

WORKING PAPER NO. 6

COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN PROJECT  
For Water Supply and Water Quality Management

WILLOW CREEK AREA (OREGON)  
PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, 1960-2010

DATE: October 1961

DISTRIBUTION

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This working paper contains preliminary data and information primarily intended for internal use by the Columbia River Basin Project staff and cooperating agencies. The material presented in this paper has not been fully evaluated and should not be considered as final.

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I. Introduction

A. Purpose of Analysis

This analysis is intended to provide a preliminary estimate of the economic potentials and economic growth of the subject area.

B. Definition of Area

Willow Creek is a tributary of the Columbia River, joining it at about the middle of the John Day Pool (under construction). A major part of Morrow County, Oregon, is drained by Willow Creek. For the purposes of this analysis, the study area is approximately defined by Census County Divisions as shown in Table II-A-1. This study area is statistically derived and includes all of Morrow County except an area in the northeast part of the county which contains the community of Boardman. It is assumed that, although these arbitrary boundaries do not exactly coincide with the sub-basin boundaries, the various discrepancies will be compensating in their net effect. Excluded from the projections are the areas on the shores of the Columbia River at the mouth of Willow Creek.

C. Study Period

The study period is the 50-year period ending in 2010. The year 1980 is taken as an interim point.

D. Limitations of Analysis

This analysis is intended only as an initial estimate of the outlook of the Willow Creek area, based upon broad trends. Subsequently, in connection with the development of the Columbia River Basin Project for Water Supply and Water Quality Management, additional and more detailed economic analysis will be considered. Such an analysis would include studies of growth potential on an industry-by-industry basis. At that time, this preliminary estimate will be reviewed and revised, if necessary.

II. Present Economic Development

A. Population

The study area contained about 4,100 persons in 1960, of which 40 percent were in Heppner City. The distribution of this population is shown in Table

II-A-1. The population of the county and of Heppner has remained almost unchanged since 1950. It is assumed that the study area population has followed the same trend.

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Table II-A-1.  
POPULATION IN WILLOW CREEK AREA, 1960  
(Source: U. S. Census of Population)

	<u>Number of Inhabitants</u>	
	<u>Morrow</u> <u>County</u>	<u>Study</u> <u>Area</u>
Boardman Division	1,145	380 <sup>1/</sup>
Boardman City	(153)	
Irrigon City	(232)	
Heppner Division	2,517	2,517
Heppner City	(1,661)	
Ione-Lexington Division	1,209	1,209
Ione City	(350)	
Lexington Town	(240)	
TOTAL	4,871	4,106

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<sup>1/</sup> Study area portion of Boardman Division was computed by subtracting the population of Boardman and Irrigon cities from the Division and taking half the remainder.

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#### B. Industrial Pattern

The 1950 distribution of employment in Morrow County is shown in Table II-B-1. When the employment data from the 1960 Census of Population are available, it is not expected to change this distribution. The only significantly sized manufacturing operation now in the county is the Kinzua Corporation wood products plant at Heppner with an employment of 80 persons.<sup>2/</sup>

The agriculture of the county is primarily based on wheat production. Irrigation is practiced on 14,019 acres according to the 1959 Census of Agriculture. This compares to 181,246 acres of cropland harvested and 164,035 acres of cultivated summer fallow.

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<sup>2/</sup> Data are from the "1961 Directory of Oregon Manufacturers", by the Oregon State Department of Planning and Development.

Table II-B-1.  
DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN MORROW COUNTY, OREGON, IN 1950  
(Source: U. S. Census of Population, 1950)

	<u>Employed Persons</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Agriculture .....	815	40.8
Construction .....	194	9.7
Manufacturing (mainly wood products) .....	145	7.3
Retail Trade .....	257	12.9
Other (mainly service industries) .....	586	29.3
TOTAL .....	1,997	100.0

### III. Estimated Growth

No population growth is predicted for the study area. The basis for this prediction includes an assumption that any water control projects on Willow Creek will not substantially alter the number of farms in the study area. It is also assumed that the industrial facilities proposed for the Boardman area will have no effect on the study area. These facilities which the Boeing organization is considered likely to construct will probably immediately increase the population of the Boardman area by several hundred persons. The ultimate growth of the Boardman area, however, might be several times as great.