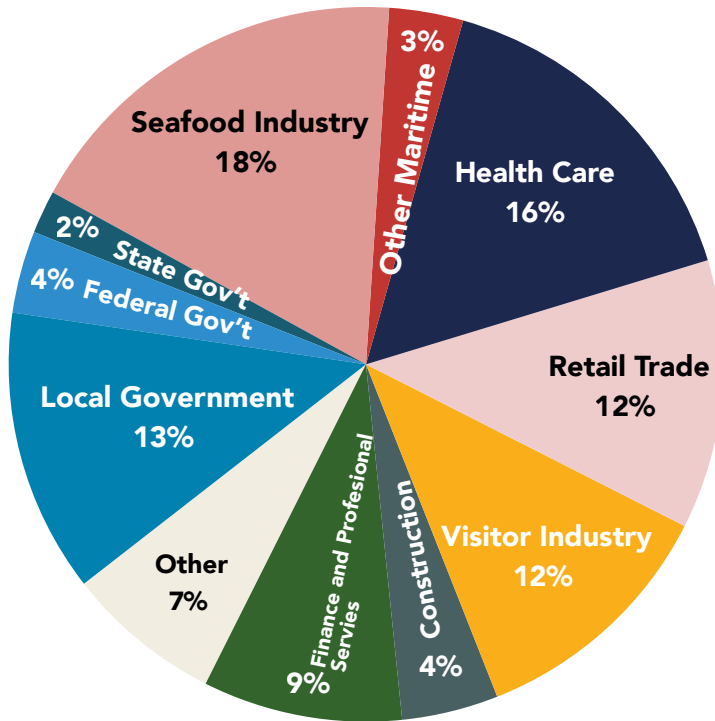
Sources: Alaska Department of Labor (ADOL); ADOL Southeast Alaska Population by Age; Alaska Department of Education and Early Development; Based on the quarterly Alaska Housing Unit Survey, a survey of local governments and housing agencies; US Census Nonemployer (self-employment) Statistics; ADF&G Southeast Alaska Commercial Seafood Industry Harvest and Ex-Vessel Value Information; Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska; US Bureau of Transportation Statistics (RITA); Alaska Marine Highway System data. Self-employment represents approximately one-fourth of Wrangell's annualized employment.

The Whole **Wrangell Economy** 2024

In 2024, Wrangell had 1,073 year-round equivalent jobs and nearly \$60 million in workforce earnings.

Annualized **Jobs**
1,073 Total Jobs

Employment **Earnings**
Total Earnings \$60 million



2024 Wrangell Alaska Employment Earnings

	WORKFORCE RELATED EARNINGS			ANNUALIZED WORKFORCE			
	Wages	Self-Employment	Total Earnings	Annual Average Employment	Self-Employed	Total Employment	Change 2021 to 2024
Health Care	\$15,142,440	\$82,000	\$15,224,440	166	5	171	0.3%
Seafood Industry	\$3,877,767	\$8,069,000	\$11,946,767	63	131	194	7%
Visitor Industry	\$3,886,247	\$1,086,500	\$4,503,247	104	20	124	20%
Retail Trade	\$3,116,015	\$1,111,000	\$4,227,015	118	13	131	-3%
Construction Industry	\$1,521,436	\$1,702,000	\$3,223,436	29	18	47	7%
Financial Activities	\$780,618	\$1,484,000	\$2,264,618	19	29	48	7%
Other Maritime	\$859,753	\$469,500	\$1,798,753	24	12	36	-8%
Profess. & Business Services	\$642,542	\$804,000	\$1,446,542	12	37	49	9%
Information	\$531,313	\$0	\$531,313	10	0	10	0%
Social & Education	\$90,467	\$206,000	\$296,467	5	12	17	-6%
Other	\$1,232,869	\$539,000	\$1,771,869	30	19	49	-9%
Local Government	\$7,787,846	NA	\$7,787,846	138	NA	138	3%
Federal Government	\$3,460,665	NA	\$3,460,665	40	NA	40	15%
State Government	\$1,356,694	NA	\$1,356,694	21	NA	21	15%
Total	\$44,286,672	\$15,553,000	\$59,839,672	778	295	1,073	4%

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor Employment & Wage data; US Census Nonemployer (self-employment) Statistics. Due to data confidentiality, some figures are estimates by Rain Coast Data, based on all available inputs. *Other maritime draws from other sectors, so is not fully included in chart. NA = not available, suppressed for confidentiality.

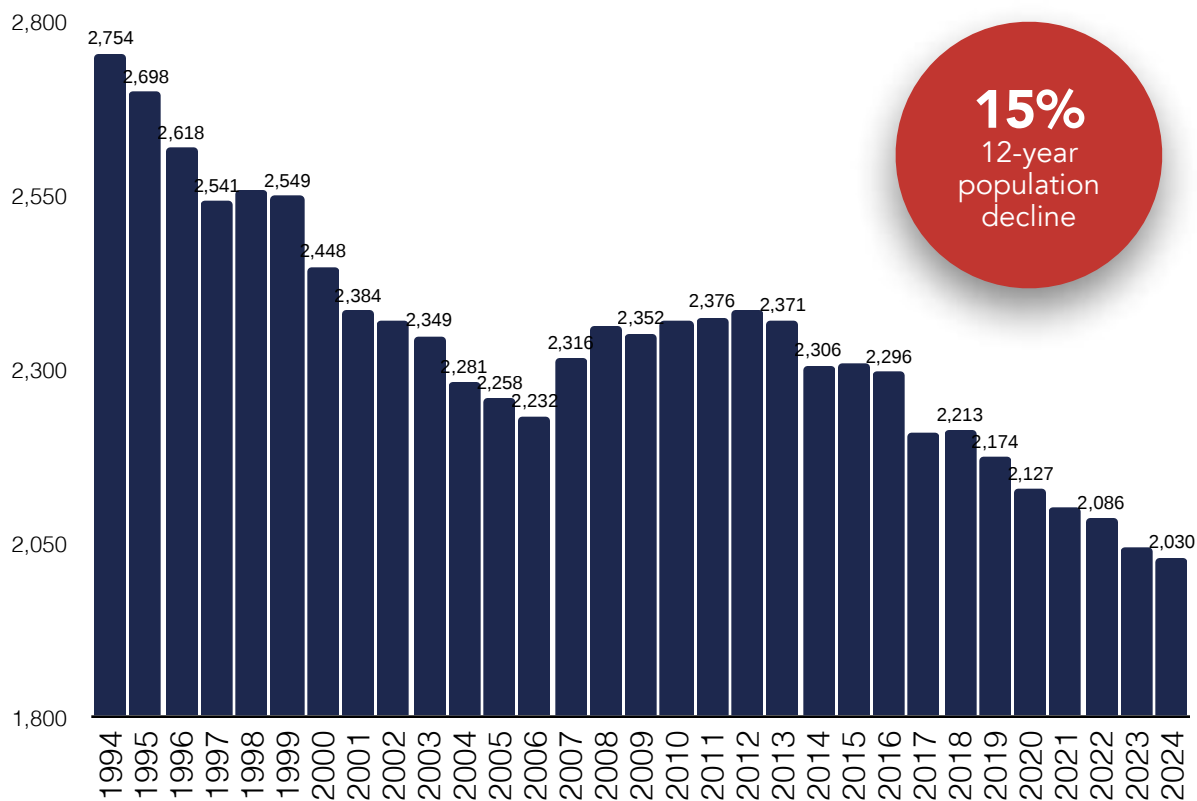
Demographics

In 2025, Wrangell's greatest economic vulnerability is changing demographics. The overall population is shrinking, and the decline is even more pronounced among younger residents and those of working age.

Population¹

Wrangell's population peaked in 1994. Following the collapse of the timber industry, the community experienced 12 consecutive years of decline, reaching 2,232 residents in 2006. A modest six-year recovery followed, but the population began falling again after 2012. Since then, Wrangell has lost 355 residents—a 15% decline over 12 years—with downward trends projected to continue.

Wrangell Alaska Population 1994-2024

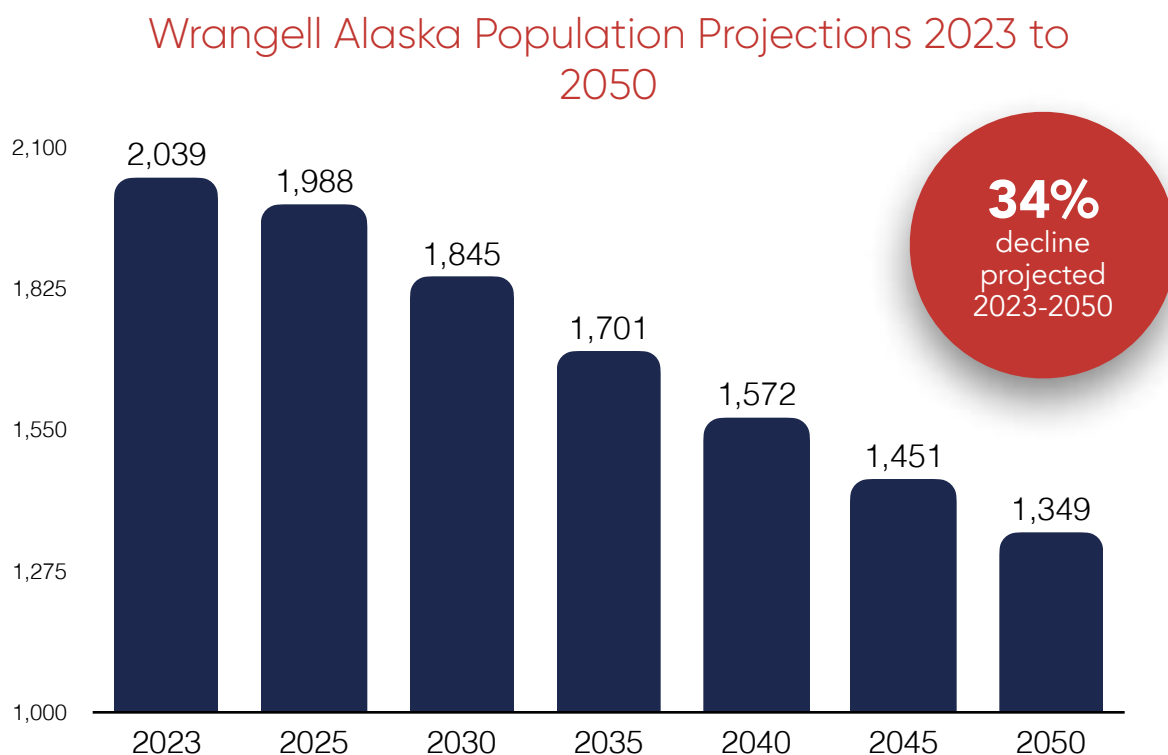


¹ State of Alaska, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis. 1990-2024.

Population Projections²

Wrangell's population is expected to experience sustained decline through 2050, at a higher rate than previously projected. The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development released updated population projections for Alaska in June of 2024. Wrangell is projected to have the highest level of average annual population loss compared to all Alaska boroughs and census areas. The state analysis highlighted Wrangell's elevated death rate in 2023, a factor contributing to the steeper projected decline.

Between 2023 and 2050, the community is projected to lose approximately 34% of its residents. These projections assume current demographic and economic trends persist; however, much can change over the coming decades. As noted earlier in this report, Wrangell has opportunities to strengthen and diversify its economy, which could alter these outcomes.



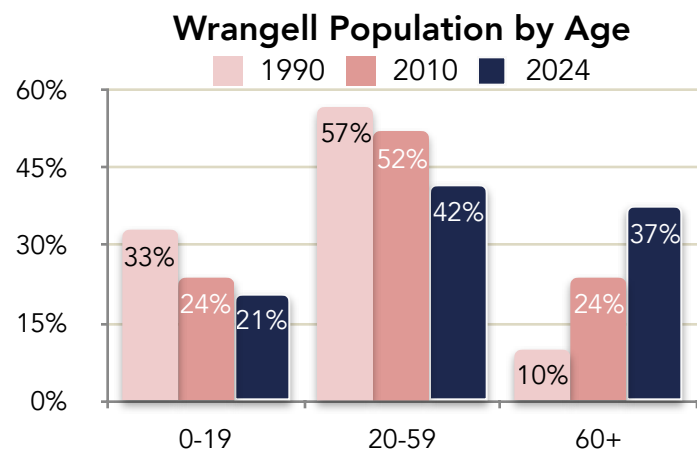
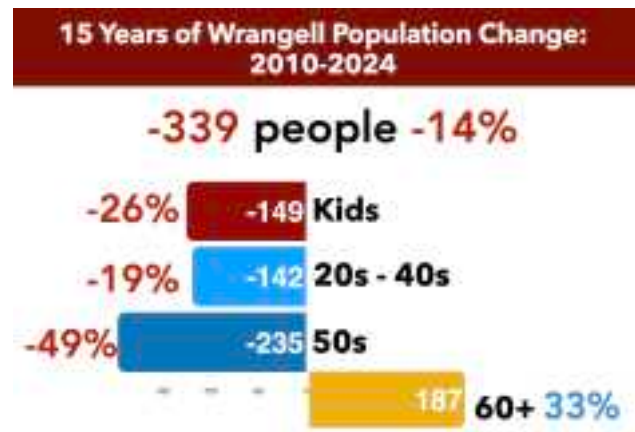
² Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The population projections are based on the current population and historical birth, death, and migration trends.

Age³

Between 2010 and 2024, Wrangell's population declined by 14 percent, or 339 residents. The losses were especially sharp among children and working-age residents. Over this period, the number of children decreased by 26 percent (149 fewer), those in their twenties and thirties fell by 19 percent (142 fewer), and residents in their fifties declined by nearly half, resulting in the loss of 235 people in that age group. In 1990, children under the age of twenty made up one-third of Wrangell's population, but by 2024 they accounted for only 21 percent.

At the same time, the senior population has grown significantly as residents age in place. Between 2010 and 2024, the number of residents aged sixty and older increased by 33 percent, adding 187 people. This group represented just 10 percent of Wrangell's population in 1990 but had expanded to 37 percent by 2024. Reflecting these shifts, Wrangell's median age in 2024 was 49.

While most Alaska communities have more births than deaths, and thus have a natural population increase Wrangell had the highest deaths to births ratio in the state from 2020 to 2024, reporting 1.6 deaths for every birth since 2020, for a total of 120 deaths and 76 births. Outmigration has deepened the decline: during the same period, 53 more people moved away from Wrangell than moved in.



Wrangell Population by Age Group, 2010 to 2024

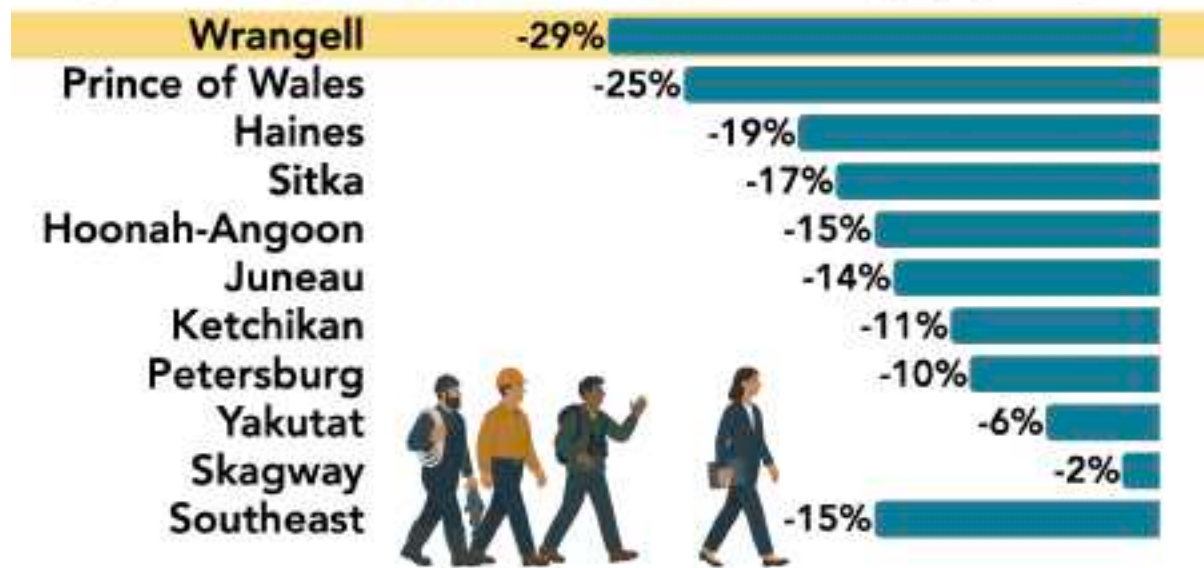
Age Group	2010	2024	Change 2010-2024
Under 10	265	213	-20%
10 to 19	307	210	-32%
Twenties	231	196	-15%
Thirties	202	219	8%
Forties	313	189	-40%
Fifties	478	243	-49%
Sixties	322	403	25%
70s+	251	357	42%
Median Age	46.4	49.1	2.7
Total Population	2,369	2,030	-14%

³ State of Alaska, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis.

Workforce Aging

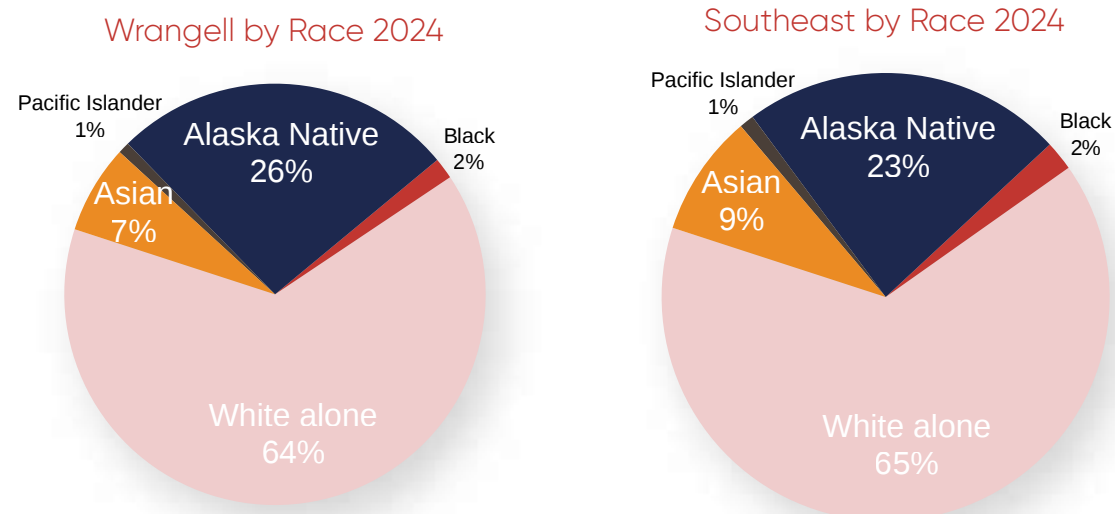
By 2024, the number of Wrangell residents of traditional workforce age had fallen by 29 percent from 2014. Although all Southeast Alaska communities have experienced declines in this age group, Wrangell's losses have been the steepest, underscoring the community's heightened vulnerability to workforce shortages.

2024 WORKING AGE VERSUS 2014



Race⁴

More than one-quarter of Wrangell residents identify as Alaska Native, a higher proportion than both the state overall (26 percent compared to 20 percent) and the Southeast region (23 percent).



⁴ American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Income

Median Household Income

Wrangell's median household income is substantially lower than that of the state, the Southeast region, and the nation, and it is rising at a slower pace than inflation. In 2023, the median household income in Wrangell was \$64,545—25 percent below the Alaska median, 36 percent below the Southeast median, and 17 percent below the national median. These income gaps are widening. In 2018, Wrangell's median household income trailed the national average by only 4 percent. Between 2018 and 2023, while inflation rose by 18 percent, Wrangell's household income increased by just 12 percent.

	United States	Alaska	Wrangell	Southeast Alaska
2018	\$60,293	\$76,715	\$57,583	\$75,657
2023	\$77,719	\$86,631	\$64,545	\$89,587
Change	29%	13%	12%	18%

Poverty⁵

In 2023, 10.9 percent of Wrangell residents lived below the federal poverty level. This rate is slightly lower than the poverty rates reported nationally and regionally.

Percentage of Population Below Poverty

	United States	Alaska	Wrangell	Southeast Alaska
2019	13.4%	10.7%	7.8%	9%
2023	12.5%	10.4%	10.9%	11.1%

⁵ American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (ACS S1701)

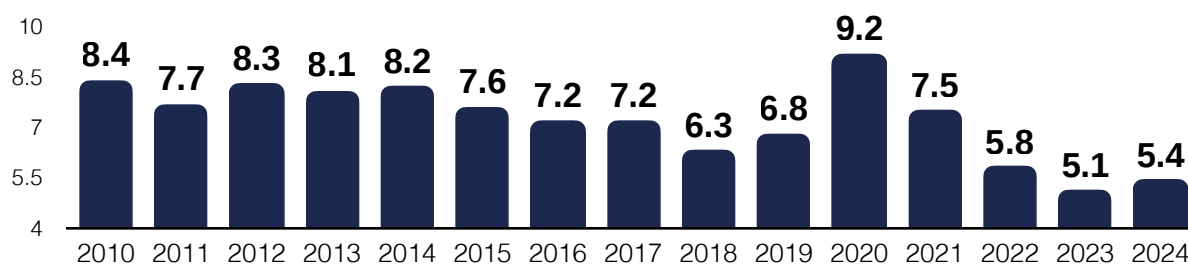
Other Demographic Data

Unemployment⁶

Over the past decade, Wrangell's annual unemployment rate has fluctuated between a high of 9.2 percent in 2020 and a low of 5.1 percent in 2023. In March 2025, the community recorded an unemployment rate of 4.9 percent, the lowest ever reported for that month. Because Wrangell's economy is heavily influenced by seasonal industries, unemployment rates vary widely throughout the year, typically peaking in January and February and reaching their lowest levels in July and August.

Unemployment in Wrangell, 2010 to 2025

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
2025	6.5	6.1	4.9	5.3	5.1	5.4	4.6	5.0					
2024	6.2	6.6	5.7	5.3	4.3	5.3	5.5	4.8	5.1	5.2	5.4	5	5.4
2023	6.3	7.5	5.8	5	4.7	4.6	4.1	3.1	3.9	4.4	6.1	5.6	5.1
2022	9.2	8.8	6.9	6.1	5.2	5.5	4.6	3.9	3.5	4.5	6.2	5.8	5.8
2021	8.8	8.8	8.2	8.2	7.2	7.8	7.0	6.0	6.8	6.7	7.0	6.9	7.5
2020	7.9	7.5	8.5	12.8	12.8	11.6	10.7	7.0	7.6	6.7	7.8	8.4	9.2
2019	9.6	9.2	8.2	6.6	5.7	6.5	5.5	5.5	5.1	5.8	6.9	7.2	6.8
2018	8.9	8.7	7.7	5.7	5.2	6.3	4.7	4.7	4.6	5.7	6.8	7.8	6.3
2017	9.6	9.2	8.4	6.8	6.2	6.6	5.4	6.1	6.2	6.3	7.7	8.1	7.2
2016	9.9	9.7	8.8	6.6	5.9	6.8	5.6	5.6	6.5	6.6	7.7	7.8	7.2
2015	10.3	10.0	8.6	7.1	7.1	7.5	6.0	5.2	6.0	6.9	8.5	9.2	7.6
2014	11.9	12.4	9.6	7.5	6.8	7.3	6.1	6.1	6.7	7.6	8.9	9.4	8.2
2013	11.7	11.2	9.6	6.8	6.3	6.9	6.0	5.6	6.0	8.4	9.4	10.4	8.1
2012	11.7	11.5	11.0	8.4	7.5	7.6	6.4	6.0	6.5	7.4	7.7	9.4	8.3
2011	10.4	9.5	8.6	7.4	6.7	7.4	5.6	5.3	6.0	7.8	8.5	10.6	7.7
2010	13.8	13.3	11.1	7.7	7.6	7.2	5.5	5.5	6.0	7.0	7.5	8.4	8.4



⁶ Alaska Department of Labor. Annual Unemployment Rates for City and Borough of Wrangell and Alaska 2010 to 2025. <https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/labforce/labdata.cfm?s=30&a=0> Note: Rain Coast Data was advised against relying on ADOL unemployment rates during pandemic, as the model is not calibrated to accurately measure this type of event on our economy.

Educational Attainment⁷

Wrangell residents generally have lower levels of educational attainment than those in the region, state, or nation. Among residents aged 25 and older, 90 percent hold a high school diploma or higher, but only 19 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. Nearly one-third (32 percent) have only a high school diploma, while 4.5 percent hold a graduate or professional degree. By comparison, 12 percent of adults across Southeast Alaska and the state hold a graduate or professional degree, and about one-third have at least a bachelor's degree. Earnings in Wrangell do not follow the same strong correlation with higher education found elsewhere. In 2023, residents with only a high school diploma earned a median of \$47,125. Those with a bachelor's degree or higher earned slightly less than those with some college but no degree—likely reflecting an older cohort moving into partial retirement rather than a lack of wage premium for higher education. Across the region, state, and nation, however, wages consistently increase with higher levels of educational attainment.

Top Educational Attainment and Wages for Wrangell Residents Aged 25 and Older

Population 25 years and over	% 2023	Median Earnings 2023
Less than high school	10%	\$12,000
High school degree or higher	90%	
High school graduate only (includes equivalency)	32%	\$47,125
Some college, no degree	29%	\$56,364
Associate's degree	11%	
Bachelor's degree or higher	19%	
Bachelor's degree	14%	\$51,486
Graduate or professional degree	4.5%	

Top Educational Attainment and Wages for Southeast Residents Aged 25 and Older

Population 25 years and over	% 2023	Median Earnings 2023
Less than high school	6%	\$29,670
High school degree or higher	94%	
High school graduate only (includes equivalency)	26%	\$39,734
Some college, no degree	26%	\$51,832
Associate's degree	9%	
Bachelor's degree or higher	33%	
Bachelor's degree	22%	\$62,936
Graduate or professional degree	12%	\$83,155

⁷ American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Residency⁸

Wrangell has the highest share of resident workers in Southeast Alaska. Only 21 percent of its workforce is made up of non-Alaska residents, compared to 30 percent across the region. Of the total workforce, 693 workers live in Wrangell, while 286 are from outside the community or state. Local residents account for 71 percent of all workers in Wrangell and capture 82 percent of total workforce earnings. These figures reflect employees rather than annualized jobs and do not include self-employed individuals.

Southeast Non Residents versus Resident Workers, 2023

Borough or Census Area	% Local residents	% Nonlocal residents (Non-local Alaskans)	Percent Non AK Residents
Skagway	27%	6%	67%
Sitka	52%	6%	42%
Hoonah-Angoon	47%	11%	42%
Petersburg	57%	5%	38%
Yakutat	50%	12%	38%
Haines	61%	8%	31%
Ketchikan	64%	8%	29%
Prince of Wales	68%	6%	25%
Juneau	71%	6%	23%
Wrangell	71%	8%	21%
Southeast Total	63%	7%	30%

⁸ Nonresidents Working in Alaska. Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Healthcare

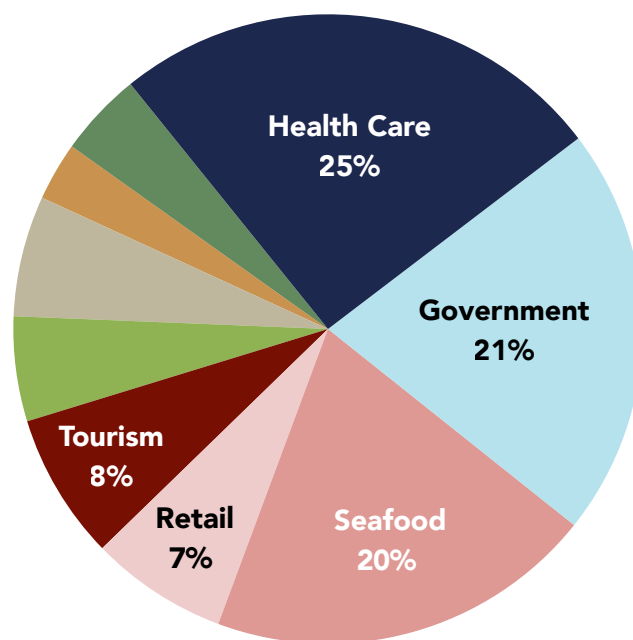
Healthcare has become Wrangell's dominant economic sector. In 2024, healthcare workers earned \$15.2 million in wages, with 171 employees—a 53 percent increase from 112 in 2016. The sector accounted for 16 percent of all jobs and one-quarter of total wages, making it Wrangell's largest industry by earnings. Healthcare wages exceeded those paid to the combined government sector (state, local, tribal, and federal) and surpassed total seafood sector earnings. Although the government and seafood sectors employed more workers in 2024, healthcare generated greater overall payroll. Reliable estimates of earlier growth are limited, as Wrangell healthcare job counts were considered confidential prior to 2024.

Most of Wrangell's healthcare workforce is employed by the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC), which is now the community's most important business. The sector shifted from a public to private model in 2018, when SEARHC assumed ownership of the city-run Wrangell Medical Center. In February 2021, SEARHC completed construction of a new 44,500-square-foot healthcare campus, anchored by a critical access hospital and supported by 80 staff.⁹

By 2025, SEARHC's Wrangell operations included approximately 174 full-time equivalent workers, including direct contractors. The system provides a full range of services, including the Critical Access Hospital, Primary Care Clinic, Long-Term Care, Specialty Clinics, and supporting services such as laboratory, imaging, rehabilitation, social work, education, behavioral health, and dental care. Long-term care capacity was recently expanded from 14 to 18 beds.¹⁰ SEARHC is also investing in workforce housing in Wrangell, with new units expected to be completed in late 2026. Eight rental units are planned with twelve more that could be added in Phase 2.

In 2022, SEARHC closed Crossings, a Wrangell-based behavioral health program that had employed about 20 staff and 50 seasonal guides at its peak. At the time of closure in January 2022, the program had 16 staff in Wrangell, and services were consolidated to Sitka.¹¹

Wrangell Employment Earnings 2025



⁹ March 2022 SEARHC presentation: https://www.pmcak.org/uploads/3/1/1/0/31108911/searhc_slide_deck_3.24.22.pdf

¹⁰ Personal communication SEARHC.

¹¹ SEARHC permanently closes Wrangell's Alaska Crossings program by KSTK <https://www.kstk.org/2022/01/12/searhc-permanently-closes-wrangells-alaska-crossings-program/>

Government

In 2024, government accounted for 19 percent of Wrangell jobs and 21 percent of workforce earnings—down from 28 percent in 2019. The sector supported 199 average annual jobs and \$12.6 million in wages.

Local and tribal government employment makes up the majority of this sector, with 138 workers earning \$7.8 million in 2024. This represents a major structural change for Wrangell. Until 2018, roughly one-quarter of all City and Borough positions were tied to the Wrangell Medical Center. In November of that year, about 55 hospital-related jobs were transferred to SEARHC when it assumed ownership of the facility.

However, even after health care jobs were moved to SEARHC, Wrangell City and Borough jobs have continued to decrease - declining by 36 more annualized workers in the past five years, a 21% decline. Current CBW employment includes the Wrangell School District, Wrangell Municipal Light and Power, the Public Library, the Nolan Center, Ports and Harbors, Parks and Recreation, Public Works (solid waste, water, and wastewater), and general administrative services.

Government employment and earnings in Wrangell, 2010 to 2024

Government Sector	2010	2013	2015	2018	2019	2021	2024	Change 2019-2024
Total Government Employment	318	325	309	292	234	187	199	-15%
Federal	58	50	51	43	41	35	40	-2%
State Employment	23	25	23	20	19	18	21	11%
City and Tribal	236	250	235	229	174	134	138	-21%
Total Government Payroll, adjusted for inflation	\$19 million	\$19 million	\$17.5 million	\$18.1 million	\$12.9 million	\$11.4 million	\$12.6 million	-2%

Tax Revenue

Wrangell General Fund Revenue Sources FY2023

Total = \$7.4 million¹²

In FY2023, Wrangell's General Fund revenues totaled \$7.4 million. Sales tax is the community's single largest revenue source. The City and Borough of Wrangell levies a 7 percent sales tax, which generated \$3.8 million in FY2024. Collections have grown in recent years, aided by the adoption of online sales tax collection beginning in 2018.

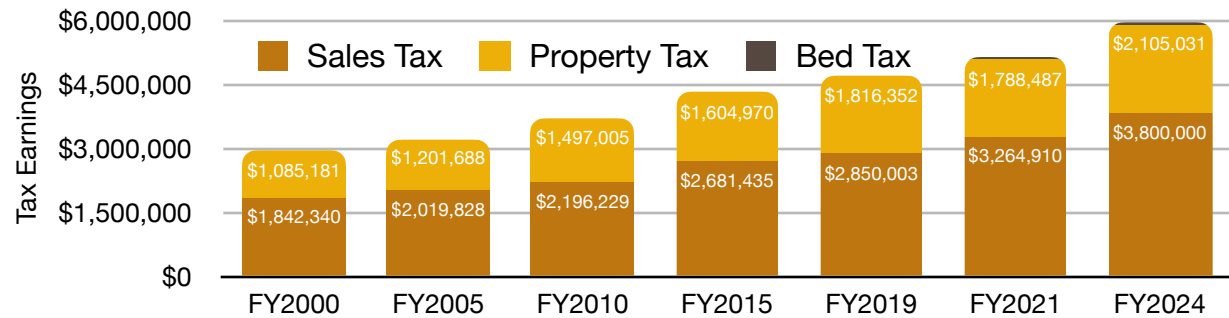
Property taxes also provide a steady source of municipal revenue. Locally assessed land values have increased consistently since 2000, reaching \$288.6 million in 2024. This growth has correspondingly expanded property tax receipts.

Tourism contributes on a smaller scale through Wrangell's 6 percent bed tax, which generated nearly \$62,000 in FY2024.

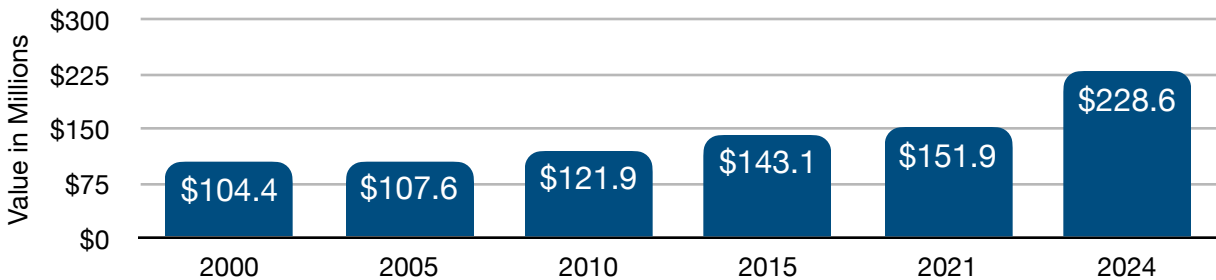
City and Borough of Wrangell Taxes

Year	Bed Tax	Real & Personal Property Tax	Sales Tax	Total
Current Rate	6%	Effective Mill Rate 12.75* (4 Mills in some parts outside service area)	7%	
2024 Earnings	\$61,908	\$2,105,031	\$3,800,000	\$5,966,939

Wrangell Taxes, 2000-2024



Wrangell Property Value, 2000-2024



¹² Draft budget of the City and Borough of Wrangell

Seafood Sector

Seafood remains one of Wrangell's most important industries, providing 18 percent of all annualized jobs (181 workers) and 20 percent of workforce earnings (\$11.9 million) in 2024. The sector supports local fishermen and onshore seafood processing facilities, making it a cornerstone of the community's economy.

Over the past decade, jobs and wages in the sector have declined sharply, primarily due to reduced processing activity. Trident Seafoods, the community's largest processor, closed its Wrangell plant at the end of the 2019 season and remained shuttered for three years amid the pandemic, weak salmon returns, and low prices. The facility reopened in 2023, restoring critical processing capacity.

Wrangell Seafood Sector, 2010-2024

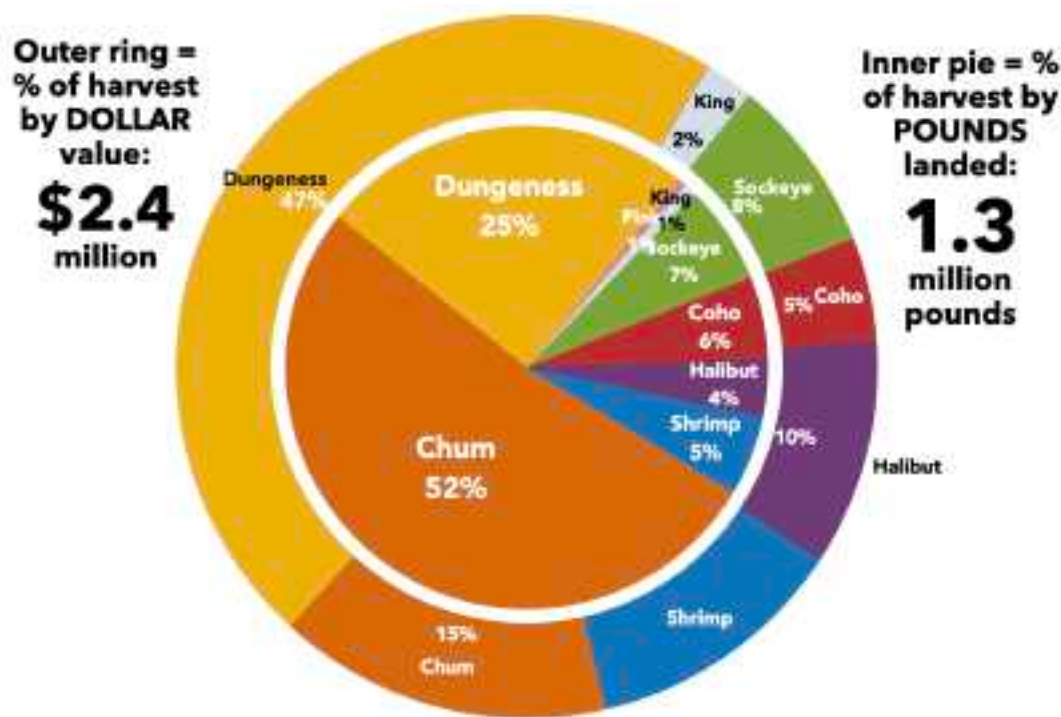
Seafood Sector	2010	2015	2018	2019	2021	2024	Change 2019-2024
Seafood Jobs (annualized)	271	281	220	198	181	194	-2%
Total Seafood Workforce Earnings	\$14,961,150	\$13,371,074	\$11,868,545	\$10,528,260	\$9,784,855	\$11,946,767	13%
Seafood Processing Workers (peak)	377	284	174	173	180	162	-6%
Total Seafood Processing Wages	\$2,743,874	\$4,006,185	\$2,383,743	\$2,554,170	\$2,352,663	\$3,416,729	34%
Port of Wrangell Seafood Pounds Landed	2,152,282	3,079,439	2,500,576	2,338,822	1,471,085	1,309,681	-44%
Port of Wrangell Seafood Value (nominal \$)	\$2,848,209	\$2,659,211	\$2,376,921	\$4,770,389	\$4,613,561	\$2,374,059	-50%
Commercial Fishing Vessels Homeported in Wrangell	208	233	212	214	187	181	-13%

¹³ Alaska Department of Labor Employment & Wage data; US Census Nonemployer; Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission; DCCED; Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Port of Wrangell: Total Volume and Value of Wrangell Seafood¹⁴

In 2024, Wrangell's harvest was dominated by salmon, accounting for 66 percent of total volume but only 31 percent of ex-vessel value. Dungeness crab comprised just one-quarter of landed pounds but generated nearly half (47 percent) of total ex-vessel value, underscoring the species' economic importance to the community.

Seafood Landed in Wrangell by Species, 2025



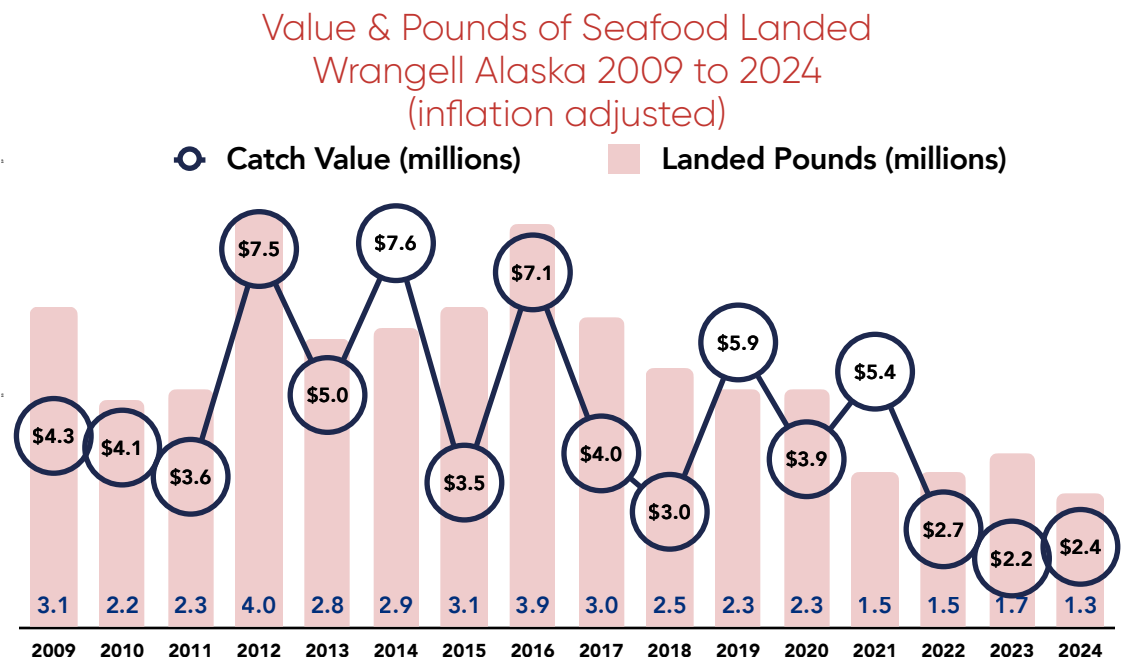
While Wrangell landed fewer pounds of seafood in 2021 than in 2020, strong Dungeness crab prices buoyed overall value. Since then, however, the community has endured three consecutive years of very low ex-vessel value. From 2022 through 2024, Wrangell experienced some of its weakest seafood earnings on record, driven by poor salmon runs and depressed global prices. The 2020 season, among the worst in Southeast Alaska's history, set the stage for this downturn, but for Wrangell the following three years proved even more difficult.

The challenges stem from a perfect storm of market pressures. Alaska's seafood values have been at historic lows, as the pandemic collapsed demand with widespread restaurant closures—the primary channel for U.S. and global seafood consumption. At the same time, large global salmon harvests created oversupply and pushed prices down further. Excess inventory from these seasons lingered, keeping values depressed well beyond the initial shocks.

There are signs of recovery: as inventories decline, prices are beginning to rebound. Yet risks remain. Trade tariffs continue to threaten Alaska's export-driven seafood economy, with the potential to undermine competitiveness in critical world markets.

¹⁴ Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

Because annual seafood harvests can fluctuate widely, average values over time provide a more accurate picture than single-year comparisons. Over the past decade, the ex-vessel value of Wrangell's seafood catch has ranged from a low of \$2.2 million in 2023 to a high of \$7.6 million in 2013 (after adjusting for inflation). Landed volumes have shown similar swings, from more than four million pounds in 2012 to just 1.3 million pounds in 2024.



Seafood Processing¹⁵

Seafood processing creates additional value in this industry. Total count of workers in the Wrangell seafood industry is much higher than the annualized job count. Seafood processing employment peaks in late July when the processors are at maximum effort.

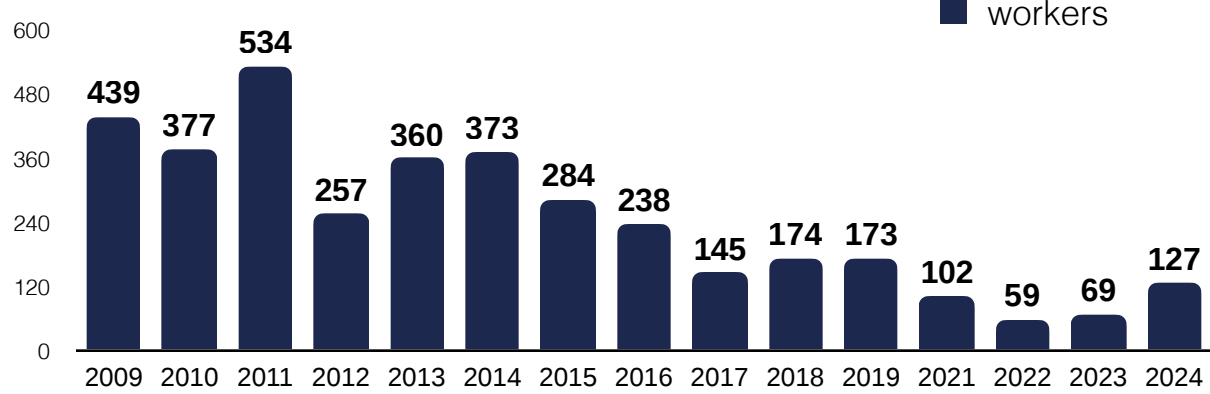
Trident Seafoods, one of Wrangell's two major processors, did not operate during the 2020–2022 salmon seasons. The company reopened in 2023 and has since operated in both the 2024 and 2025 seasons. A second, smaller processor—Sea Level—handles halibut, black cod, and rockfish in the early season, before shifting primarily to crab and salmon later in the year.

Processing employment has contracted significantly over past decades, along with pounds landed. In 2011, Wrangell employed 534 processing workers who earned nearly \$4 million in wages. By 2024, employment had fallen to 127 workers, a 76 percent decline, with total wages of \$2.7 million. Still, this marks a notable improvement compared to the 2022 and 2023 seasons. In 2023, just 69 processing workers were needed in Wrangell, up 10 workers from the year before.¹⁶

¹⁵ Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Commercial Fisheries. Wrangell Production Shorebased Processors and Direct Marketers custom processing with Shorebased Processors.

¹⁶ Alaska Department of Labor. Seafood Processing Workforce and Wages by Borough, 2009 - 2024.

Wrangell Seafood Processing Workers 2009 to 2024



Seafood Processing Workforce and Wages 2009-2024

Year	Total Workers	Wages	% non-resident workers
2009	439	\$2,760,843	71%
2010	377	\$2,743,874	71%
2011	534	\$3,991,965	81%
2012	257	\$2,610,723	69%
2013	360	\$4,472,669	76%
2014	373	\$4,015,454	79%
2015	284	\$4,006,185	76%
2016	238	\$2,643,179	63%
2017	145	\$1,980,904	68%
2018	174	\$2,383,743	76%
2019	173	\$2,554,170	83%
2021	102	\$1,498,901	62%
2022	59	\$1,093,165	56%
2023	69	\$1,595,335	62%
2024	127	\$2,798,392	NA
Change 2019-2024	-27%	10%	

The Larger Maritime Economy

In Wrangell there were 230 private “blue jobs”—as maritime jobs are sometimes called—with \$13.7 million in associated workforce earnings in 2024. The maritime sector represents a shrinking part of Wrangell’s economy, as the seafood sector has declined in recent years.

A decade ago, Wrangell’s maritime industries generated more earnings than any other, accounting for 36 percent of all local wages. By 2024, that share had dropped to 21 percent. Health care and government have since overtaken the blue economy as Wrangell’s largest sources of workforce earnings.

Wrangell Maritime Employment and Workforce Earnings 2010 to 2024

Year	Original Value	2024 Dollars (inflation adjusted)	Annualized Employment
2010	\$16,296,975	\$21,853,000	295
2013	\$15,783,920	\$19,546,000	299
2015	\$14,991,092	\$18,378,000	328
2018	\$13,415,195	\$15,793,000	269
2019	\$12,102,159	\$14,114,000	249
2021	\$11,227,012	\$12,708,000	220
2024	\$13,745,520	\$13,746,000	230
% change 2015-2024	-8%	-25%	-30%
Change 2015-2024	-\$1,245,572	-\$4,632,000	-98

The Wrangell Shipyard

While seafood processing and commercial fishing account for most maritime employment in Wrangell, the shipyard also creates important jobs and wages.

Following the collapse of the regional timber industry, Wrangell repositioned itself as a hub for maritime industrial services in southern Southeast Alaska. Its central location allows fishermen to access emergency repairs while staying close to their fishing grounds, and more vessel owners are taking advantage of the ability to complete repairs near home.



The City of Wrangell redeveloped the former mill site into a marine center, literally building on the sawdust remains of the timber industry. The facility includes a tunnel freezer, cold storage, vessel haul-out, and boat storage. A 150-ton travel lift was installed in 2006, followed by a 300-ton lift in 2014 capable of hauling boats up to 180 feet long.

Today, the seven-acre facility supports a diverse set of skilled trades, including wooden shipwrights, fiberglass specialists, machinists, steel welders, commercial painters, sandblasters, and metal fabricators, as well as technicians in hydraulics, electronics, and refrigeration. The yard also includes a 40-ton hydraulic trailer, wash-down facilities, and upland storage capacity for more than 85 boats.

From 2019 to 2024, the jobs associated with the shipyard declined. Annualized jobs fell 41%, from 51 to 30, while total associated workforce earnings fell 45% from \$1.6 million to less than \$900,000.

Wrangell Maritime Economy Components, 2015-2024 2014 to 2024

Maritime Economy	2015	2019	2021	2024	% Change 2019-2024
Seafood Employment (annualized)	281	198	181	194	-2%
Seafood Earnings	\$13,371,074	\$10,528,260	\$9,784,855	\$11,946,767	13%
Other Maritime (Boatbuilding, etc.)	47	51	39	30	-41%
Other Maritime Earnings	\$1,620,018	\$1,573,899	\$1,442,157	\$859,753	-45%
Commercial Fish Vessels Homeported	233	214	187	181	-15%
Port of Wrangell: Total Seafood Pounds	3,079,439	2,338,822	1,471,085	1,309,681	-44%
Port of Wrangell: Total Seafood Value	\$2,659,211	\$4,770,389	\$4,613,561	\$2,374,059	-50%

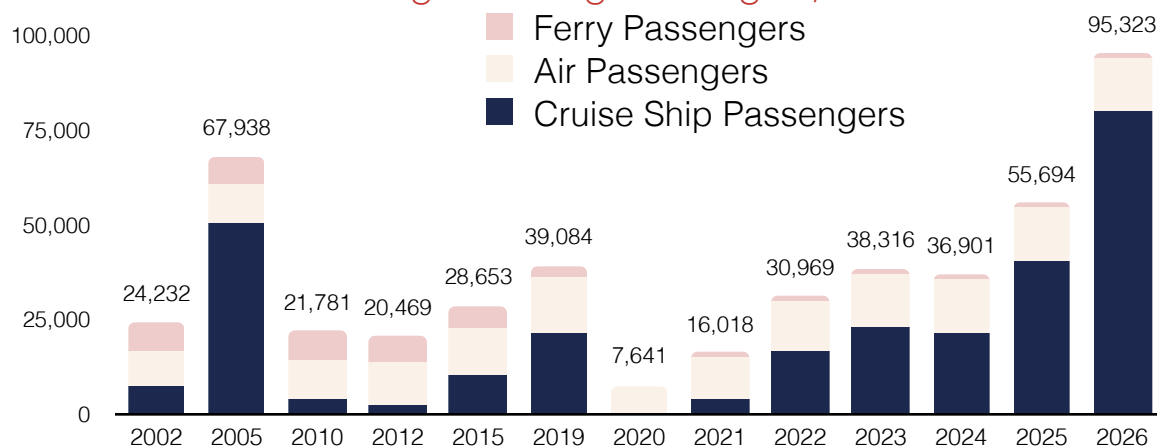
Visitor Sector

Tourism is an important economic driver in Wrangell, though smaller in scale than in Southeast Alaska overall. In 2024, the visitor industry supported 124 annual average jobs—12 percent of total local employment—with \$4.5 million in workforce earnings, or 8 percent of all wages. By comparison, tourism across Southeast Alaska represented 19 percent of all jobs and 13 percent of earnings.

Wrangell Tourism Employment and Workforce Earnings 2014 to 2024

Year	Total Visitor Industry Employment	Total Visitor Industry Workforce Earnings	Average Visitor Industry Wage
2014	101	\$2,244,990	\$22,227
2017	100	\$2,406,618	\$24,066
2018	106	\$2,889,447	\$27,259
2019	110	\$3,515,030	\$31,955
2021	103	\$3,189,000	\$30,961
2024	124	\$4,503,247	\$36,317
% change 2019-2024	13%	28%	14%
Change 2019-2024	14	\$988,217	\$4,362

Total Wrangell Arriving Passengers, 2002 to 2024



Changes in the Visitor Industry

Wrangell is poised for its strongest tourism seasons in two decades. In 2025, the community is projected to host between 40,400 and 45,428 visitors, depending on ship capacity utilization. Even at the lower estimate, this would mark Wrangell’s busiest tourism year since 2005. Based on current cruise schedules, 2026 is expected to set a new record, with nearly 80,000 visitors.

Wrangell has developed a boutique tourism sector, anchored by Anan Wildlife Observatory and jet boat tours. Because Forest Service permits cap the number of annual Anan visitors, growth opportunities have been limited.¹⁷ Historically, Wrangell also relied on ferry travelers who often spent several days in the community, supporting local accommodations, dining, and tours. However, deep cuts to Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) service have sharply reduced ferry visitation, disproportionately impacting Wrangell. The estimated number of tourists using the ferry system fell by 92 percent between 2014 and 2024, causing the visitor businesses built around ferry traffic to struggle.

Estimated Summer Tourists to Wrangell 2010–2025

Summer Tourists to Wrangell	2010	2014	2024	2025	% Change 2024–2025
Total Tourists	11,907	13,256	25,057	45,428	73%
Cruise	6,779	8,096	21,207	41,968	98%
Air	1,768	2,008	2,600	2,300	-12%
Ferry	2,000	2,100	170	160	-6%
Transient Vessels (includes yachts)	960	1,052	1,080	1,000	-7%

Air: US Bureau of Transportation Statistics RITA arriving passengers. **Cruise Passengers:** Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska. Small cruise ship schedules with research regarding total capacity. **Alaska Marine Highway System:** Annual Traffic Volume Reports and direct data request. **Yacht** counts provided by City and Borough of Wrangell. Due to a change in the counting process, these figures are no longer comparable to past years. “Summer tourists” are calculated in a variety of ways. All yacht and cruise passengers are considered “tourists.” Air and ferry passengers are calculated by subtracting October to April average passenger arrivals from monthly summer passenger arrivals. From this number total seafood processing workers in Wrangell per summer is subtracted.

The challenge for Wrangell is how to capitalize on the expected influx of cruise visitors. To translate growing visitor volumes into jobs, wages, and local spending, the community will need to expand shore excursion options and visitor services in advance of the 2026 season.

¹⁷ The Forest Services caps the permits due the bears' natural behavior and tolerance for human interaction while fishing. Before the permits were regulated by the Forest Service, Wrangell guides worked together to manage visitor/bear interactions safely.

Summer Visitation and Spending Analysis

In 2024, summer visitors spent an estimated \$5.9 million in Wrangell. This analysis was conducted using a full accounting of City and Borough of Wrangell sales tax receipts from visitor-serving businesses. Winter receipts were subtracted from summer receipts to isolate seasonal visitor spending, supplemented by accommodation tax and short-term rental data.

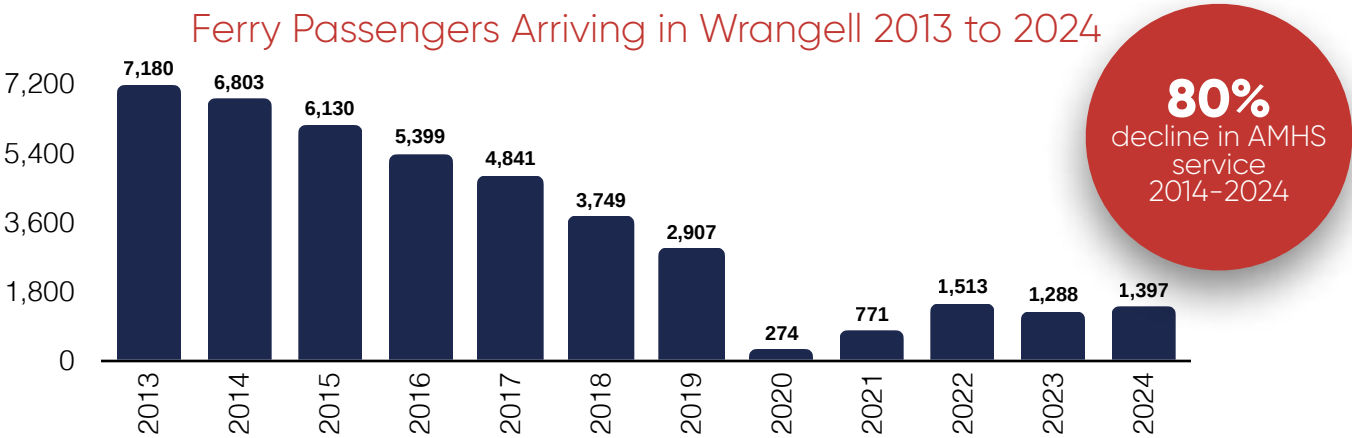
Total Tourist Spending, 2024

Summer Spending by Visitors by Category	2024
Total estimated summer tourist spending	\$5,914,820
Food, Beverages	\$1,969,159
Excursions and Transportation	\$1,602,187
Accommodation	\$1,383,618
Visitor Retail Spending	\$959,854

Note that Wrangell has a sales tax cap of \$3,000 that applies both to goods and services. Sales may have been missed by this analysis if they were over \$3,000; however only for the portion over \$3,000.

Ferry Ridership¹⁸

In 2024, nearly 1,400 AMHS passengers arrived in Wrangell, including an estimated 160 ferry tourists. This reflects a modest increase of about 100 passengers over 2023. However, the long-term decline has been steep: since 2014, the number of ferry passengers disembarking in Wrangell has fallen by 80 percent—a nearly five-fold decrease—due to service cuts and fewer sailings.



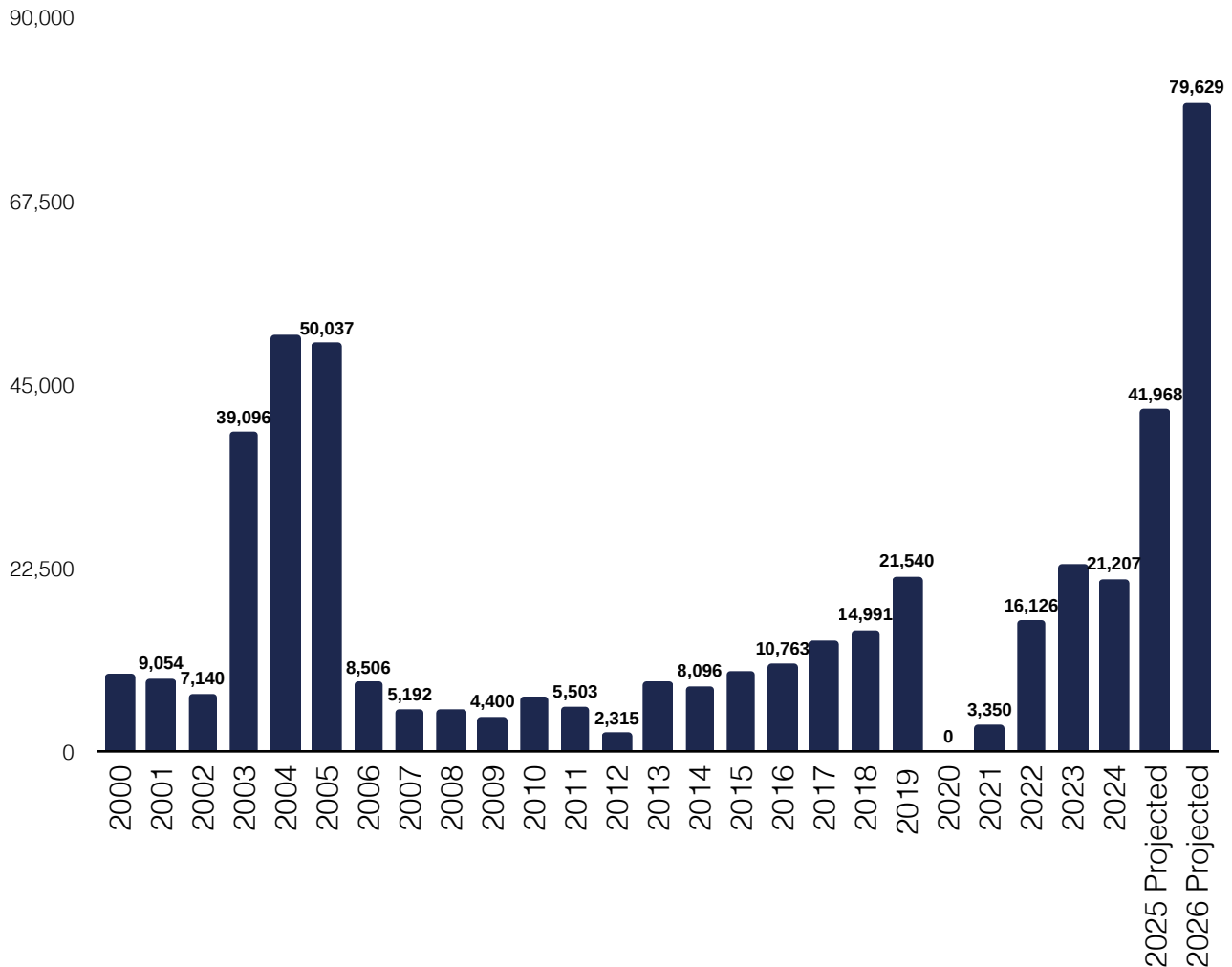
¹⁸ Alaska Marine Highway System Annual Traffic Volume Reports for 2010 and 2014. Direct data request for 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 data.

Cruise Passengers¹⁹

In 2025, Wrangell is expected to have 117 port calls from 41,969 passengers, if all ships are entirely full. This represents a 74% capacity increase over 2024. In 2026, based on the draft schedule, Wrangell is expected to have more than 150 port calls from nearly 80,000 passengers, if all ships are at 100% capacity — nearly doubling the number of expected ship passengers for 2025.

In 2024, 21,207 cruise passengers visited Wrangell. The projection had been for a capacity of 31,437 cruise passengers, reflecting the challenges of building businesses around year-to-year projections and the value of collaboration with cruise lines to increase certainty for local operators.

Total Cruise Passengers in Wrangell 2000–2026



¹⁹ Midsized cruise passenger actuals were provided by McDowell Group & Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska. 2019 are estimates based on capacity. All other cruise passenger data are estimated totals based on small cruise ship schedules and research regarding total capacity.

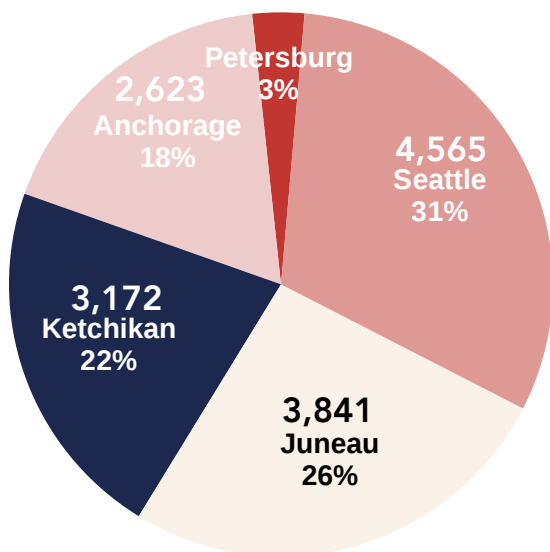
Air Passengers²⁰

In 2024, Wrangell recorded 14,297 arriving passengers, comparable to 2019 totals.

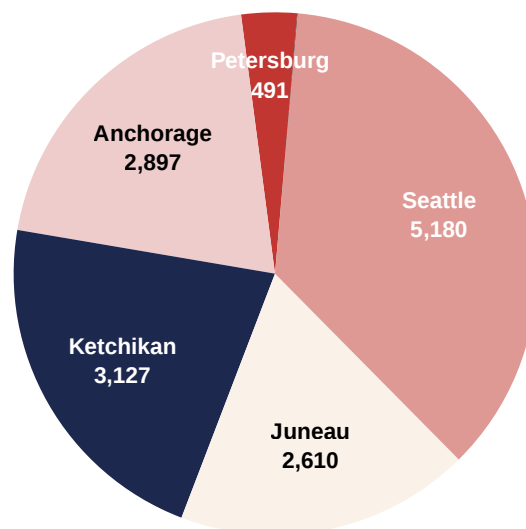


Among these arrivals, 36 percent originated in Seattle, 22 percent in Ketchikan, 20 percent in Anchorage, and 18 percent in Juneau. This represents a change from 2019 when 26% of all disembarking passengers originated in Juneau. These figures represent scheduled flights only.

Passengers Disembarkments in Wrangell by City 2019



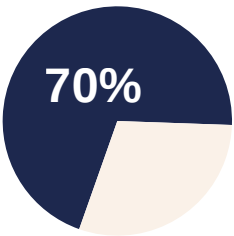
Passengers Disembarkments in Wrangell by City 2024



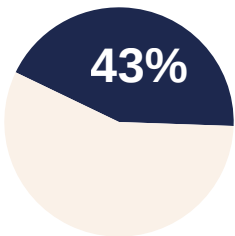
²⁰ Bureau of Transportation Statistics T-100 Market data.

Housing Units = 1,300

**Occupied =
912**



**Renters =
43%**



Occupied Housing

Wrangell has 1,300 housing units, of which 912 are occupied and 388 are vacant—representing a vacancy rate of 30 percent. This is substantially higher than both the state and Southeast Alaska averages, each at 19 percent. Because vacancy is measured in April, this total includes homes used only seasonally. Even with that adjustment, Wrangell’s vacancy rate is high relative to similar communities.

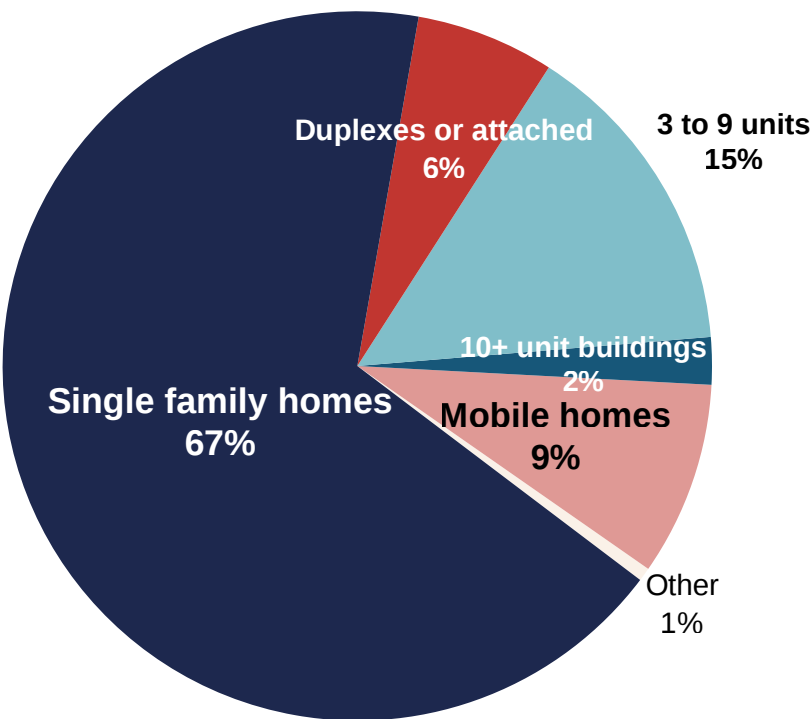
Housing Tenure

Of Wrangell’s occupied housing, 53 percent is owner-occupied and 43 percent renter-occupied. This contrasts with the more typical pattern of roughly two-thirds homeowners and one-third renters, meaning Wrangell has an unusually high share of renters.

Housing stock by type

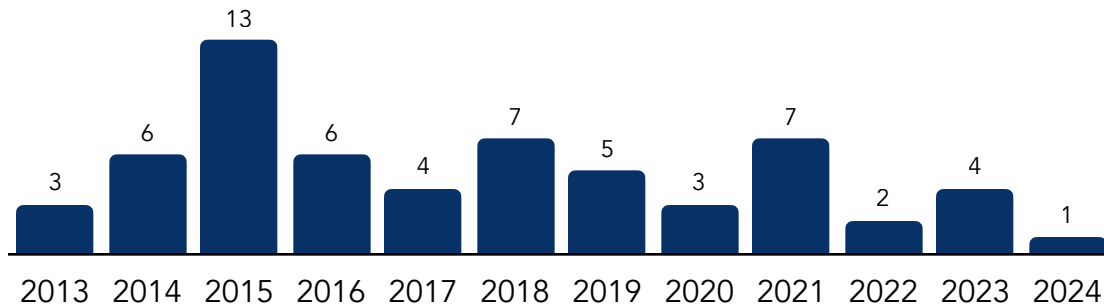
Single-family homes make up 67 percent of Wrangell’s housing stock, slightly above the statewide average of 63 percent.

A distinguishing feature of Wrangell is its relatively high share of mobile homes, which account for 9 percent of all housing units. This compares to 4.6 percent statewide and 6.3 percent across Southeast Alaska.



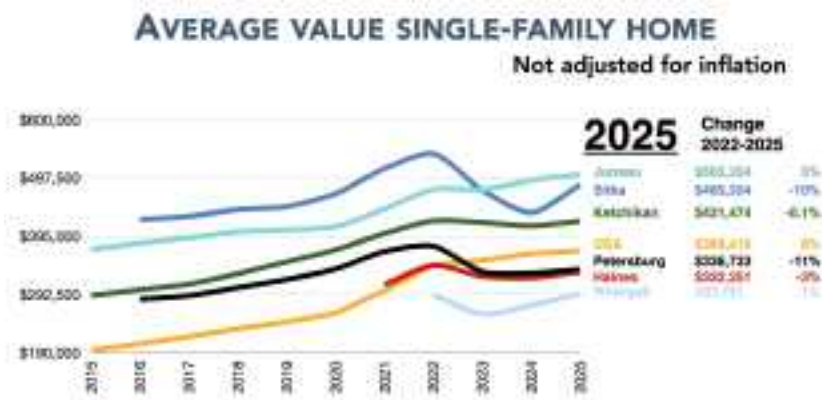
New Housing

Based on permit activity by the Alaska Department of Labor, Wrangell has added more than 60 new housing units since 2013. However, the U.S. Census shows that over the last decade the number of occupied units in the community declined by 120 units, and could reflect an increased number of those with summer homes in Wrangell.

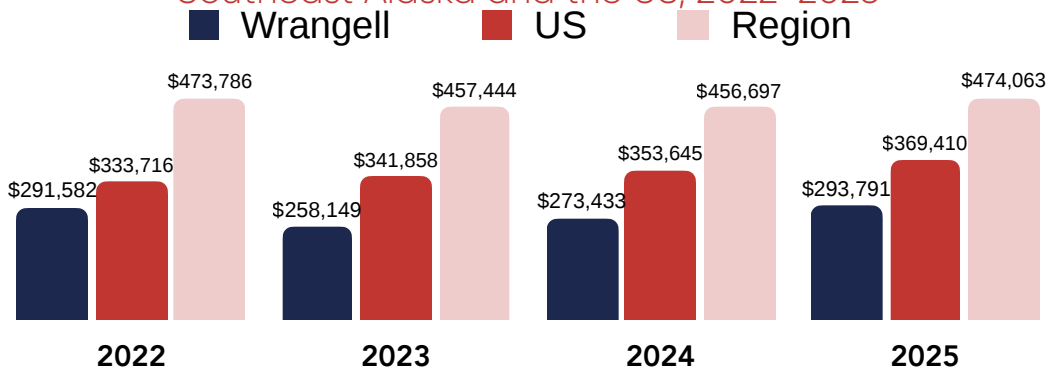


Housing Prices

Wrangell has some of the most affordable housing in Southeast Alaska, based on Zillow's tracking of six regional communities. In the first eight months of 2025, the average single-family home value was just under \$300,000—comparable to 2022 prices and below the U.S. average. While affordability may make Wrangell attractive to buyers, home quality may not be directly comparable to markets elsewhere.



Average Value of a Single-family Home in Wrangell, Southeast Alaska and the US, 2022-2025



Source: Zillow Research

Housing Cost Burdened

Wrangell households are less likely to be cost-burdened than those statewide. In 2023, only 15 percent of homeowners and 29 percent of renters in Wrangell spent more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs. This compares to 22 percent of homeowners and 45 percent of renters statewide.

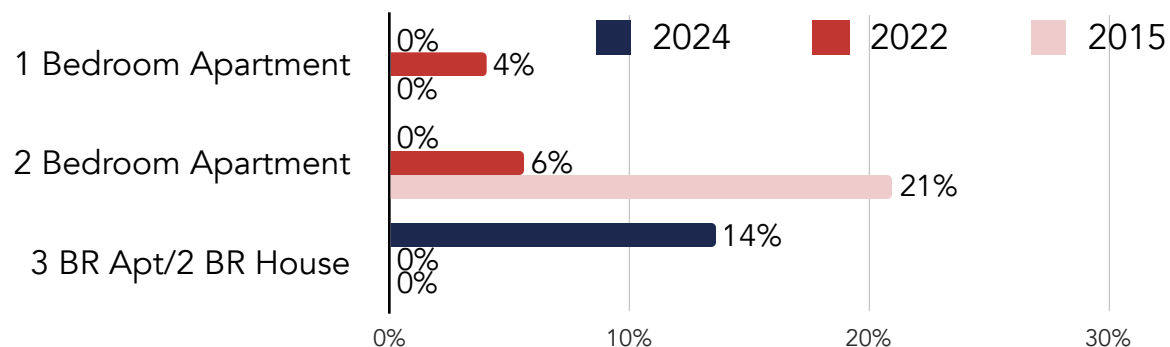
Percentage of Housing Cost-Burdened Households 2023

	United States	Alaska	Southeast Alaska	Wrangell
Home Owners ACS B25091	22%	22%	22%	15%
Renters ACS DP04	52%	45%	43%	29%

Rental Vacancy Rates

In 2024 Wrangell had zero vacancy rates in several categories. According to the Alaska Rental Market Survey Results, there was a zero vacancy rate for efficiency and one-bedroom apartments, and one and two bedroom rental houses. Higher vacancy rates began for larger homes and apartments. The rental surveys are conducted in spring and the survey combines the Wrangell and Petersburg boroughs.

Vacancy Rate by Rental Unit Type and Number of Bedrooms, 2019 and 2015



Land Ownership

The City and Borough of Wrangell encompasses 2,582 square miles of land and 883 square miles of water. However, land ownership is dominated by federal holdings, which cover 97 percent of the land base. The State of Alaska manages 2.5 percent, while the City and Borough controls just 0.08 percent, and other private landholders account for only 0.17 percent. The extremely limited supply of municipally and privately owned land constrains Wrangell's ability to support housing development and private-sector growth.

Wrangell Business Climate Survey

Each year, Southeast Conference conducts a regional business climate survey to track confidence and expectations across Southeast Alaska. In 2025, 64 Wrangell business owners and operators from 16 different economic sectors responded, representing a combined workforce of 600. Their responses highlight persistent challenges in Wrangell's economy, but also areas of cautious optimism.

Low Business Climate Ratings: Wrangell reported the second-lowest business climate rating in the region. In 2025, 38 percent of business leaders described the economy as good or very good, while 60 percent rated it poor or very poor. Negative perceptions were led by Wrangell's blue economy—fishermen and maritime workers—89 percent of whom gave the current climate a poor rating.

Outlook is Similar to Region as a Whole: While Wrangell in prior years reported the most negative outlook in the region, in 2025 its business leaders were more aligned with the regional average. Sixty percent said they have a positive outlook for the coming year, including 21 percent who believe conditions will improve. Tourism leaders expressed the greatest optimism: 88 percent had a positive view of the coming year, and 44 percent believed their outlook was better or much better than the year prior.

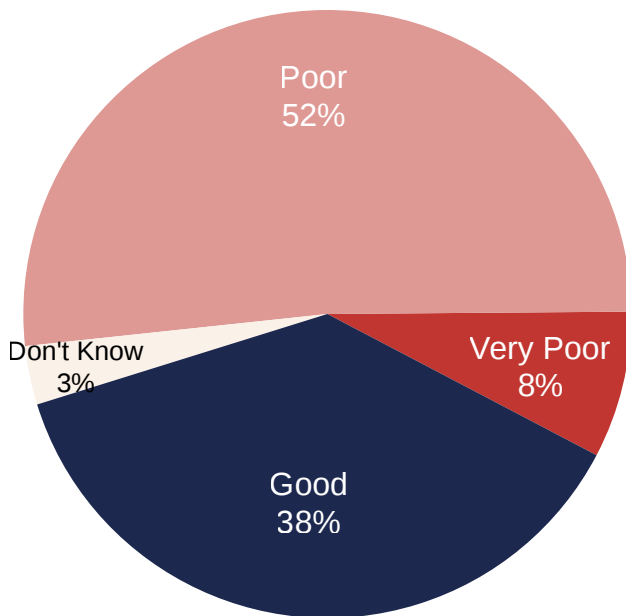
Hiring Expectations Also Similar to Region: Wrangell's hiring outlook also mirrored the region overall, although a higher share of respondents reported uncertainty. Job growth is expected to be concentrated in the visitor industry, with 31 percent of employers anticipating adding staff in 2025. Seafood businesses were split: 11 percent expected to expand hiring, but 33 percent anticipated staff reductions, the highest proportion of any sector.

Retention and Turnover: When asked about factors affecting workforce attraction and retention, Wrangell business leaders pointed to childcare shortages, the high cost of living, and transportation costs as their most pressing issues. This differs from the rest of the region, where housing availability was ranked as the number one workforce challenge. Wrangell respondents also cited quality of life, recreation opportunities, and a homegrown workforce as the most important drivers of worker retention.

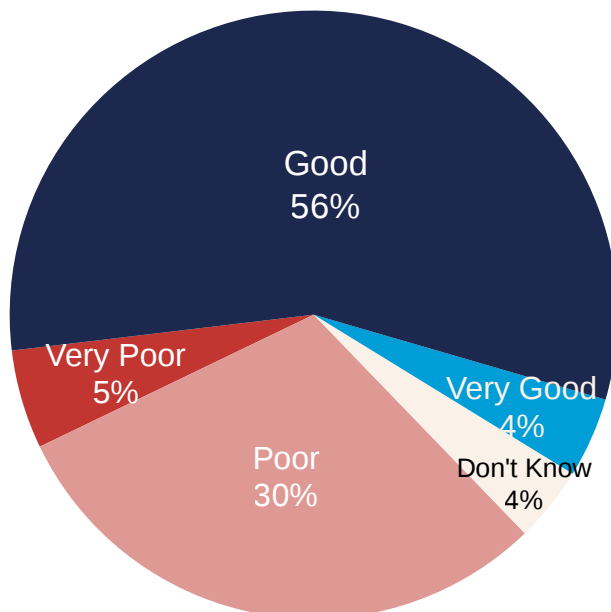
Federal Policy Impacts: Wrangell businesses expressed concern over the effects of federal decision-making. Forty-one percent expect tariffs, Executive Orders, and other federal actions to negatively affect their business, including 23 percent who anticipate very negative impacts. Specific concerns included higher costs from tariffs, funding cuts to NOAA, and reduced support for fisheries safety and tourism. Only 6 percent of respondents expected positive effects from federal policy.

Wrangell Business Climate Spring 2025

2025 Wrangell Alaska: **How do you view the overall business climate right now?**
38% Positive / 60% Negative



2025 Southeast Alaska: **How do you view the overall business climate right now?**
60% Positive / 35% Negative



Southeast Alaska Annual Business Climate Survey

In April and May of 2022, 440 Southeast Alaska business owners and top managers responded to Southeast Conference's Business Climate Survey, including 64 Wrangell business leaders with a total of 600 workers, and 16 economic sectors.

Southeast Economy Now: How do you view the Southeast business climate right now?

In 2025, 60% have a positive view of the Southeast business climate.

Wrangell Now

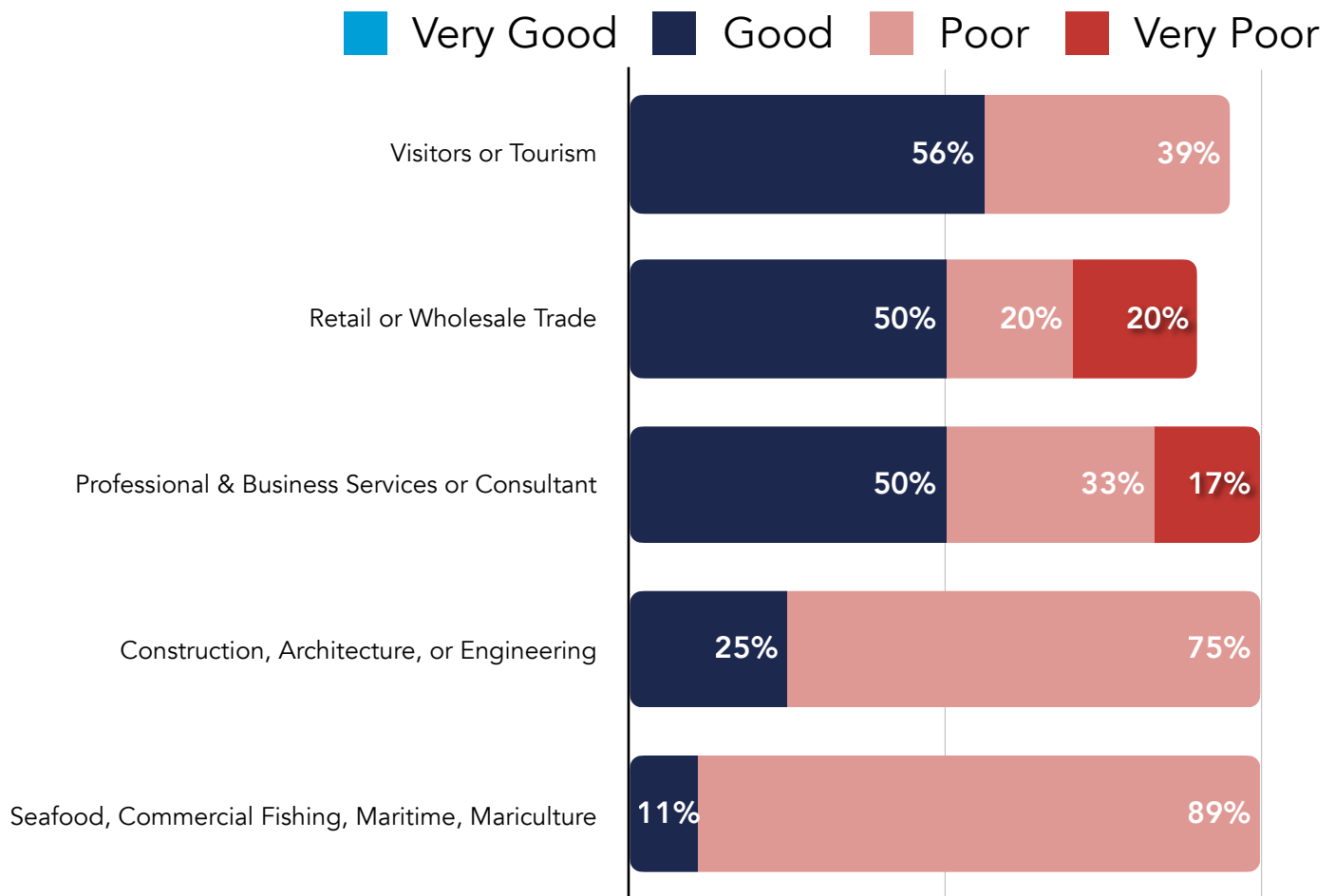
Wrangell's business climate was the among most negative in the region in 2025, with 38% having a positive view on the current economy, and 60% calling it poor or very poor.

The poor rating was led by those in Wrangell's blue economy, fishermen and maritime workers, who were much more like to say the business climate was poor than good.

Wrangell Business Climate Results: By Industry

The following graphic breaks out how the Wrangell business climate is viewed by each sector. Those in tourism are most likely to call the current economy good or very good; while the seafood and construction sectors are most likely to call the economy poor or very poor.

April **2025** Southeast Alaska: **How do you view the overall business climate right now?**

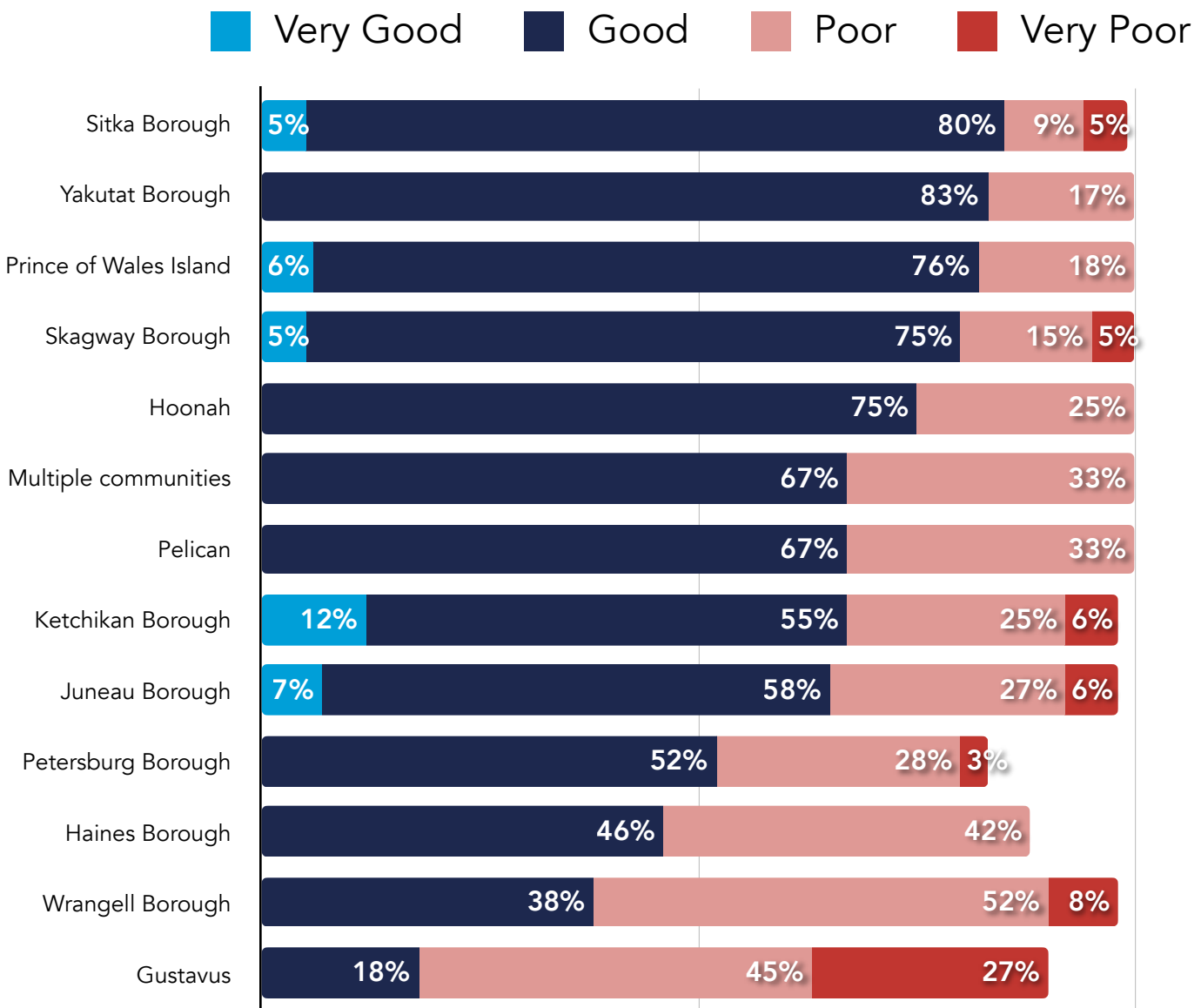


The "don't know" category has been excluded from this chart.

Southeast **Business** Climate Survey Results 2025: **by Community**

The graphic below shows how the current regional business climate is being experienced by business leaders in each community. **Sitka** moved into first place with a 85% positive view in 2025. Other communities reporting the best business climates include **Yakutat**, **Prince of Wales**, and **Skagway**. **Gustavus** moved into last place with a 72% negative view in 2025, followed by the 60% of **Wrangell** business leaders calling the business climate poor or very poor.

April **2025** Southeast Alaska: **How do you view the overall business climate right now**

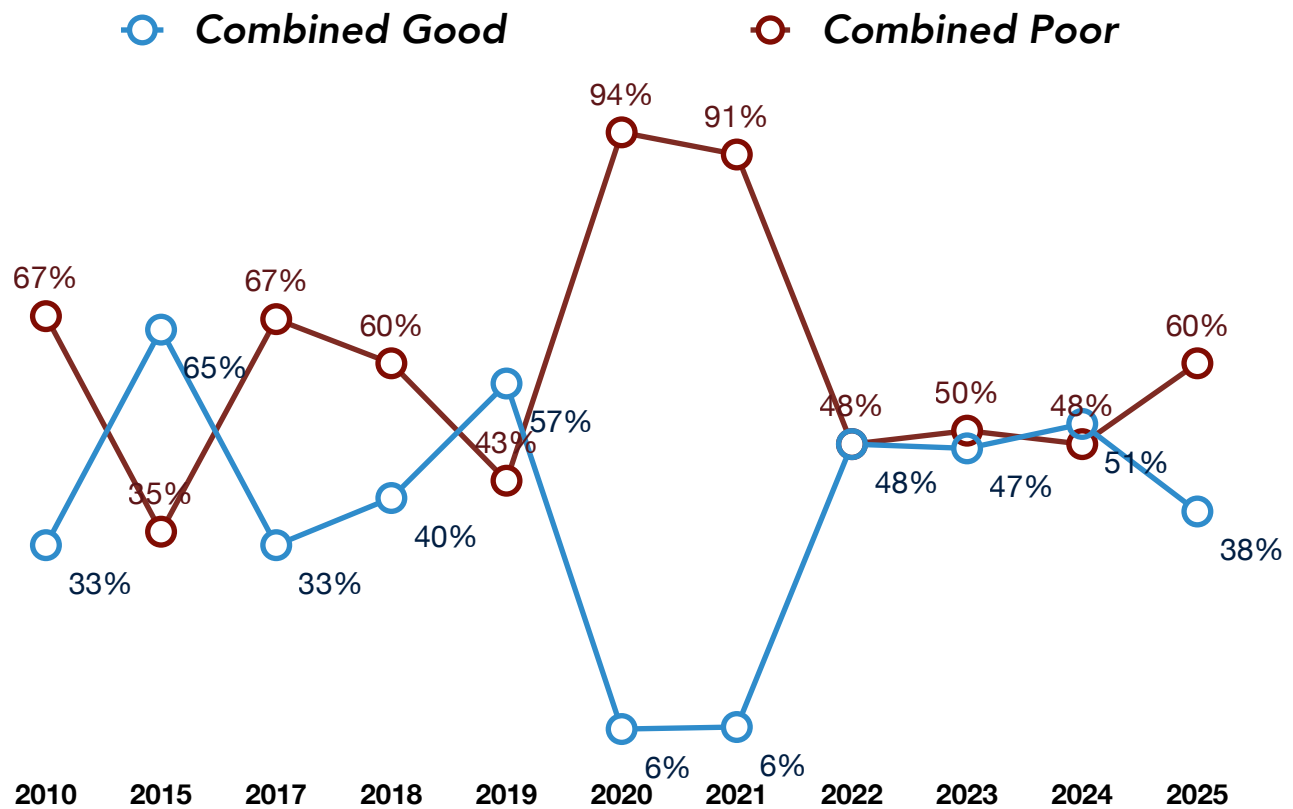


The "don't know" category has been excluded from this chart.

Wrangell Business Climate Survey Results by Year

Looking back at previous business climate reports for Wrangell puts 2025's results in perspective. While Wrangell has long tended to have one of the most negative business climates of any community in the region, according to its business leaders, outside of the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021, only two years, 2010 and 2017 had higher negativity ratings of the local business climate.

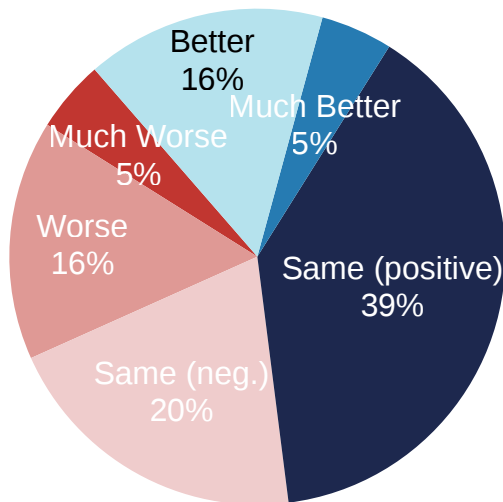
Wrangell: **How do you view the overall business climate right now?**



Wrangell Economic Outlook

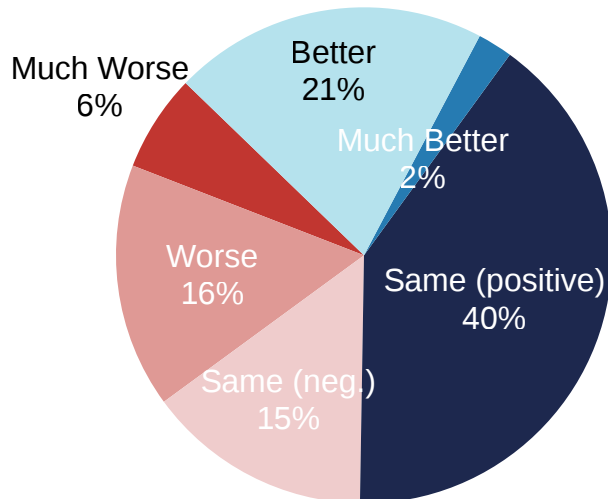
2025 Wrangell Alaska: What is the economic outlook for your business/industry over the next year (compared to the previous year)?

60% Positive / 37% Negative



2025 Southeast Alaska: What is the economic outlook for your business/industry over the next year (compared to the previous year)?

63% Positive / 37% Negative



Southeast Alaska Economic Outlook

Wrangell Future: Sixty percent of Wrangell business leaders have a positive outlook regarding the next year, including 21% who think it the economic outlook will be better or much better. Unlike the business climate question, in 2025 the outlook of Wrangell business leaders had an average negative rating compared to the region.

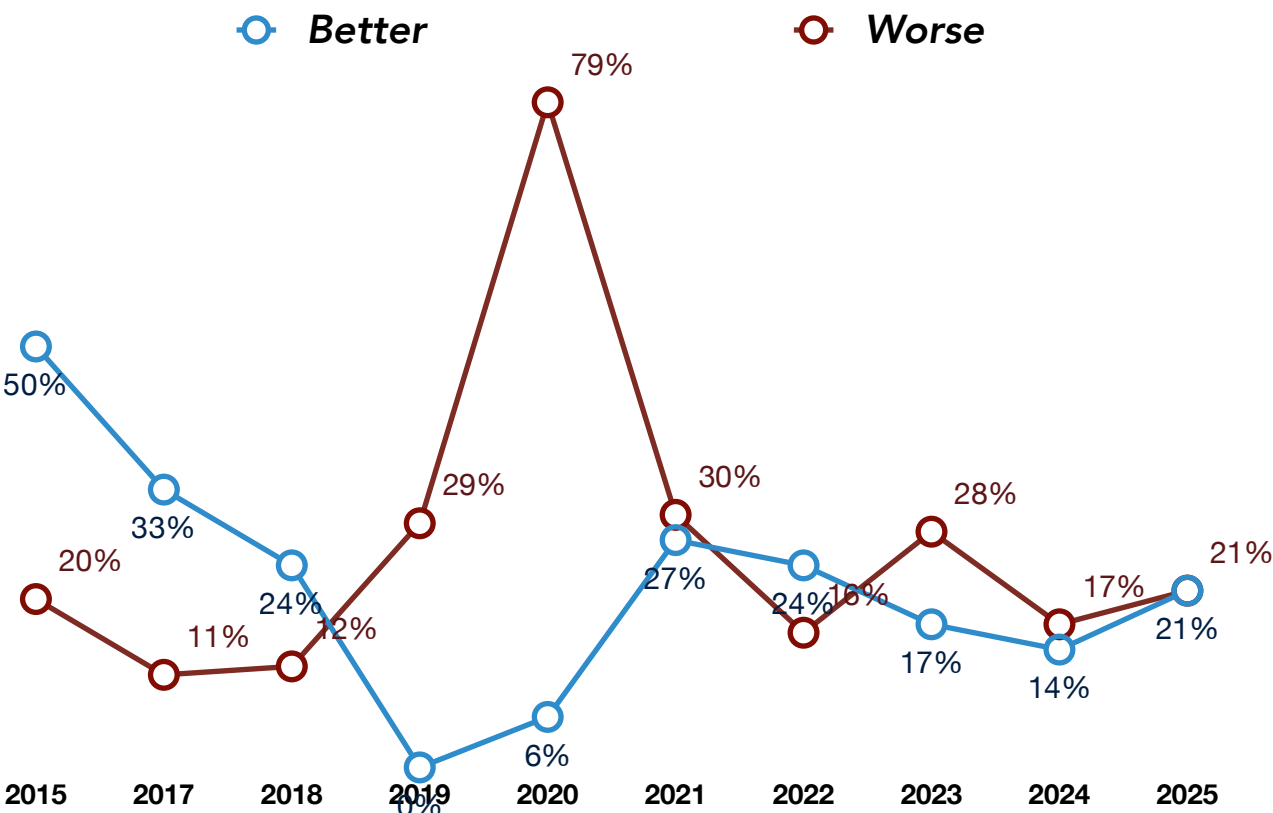
Southeast Economic Future: In 2025, just under two-thirds (63%) of respondents describe the economic outlook for their business or industry over the next 12 months as positive; while more a third (37%) have a negative outlook. Forty percent of regional business leaders say their business outlook is similar to current operations, in a positive way.

This outlook represents a sharp 16-point decline from just two years earlier in 2023 when 79% were positive about the business outlook for their organization. The 2025 outlook is one of the weakest in the history of the survey. The pandemic year of 2020 had the worst outlook, followed by 2021 and 2025, which shared similar levels of optimism.

Wrangell Business Outlook Results: By Year

The chart below provides the same data as the previous page, but combines the better and much better responses, as well as the worse and much worse responses, so it is easier to see how combined sentiment compares to past years. In 2025 the number of businesses who feel the economic outlook will improve is about the same as those who feel the economic outlook will be worse.

Wrangell: **What is the economic outlook for your business/industry over the next year (compared to the previous year)?**



Wrangell Business Outlook Results: By Industry

The following graphic breaks out how the Wrangell business outlook is viewed by each sector. Those in tourism have the most positive economic outlook of the community; while the seafood sector has both the second most positive outlook, with 22% saying they expect the outlook to improve; while also having the most negative outlook, with 33% saying the sector will become worse over the next year. Only sectors with higher sample sizes were included in this chart.

What is the economic outlook for your business/industry over the next year (compared to the previous year)?

- Much Better

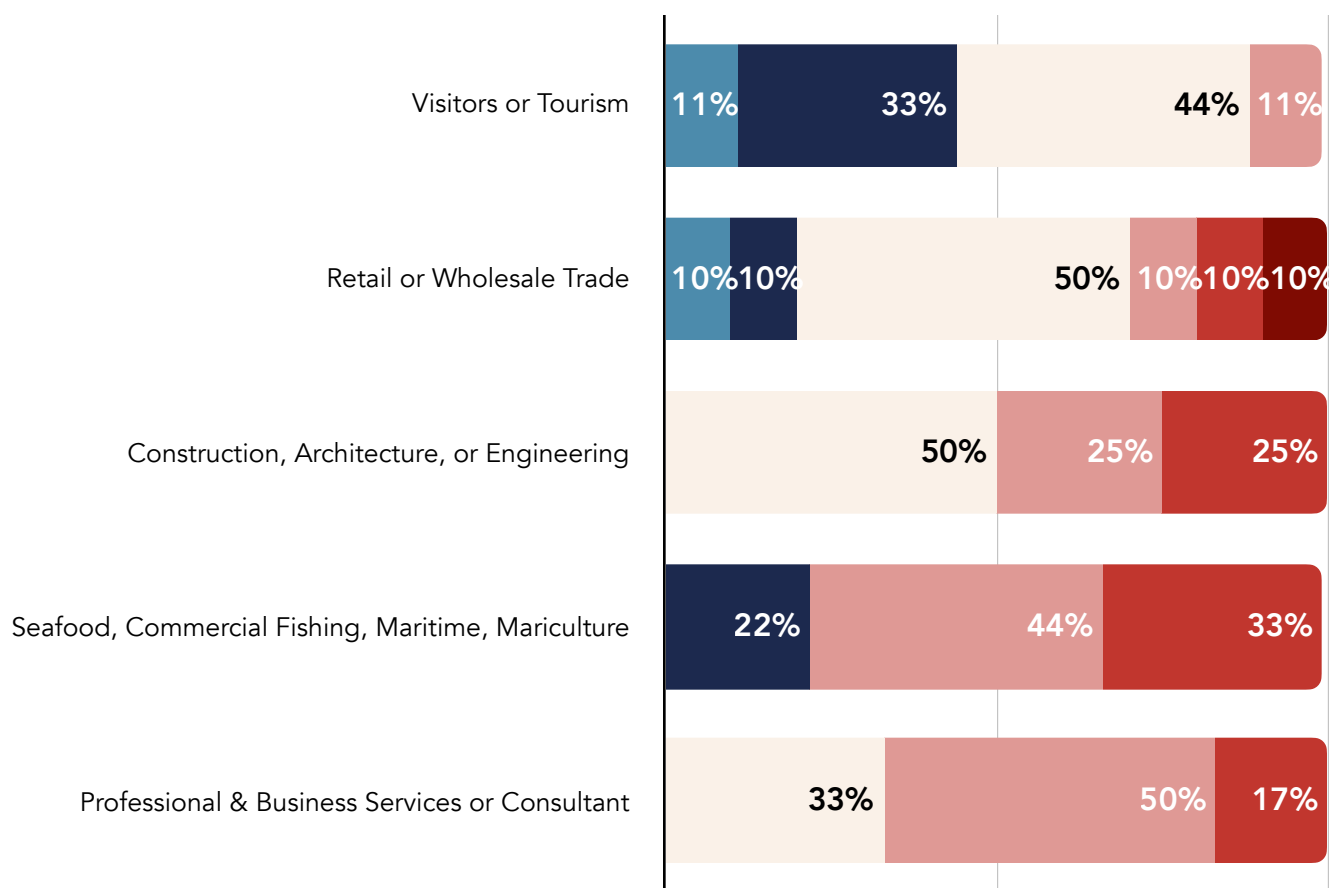
Better

Same (generally positive)

Same (generally negative)

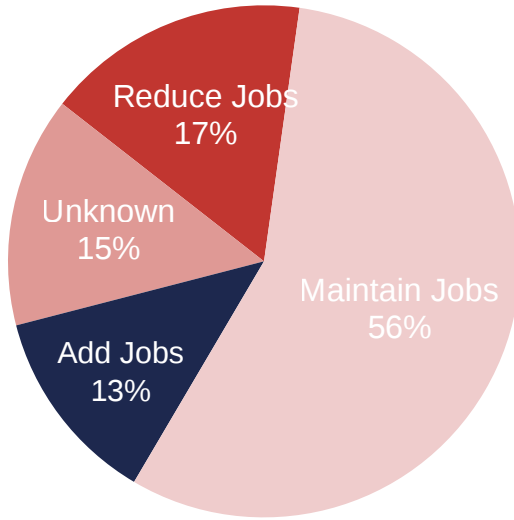
Worse

Much Worse

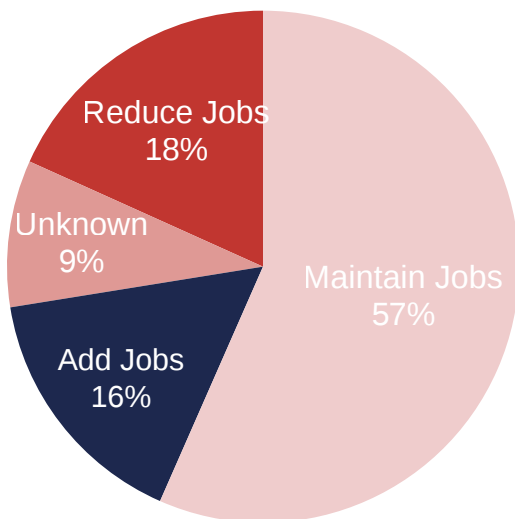


Wrangell Job Projections

2025 Wrangell: Over the next 12 months, do you expect your organization to add jobs, maintain jobs, reduce jobs, or are you unsure (for those businesses with staff)



2025 Southeast Alaska: Over the next 12 months, do you expect your organization to add jobs, maintain jobs, reduce jobs, or are you unsure (for those businesses with staff)



Southeast Alaska Economic Outlook

Wrangell Jobs: In 2025, Wrangell's job outlook is roughly similar to the region overall, with a higher percentage of respondents saying they don't know. In the visitor industry sector, 31% of employers expect to add staff in the coming year. The only other sector expecting job gains is the seafood sector (11%)—which also is the leading sector for job reductions (33%).

Southeast Jobs: When asked about staffing expectations, 16% of regional business leaders expect to add employees, and more than half of business leaders (57%) expect to maintain job levels in the coming year.

Eighteen percent of business leaders expect to reduce staffing levels in the upcoming year, 6% higher than in 2024, and three times as many as in 2023.

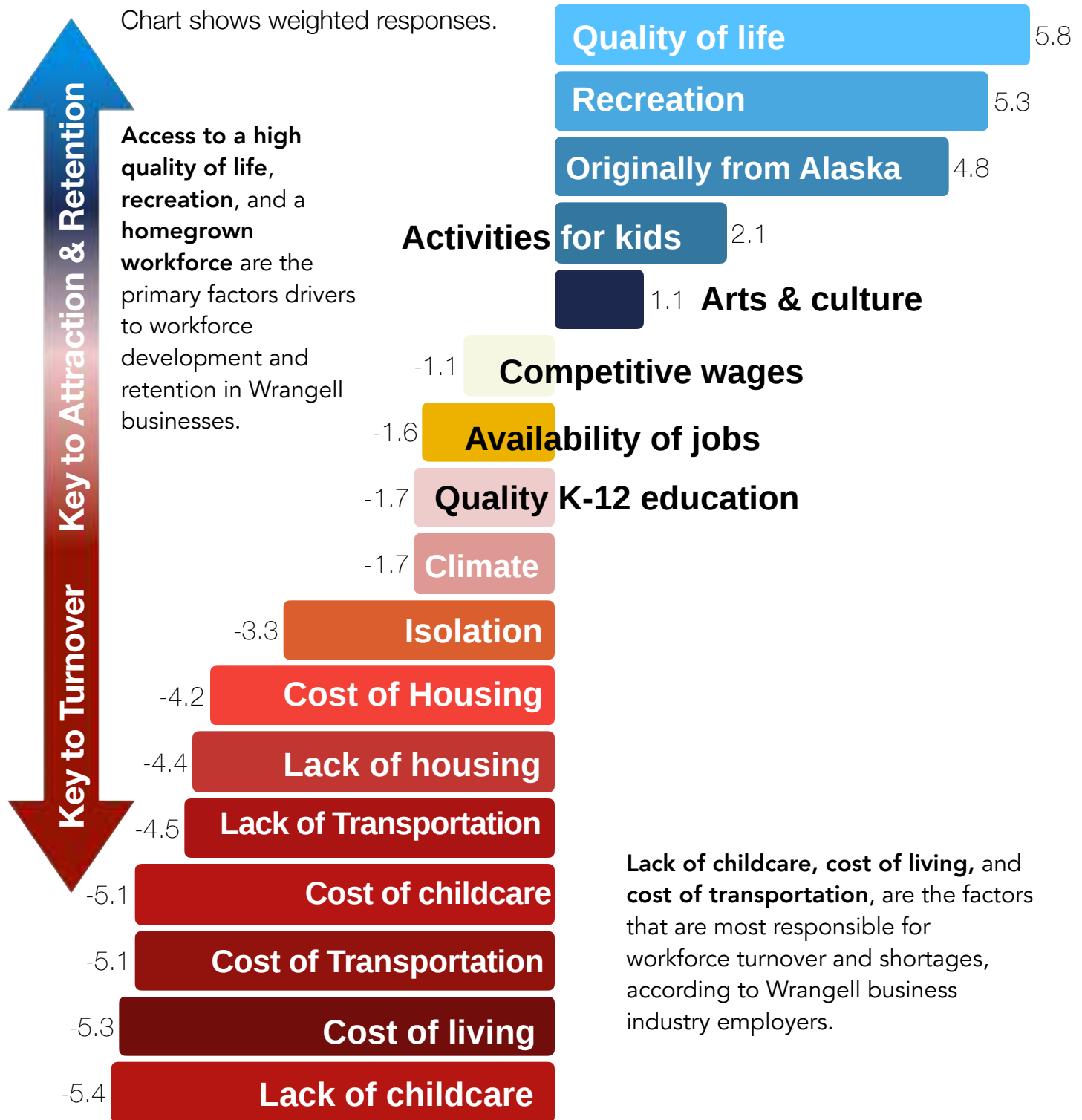
The expected job gains will be most significant in Alaska Native organizations, financial activities, non-profits, tourism, and health care.

Employment reductions will be concentrated in seafood, timber, and the arts.

Retention & Turnover: How do these factors impact worker attraction & retention?

Wrangell business leaders were asked to rank the impact of 17 elements on workforce attraction, retention, and turnover. This is a weighted ranking of their responses.

Chart shows weighted responses.



Lack of childcare, cost of living, and cost of transportation, are the factors that are most responsible for workforce turnover and shortages, according to Wrangell business industry employers.

Retention & Turnover: How do these factors impact worker attraction & retention?

Business leaders say that quality of life, recreation, and Alaskan staff are key to worker attraction and retention, while lack of childcare, along with the cost of living (including transportation and childcare costs) drive workers and potential workers away from the region.

Southeast Alaska Workforce Attraction, Retention & Turnover					
Factor	Significant factor resulting in long-term staff retention (or taking job)	Factor resulting in long-term staff retention (or taking job)	Factor resulting in staff leaving (or not taking job)	Significant factor resulting in staff leaving (or not taking job)	Not a factor
Childcare availability (or lack thereof)	9%	6%	19%	57%	9%
Cost of living	7%	7%	39%	44%	2%
Cost of transportation	0%	18%	27%	47%	7%
Cost of childcare	6%	8%	25%	49%	13%
Availability of transportation (or lack thereof)	5%	15%	29%	44%	7%
Housing availability (or lack of)	15%	5%	29%	47%	4%
Cost of housing	11%	9%	36%	40%	4%
Isolation	5%	20%	43%	27%	5%
Climate & weather	7%	27%	35%	22%	9%
Quality of K-12 education	11%	20%	41%	19%	9%
Availability of jobs (or lack thereof)	11%	22%	31%	24%	13%
Competitive wages (or lack thereof)	7%	31%	33%	18%	11%
Arts and cultural opportunities	11%	42%	25%	9%	13%
Activities for kids	17%	44%	26%	6%	7%
Originally from Alaska	41%	27%	9%	4%	20%
Recreational opportunities	41%	39%	9%	4%	7%
Overall quality of life	46%	39%	4%	7%	4%

How would you rate the **Quality of Life** in Southeast Alaska?

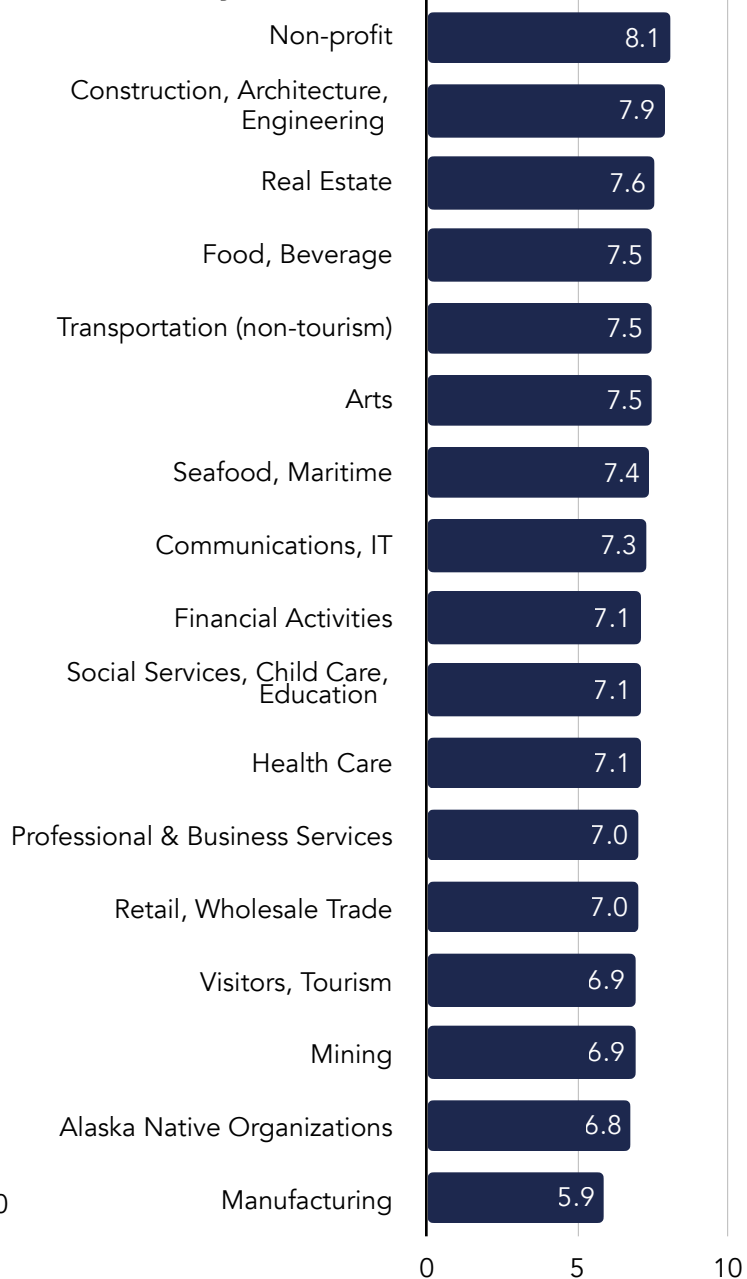
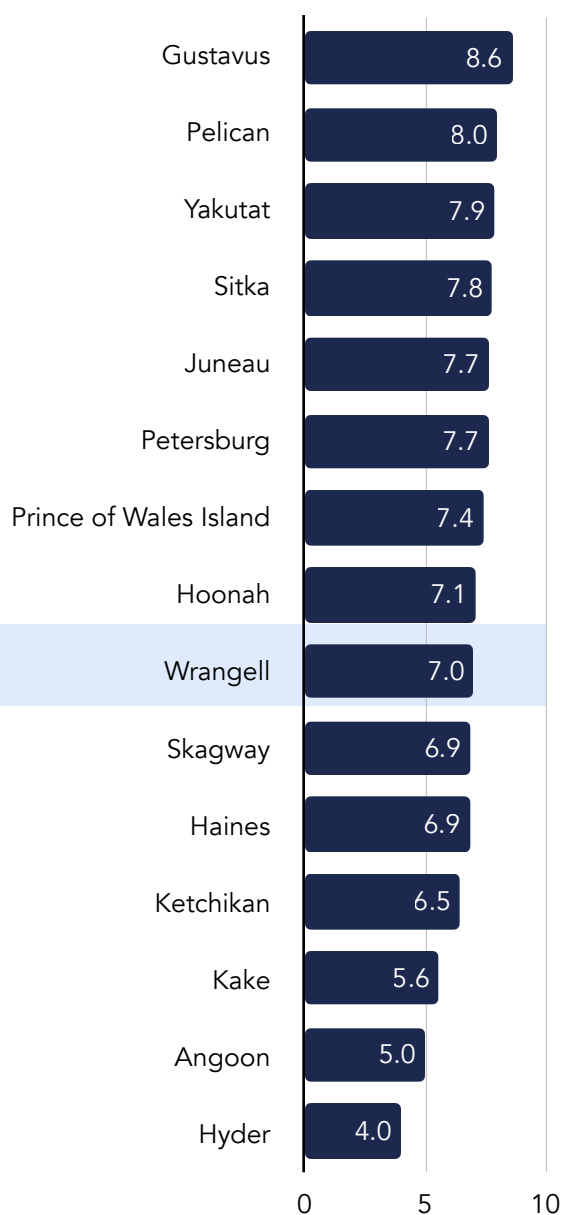
Southeast Alaska is known for its high quality of life ratings. Among business leaders, the overall quality of life rating is 7.2 out of 10. Gustavus, Pelican, and Sitka business leaders gave their region the highest ratings, while Kake, Angoon, and Hyder have the lowest. Those in the nonprofit sector and the construction/architecture/engineering sector provide the highest ratings, while those in tourism, mining, Alaska Native organizations, and manufacturing provide the lowest ratings. Wrangell's quality of life rating ranks #9 among 15 communities.

7.2
SE Quality of Life

By Community

By Industry

■ Southeast Quality of Life



Open Ended Responses

Wrangell Economic Outlook: Open-Ended Responses

In the spring of 2025, Wrangell industry business leaders were asked to describe their economic outlooks in their own words.

Wrangell business leaders expressed a cautious and often pessimistic economic outlook, with many citing rising costs, federal funding cuts, regulatory pressures, shrinking markets, and population decline as major challenges. The seafood sector in particular faces uncertainty due to volatile markets, new restrictions, and transportation barriers, while small businesses struggle to absorb high freight and labor costs. At the same time, visitor sector respondents emphasized that tourism—especially the growth of cruise traffic—remains the community's primary economic driver, offering opportunities for expansion if workforce shortages and infrastructure gaps can be addressed. Overall, the comments reflect a mixed outlook: optimism around visitor growth, but widespread concerns about sustainability in the face of demographic and market headwinds.

These comments were primarily regarding their expectations of 2025 through the first quarter of 2026.

- *I believe regionally, Southeast Alaska is struggling to remain united. As smaller communities without infrastructure connecting our economies seeing increased costs and aging populations, we need to be able to open up our economic landscapes not only regionally, but nationally (domestically) in order to encourage local and non-local investment.*
- *With the increase in costs for everyday material, consumables, and labor, our operational costs continue to rise much faster than the income generated from my business. Each year I re-invest heavily into the business in an effort to outpace the costs of the operation. This season, area closures combined with market uncertainties has created a large fear for the upcoming season. It's not all negative. As long as seafood is consumed locally and internationally, Alaska has a unique market on their seafood. Each year is different; I'm hopeful that there is a demand for our seafood.*
- *Our business is stable and growing slowly. Our customer base while small, is growing slowly in a small community. The major negative consideration is our slowly shrinking population will eventually require that our business be closed.*
- *We are continuing at the same pace but would be projected to grow if we had the same grant funding opportunities as last year.*

- The current administration is having everybody freeze because of fear of travel and border issues
- Our "membership" is dependent upon participation and as the age of the members increase the attrition decreases. In my opinion, we are slowly dying off. We have less than half of the members in 2011, and the numbers continue to dwindle.
- Seems as if our foreign markets are looking poor and our domestic markets can't sustain the pricing we need to receive as fuel and other expenses rise we have to charge more for our products often times prices that small independent markets can't pay.
- Federal funding declines and destruction of government functions.
- Tourism is our sector, and we will effectively double in business this year from last. We have added two new employees this year and are anticipating the season to grow significantly again next year and in 2027. So with that, we have been preemptively making plans to create more jobs. The only concerns I have will be not being able to find those employees. But I guess that's a good problem to be facing in the shadow of growth!
- We have plans of expanding and will need to hire more help.
- Much uncertainty in the market and the potential spending habits of locals and visitors so more than ever I feel unsure what to expect for this next year.
- We are expecting to remain the same. However we will seek new subscribers and other advertisers to support the oldest continuous newspaper in Alaska. We will offer a free month of online access once our new website is launched.
- Jobs will be lost due to the shrinking of the federal government. It is unlikely that these jobs will be filled in the local area with comparable positions. It is likely that individuals will leave the community, along with their families.
- Lack of support from City of Wrangell for infrastructure needed to grow my business.
- Wrangell is experiencing a decline in year-round jobs, a very dismal commercial fishing outlook, practically zero sportfishing and residents struggling just to pay everyday expenses. Most all of the local businesses and food/beverage businesses are struggling to just keep the doors open.
- Local economy is struggling, with low workforce, shrinking industry and sky rocketing expenses.

- The growth we need for stability in our business is dependent on independent travelers. Current dependance on cruise ship traffic is much like expecting every year to have a great fish return. It's the independent traveler that stays longer, spends more money in town and helps promote our community as they travel to other places. Wrangell is a difficult place to visit. Although we have Alaska Airlines flights twice a day, there is a finite number of seats and with stops in Ketchikan and Petersburg northbound, and Juneau, Petersburg and Ketchikan southbound, seats are often not available. If there are seats, they are cost prohibitive. Why fly to Wrangell for \$250 when you can fly to Ketchikan, Juneau or even Sitka for \$99. Our current ferry service is limited to one northbound and one southbound run each week. Although this is scheduled to improve over the next many years, it might help to have a ferry that operates more often from Ketchikan to Hollis, to Coffman Cove to Wrangell and maybe the Petersburg terminal for the IFA. Another ferry can run from Juneau to Petersburg. We are also concerned that the current changes and reduction in the USFS will be detrimental to small businesses if the Federal Government decides to use concessionaires for various venues. Small businesses cannot compete with larger corporations, and we may lose our access and ergo opportunities. This would be catastrophic.
- Tourism has been the primary driver of financial growth for the business I manage. With Wrangell anticipating a 35% surge in visitors this year and further growth projected for 2026, our focus is on maximizing revenue capture from this increased tourism. Additionally, we aim to boost conference reservations, attracting groups from within Southeast Alaska and beyond to utilize our rental space, thereby fostering broader economic development in Wrangell.
- Our business is solid. The cruise industry grows in Wrangell. Sadly as the cruise industry grows the city of Wrangell doesn't have the money to build the infrastructure to maintain the growth. Not enough tour operators to meet the needs of the ships. Operators are aging out and just a few companies will survive into the future. Catch 22. Tourism is the only viable growth industry in town and not enough entrepreneurs are embracing it as an opportunity. We have an average age of 50 years plus as our population. We have a terrific opportunity with the cruise industry if we can get people to step up.
- Lack of foreign travel is a huge concern for us. We are also bracing for huge increases in fuel and materials.
- We need employees to support the 120 days of summer tourism. Biz needs support in customer service training, marketing and signage. Brining back a Main Street type of program would help to create a more welcoming environment.

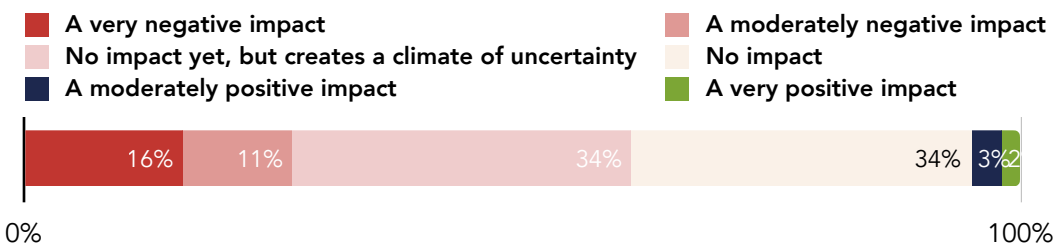
- Government regulation with the Forest Service and Fish and Game and regulations with Sport Fishing for Halibut and other species make it very hard to sell trips to our area, Wrangell. Every year, more regulations make operating our business harder and harder. Because of all the limits on sport fishing for guests being "guided," it is difficult to meet guests' needs and expectations. They feel they are better off in a "do it yourself" fishing environment where their fish are not as limited as in a "guided" situation. This is especially true for guided, sport halibut fishing. We also guide guests for fly fishing experiences, and the Prince of Wales Forest Service recently shut down guided fishing in their district for the entire month of May for guided fishing. This affects our business greatly. Not only that, but our guests book trips with us up to a year or more in advance, and Prince of Wales Forest Service shut down guided fishing in May only two months before the season. This drastic and last-minute closure creates stress for our guides who need to make changes to our typical fishing areas last minute. We cannot apply for and get new areas added to our Operating Plan in only two months. In our business of guiding sport fishing guests, we are getting more regulations that limit us more every year. The noose is constantly closing in tighter and tighter until we can no longer sell trips to guests because we will have nothing to offer them. It seems that government agencies are trying to limit sport fishing to have an effect on the fish populations when the commercial fishing has so much more of an impact. But commercial fishing is not being regulated like sport fishing is. I believe this is because lobbyists pay off government officials to promote their industry. Sport fishing doesn't have the money to lobby politicians. NOAA is there for the commercial industry. They do not consider the money sport fishing brings to Alaska.
- Currently in the early stages of my business, not sure if this year I will grow very much.
- The Salmon/seafood market is still very volatile, especially with the unknown effects of Tariffs.
- With more cruise ships scheduled to make port in Wrangell over the next two years, we anticipate growth as long as local workforce can fill the seasonal positions we need to operate at higher capacity.
- The housing market has changed since we started our business in 2020. People are not as confident about buying so there are lots of houses on the market now. Back then there were none.
- My organization is single provider mental health therapy clinic. While the need for this service seems to be growing in the community, I do not expect to add additional providers or employees.

- *Lack of available property and housing limits expansion opportunity. Primary costs are astronomical, as well as secondary costs. Lots needs to change, or good people will continue to move out.*
- *My only challenge is wanting to invite longer-term occupants (Airbnb), but the Website allows multiple, short-term reservations in a given month. I don't have an easy way to manage this any differently. It only affects me and would not alter the outlook for the community, as a whole.*
- *Competition from Sitka for marine services in southeast Alaska could impact Wrangell.*
- *Wrangell's population is declining. This can be directly attributed to the lack of affordable housing, lack of affordable childcare, and lack of consistent ferry service in Southeast Alaska. There are jobs, but they do not pay enough to enable families to live in Wrangell.*
- *Fish are harder to find. Lots of fisherman selling out and leaving. Most of my work is with marine repair — it used to be part logging but that has all gone away .*
- *Board of fish continues to make poor decisions based on political winds, which continue to make it more difficult for fishermen, especially direct marketers to succeed. Changing the timing of the shrimp pot fishery moved us into a market which is less profitable, all for a change based on poor science at best. Moving more of the troll King salmon quota to sport fishermen reduces the value and availability of product for direct sales. Continued reduction in transportation, coupled with increased costs of transportation makes it almost impossible to have any margin between revenue and costs.*
- *There is more than enough bookkeeping, accounting and tax business to go around. The hardest part is competing for employees with the borough of Wrangell, the WCA and Searhc for small businesses. Small businesses cannot compete with the pay and benefits offered by those entities. My business relies heavily on a reliable internet service.*
- *New tariffs and discourse with the US admin have possibly had a negative impact on potential travelers to Alaska.*
- *I have a tool rental business and Storage. The tool Rentals depend on construction in town. So far it's been doing OK but future construction is questionable. With the cost of freight and materials construction is really high in Alaska. Diversity is the thing, and Alaska doesn't have a lot of diversity and jobs or new jobs coming up.*

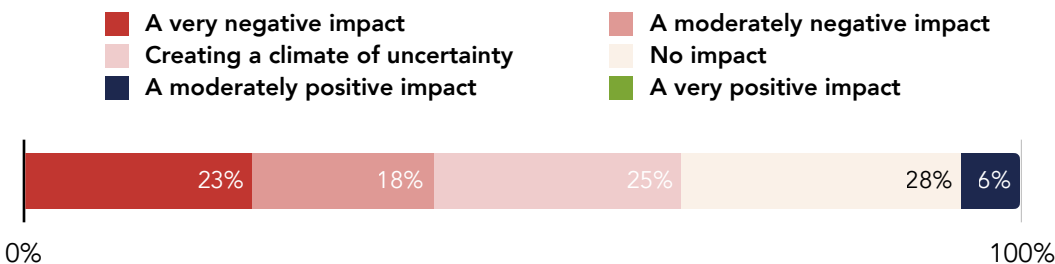
- *Government funds uncertainty will freeze all growth and expansion of activities and investments.*
- *Our country is in trouble. Fascism is on the rise. Many of our Alaskan businesses use people from other countries to work here in summer. They don't want to risk it now. Our SE Alaska has lots of Canadians who are scared. Funding for small businesses are being cut. Funding for agriculture ventures are being cut. What about business loans? Loan opportunities for diverse Alaskans are being cut. The arts and artist opportunities and organizations and programs are being cut.*
- *We are a B&B and Charter Company. We are located in Wrangell. We do not believe the cruise ship or tourism will sustain our community. We need industry. I believe in the new Administration however we are concerned about overregulating the Charter Fishing Industry.*
- *Everyone is cutting back.*

Wrangell Economic Federal Impacts

Have the federal job or spending cuts impacted your business?



How do you expect federal changes in Wrangell to impact your business over the next few months?



27% of Wrangell businesses say they have already been negatively impacted by the early federal job and spending cuts that hit the region.

Asked about the business impacts (positive or negative) of the federal changes (i.e. tariffs, Executive Orders, regulatory, staffing changes, etc.), close to half (41%) of Wrangell businesses said they expected negative business impacts, including 23% who expect the impacts to be very negative. Another 6% are expecting positive impacts.

Businesses were asked to describe the impacts in their own words:
Please describe the impact (positive or negative) you expect the federal changes to have on your business or sector over the coming months (i.e. tariffs, executive orders, regulatory, staffing changes, etc.).

Wrangell businesses largely expect negative impacts from recent federal changes, citing tariffs that raise costs, funding cuts to agencies like NOAA and the Forest Service, job losses, and reduced support for fishing safety and tourism. While a few saw positives in reduced regulation or greater efficiency, the overall the outlook reflects concern over rising costs, shrinking services, and instability in key sectors.

All responses are presented below:

Open Ended Responses

Wrangell Visitor Sector Federal Impacts: Open-Ended Responses

- *Tariffs still have an unknown effect. But it is a concern on the global seafood market with affects our community directly.*
- *With federal job cuts to NOAA, our weather monitoring information is going to be hamstrung. Our safety relies on as accurate information regarding the weather as we can get. Other safety programs, designed to reduce commercial fishing are being reduced in funding which will most likely shut them down. Lastly, just like farmers, sometimes there is a season which is completely out of our control and is a disaster. We rely on the federal funds to help push us through. Lastly, eliminating programs or funding for programs that assist small businesses through grants and loan programs hurts the individual self-employed fisherman tremendously. With these jobs being cut or eliminated it increases risk of over fishing, increasing our risks fishing, and losing government support.*
- *I am concerned about the tariff as a commercial fisherman. Also the federal cutbacks specifically in NOAA may affect weather conditions and safety.*
- *We plan to transition to a nonprofit so as to be no cost to our clients but grant funding is looking rough.*
- *I'm extremely hopeful that someone is finally addressing the over spending & bleeding of our limited tax \$. The important jobs & money will return once this initial process is fully complete. I think our schools will be very well cared for first*
- *Fear of travel*
- *Well licensing and weather and transportation are key industries that make our jobs possible, and all these jobs are on shaky ground.*
- *We will see decreased revenue with less federal employees traveling.*
- *All negative: Federal funding cuts, DOGE destruction of government functions, Secure Rural Schools not renewed.*
- *We work with private, for profit companies whose clients are ones able to afford vacations. I don't see that we will face any impact from current federal changes.*

- Tariffs are expected to increase prices of imported goods substantially and for those of us in the retail business it will make it nearly impossible to compete with internet sales. Reductions in staff of Federal offices in a small community can have a very negative effect on the business climate. Even the loss of 10 jobs is a significant amount in a town of 2,000 people.
- Tariffs are very impactful as are the tentative everyone is holding their breath waiting for the next order no one wants to make any commitment on jobs, expanding, contracts or purchases.
- It will be a negative impact on it as other businesses have to pay more for items they will not be able to advertise as much.
- Significant loss in jobs and exodus from small communities. Decreased support for conservation partnerships and sustainability work. Potential irreversible environmental change, which may affect future commercial opportunities. Inefficiencies in ability to serve the public as staff is not focused in the areas of demand and/or desire.
- Increased cost of goods, decreased population, possibly decreased tourism
- No impact
- Historically, our sales to non-cruise passengers increases in March and April, however these bookings have trickled down to almost zero.
- Tariffs will cause (and already has) our wholesale prices to increase overall. Some of the executive orders could have positive impacts if we can access more local resources.
- We utilize grants administered by federal agencies to enhance our museum. The lack of funding could impact us in a negative way, especially since we do not have an operating expenditure currently to add & maintain our museum.
- We have a big Alaska Native population. As the Trump administration cancels grants and federal funding it adversely impacts our business and our community.
- Cutting back on regulations is very good for our business.
- Negative due to tariffs, uncertainty, lack of foreign travelers due to fear and mistrust of the USA, uncertain staffing with the USFS and other agencies
- In working with employees in the Forest Service, they are upset and concerned with the budget cuts and employee reduction. We do not feel the effect in our business personally, but we hear complaints from the government workers we work with. It

makes no difference, but we had additional paperwork to fill out with the Forest Service, and nothing will come of it because they lack funding. Basically, it is just a lot of hoops to jump through for nothing. The government is slow and difficult to work with. Rather than simplify and make processes efficient, they complicate a simple situation and create a bunch of extra paperwork for each scenario. Less funding for the nonsense is good in our opinion and for the business experience.

- Our current population is already too low. Losing young, working-aged people is not ideal.*
- Layoffs of Federal employees would cause private industries to have to find ways around all the Federal Permitting Processes and Policies. This will negatively impact our environment and the total visitor experience.*
- Foreign visitors have begun to cancel their cruise trips or independent bookings because of travel concerns with entering and exiting the US. We depend on USFS seasonal staff to maintain recreation sites used by tourists. Increased cost of goods essential to this industry (aluminum etc.) make predicting future costs difficult. We have to lock in prices on contracts often two years in advance.*
- People are nervous about a recession, volatile markets, state school cuts and more. The Fed admin is doing all of this on purpose - creating uncertainty.*
- Federal changes will have no impact on my business or other similar businesses, because services are largely covered by insurance or paid out-of-pocket by the patient*
- None. I think this administration is doing an excellent job.*
- People may be less inclined (or able) to travel for pleasure if it becomes too expensive an option for the use of their time and resources.*
- Higher prices and executive orders that make NO SENSE if the goal is to save federal dollars. Our school is ready to make drastic reductions due to federal cuts via executive order instead of congress being the ones who hold the purse strings. This is an affront on the democratic process. The balance of power is being disrupted, and chaos is ensuing. Positives are Alaska being able to manage her own resources, but this takes time, government oversight for permitting purposes (these people have all been laid off), and infrastructure. There seems to be no organized plan.*
- NMFS is short staffed and is making mistakes in calculating IFQ shares and has already made corrective reports on season timings. I don't trust that there won't be more mistakes overall.*

- *Cost of health insurance for myself thru the Affordable Healthcare act and cost of utilities, software subscriptions and supplies for my business are all on the rise*
- *Continued strained US border country relations are not good for Alaska since we are separated by a country from our country. Everyone seems cautious at this time.*
- *I don't do a lot of business with Federal employers. So I don't expect anything to change.*
- *Loss of federal jobs will hopefully open up the market for private businesses. Private businesses cannot compete with subsidized (federal and state) organizations.*
- *Foreign travelers are not coming to America*
- *Lack of funds for existing programs and services. We project no job growth.*
- *Fortunately I got a grant before the National Endowment for the Arts cut funding. So I can do my arts program in Wrangell. But now the Feds want you to sign an anti-diversity waiver so that they can pull funding if you promote diversity. Again, fortunately I did not have to sign this because my arts program is targeting diverse writers. This policy will endanger many cultural programs for Alaska Native peoples. Visitors are already deciding NOT to come to the US for vacations. The Tariffs will and are hurting our businesses.*
- *Government efficiency is necessary and important. We are all for it.*
- *Things will get worse before they get better, but I support the federal changes.*