SOUTHEAST ALASKA by the Numbers 2023

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

Tlingit & Haida

CHANGES 2021 TO 2022

THE **LABOR FORCE** INCREASED BY **2,180 JOBS** TO **44,455** JOBS, **+5%**.

TOTAL WAGES INCREASED BY **$252 MILLION** TO $2.65 BILLION, **+11%**.

AVERAGE REGIONAL WAGE INCREASED BY **5%** TO **$59,493** +$2,888.

TOTAL **PASSENGER ARRIVALS** INCREASED BY **239% TO 1.65 MILLION** (INCLUDES RESIDENTS). +1.16 MILLION DISEMBARKING

VALUE OF SEAFOOD LANDED IN THE REGION INCREASED BY **15%** TO $335 MILLION **+$44 MILLION**

BUSINESS CONFIDENCE INCREASED BY **47%** ACCORDING TO THE ANNUAL BUSINESS CLIMATE SURVEY

SOUTHEAST ALASKA'S **ECONOMY**

2022

Southeast Alaska is experiencing an economic renaissance. Business leaders are reporting the best business climate since business climate surveying began. In 2022 jobs were up by 5%, and wages were up by 11%.

Seafood – the top private sector industry in 2022 – had its most valuable catch since 2014, and the region's value-added seafood products garnered record profits.

Tourism brought 1.16 million more visitors to the region in 2022 than in 2021. As tourism jobs flooded back, visitor-dependent communities saw massive job returns. Jobs in Skagway increased by 41%, while job increases in Hoonah and Gustavus were above 20%.

Employment was up across nearly every sector. Tourism, government, healthcare, retail, construction, professional & business services, and transportation sectors all added workers to their payrolls. Mining and Tribal Government grew by 12% each. Substantial federal investments paved the way for development or rehabilitation of roads, bridges, airports, broadband, harbors, and recreational facilities, generating jobs and much needed community improvements.

Not all indicators are up. State jobs continue to decline, social services are down, overall population decreased slightly, and employment figures remain incrementally below 2019 levels.

2023

Regional business leaders continue to report tremendous optimism moving forward. In the first half of 2023 more than 600 jobs have been added to the region, and 42% of the region's business leaders expect their prospects to be even better over the next year. Inflation, which hit Alaska hard during the pandemic, came down in 2023. Preliminary figures show that jobs are expected to be up (or flat) in every single sector, except for state government, in 2023.

The region's fishermen are on track for a solid seafood harvest, but struggle with low salmon prices.

Tourism is booming. The number of cruise passengers arriving in the region in 2023 is on track to be 44% higher than 2022 levels and will be record setting by every measure, as nearly 1.7 cruise ship passengers are expected to visit. Tourism jobs were up by 7% in the first half of the year. Juneau was named the #3 best city in the US for summer jobs, due to the prevalence and quality of jobs for 16–24 year olds.

Continued long-term growth is dependent on the region's ability to respond to housing and childcare shortages that threaten workforce attraction and retention. Leaders must establish sustainable strategies to ensure that the federal investments currently bolstering our economy will continue to have long-lasting impacts on the region.

Photo: Klawock by George Nickerson

A **SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE** PUBLICATION BY RAIN COAST DATA

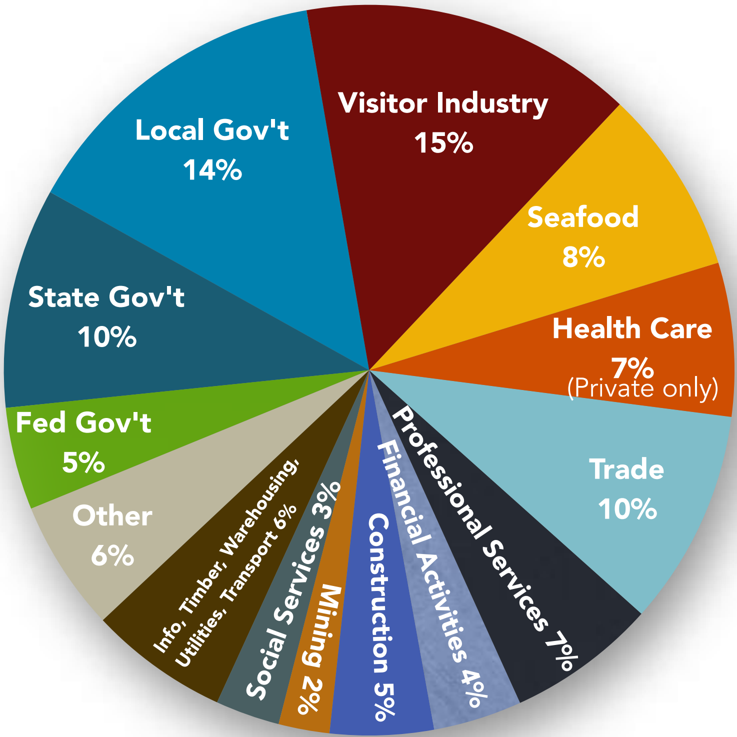
The Whole **Southeast Alaska Economy** 2022

In 2022, Southeast Alaska gained more than 2,000 year-round equivalent jobs and $251 million in workforce earnings compared to 2021.

Annual Average Jobs

44,452 Jobs

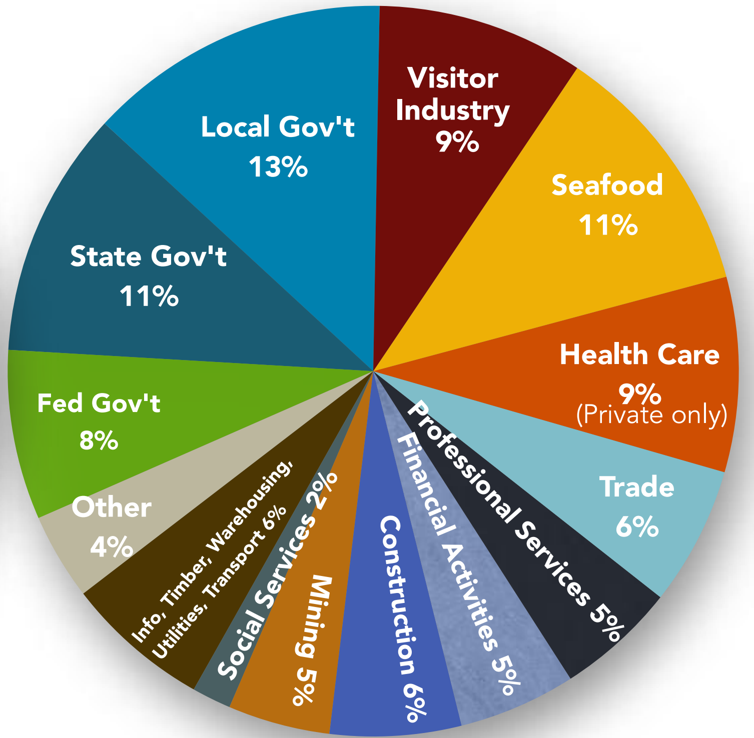
UP 2,180 JOBS IN 2022 +5%



Employment Earnings

$2.65 Billion Workforce Earnings

UP $252 MILLION +11%



2022 Southeast Alaska Employment Earnings

	Employment Related Earnings			Employment Numbers			
	Wages (2022)	Self-Employment Earnings (est.)	Total Earnings	Annual Average Employment (2022)	Self-Employed (est.)	Total Employment	Change 2021 to 2022
Government (includes Coast Guard)	$774,044,339	$68,695,377	**$842,739,716**	11,989	655	**12,644**	**58**
Visitor Industry	$215,092,806	$26,802,000	**$241,894,806**	5,734	835	**6,569**	**317**
Seafood Industry	$87,680,259	$214,122,535	**$301,802,794**	1,414	2,239	**3,653**	**-266**
Trade: Retail and Wholesale	$139,344,896	$23,475,000	**$162,819,896**	3,721	533	**4,254**	**52**
Health Care Industry (private only)	$212,401,285	$15,771,000	**$228,172,285**	2,750	273	**3,023**	**69**
Construction Industry	$109,612,684	$43,936,560	**$153,549,244**	1,428	610	**2,038**	**12**
Financial Activities	$60,569,617	$76,544,000	**$137,113,617**	998	748	**1,746**	**-2**
Professional and Business Services	$91,628,663	$48,742,000	**$140,370,663**	1,632	1,305	**2,937**	**261**
Mining Industry	$119,006,946	$413,000	**$119,419,946**	995	7	**1,002**	**104**
Social Services	$41,836,698	$4,109,000	**$45,945,698**	1,071	194	**1,265**	**-117**
Information	$22,026,520	$1,389,000	**$23,415,520**	418	61	**479**	**51**
Timber Industry	$17,037,720	$2,315,000	**$19,352,720**	242	53	**295**	**-17**
Warehousing, Utilities & Non-Visitor Transportation	$107,663,102	$19,140,000	**$126,803,102**	1,649	319	**1,968**	**998**
Other	$65,542,410	$35,838,000	**$101,380,410**	1,580	1,002	**2,582**	**659**
Total	**$2,063,487,945**	**$581,292,472**	**$2,644,780,417**	**35,621**	**8,834**	**44,455**	**2,180**

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor Employment & Wage data; (latest available) US Census Nonemployer (self-employment) Statistics; Active Duty Military Population, ADOL. ***These cells in Government refer to active duty Coast Guard personnel employment and wages, and not self-employment data. Notes: Seafood Industry** includes animal aquaculture, fishing & seafood product preparation, and Southeast Alaska resident commercial fishermen (nonresident fishermen & crew who did not report income are excluded). **Visitor Industry** includes leisure & hospitality, and visitor transportation (air, water, scenic). **Timber** includes forestry and logging support activities for forestry, and wood product manufacturing.

Change in the Last Year: 2021 to 2022

Table tracks key Southeast indicators over the past year, along with associated changes.

Demographics	2022	2021	% Change 2021-2022	Change 2021-2022
Total Population [1]	72,218	72,683	-0.6%	-465
Under Age 15 [2]	12,521	12,824	-2%	-303
Twenty-somethings [2]	7,629	8,038	-5%	-409
Ages 65 and older [2]	13,315	12,664	5%	651
UAS Enrollment	2,148	2,206	-3%	-58
K-12 School District Enrollment [3]	10,721	10,843	-1%	-122
General Economic Conditions				
Total Labor Force (jobs, includes self-employed & USCG)[1,5,6]	44,455	42,275	5%	2,180
Total Job Earnings[1,5,6]	$2.65 million	$2.39 million	11%	$252 million
Total Private Sector Payroll [1,6]	$1.80 billion	$1.58 billion	14%	$224 million
Average Annual Wage [1]	$59,493	$56,605	5%	$2,888
Annual Unemployment Rate [1]	3.6%	6.1%	-2.5%	-2.5%
Top Economic Sectors	**2022**	**2021**	**% Change**	**Change**
Government	Public Sector: 32% of all employment earnings			
Total Government Employment [1,5]	12,644	12,586	0%	58
Federal Employment [1,5] (8% of all employment earnings)	2,019	2,037	-1%	-18
State Employment [1] (14% of all job earnings)	4,334	4,403	-2%	-69
City and Tribal Employment [1] (14% of all job earnings)	6,291	6,146	2%	145
Total Government Payroll (includes USCG) [1,5]	$842.7 million	$814.5 million	3%	$28 million
State of Alaska Payroll [1]	$289.1 million	$287.6 million	1%	$1.5 million
Visitor Industry	Key Industry: 9% of all employment earnings			
Total Visitor Industry Employment [1,6]	6,569	6,252	5%	317
Total Visitor Industry Wages/Earnings [1,6]	$241.9 million	$226.4 million	7%	$15.5 million
Total Southeast Alaska Passenger Arrivals	**1,652,223**	**487,831**	**239%**	**1.16 million**
Cruise Passengers [10]	1,178,123	124,600	846%	1.05 million
Total Air Passenger Arrivals from Outside SE [11]	465,299	357,222	30%	108,077
Total AMHS Passengers from Outside SE [12]	8,801	6,009	46%	2,792
Commercial Fishing & Seafood Industry	Key Industry: 11% of all employment earnings			
Total Seafood Employment (includes fishermen) [1,6]	3,653	3,919	-7%	-266
Total Seafood Employment Earnings [1,6]	$301.8 million	$291.0 million	4%	$10.8 million
Commercial Fishing Boats Homeported in SE[15]	2,624	2,793	-6%	-102
Value of Seafood Processed [7]	$892 million	$674 million	32%	$218 million
Pounds Landed (commercial seafood landed pounds by SE residents) [8]	246 million	266 million	-8%	-20 million
Estimated Gross Earnings (ex-vessel value of pounds landed) [8]	$335 million	$291 million	15%	$44 million
Health Care Industry (Public & Private Health)	Key Industry: 10% of all employment earnings			
Health Care Employment [1,6]	3,538	3,506	1%	32
Health Care Wages [1,6]	$271 million	$250 million	9%	$21 million
Maritime Economy (Includes employment from all industries)	Key Industry: 16% of all employment earnings			
Private Maritime plus USCG Employment [1,5,6]	5,429	5,616	-3%	-187
Private Maritime plus USCG Wages [1,5,6]	$450 million	$416 million	8%	$34 million
Other Selected Statistics	**2022**	**2021**	**% Change**	**Change**
Construction Employment [1,6] (6% of all employment earnings)	2,038	2,026	1%	12
Mining Employment [1] (5% of all employment earnings)	1,002	898	12%	104
Price of Gold [7]	$1,800	$1,799	0.1%	$1
Total Southeast AMHS Ridership[12]	113,868	76,947	48%	36,921
Cost of Living: Consumer Price Index[1]	256.42	237.19	8%	19
Housing Units Permitted/Completed [4,1]	251	318	-21%	-67
Avg. Daily Volume ANS Oil Production (mbbls/day)[14]	485,193	477,110	2%	8,083
Annual Avg. Domestic Crude WTI Oil Prices (in $/Barrel)[14]	$100	$71	41%	$29

Sources: [1]Alaska Department of Labor (ADOL); [2]ADOL Southeast Alaska Population by Age; [3]Alaska Department of Education and Early Development; [4]Based on the quarterly Alaska Housing Unit Survey, a survey of local governments and housing agencies; [5] US Coast Guard; [6] US Census Nonemployer (self-employment) Statistics and estimates based on business climate surveys; [7]Kitco Metals Inc.; [8]ADF&G Southeast Alaska Commercial Seafood Industry Harvest and Ex-Vessel Value Information; [10]Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska; [11]US Bureau of Transportation Statistics (RITA); [12]Alaska Marine Highway System data; [14]Alaska Department of Revenue Crude Oil and Natural Gas Prices; [15]Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission.

SEAFOOD

Value & Pounds of Seafood Landed in Southeast Alaska

Seafood Industry

3,650 Annualized Jobs 2022

Down 266 Jobs in 2022

Earnings Up by 4%

2022 The seafood sector had a huge year in 2022 and was the top private sector wage provider in the region for the second year in a row.

In 2022, regional fishermen caught 245 million pounds of seafood, with a value of $335 million. The harvest value was extremely strong. The 2022 harvest represented the most valuable catch since 2017, with the overall gross value of the catch up 15%, a $44 million increase over 2021.

The overall harvest by pounds landed was the best even-year harvest since 2014. It is important to compare even years to even years due to the distinct two-year pink salmon life cycles. Fishermen caught 20 million fewer pounds of seafood in 2022 than they did in 2021. This includes 66 million fewer pounds of pink salmon, due to it being an even year.

Excluding pink, the regional harvest was up by 35% by weight over 2021.

Overall jobs were down slightly, as fewer workers are traditionally needed in even years.

In 2021, the five salmon species represented two-thirds of the regional seafood catch by pounds landed, and slightly more than half the overall value. Halibut, black cod, crab, and the dive fisheries accounted for just 10% of pounds landed, but more than a third of the total harvest value. The majority of the statewide catch of Chinook, coho, chum, shrimp, Dungeness crab, and the dive fisheries typically occurs in Southeast Alaska.

Key Economic Driver

The regional seafood industry (including commercial fishing and seafood processing) generated 3,653 annual regional jobs and $302 million in earnings in 2022, making up 11% of earnings and 8% of the jobs in the region. The 10-year Southeast seafood harvest averages are 262 million pounds, and an inflation adjusted value of $308 million.

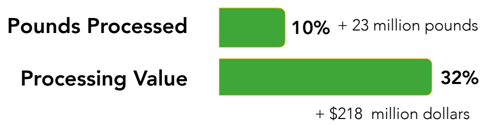
The 2022 Southeast Catch
Compared to the 2021 Catch in Millions

Species	2021 Pounds Landed	2022 Pounds Landed	2022 Catch Value	2022 Increase in Value
Chum Salmon	49.2	74.5	$97.9	86%
Pink Salmon	134.3	68.3	$36.0	-42%
Herring	32.6	51.8	$9.6	63%
Black Cod	12.3	15.9	$54.6	42%
Coho Salmon	9.2	8.6	$22.0	14%
Halibut	7.8	7.4	$54.4	10%
Sockeye Salmon	6.4	6.8	$14.3	14%
Chinook	2.5	3.0	$17.8	15%
Geoduck, Sea Cucumbers, Urchins	2.6	2.0	$8.9	-49%
Crab	4.8	3.3	$16.0	-24%
All Other	4.3	4.4	$3.6	-39%
Pounds	266 million	246 million	$335 million	$44 million

Seafood Processing

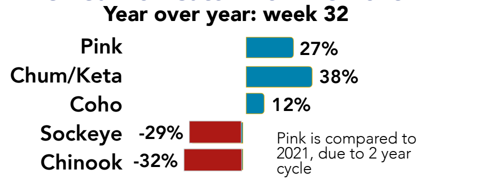
The region had its most valuable processing year ever. In 2022, shore-based seafood facilities in Southeast Alaska processed 258 million pounds of seafood in the region, with a wholesale value of $892 million, including shorebased processors and direct marketers.

SE Seafood Processing: 2021 vs. 2022



2023 The 2023 harvest-to-date has been good. In ASMI's August 2023 update, salmon harvests were up 28% overall, with the pink harvest expected to be well above forecast levels.

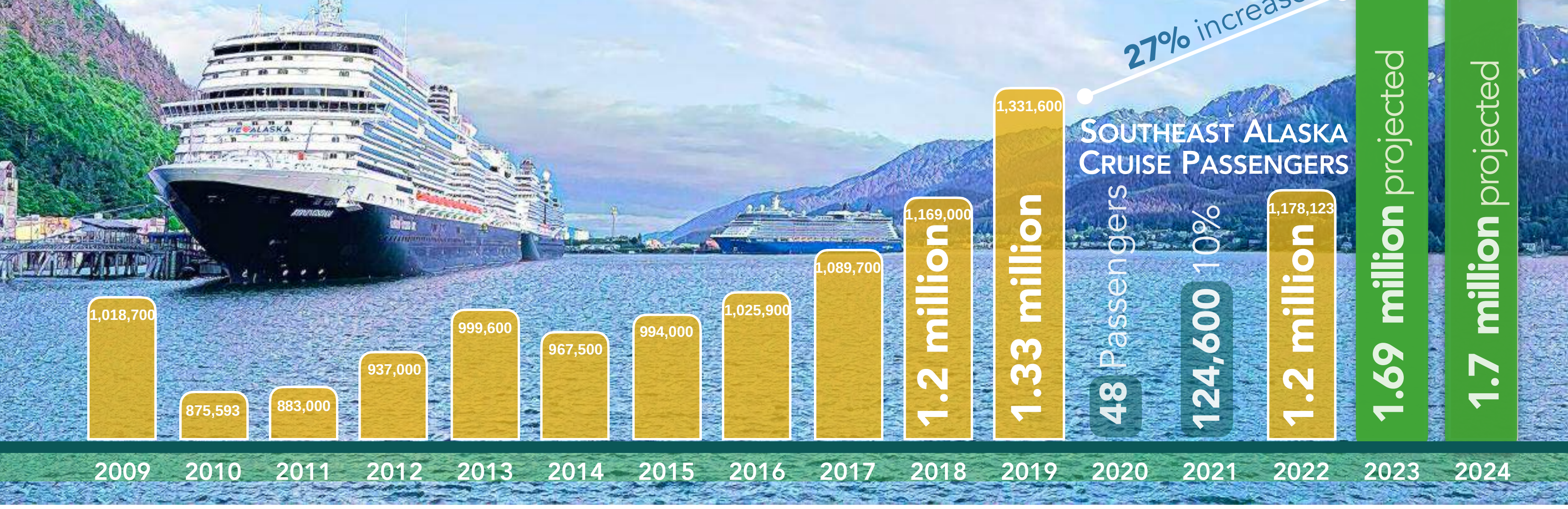
SE Salmon Catch: 2022 vs. 2023
Year over year: week 32



Despite solid harvest returns, 2023 has been a challenge for regional fishermen. An effort to ban the troller fleet from fishing for chinook salmon was nearly successful and would have disproportionally impacted rural Southeast communities. Also, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war is contributing to an over-abundant global salmon supply, leading to decreased prices across all species, with especially dismal chum prices.

Sources: Combination of ADOL Employment and Wage data; US Census Nonemployer (self-employment) Statistics; ADF&G Seafood Production of Shorebased Plants in Southeast Alaska; ADF&G Southeast Alaska Commercial Seafood Industry Harvest and Ex-Vessel Value Information; Alaska Commercial Salmon Harvests and Ex-vessel Values, ADF&G. Weekly Alaska Salmon Harvest Updates are produced for ASMI by McKinley Research. **Seafood Industry** includes animal aquaculture, fishing, & seafood product preparation and Southeast Alaska resident commercial fishermen (nonresident fishermen & crew who did not report income are excluded). **Photo by Rafe Hanson Photography.**

VISITOR INDUSTRY



Visitor Industry

6,570 Annualized Jobs

$242 Million in Wages in 2022

Jobs up 317 Jobs in 2022

Earnings up by 7% +$16m

2022 More than a million and a half passengers arrived in Southeast Alaska by air, ferry, and cruise ship in 2022. Cruise passenger numbers grew by 1.1 million passengers, nearly a 10-fold increase from 2021. Airline passengers increased by more than 100,000. Total ferry passenger traffic was up by nearly 37,000. The 2022 season was Southeast Alaska's first "normal" tourism season since the pandemic hit, with cruise passenger numbers similar to 2018. The 2020 cruise season was virtually nonexistent, while the 2021 season represented just a tenth of a season.

In 2022, visitor sector jobs increased by 5% over 2021 to 6,570, and wages increased by $16 million. Those working in the visitor industry earned $242 million in 2022, comprising 9% of all regional employment income. However, the tourism sector was still lagging as an economic driver for the region. Pre-pandemic, in 2019, it comprised 12% of all regional wages.

2023 Business Leaders Survey

By all accounts 2023 has been a very good year for tourism businesses, and by extension, the regional economy. In spring 2023, business leaders from the tourism, food, and beverage sectors reported a strong economic climate. The majority (55%) expected their business operations to be even stronger headed into 2023 and 2024, including 23% saying their outlook was much better for the coming year. The rebound of the visitor industry is partially due to federal intervention. One-third of tourism business leaders said they would have closed permanently without federal pandemic relief funding.

Biggest Cruise Season Ever in 2023

After 3 years of cruise volatility, 2023 is emerging as the region's biggest cruise ship season ever. While in 2022 the ships were only 74% full, in 2023 ships are back to full capacity, and are expected carry 1.69 million passengers by the end of this summer — 27% more than in 2019.

"We are halfway through the season, but 2023 is clearly going to be our best year ever."

Tourism businesses are reporting revenue records, and are becoming competitive with other sectors for workers, as visitor sector wages increase. Tourism jobs in Southeast Alaska increased by 7% in the first half of 2023, adding nearly 500 jobs.

Tourism Jobs are Still Lagging

Despite a significant increase in visitors, the tourism workforce was still slightly below June 2019 levels by June of 2023. Attracting the workforce volume sufficient to serve visitors has been a challenge for regional businesses. More than three-quarters of tourism business leaders blame lack of housing in the region for stymying workforce numbers; while two-thirds pointed to a lack of childcare.

Jet Passengers

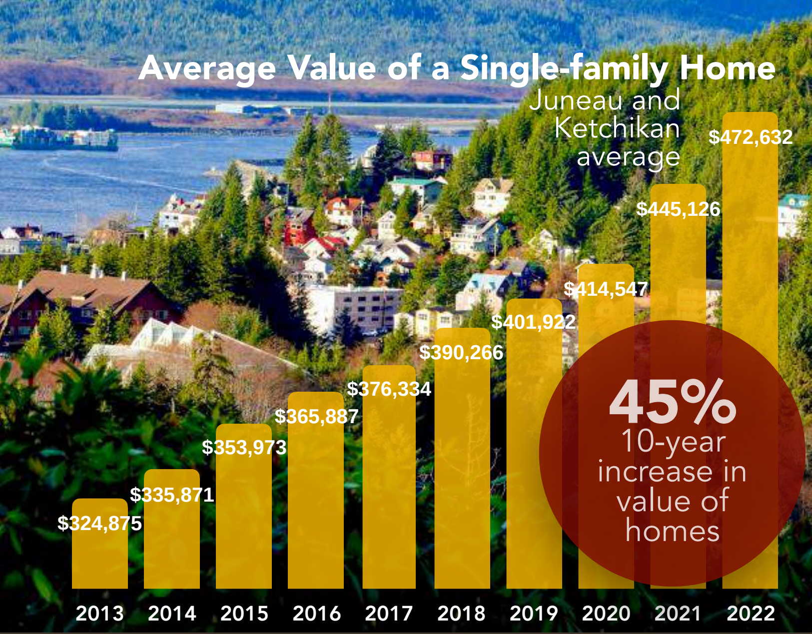
Total air passenger arriving from outside Southeast surged by 30% in 2022 and continue to increase. In the first half of 2023 total air passenger arrivals for the region were 8% above 2022 levels. June 2023 was the best June on record for passenger arrivals in the region, surpassing the previous record set in June 2018 by 3%.

2024 Visitor Stability Expected Next Year

Moving into 2024, regional cruise ship passenger numbers are expected to be similar to the 2023 season. While some larger ships will visit in 2024, the overall visitation count will be lower. Juneau will begin enforcing a 5-ship-per-day limit, a recommendation of the community's Visitor Industry Task Force, and agreed to by the industry. This change will essentially cap significant overall cruise passenger growth to the region. The 2024 season will be similar in volume, but slightly longer. The cruise ship season is expected to run a full seven months — early April though the end of October — with 50 ships making nearly 660 voyages to the region.

2024 Cruise Schedule	
Total ships	50
Total voyages planned	660
First ship	April 8
Last ship	October 26

Sources: CLIA Alaska & Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska. Combination of ADOL Employment and Wage data and US Census Nonemployer (self-employment) Statistics; Alaska Visitors Statistics Program (AVSP) VII; US Bureau of Transportation Statistics (RITA); Alaska Marine Highway System; Juneau International Airport Passenger Statistics; Juneau Docks & Harbors capacity figures. **Note:** In this analysis, the visitor industry includes leisure and hospitality businesses, along with air, water & scenic transportation companies.



Housing Indicators

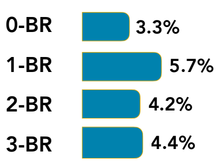
Half of business leaders say that the lack of housing is a ***significant*** barrier to their business. Hoonah and Sitka report the most acute housing shortages, followed by Ketchikan and Skagway. Two-thirds of regional business leaders say that housing costs are too high for their workers.

Housing Affordability: Nearly 1/3 of Southeast Alaskans cannot afford their homes. The definition of being housing-cost-burdened is spending more than 30% of a household income on housing related costs. According to data from the American Community Survey, in Southeast, 31% of all households were cost-burdened in 2021. Analysis shows that 44% of renters in Southeast are housing-cost-burdened, including 52% of Sitka and Ketchikan renters, while Juneau has the highest overall housing costs. The cost of a single-family home in the region has increased by 45% in the last decade, while the average regional wage increased by 22% over the same period.

Housing Availability: A weakness in the Southeast Alaska economy is a lack of sufficient housing units to meet demand. Two-thirds of business leaders say there are not enough homes on the market to attract and retain workers; and 60% say there are not enough rentals to meet the housing needs of their workforce.

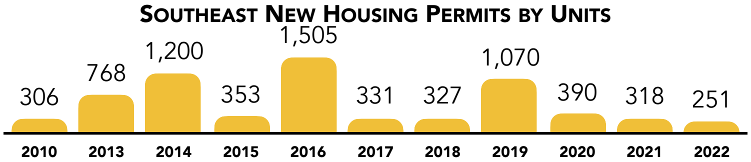
Rental Housing: Based on a 2022 survey of 1,800 rental units in the region by the Alaska Department of Labor, the overall rental vacancy rate was 4.6%, while in Juneau it was even lower at 3.7%. Efficiency apartments have the lowest vacancy rates, at 3.3%. A healthy vacancy rate is considered to be approximately 8%.

2022 SE Rental Vacancy Rates



New Housing: In the past 10 years, Southeast communities added more than 6,500 new permitted housing units — including nearly 1,300 single-family homes, 400 multi-family homes (2-4 units), and 600 apartment units. However, 2022 marked the lowest year of new housing development in years, with just 251 new units permitted.

Southeast New Housing Permits by Units



Mining Industry

1,002 Annualized Jobs in 2022

Up 104 Jobs in 2022, Jobs/Wages up by 12%

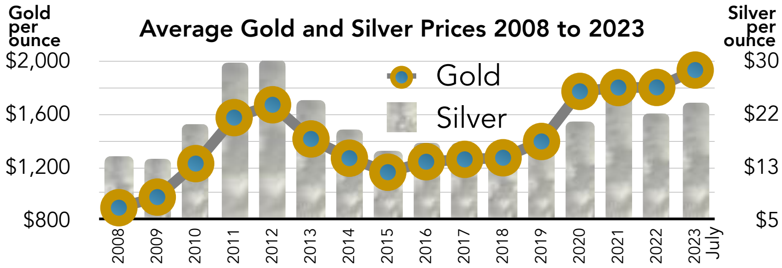
2022 The mining sector is growing steadily. Mining jobs and wages in Southeast Alaska were up by 12% in 2022, and has doubled since 2010. The average annual mining wage was $119,200 in 2022, more than twice the overall regional wage of $59,000.

Three mines in the region account for nearly all mining employment.

- **Hecla Greens Creek** is one of the largest silver mines in the world. In August 2023, Hecla Greens Creek had 506 full-time permanent employees (+32 from 2022) and continues to ramp up production and employment. Greens Creek is the largest private sector employer in Juneau as well as the highest taxpayer at $2.4 million per year in property and sales taxes. In 2022, Greens Creek produced 9.1 million ounces of silver.
- **Coeur Alaska's Kensington Mine** is exclusively a gold mine. Kensington had a production of 109,000 ounces of gold in 2022. In 2023, Coeur Alaska Kensington had a full-time permanent staff of 383 (-20 from 2022). Over the last five years, the Company has invested approximately $245 million in exploration, increasing reserves.
- **Dawson Mine** is a smaller gold and silver project on Prince of Wales. Dawson Mine reported 54 full-time workers in 2022.

Additional mining exploration projects are active in the region, including the Palmer Project in Haines, Herbert Gold in Juneau, Bokan Mountain, and Niblack, both on Prince of Wales.

Mining jobs in Southeast Alaska have increased by 3% in the first half of 2023. Metal prices continue to be strong.



Sources: ADOL Employment and Wage data; Quarterly Alaska Housing Unit Survey, a survey of local governments and housing agencies; US Census; Zillow. Kitco Metals Inc; Coeur Mining Inc. Annual Report; Hecla Mining Company Annual Report.

Photo credits: Rosie Roppel and Kensington Mine.

Road Construction in Hoonah

Construction Industry

2,040 Annualized Jobs in 2022

JOBS UP 12 IN 2022, WAGES UP BY 8%

2022 For the third year in a row, construction employment was up. Construction jobs increased by 1%, while wages grew by 8% in 2022. Construction workers in the region earned $154 million, representing 6% all regional workforce earnings in 2022. Early data shows construction jobs increased by another 1% in the first half of 2023. Sector growth is limited by a lack of workers, not projects. The passage of the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) has led to large construction projects in Southeast, but local firms must compete statewide and nationally for workers as similar investments into infrastructure projects are occurring across the US. Local leaders point to say that transportation, difficulty with licensure, and lack of childcare make it even harder to compete.

"There are plenty of opportunities. The outlook would be good if we could find more workers."

By July 2023, IIJA awards totaling $220 million for work in 27 Southeast communities had been announced, with the potential of millions more if organizations and communities continue to successfully apply for available funding to support the region's roads, bridges, ports, airports, energy grids, communication systems, and ferries. In Southeast in 2023, a partial list of grants for federal infrastructure act funding includes:

- **Roads and bridges**: $130.3 million (including the Haines highway reconstruction for $30.3 million; Juneau N. Douglas Crossing $16.5 million; and Kake Access $10 million)
- **Airport** infrastructure: $27.2 million
- **Recreation**: $14.4 million
- **Transit**: $11.3 million
- Tribal **Broadband** Connectivity: $11 million
- **Harbors**: $7 million

Statewide, $286 million has been awarded to the Alaska Marine Highway for vessel replacement, dock upgrades, vessel modernization, an electric ferry, design for a new mainliner, and to generate sustainable operations.

Sources: Combination of Alaska Department of Labor Employment and Wage data and US Census Nonemployer (self-employment) Statistics; State of Alaska.
Photography credit: Bartlett Regional Hospital and City of Hoonah

Health Care Industry

3,540 Annualized Jobs in 2022

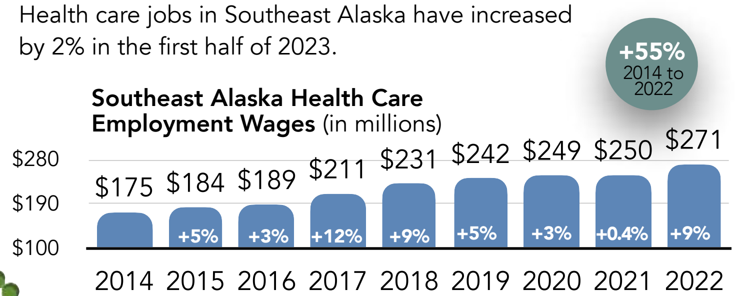
JOBS UP 32 IN 2022 WAGES UP BY 9%

2022 Southeast Alaska's 3,540 public and private healthcare workers comprised 10% of the regional workforce in 2022, also earning 10% of all wages, $271 million.

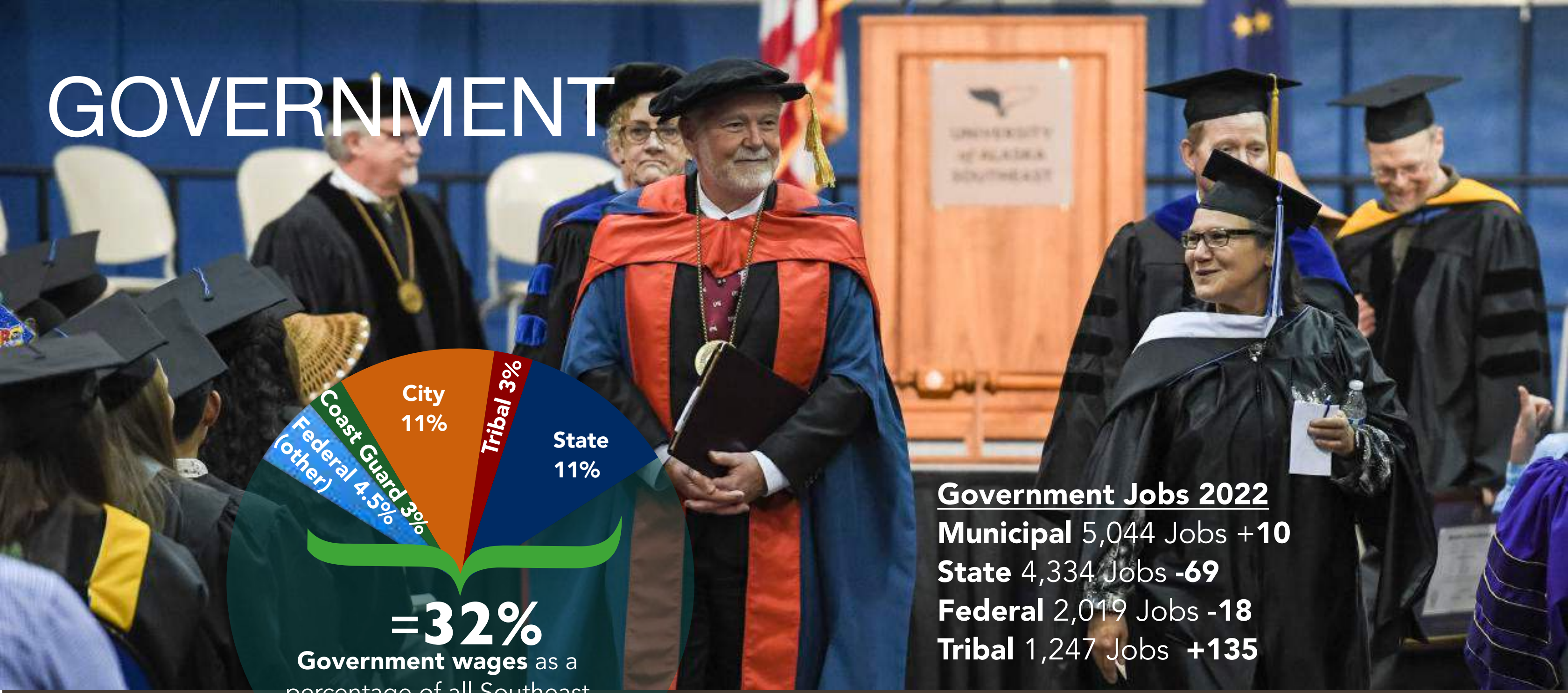
Healthcare is now the biggest economic sector in Alaska, accounting for 12% of all workforce earnings statewide, having outpaced Alaska's historically-dominant sectors years ago. Through growth and turnover approximately 7,500 new healthcare workers must be hired across Alaska every year to keep up with staffing needs. There are too few Alaska healthcare workers to fill the current demand for services in Alaska, and job vacancies in the industry are increasing. Southeast Alaska medical facilities must compete statewide and nationally for high demand healthcare workers. In 2022, the region added just 32 healthcare jobs, despite growing demand for services. Southeast Alaska providers have repeatedly adjusted wages up to remain competitive in attracting and retaining workers, resulting in significant overall wage increases. Regional healthcare wages increased by 9% between 2021 and 2022 in an effort to compete for workers. Between 2014 and 2022, total regional healthcare wages in the region have grown by nearly $100 million, a 55% increase.

The SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) is the region's largest health care provider with staff in 27 communities, employing 40% of all regional health care workers. SEARHC has been expanding its operations, growing to 1,410 workers in 2023, with an annual revenue of $344 million. The combined staffs of SEARHC, Bartlett, and PeaceHealth make up three-quarters of all regional health workers.

Health care jobs in Southeast Alaska have increased by 2% in the first half of 2023.



GOVERNMENT



Government Jobs 2022
Municipal 5,044 Jobs +**10**
State 4,334 Jobs **-69**
Federal 2,019 Jobs **-18**
Tribal 1,247 Jobs **+135**

Government

12,644 Annualized Jobs in 2022

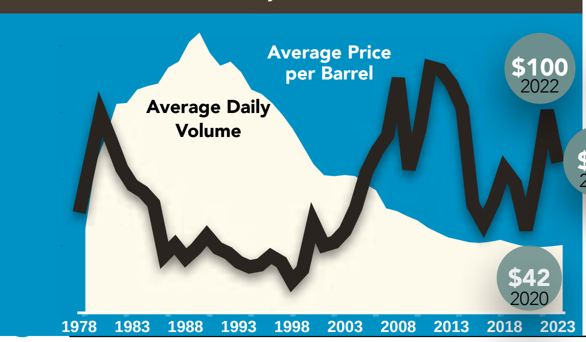
Up 58 Jobs in 2022
Wages up by 3%, $28 million

2022 Government wages made up 28% (12,644) of the region's jobs in 2022, and 32% of all regional employment earnings ($843 million). Overall public sector wages grew by $28 million in 2022, an increase of 3%, while government jobs grew by less than one percent.

State Government Losses

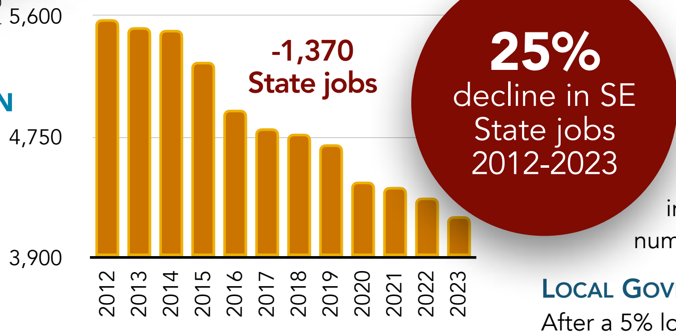
For the past decade, the region's state government sector has suffered from a prolonged reduction of Southeast jobs. From 2012 to 2022, state jobs have fallen by 25%, a decline of 1,370 annualized workers, representing $91 million in lost wages annually. Outside the region State jobs were down by 12% over the same period.

Avg. Daily Volume of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System and Inflation Adjusted Price Per Barrel, 1978-2023



Southeast State Jobs

State jobs in the region are down for the 11th year in a row, for a total of 1,370 jobs lost since 2012, a decline of 25%



Permanent Fund Concerns

Alaska's revenue structure is dependent on fluctuating oil prices and, following a 2018 legislative amendment, on permanent fund earnings. The Alaska Permanent Fund, which contributes more than half of the State's general fund revenue, has been posting negative returns for the first time in a decade, including a $6 billion loss between the end of 2021 and mid-2023. Future forecasts are also concerning. Without sufficient earnings the fund will be unable to pay for state services or dividends by 2026. Such an outcome would lead to job, service, and financial losses within the region.

Federal Government

In 2020 when the regional economy crashed, the federal government provided hundreds of million in grants and loans to the region. This funding was funneled into regional households, businesses, service providers, tribes, and communities, and proved to be instrumental in restoring economic stability. Continued federal expenditures in the form of infrastructure and broadband investments have been critical for restoring the regional economy.

Federal jobs were down slightly in 2022. Early 2023 jobs data indicate that federal employment numbers will be similar to 2022.

Local Government

After a 5% loss in 2020, local government employment has remained relatively stable, increasing by 10 jobs in 2022. In the first half of 2023, employment numbers were up by 30 jobs. The primary elements that make up local government include public administration —accounting for 44% of all city workers; 40% in education, just over 2,000 workers in Southeast; and 16% health care workers. In 2022, elementary and secondary schools decreased by 24 jobs, -1%.

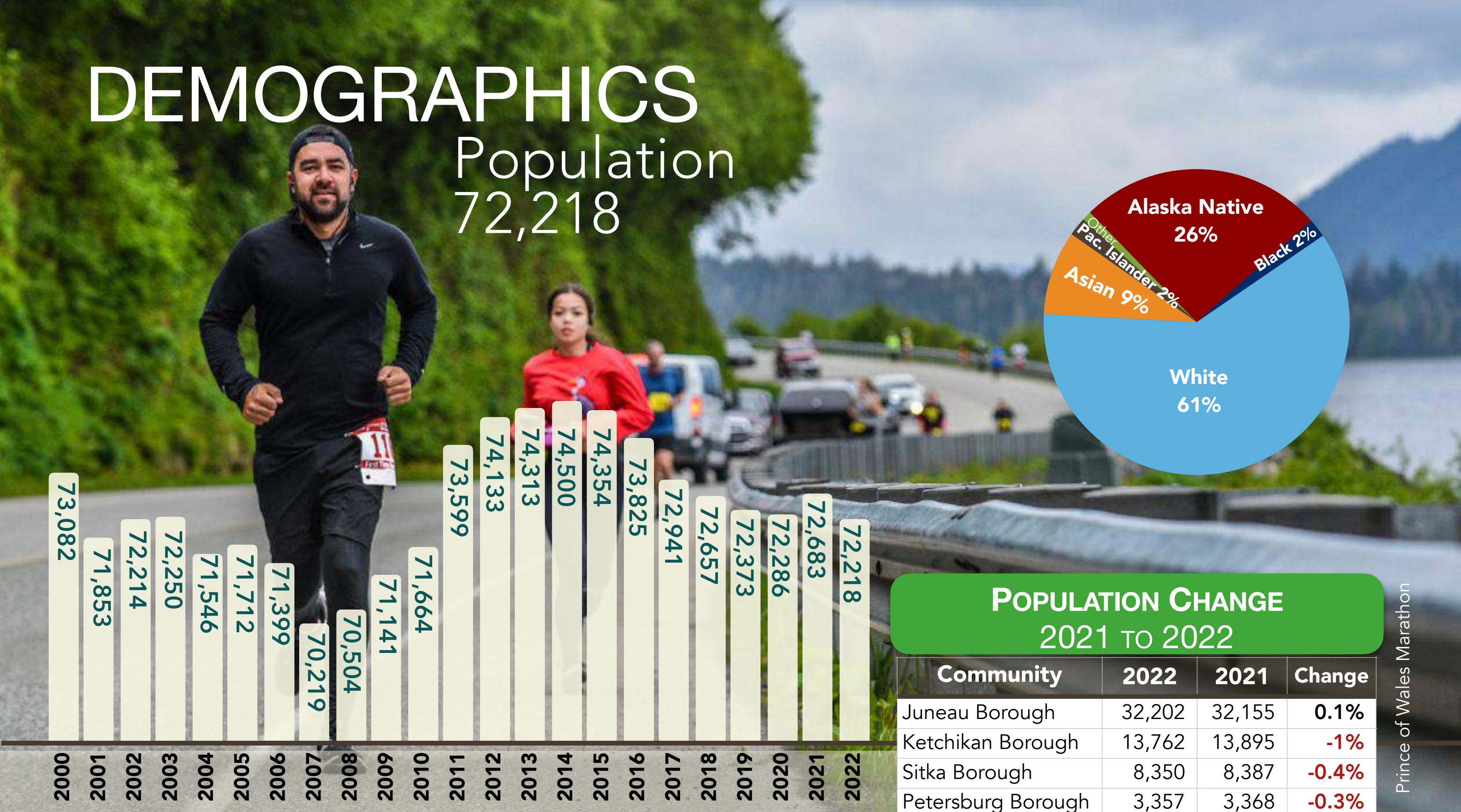
Thriving Tribal Government

The sector with the most significant growth between 2021 and 2022 was the region's tribal governments. Tribal government staff grew by 12% — 135 jobs — to 1,247 annualized workers, representing a 38% staff increase in 6 years. Tribal government wages increased by 20% from 2021 to 2022, to $70.3 million, an increase of $12 million. Tribal government now makes up 10% of all government jobs in the region, and 3% of all Southeast jobs.

Sources: ADOL Employment and Wage data; Alaska Department of Revenue Crude Oil Prices. Alaska Office of Management Budget. Photo credit: Michael Penn and UAS

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 72,218



2022 The region's population has remained relatively stable over the past six years, declining by less than one percent over that time, and averaging 72,500 residents.

School Enrollment

K-12 enrollment was down by 1%, as school numbers fell by 122 students in 2022. Losses were experienced across the region, but Ketchikan elementary student declines accounted for more than half of the total reduction (-67). School population in Skagway increased by 16%.

A Changing Workforce

Southeast continues to have the state's oldest residents. Since 2000, the most pronounced demographic shift has been the aging of the population. During that period, the 60-plus population grew by more than 10,000 older residents, from 10% of the overall population to more than a quarter.

At the same time those of prime working age, aged 19 to 59, have shrunk by 6,500 residents. While many Southeast Alaskans work well into their senior years, this demographic shift bears a primary responsibly for the lack of available workforce within the region.

Best Summer Job Market

In 2023, Juneau was named the 3rd best city in the US for summer jobs (out of 180), highlighting the ample high-quality seasonal work opportunities for the region's teens and those in their 20s.

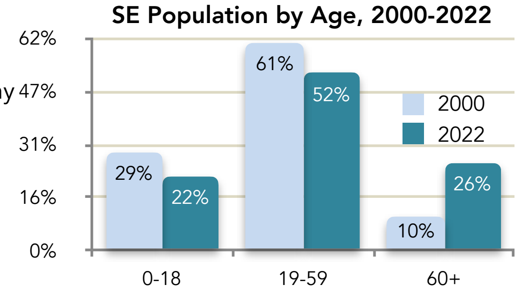
Workforce Residency

In 2021, 7% of the Southeast workforce were Alaskans from other areas of the state, and 24% were non-Alaskans. Non-Alaskans earned 16% of all regional wages in 2021. Southeast's largest numbers of nonresidents work in seafood processing (66%), and accommodation and food services (38% nonresident).

Net Migration

While more people moved to Southeast Alaska than moved away in 2020 and 2021, in 2022 495 more people left the region than those who moved here. The majority of those who moved away left Alaska entirely.

SE Population by Age, 2000-2022



Population Change 2021 to 2022

Community	2022	2021	Change
Juneau Borough	32,202	32,155	0.1%
Ketchikan Borough	13,762	13,895	-1%
Sitka Borough	8,350	8,387	-0.4%
Petersburg Borough	3,357	3,368	-0.3%
Haines Borough	2,575	2,614	-1.5%
Wrangell Borough	2,084	2,096	-0.6%
Metlakatla	1,444	1,403	3%
Skagway Borough	1,146	1,203	-5%
Craig	992	969	2%
Hoonah	917	902	2%
Klawock	694	709	-2%
Yakutat Borough	673	697	-3%
Gustavus	657	658	0%
Kake	530	557	-5%
Thorne Bay	449	456	-2%
Hydaburg	347	376	-8%
Angoon	340	360	-6%
Coffman Cove	201	187	7%
Hollis	139	138	1%
Naukati Bay	131	137	-4%
Tenakee Springs	126	122	3%
Klukwan	86	88	-2%
Pelican	83	92	-10%
Whale Pass	84	84	0%
Port Alexander	57	61	-7%
Kasaan	49	46	7%
Hyder	46	42	10%
Edna Bay	42	40	5%
Port Protection	33	35	-6%
Elfin Cove	38	32	19%
Game Creek	18	19	-5%
Point Baker	10	10	0%
Remainder	556	556	0%
Total	**72,218**	**72,494**	**-0.4%**

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor (ADOL); ADOL Southeast Alaska Population by Age, Sex and Borough/Census Area; Alaska Population Projections; US Census. WalletHub. Nonresidents Working in Alaska (ADOL). Photo: George Nickerson

Jobs by Community

Looking at all communities across Southeast in 2022, job counts were mostly up compared to 2021. Communities with large cruise ship ports were most likely to add jobs.

The largest 2021 to 2022 job gains percentage-wise included **Skagway** (+41%), **Hoonah** (+23%), and **Gustavus** (+21%). The largest increases in total wages were seen in **Skagway** (+52%), **Hoonah** (+38%), and **Gustavus** (+28%).

Five communities experienced continued job losses in 2022 compared to 2021, but only **Petersburg** lost both jobs (-12%) and wages (-16%). **Wrangell** and **Angoon** both lost 5% of all jobs.

Regional job rates remained below 2019 levels for most communities in 2022. Skagway's jobs were 19% below 2019 levels. Three communities had more jobs in 2022 than they did in 2019. These include **Gustavus** (+25%), **Yakutat** (+22%), and **Hoonah** (+11%).

Approximately half of all regional jobs (49%) and wages (52%) are in Juneau.

Note: *This analysis* ***excludes self-employment data****, which is not made available below the borough/census area level. Still, tracking change in labor figures is an important way to track overall workforce changes in a community.*

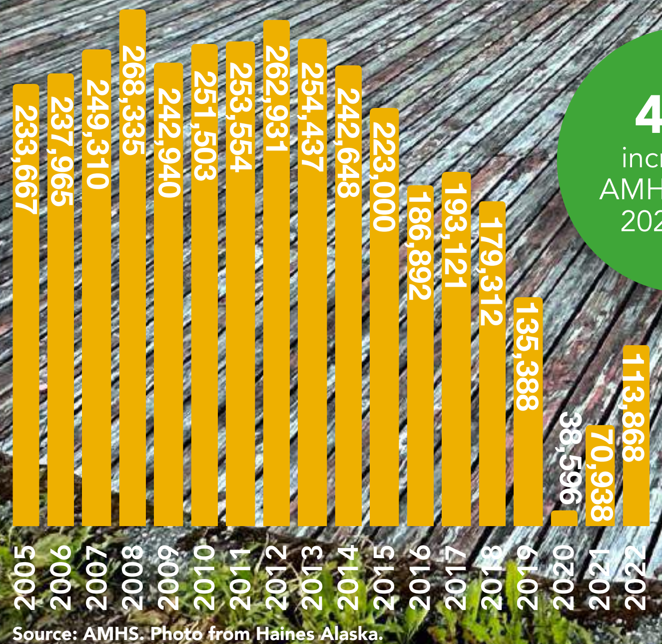
Annual Employment Change by Community 2021 to 2022

Community	2022 Annual Average Employment	2021 Annual Average Employment	2022 Wages in millions	Wages Change 2021-2022	Employment Change 2021-2022	Employment Change 2019-2022
Juneau	17,323	16,450	$1,080.5	10%	5%	-4%
Ketchikan	6,963	6,492	$396.2	13%	7%	-6%
Sitka	4,267	4,133	$242.3	12%	3%	-1%
Prince of Wales	1,393	1,410	$66.4	3%	-1%	-9%
Petersburg	1,244	1,419	$61.1	-16%	-12%	-3%
Haines	913	813	$40.6	19%	12%	-11%
Wrangell	673	712	$34.9	7%	-5%	-18%
Skagway	879	623	$45.0	52%	41%	-19%
Metlakatla	503	493	$26.9	14%	2%	-0.3%
Hoonah SSA	476	388	$23.1	38%	23%	11%
Yakutat	341	334	$20.2	7%	2%	22%
Gustavus SSA	255	211	$12.5	28%	21%	25%
Kake	161	166	$5.8	2%	-3%	-4%
Angoon SSA	138	145	$4.6	2%	-5%	-10%
Hyder	38	34	$2.3	5%	13%	-26%
Klukwan	48	46	$1.0	4%	3%	-7%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section.
Notes: The Hoonah sub-subarea (SSA) includes Pelican and Elfin Cove. The Angoon SSA includes Tenakee Springs. Prince of Wales includes the Hollis SSA, Thorne Bay SSA and Hydaburg. An SSA is the smallest unit for which the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages is analyzed.

Southeast Alaska GDP 2021 = $4.2 billion
Change 2020 to 2021 = 2.4%
Source: BEA

AMHS Ridership in Southeast



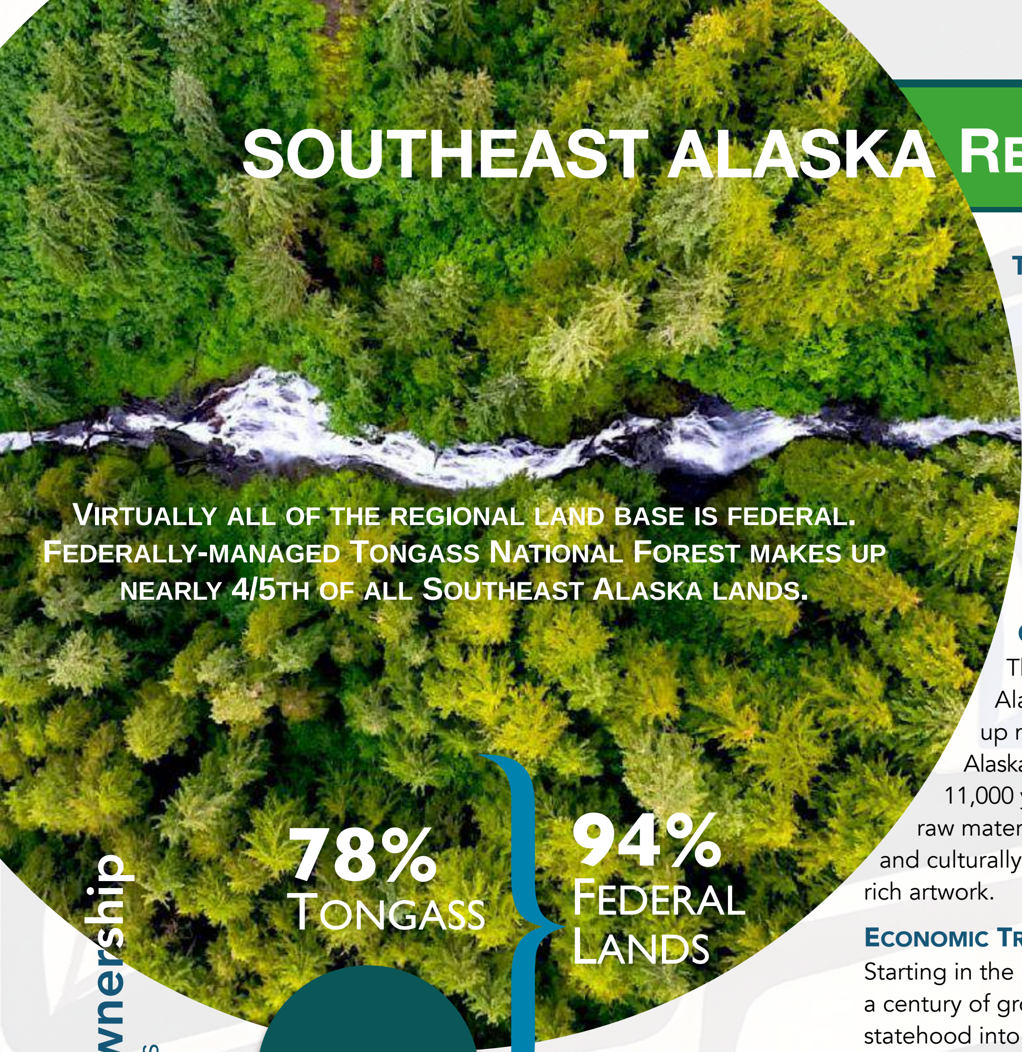
Source: AMHS. Photo from Haines Alaska.

48% increase in AMHS service 2021-2022

Ferry connectivity, long identified as the most vulnerable element of the regional economy, has been cut dramatically over the past decade. However, as pandemic recovery continues, ridership was up by 48% between 2021 and 2022.

In the summer of 2023, just 6 of the State's 9 ferries were in service, but the fleet is poised for a significant makeover. Three new ferries — including one hybrid model and an electric ferry — will be added to the Alaska Marine Highway System by the end of 2027 to replace the Tustumena, Matanuska, and Lituya. In the meantime, lack of qualified crew is limiting service.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL OVERVIEW



Southeast Alaska Land Ownership
Circle size = Number of Acres

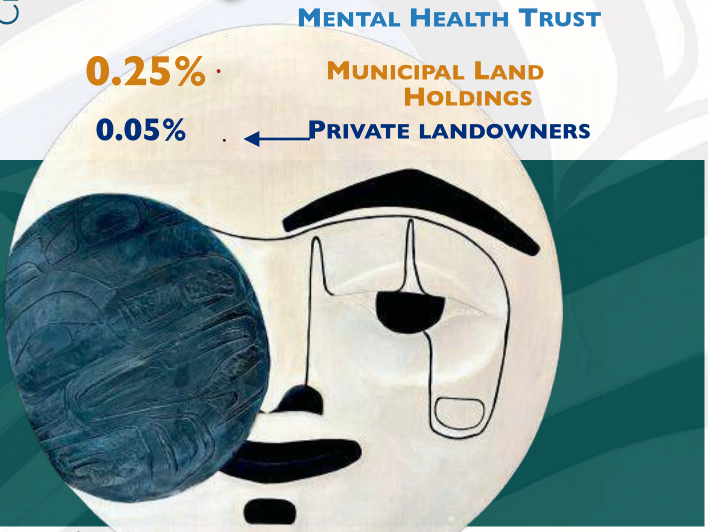
16% OTHER FEDERAL HOLDINGS MAKE UP NEARLY ALL THE REST (MOSTLY GLACIER BAY)

3.4% ALASKA NATIVE ORGANIZATIONS ARE THE REGION'S NEXT LARGEST LANDOWNER

2.5% STATE OF ALASKA LANDS INCLUDE THOSE MANAGED AS PART OF THE MENTAL HEALTH TRUST

0.25% MUNICIPAL LAND HOLDINGS

0.05% PRIVATE LANDOWNERS



Sources: State of Alaska; US Forest Service; Sealaska. *Economies in transition: An assessment of trends relevant to management of the Tongass National Forest, USDA 1998. Image Credits: Mask by Mike Dangeli. Tongass photo by Ken Gill.*

THE REGION

The Southeast Alaska panhandle extends 500 miles along the coast from Metlakatla to Yakutat, encompassing approximately 33,500 square miles of land and water. The saltwater shoreline of Southeast Alaska totals approximately 18,500 miles. More than 1,000 islands make up 40 percent of the total land area. The region is home to 34 communities. The three largest communities – Juneau, Ketchikan, and Sitka – together are home to 75 percent of the regional population.

CULTURE

The dominant culture in the region is indigenous. Alaska Natives – the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian – make up more than a quarter (26%) of the region's population. Alaska's Native peoples have resided in the region for at least 11,000 years. The region's mild climate, abundant food and raw materials supported the development of highly-organized and culturally-advanced societies with extensive trade routes and rich artwork.

ECONOMIC TRENDS

Starting in the 1880s, the economy of Southeast Alaska experienced a century of growth that intensified after statehood in 1959. From statehood into the 1990s, population and employment levels in Southeast more than doubled as the workforce expanded in the areas of mining, government, fishing, tourism, and timber. In the early 1990's seafood and timber directly accounted for a fifth of the regional economy. Over the next decade pulp mills and sawmills in the region closed, laying off 3,200 workers. During the same period, the value of salmon declined and catch levels fell. The population continued to decline through 2007. Between 2008 and 2015, the region experienced a significant economic recovery, rebounding to record numbers of jobs, wages, and residents. However, the loss of nearly 1,400 State of Alaska jobs in the region, a 25% cut, stymied recovery. The regional economy was decimated in 2020 as the pandemic wiped out the tourism season and an extremely poor 2020 salmon season exacerbated the economic losses. However, by 2023 jobs, tourists, fish, and wages are back, as the region enters a period of economic prosperity.

LAND OWNERSHIP

A lack of privately-owned land and accessible land available for development is unique to Southeast Alaska and impacts the ability of the region to nurture the private sector. (See infographic on the left.) Southeast Alaska's land ownership is dominated by the federal government, which manages 94 percent of the land base. Most of this (78%, or 16.7 million acres) is the Tongass National Forest. The remaining federal lands are mostly in Glacier Bay National Park. Alaska Native organizations, including village, urban, regional corporations, and the Annette Island Reservation, own 3.4 percent (728,100 acres). The State manages 2.5 percent of the total land base (511,500 acres). Boroughs and communities own 53,000 acres — a quarter of one percent of the regional land base. Other private land holdings account for 0.05% of the regional land base.

JUNE PANDEMIC ECONOMICS

Change in June 2023 Jobs compared to June 2019 Levels: -2,000 jobs

June SE jobs down 5% Over 2019 pre-pandemic levels

In June 2023 the regional job numbers remained 2,000 below June 2019 levels, a 5% jobs deficit, primarily due to a combination of worker scarcity and continued state sector job cuts.

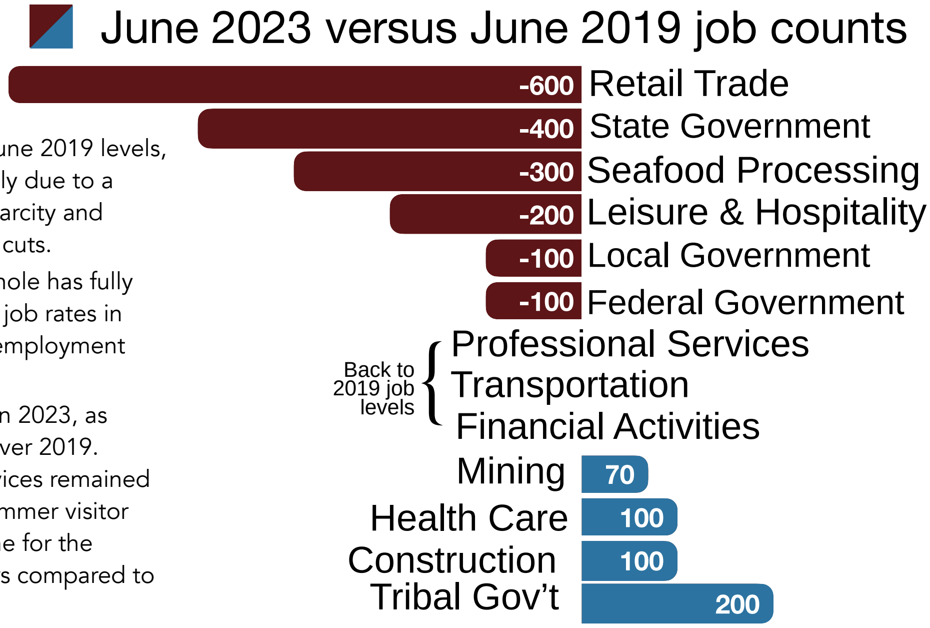
Comparatively, the US as a whole has fully recovered and was 3.5% above pre pandemic job rates in June, while Alaska remained 2% below 2019 employment levels.

Demand for worker services was even higher in 2023, as tourism visitation is up by an estimated 27% over 2019. However, businesses that provide tourism services remained unable to attract sufficient staffing for peak summer visitor levels in 2023, leading to a 800 job gap in June for the combined retail, leisure, and hospitality sectors compared to June 2019.

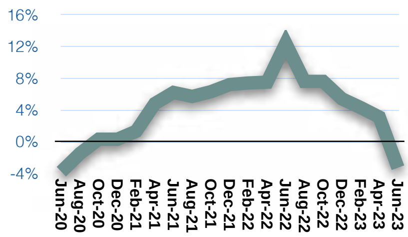
State government is the only sector that increased job cuts following peak pandemic losses. By June of 2023, state jobs were down by 9% over June of 2019, a loss of 400 jobs. Local and federal government each remain 100 jobs below 2019 staffing levels. The Juneau 2023 seafood sector is also below 2019 levels.

Four key sectors had higher levels of staffing in June 2023 than in 2019. Tribal government jobs were up by 20% (+200 jobs), health care and construction were each up by 100 workers, and mining jobs were up by 9% (+70 jobs).

Note that 2023 numbers are preliminary. Self-employment data for this dataset is not available and has not been included in this analysis.

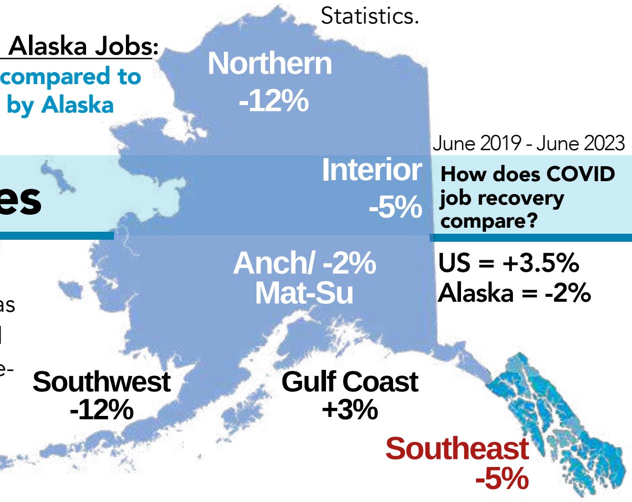


Alaska INFLATION June 2020 to June 2023: % change by year



After rising precipitously post 2020, Alaska's urban inflation levels have dropped. From June 2022 to June 2023, CPI fell 3.3% as food prices fell 19%, and energy prices decreased 16%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Change in Alaska Jobs: **June 2023 compared to June 2019, by Alaska region**



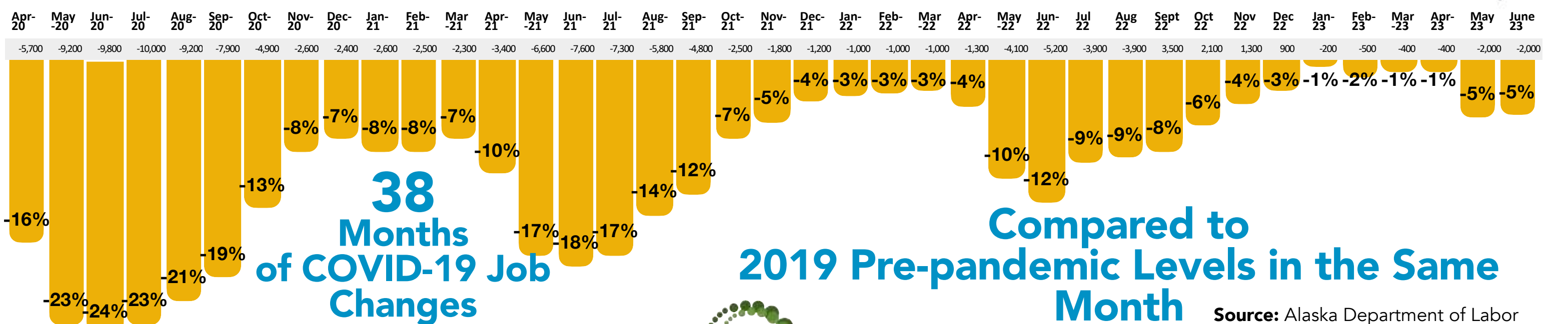
June 2019 - June 2023

How does COVID job recovery compare?

US = +3.5%
Alaska = -2%

Southeast COVID-19 **Employment Losses**

Since the pandemic hit Alaska in March of 2020, jobs in the Southeast region have been down acutely, especially in the summer months. In June of 2020, the region was down by nearly a quarter of all jobs (24%) compared to June of 2019. By 2023 it had appeared that Southeast had almost made a full recovery and was nearly back to pre-pandemic levels, with jobs down just 1-2% over 2019 job numbers January through April. But the visitor sector continues to struggle as it attempts to ramp up for busy summer seasons. June 2022's jobs came in at 5% below 2019 levels.

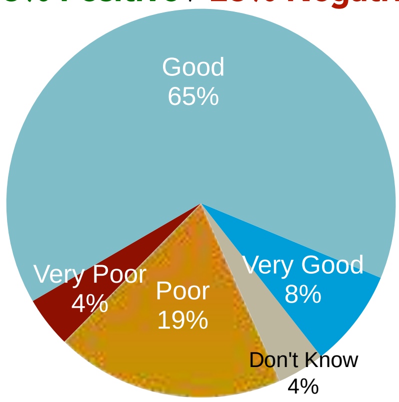


Source: Alaska Department of Labor

SOUTHEAST **ECONOMIC OUTLOOK** SURVEY

"How do you view the overall business climate right now?"

73% Positive / 23% Negative



Best Business Climate Since Survey Began in 2010

In April 2023, 370 Southeast Alaska business owners and top managers responded to Southeast Conference's Business Climate Survey.

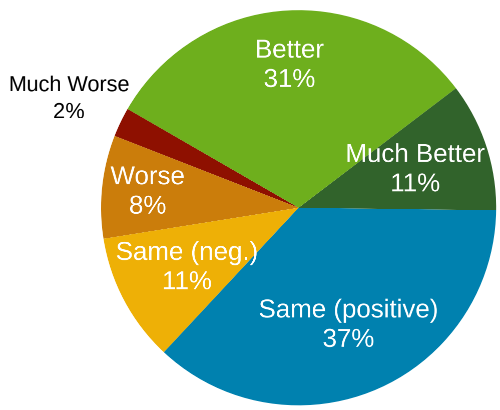
Nearly three-quarters (73%) have a positive view of the Southeast business climate, **making it the highest rated business climate since surveying began in 2010.**

While most sectors have a positive perspective on the current economy, those leading **Alaska Native organizations**, **tourism enterprises**, and **food**- or **beverage-focused businesses** were the most positive. Among communities, business leaders in **Sitka**, **Hoonah**, **Pelican**, and **Skagway** reported the most positive business perspectives.

The **seafood** and **transportation** (non-tourism) sectors were most likely to call the 2023 economy poor or very poor, along with business leaders in **Wrangell**.

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

79% Positive / 21% Negative



The Outlook is Strong

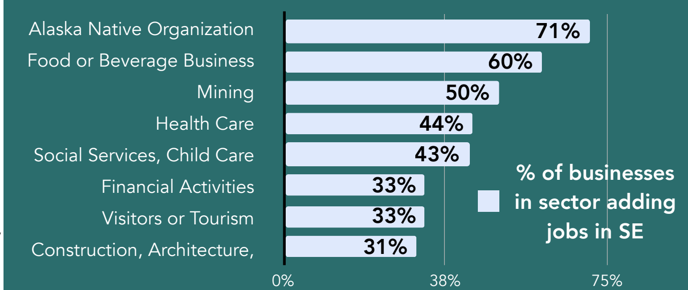
Business leaders are optimistic about the future. Almost half of respondents expect their prospects to be better (31%) or much better (11%) over the next year, with an overall positivity rating of 79%.

The economic outlook for **energy**, **Alaska Native organizations**, **tourism**, and the **food** & **beverage sector** are most positive moving into 2024, followed by the **arts**.

The communities with the most positive outlooks include **Skagway**, **Gustavus**, **Hoonah**, and **Sitka**.

Job Projections in Next Year

When asked about staffing expectations, 30% of regional businesses expect to add employees by spring 2024, with more than half of business leaders (56%) expecting to maintain job levels in the coming year. Just 6% of business leaders expect to reduce staffing levels. Expected job gains will be most significant in Alaska Native organizations, the food & beverage sector, mining, and health care.



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

Lack of Housing and Childcare are Creating Workforce Shortages for Regional Businesses

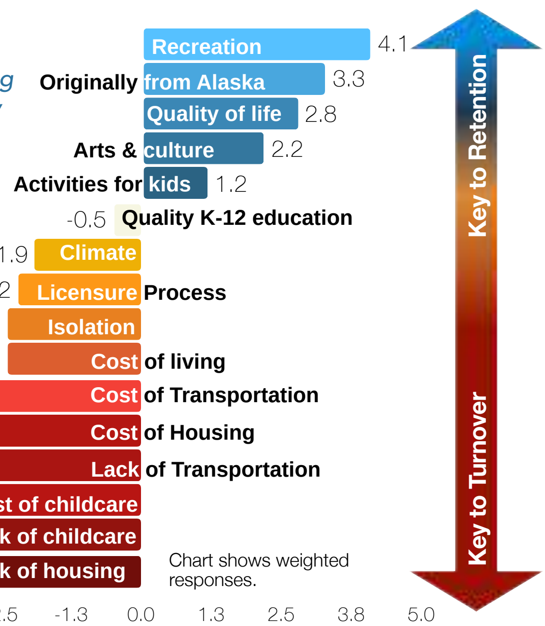
Southeast Alaska business leaders were asked to rank the impact of various elements on workforce attraction, retention, and turnover.

More than half of business leaders (52%) say that **housing availability** results in staff leaving or not taking a job, including 36% that say it is a **significant factor.** Hoonah, Yakutat, and Sitka report the highest housing related workforce limitations.

Half of business leaders say **childcare availability** is limiting their ability to keep or hire staff, including 23% that call it a significant factor. Hoonah, Prince of Wales, and Kake are most likely to call childcare a significant workforce problem.

Workers are attracted to jobs in the region — or are more likely to stay at their jobs in Southeast — because of **recreation opportunities**, because they are **originally from here**, and for the **high quality of life**, according to regional employers.

"Hiring and housing employees is very difficult." - regional business leader



SOUTHEAST **2025 STRATEGIC PLAN** SUMMARY

In April 2021, Southeast Conference released the Southeast Alaska 2025 Economic Plan, a five-year strategic plan for the region. The membership worked together to develop an overall vision statement, more than 50 objectives, and 3 priority objectives, along with regional and industry specific SWOT analyses. More than 400 people representing small businesses, tribes, Alaska Native organizations, municipalities, and nonprofits were involved in various elements of the planning process. The Plan's prioritized objectives are listed below.

Transportation

1. **Priority** Sustain and support the Alaska Marine Highway System
2. Develop a long-term, strategic, multi-modal, regional transportation plan
3. Ensure the stability of regional passenger transportation services
4. Move freight to and from markets more efficiently
5. Ports and harbors infrastructure improvements
6. Road Development

Seafood & Maritime

Seafood

1. **Priority** Mariculture development
2. Work to promote a year-round seafood economy
3. Further develop seafood markets
4. Maintain a stable regulatory regime
5. Research the effects of changing ocean conditions on the marine environment
6. Support regional processors becoming economically competitive
7. Communicate the importance of salmon hatcheries
8. Seafood sector workforce development
9. Full resource utilization & ocean product development

Maritime

1. Increase employment & training opportunities for Southeast Alaska residents in the Marine Industrial Support Sector
2. Increase energy efficiency & reduce energy costs
3. Expand marine industrial support capacity

Energy Sector

1. **Priority** Promote beneficial electrification
2. Continue to support rural Southeast communities with high-cost electric rates without access to lower-cost hydroelectricity
3. Work with communities to create energy systems that provide sustainable, affordable, renewable thermal energy
4. Implement regional energy plan with a focus on "committed units" and deployment of renewables
5. Energy workforce development

Visitor Industry

1. Market Southeast Alaska to attract more visitor spending and visitor opportunities
2. Grow cultural and arts tourism opportunities
3. Increase access to public lands and expand trail network
4. Increase yacht and small cruise ship visitation
5. Educate public on the economic value of tourism

Mining Industry

1. Proactively support mining operations and mineral exploration projects
2. Support efforts to increase access to minerals and energy sources for mining on state and federal lands
3. Mining and exploration workforce development
4. Preserve access to reliable, year-round transportation for miners living in rural Southeast Alaska
5. Attract mining capital

Health Care

1. Plan for a post COVID-19 health care system
2. Retain Alaska-trained health care students
3. Meet the health care needs of an aging population
4. Increase health care training within the region and state

Timber Industry

1. Provide an economically viable and dependable supply of timber from the Tongass National Forest to regional timber operators
2. Revise the Tongass National Forest Land Management Plan
3. Support an integrated timber industry that includes harvest of young growth and old growth
4. Community-based timber workforce development
5. Work with USFS to direct federal contracts and timber sale opportunities toward eligible locally-owned businesses

Other Objectives

1. **Housing:** Support the sustainable development of housing
2. **Childcare:** Increase childcare capacity
3. **Communications:** Improve communications access
4. **Education Objective:** Partner with University of Alaska Southeast and K-12 school districts to build career pathways and meet employer needs for a skilled workforce
5. **Natural Disaster Planning:** Support disaster preparation and relief efforts
6. **Solid Waste:** Support regional solid waste management solutions
7. **Food Security:** Increase supply, demand and equitable access and distribution of local foods and regional food system opportunities
8. **Arts:** Increase the recognition of Southeast Alaska's thriving Northwest Coast arts economy
9. **Cultural Wellness:** Support the development of activities and infrastructure that promotes cultural wellness and multicultural wellness

A Message from **Southeast Conference**

Executive Director **Robert Venables**

What a difference a year makes in the Southeast economy! There is a vibrancy and sense of expectation. What has been the driving force to propel such success? A commitment to teamwork. As we reflect on accomplishments that have led to unprecedented investments in our communities, we pause to acknowledge the partnerships and planning that were foundational to this success. The 400 participants and 14 months of preparing the 5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was the start. Embracing and utilizing the CEDS is what makes it effective. Partners like EDA, USDA, the Denali Commission, and the State of Alaska have used our CEDS to guide community investments. Coupled with federal funding, these investments will make generational impacts and sustain economic vibrancy.

Our strong partnership with Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes supports 33 communities and 19 Tribes. Together, we have worked to secure federal investment through unique programs like the OneUSDA Southeast Alaska Sustainable Strategy initiative.

The Alaska Marine Highway System has hope. While there are real, debilitating challenges, through painstaking planning efforts federal funding, real change is taking place, and new vessels are being designed and headed for construction. There has never been stronger support from our Legislature and Governor's Administration that coincided with funding to implement a plan. A hearty thanks to them and especially our federal advocates in Congress that makes this a reality.

Our statewide coalition is one year into the $49 million EDA-funded Alaska Mariculture Cluster project. We are pleased to see progress accelerate and have high expectations of attracting private sector investment that will sustain an industry that can be led by Alaskans and revitalize rural economies with jobs in our Underserved Communities.

Although much has been accomplished over the past year, the economic disaster of the pandemic still casts a shadow with lingering impacts on workforce readiness and availability, and other challenges remain such as housing, childcare and solid waste management that are still largely unresolved. But we have an effective partnership, a commitment to our mission, and a resolve to "be the compass and lead the way".

Incoming President **Kaitlyn Jared**

Kaitlyn Jared is the former Executive Director of the Skagway Development Corporation and currently serves as the Port Administrative Manager in Skagway.

"Alaska is the biggest small community you will ever be a part of" is a saying I was taught while in school at the University of Anchorage. True for Alaska as a whole, I find it applies even more to the community of Southeast Alaska.

The commitment we have for one another and for our current and future generations is inspiring. The communities of Southeast support each other through tough times, are working together to explore new industry opportunities, and will continue to improve existing ways to be more sustainable. We've formed stronger partnerships with each other as well as with State, Federal, Tribal and Private organizations.

Though our employment numbers haven't rebounded to 2019 levels, 2022 saw significant economic recovery with an overall increase of 2,180 jobs and 79% of businesses having a positive outlook.

Supporting a healthy and sustainable economy is essential to keeping our children in the region and fostering a way of life that attracts families. As we continue to see the region's population decline, we must work together in the coming year is critical to reverse this trend.

As we move through 2023 and into 2024, it is the communities of Southeast Alaska that direct the efforts of Southeast Conference and the board that serves it. As Southeast Conference's president, I look forward to supporting each and every one of our members in the coming vibrant year.

The mission of Southeast Conference is to **undertake and support activities that promote strong economies, healthy communities, and a quality environment in Southeast Alaska**. As the state- and federally-designated regional economic development organization, Southeast Conference serves as the collective voice for advancing the region's economy. We have 200 member organizations representing 1,200 people from 32 regional communities. We started 60 years ago with a group of people supporting the establishment of a regional transportation system, leading to the formation of the Alaska Marine Highway System. Our members stayed together through more than a half-century to focus on concerns unique to the region.

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

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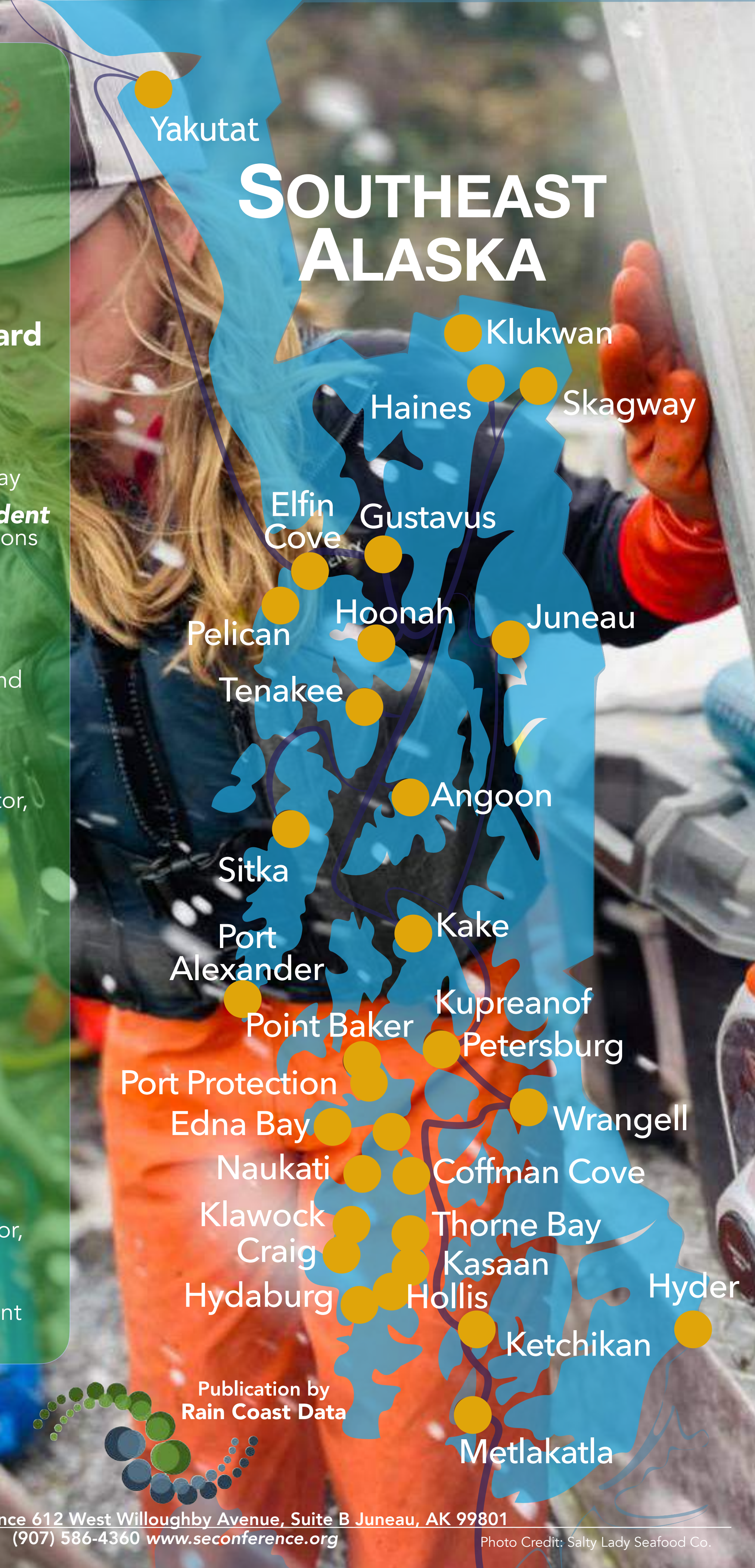

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