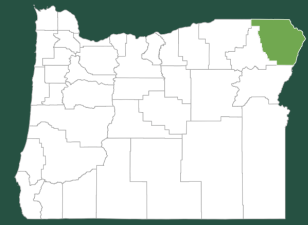




# WALLOWA COUNTY

## Oregon Voices Data Summary



County Total Population

7,065

### About the Summary

Oregon Voices began in summer of 2021 when The Ford Family Foundation invited 18,000 randomly selected households — 500 in each Oregon county — to complete a survey online or by mailing back a paper response. We then reached out to Ford Family friends and partners, encouraging them to participate and invite others to do the same. In total more than 4,300 Oregonians from all walks of life responded to the survey, generously sharing their honest reflections on the question we posed: *What is it like to live in your corner of the state?*

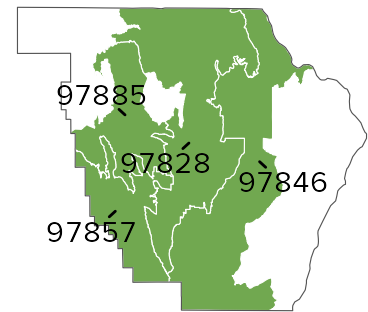
The following report provides a high-level summary of the survey data received from those who responded in Wallowa County. Here the number of random household respondents outnumbered the Ford Family respondents. For clarity, the two data sets have been combined in the visualizations below, even though the two samples show differences in demographics and response patterns. Please interpret the findings with this in mind. Data have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Total number of Wallowa County respondents: 86**  
Random household sample: 77, Ford Family sample: 9

### Key Highlights

- Located in the Northeast corner of Oregon, bordering Washington and Idaho, Wallowa County is the historic lands of the Nez Perce Tribe.
- Respondents love the natural beauty of the outdoors around them, including Wallowa Lake and the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.
- Respondents report that tourism is bringing challenges to the area, such as crowds and changing the nature of the community.

### All reporting zip codes

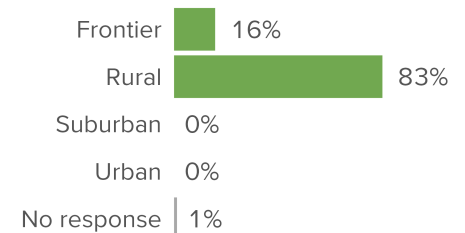


### Top 3 reporting zip codes

- 1 97828
- 2 97846
- 3 97857

### Rural/Urban

How respondents described their community, the immediate area where they live



Two of the early survey questions asked people to name something they appreciate or that concerns them about where they live. Their open-ended responses were coded into categories. These are the top two results for Wallowa County.

What respondents **APPRECIATE** most about where they live



**Natural Environment**

Beauty, recreation, public land, parks, water, disasters, climate



**Community, People**

Culture, relationships conflict, size, leadership, change

What **CONCERNS** respondents most about where they live



**Services/Economy**

Housing, infrastructure, healthcare, education, jobs, industry, businesses, shopping, cultural events



**Community, People**

Culture, relationships conflict, size, leadership, change

*“You would have to experience it — the feeling of the magnitude of this place. There’s no way to explain it to you. To see lightning illuminating the entire neighborhood... The weather between the canyons changes all of the time, the climate here... You can listen to the rocks in the river because there is no traffic.”*

*“Too much growth is changing the fabric of the area. It also creates inequality in real estate cost availability. Second and third homes are outpricing the cost/availability of local people’s first homes.”*

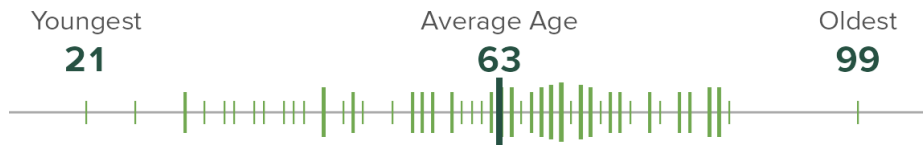
*“We have gorgeous weather and a pristine lake just up the road — as well as excellent skiing and hiking options in our surrounding mountains.”*

*“I love the beauty of the place — the open spaces, farms and ranches— and the people I know who care about one another.”*

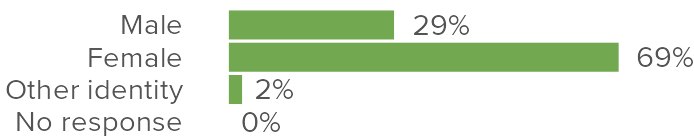
*“Life is difficult right now for many. Even though we may have low incomes here, we have a bounty of care and concern in our neighbors.”*

**Respondent Demographics**

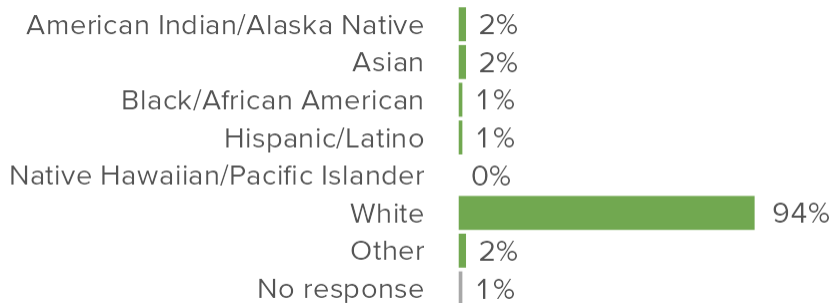
**Age of respondents**



**Gender**



**Race/Ethnicity**



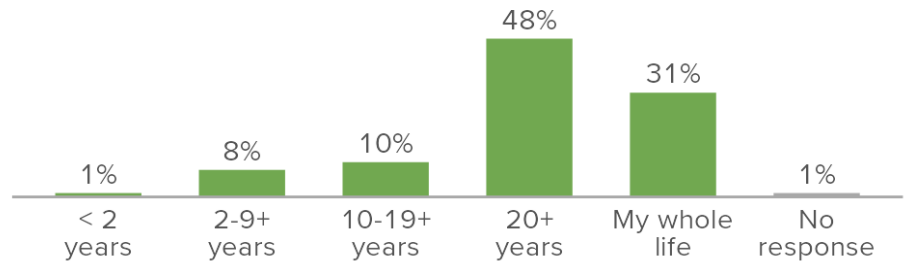
Percentages may sum to more than 100 if respondents selected multiple options.



**Years living in Oregon**

**79%**

of all respondents report living in Oregon for their whole life or 20 years or more



**Homeownership**

**8 out of 10**

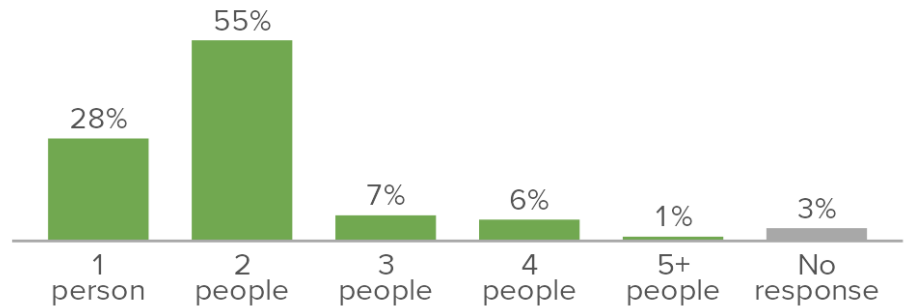
respondents own their home



**Household size**

**1.9**

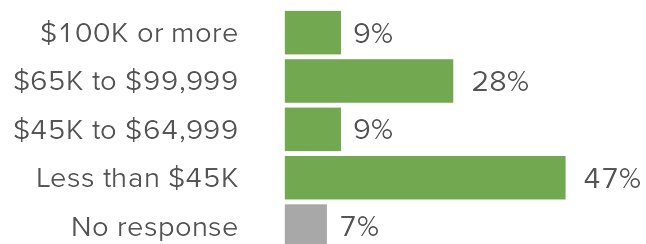
average number of people who live in the respondent's household



**Household annual income**

**47%**

of respondents reported household incomes falling under \$65K



**Emergency funds**

**12%**

of respondents would find it "difficult" or "very difficult" to get \$1,000 to pay for an emergency

**Trouble making ends meet**

**58%**

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that "families are having trouble making ends meet"

**Homelessness**

**15%**

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that "homelessness is a problem" in their community



# 6 out of 10

respondents  
LOVE where they live



## Community participation

*“It’s the ‘Land of a Thousand Mothers’ and the best place to raise children. It’s very safe, and people look after each other.”*

*“I have wonderful neighbors who share, exchange, buy/sell homegrown food with each other.”*

*“We collectively come together to tackle hard things.”*

*“It’s generally a friendly community, but elements of racism and cultural suspicion of ‘outsiders’ are certainly present.”*

*“Community leaders have great ideas, but we sometimes need financial support for the community.”*

*“My community is more collaborative and integrated than most.”*

Respondents indicated the extent to which they perceive that people where they live participate in their community in the following ways:

Results below 5% are not labeled due to space constraints.

**STRONGLY AGREE**

**STRONGLY DISAGREE**

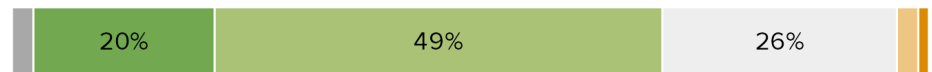
### Take care of each other during hard times



### Come together to solve community problems



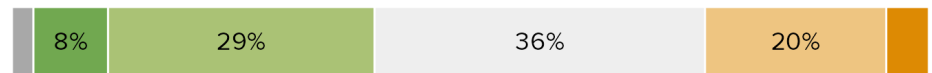
### Attend community events



### Go to church



### Welcome newcomers



## Community traditions

**66%**

of respondents participate in community traditions or annual events

## Pride in community

**86%**

of respondents are “often” or “always” proud to tell others where they live

## Voting

**87%**

of respondents report that they “always” vote

## Community service

**58%**

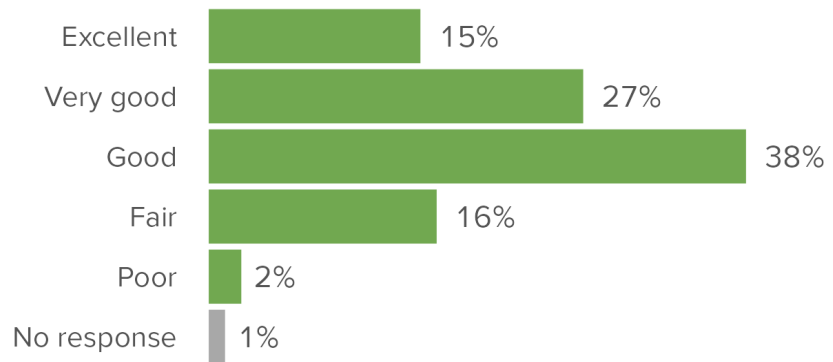
of respondents report that they volunteer at least once a month



**Physical health**

**80%**

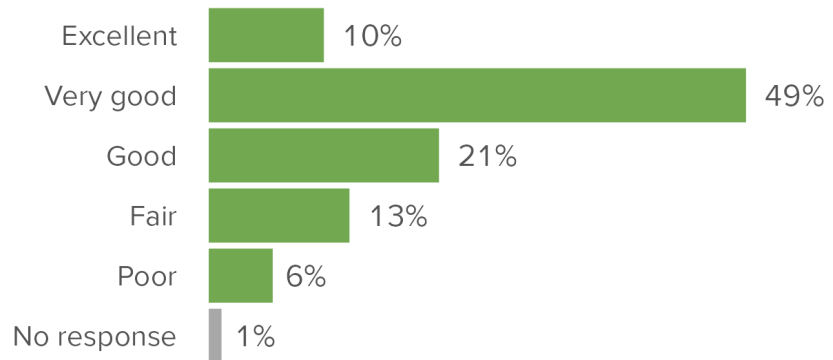
of respondents rated their physical health as “good” or better



**Mental health**

**80%**

of respondents rated their mental health as “good” or better



**Medical and dental care**

**69%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that they have “enough medical and dental providers” in their community

**STRONGLY AGREE**

**STRONGLY DISAGREE**



Results below 5% are not labeled due to space constraints.

**Child abuse and neglect**

**22%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “child abuse and neglect is a significant problem” in their community”

**Substance abuse**

**41%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that their community has “many residents struggling with substance abuse”

**Mental illness**

**27%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that their community has “many residents struggling with mental illness”



**Education**

**71%**

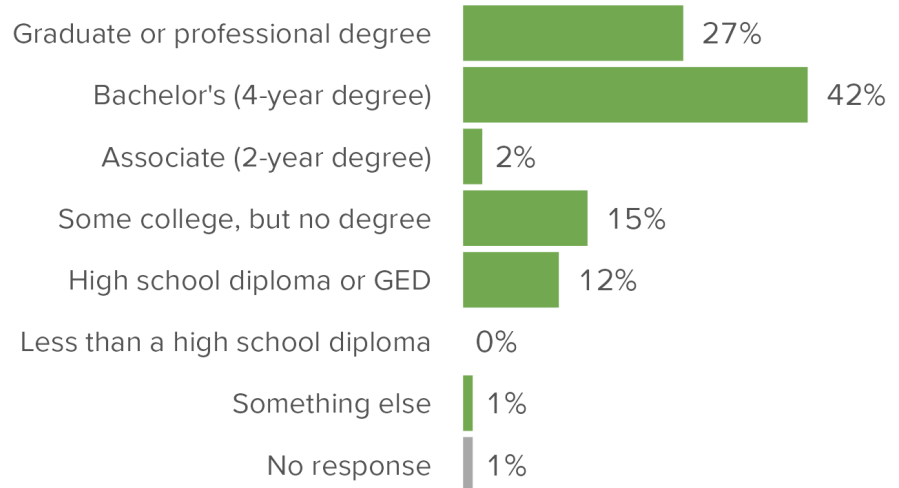
of respondents report having completed an associate degree or above

**Students**

**2%**

of respondents identified as a current student

**Respondents' highest level of education completed**



**Employment**

**Wages**

**65%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “jobs do not pay enough” in their community

**Perception of unemployment**

**41%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “a lot of people are unemployed” in their community

**Self-employment**

**35%**

of respondents identified as self-employed

**Employment status of respondents**

<b>Employed</b>	<b>41%</b>
Full-time	27%
Part-time	14%
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>3%</b>
Looking for work	0%
Not looking for work	0%
Unable to work due to disability	3%
<b>Other</b>	<b>55%</b>
Homemaker/manage your home	3%
Retired	47%
Something else	5%
<b>No response</b>	<b>1%</b>

Due to rounding, percentages in grouped rows may differ from the sum of the individual rows below it.



**Services**

*“It’s enjoyable to live here, but it’s very hard — you need to know what you’re doing. If you forget to get fuel, you will run out. Once we leave our homes, we have no cell service until we get to town, which is a two-hour drive. You need to be able to do for yourself.”*

*“Limited jobs make it difficult to keep young families which hurts our school system.”*

*“As in every other community low incomes and disability severely limit our options, but it is more comfortable here than in a big city.”*

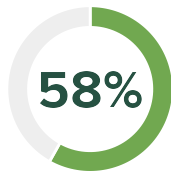
*“Cell phone service is sketchy. Using it for the internet does not work easily without our satellite.”*

*“Finding housing is impossible and unaffordable.”*

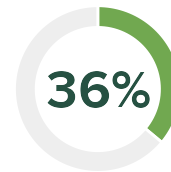
*“People must work more than one job to live here.”*

**Respondents who reported they “agree” or “strongly agree” the following services are available where they live:**

Good schools



Enough places to shop



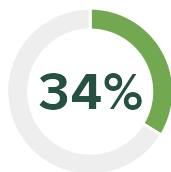
Affordable housing



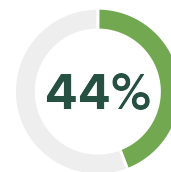
Good streets and roads



Reliable internet



Community-wide cell service



**Healthy food**

**56%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that they have easy access to healthy foods

**Top 3 places respondents get food for weekly meals**

- 1 Grocery stores
- 2 Backyard or local garden
- 3 Restaurants

**Lack of child care**

**58%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “child care is hard to find”

**Lack of places for youth to hang out**

**50%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “youth do not have places to hang out”



For data summaries for each county in Oregon,  
more research and to explore the data on your own, visit

**orvoices.org.**



Research conducted in partnership with ECONorthwest and  
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*Oregon Voices*. [www.orvoices.org](http://www.orvoices.org).

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