



# Lincoln County Library District Community Profile and Feedback Campaign

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2020

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# Introduction

## Purpose and Context

The Lincoln County Library District (LCLD) is a special taxing district that provides access to public library services to residents of the unincorporated areas of Lincoln County, Oregon. Since its creation, LCLD has worked to establish this access to the populous coastal region of the county. The time has come to evaluate how well the District meets the needs of those living in all areas of the county.

The 2020 pandemic continues to have considerable effects on socio-economic conditions both locally and globally. Lincoln County's economy is diverse; however, pandemic-related safety measures have greatly decreased revenue from tourism—a principle segment of the local economy. Library and other social services become increasingly important following economic disasters, especially in places with higher than average poverty rates. While the true impact of the pandemic is unknown at this time, this report acts as a benchmark for future comparison and action.

## Community Profile

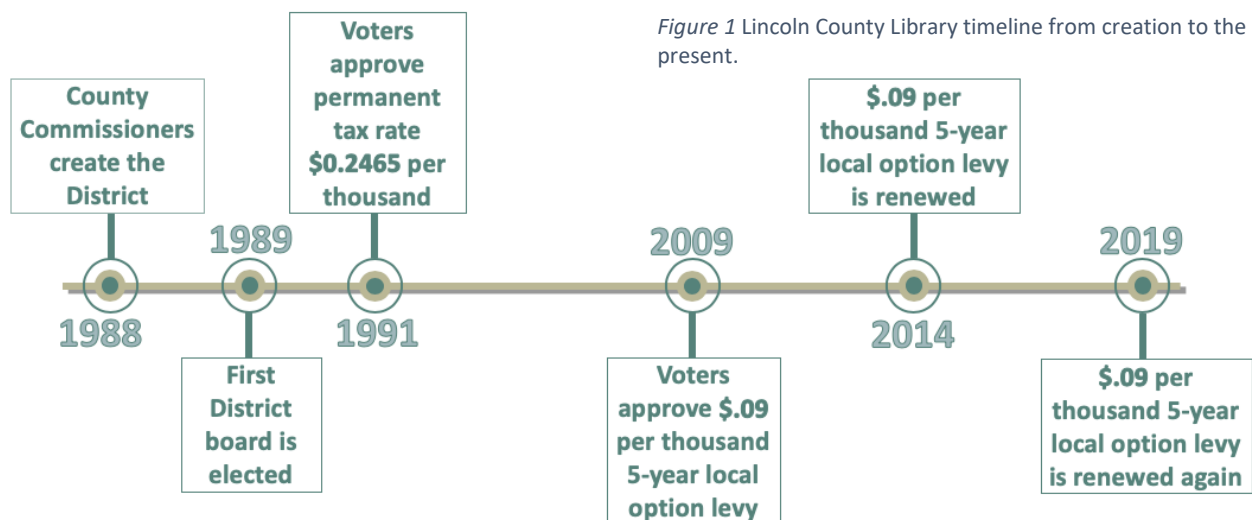
This profile will explore demographic information related to Lincoln County as a whole in addition to the characteristics of current library users who reside within the LCLD service area. It will establish demographic trends and compare those with current library users. This will identify populations who may not be utilizing LCLD services and inform priority groups for the next part of the project—a community feedback campaign.

## Feedback Campaign Recommendations

In order to engage with District patrons, it is necessary to identify appropriate methods of communication as well as possible locations, formats, and modalities. The rural nature of the District's service area requires a persistent, comprehensive approach

## History

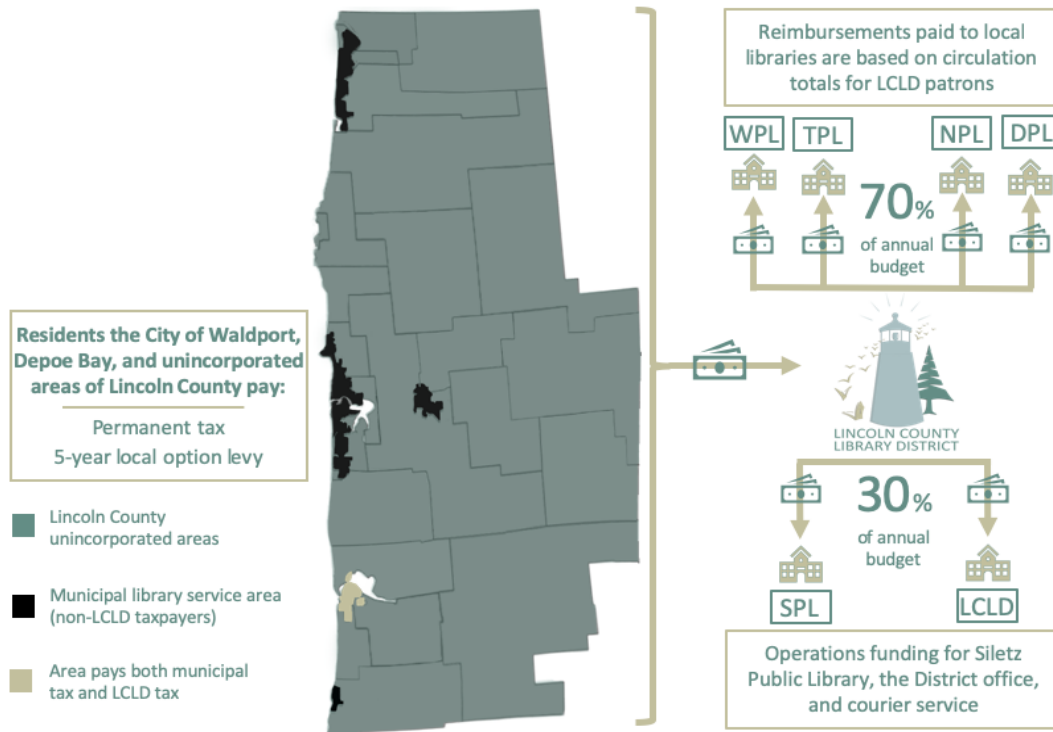
The Lincoln County Library District (LCLD) is a special taxing district that provides access to public library services to residents of Lincoln County, Oregon. In 1988, the County Commissioners created the Lincoln



County Library District, in 1989 a Board was elected, and in 1991 the voters approved a permanent tax rate of \$0.2465 per thousand. In 2009 the voters approved a \$0.09 per thousand 5-year local option levy to assure continuing service to Lincoln County residents. The 5-year local option levies were renewed in 2014 and 2019 at the same rate. The District's service area covers 1,194 square miles and the service population is 25,120.

## Current Operations

The purpose of LCLD is to provide fee-free library access to residents of the unincorporated areas of the county. In theory, residents from outside the cities of Newport, Toledo, Yachats, and Lincoln City are able to



utilize city libraries as a result of these tax-funded subsidies. The library services and access provided by LCLD include a free library card and use of all resources provided by city libraries located in Lincoln County.

In addition to distributing 70% of District revenue to city libraries, LCLD funds provide a countywide interlibrary courier service, cataloging support, and cooperates closely with the city libraries in the District. The District

contracts with and provides funding to the cities of Lincoln City, Newport, Waldport, Toledo, and Siletz to provide library services to residents of unincorporated Lincoln County and Depoe Bay.

## Challenges

### Need for Updated Funding Model

At the time that the District was created, the three public libraries in the county were located in Lincoln City, Newport, and Toledo. Therefore, residents of Waldport and Siletz were considered to be part of the unincorporated population responsible for paying District taxes. During the last thirty years, these areas established their own public libraries. Waldport, whose residents continue to pay District taxes, now has a city-funded public library. Siletz Public Library is funded entirely by the District.

Currently, library reimbursements are based on circulation totals. More specifically, the number of library items that are checked out annually to users who live in the unincorporated areas of the county. In theory, those libraries that circulate more items to LCLD users would be entitled to higher reimbursements from the District. Largely, these circulation numbers are impossible to calculate or accurately estimate. Consequently, they have not been reported correctly for some time. However, while physical item circulation is an important statistic, it is likely that a more appropriate metric could better inform library reimbursement amounts.

### ***Two Consortiums, One District***

In 2012, two of the Lincoln County libraries, Newport and Driftwood, changed their library software and created a consortium with the libraries of Tillamook County. Due to budget limitations and the variable needs of different libraries, the new software was not implemented uniformly by the District libraries.

At this time, the libraries of Waldport, Toledo, and Siletz joined The Chinook Library Network (CLN). Adminstrated by LCLD, CLN provides a shared catalog to seven county, city, and community college libraries from Lincoln, Clatsop, and Tillamook counties.

The use of two library systems is problematic for several reasons. Complications related to resource sharing are the most noticeable to patrons who must rely on library staff to fill interlibrary loan requests for items owned by a library located less than 10 miles away. To avoid the delay caused by an interlibrary loan, patrons will visit the owning library themselves—costing their home library valuable circulation statistics.

## **Community Profile**

### ***Methods and Data Sources***

LCLD serves 25 voting districts across the county. Visualizations in this report are presented in the context of these districts, their encompassing ZIP Codes, or census tracts. *Figure 3* shows these districts as numbered regions. Municipal library service areas are shown in black.

Most data were collected from open sources and compiled, visualized, and analyzed with publicly available tools. Population and demographic data are taken from Portland State University's Population Research Center and the 2014-2018 5-year estimates from the American Community Survey. Some demographic analysis is included from county-level economic and health services status reports. These reports provide additional context to census figures. Broad population data is supplemented by Lincoln County school District enrollment data supplied by the Oregon Department of Education.

Library user information is taken from the two library systems operating in the District. Data collection and management practices vary by library; therefore, some user data are missing or require additional normalization. Because user records are purged on different schedules throughout the district, those users whose library accounts expired over five years ago are not included in patron dispersal or age analyses

## Description of Regions and Ballot Measure Results

The 2019 ballot measure to extend the expiring 5-year tax levy was included in a November special election. The library measure was the only one on the ballot for the majority of voters. Typically, special elections draw

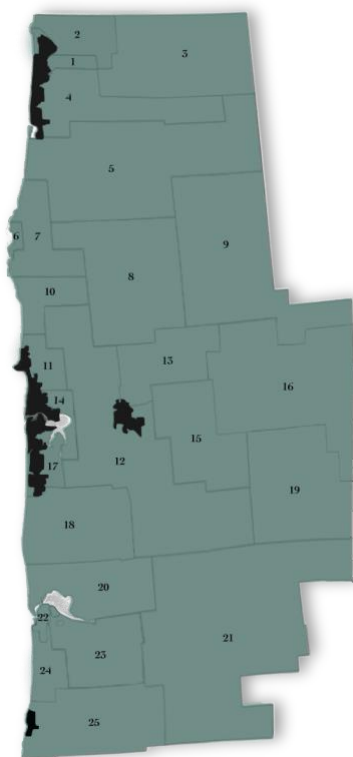


Table 1 Voting districts in Lincoln County that are included in Lincoln County Library District Elections. District numbers correspond with map regions<sup>1</sup>.

#	District	Yes%	Turnout
11	Agate Beach	61.11%	29.51%
23	Alsea	78.99%	37.86%
20	Bayview	78.36%	50.27%
19	Big Elk	71.43%	12.17%
6	Depoe Bay	69.25%	41.40%
13	East Toledo	64.74%	31.56%
16	Eddyville	70.09%	26.77%
15	Elk City	71.88%	29.36%
7	Fogarty Creek	73.22%	40.61%
12	Fruitvale	65.69%	34.15%
5	Kern	76.69%	40.41%
10	Otter Rock	76.40%	49.17%
9	Rock Creek	72.55%	33.44%

#	District	Yes%	Turnout
3	Rose Lodge	64.46%	24.40%
4	Schooner Creek	71.32%	34.86%
18	Seal Rock	71.63%	43.82%
24	Seaview	75.40%	41.51%
8	Siletz	73.60%	25.38%
17	South Beach	75.80%	29.51%
2	Sunset East	70.92%	37.86%
1	Sunset West	73.08%	50.27%
21	Tidewater	63.49%	12.17%
22	Waldport	77.37%	41.40%
25	Yachats	82.50%	31.56%
14	Yaquina	70.19%	26.77%
Average		72%	35.53%

Figure 3 Numbered regions are the voting districts that determine LCLD funding. These districts receive fee free library services through the District.

lower voter turnouts than general elections. Voter turnout rates varied by region. Overall, the results to extend the 5-year tax levy that supports the District were positive. The approval rate is well above 60% in each voting district. Agate Beach, Rose Lodge, and East Toledo returned the lowest rates of approval. Agate beach is geographically close to a public library (Newport) Yachats, Alsea, and Waldport have the highest approval rates. These districts are similarly situated at the south end of the county. Though Waldport has a city library, Waldport voters overwhelmingly approved extending the levy with an above average voter turnout. Yachats has a volunteer-run library that is not a part of the District

## Summary of Lincoln County

### Geography and Access

Lincoln County has a long narrow shape that emphasizes its coastline. Unsurprisingly, the population is concentrated on the coast and along main thoroughfares—Highways 20, 18, and 34. Figure 4 displays principle roads in the county and significant state forestlands and private timberlands. Despite the population distributions outlined in Figure 5, there are far-flung communities found in more remote areas of the county.

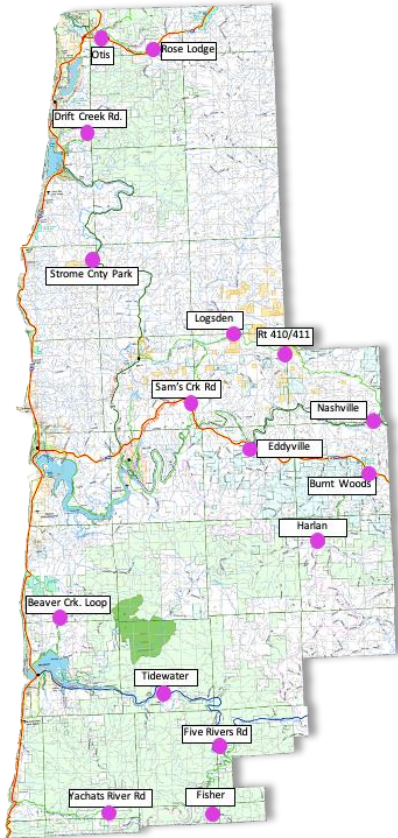


Figure 4 Map of Lincoln County with major roads, national forestlands, urban boundaries. Remote populated areas are marked and labelled.



## Broadband

Some of these isolated communities—and a few less isolated communities—do not have access to high speed (25/3 mbps). The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) provides broadband mapping that can be filtered by service type and speed. Based on this resource, 100% of Lincoln County has access to at least two high speed internet providers. Residents of Lincoln County would likely disagree with this finding and further research quickly reveals that industry leaders and open broadband activists strongly question the accuracy of the federal agency’s data collection practices<sup>2,3</sup>.

## Zoning and Land Use

The Siuslaw National Forest takes up 27% of Lincoln County’s 634,580 acres. Additional timberlands, grazing lands, lakes, streams, and clearings are all included in the forestland designation equating to 90% of the county<sup>4</sup>. Rural and agricultural lands combined make up only about 4% of the county. Only 3% of the county is zoned urban. Lincoln County is also home to the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians which owns a little over 15,000 acres.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) is a federal program that provides funds roughly equal to \$2.77/acre of federally owned land. The purpose of this program is to offset the loss of tax income by local governments due to the presence of untaxable federal lands. In 2019, Lincoln County received \$326, 406—approximately 1.5% of the county’s property tax revenue<sup>5,6</sup>.

## Economy

Based on the most recent economic summary report prepared for the Lincoln County Commissioners in 2014, Lincoln County’s economy grew 12% between 2003 and 2013 despite the global economic downturn in 2008. The report highlights the significance of ports to the strong economies of Newport, Depoe Bay, and Toledo. A lack of a harbor or port is attributed to Lincoln City’s lower median income<sup>7</sup>.

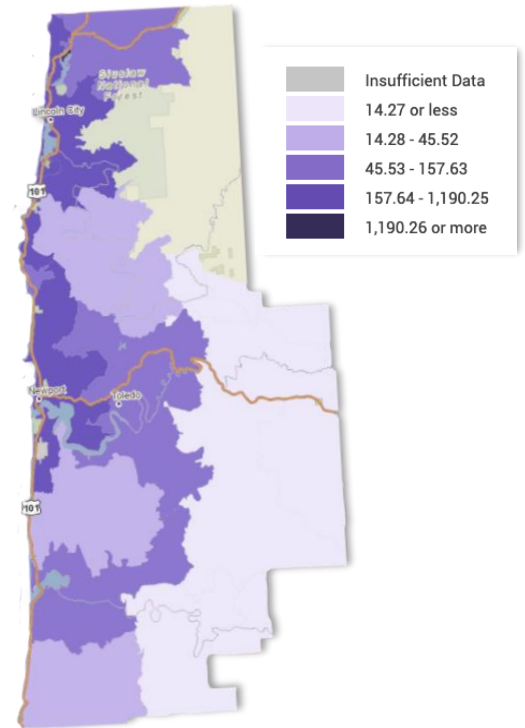


Figure 5 Population density per sq. mile in Lincoln County by ZIP Code.

Location	Median income (household)	Poverty rate (individuals)	Percent change in income 2012-2018
U.S.	63,179	11.8%	+23%
Oregon	59,393	12.6%	+19%
Lincoln County	46,061	13.6%	+10%
Depoe Bay	54,241	7.1%	+25%
Lincoln City	38,010	20.9%	+28%
Newport	45,250	17.2%	-4%
Siletz	41,676	23.4%	+12%
Toledo	57,975	16.1%	+28%
Waldport	46,367	14.9%	+29%
Yachats	49,293	4.2%	+16%

Table 2 Income and poverty rates for 2018 are estimates from American Community Survey estimates 2014-2018. Percent change in income is calculated using 2012 and 2018 incomes.

However, since the publication of the 2014 economic summary, income distribution has shifted. Previously, Newport had the highest median income among the seven most populous cities and towns in the county. The most recent estimates show significant gains in median income among all but Newport, the only city to see a decline<sup>8</sup>. *Table 2* illustrates this change.

Poverty rates are higher than national, state, and county averages in 70% of these seven areas. These rates are higher among single parent households and highest in those with single female heads of household and children—47% countywide<sup>9</sup>. A notable attribute of Lincoln County’s economy is the high percentage of households that receive Social Security and Retirement benefits. Out of 40,696 residents 16 years of age or older, only 46% are currently in the workforce. Conversely, 74% of households receive Social Security and/or Retirement benefits<sup>10</sup>.

The same natural resources that draw a substantial retirement community also attract a sizeable tourist population throughout the year. As a result, Lincoln County’s service industry is the dominant sector of the economy, employing 21% of the workforce. Educational services, health care, and social assistance industries are a close second at 17%<sup>11</sup>.

## Demography

According to the latest estimates from Portland State University’s Population Research Center, Lincoln County’s population was 48,260 in 2019, up 50 from the previous year<sup>12</sup>. Families make up 59.3% of the 21,110 households in the county. Of these families, just under 30% include a person 65 years of age or older. Almost 20% of families in Lincoln County have a member who is under the age of 18<sup>13</sup>. Of the non-family households, 78% are residents who live alone. Almost 40% of these single residents are 65 years of age or older. Since older residents are likely to have limited mobility, there is a higher risk of loneliness and its negative mental and physical effects.

Oregon’s median age is 39.1 years. *Table 3* displays Lincoln County’s median age by ZIP Code. Population centers within those ZIP Codes act as familiar proxies in this table. Disability and poverty rates are included to examine any relationships between the attributes that may present an unmet need. The town of Eddyville and its encompassing ZIP Code have one of the lowest median ages and the highest poverty and disability rates. The next highest rates are nearly 50% lower than those found in the Eddyville region. While it might seem likely that higher median ages would correlate to a higher incidence of disability, reporting practices may not reflect the true prevalence among older residents. Those who are retired would have no need to file for disability benefits in order to receive Social Security assistance. Therefore, residents of employment age would have more reason to claim their disabilities with the appropriate federal agencies. The reverse of this trend visible among regions with the highest median age. This analysis highlights two vulnerable communities: isolated older residents and those of employment-age who are unable to work due to a disability.

Region	Median Age	Disability Rate	Poverty Rate
Blodgett	53	17.27%	14.03
Depoe Bay	58	22.71%	10.55
Eddyville	43	58.13%	41.87
Logsdon	64	20.49%	12.07
Neotsu	51	16.98%	11.19
Newport	45	17.16%	17.34
South Beach	59	23.84%	8.18
Lincoln City	51	20.49%	19.69
Otis	49	19.68%	20.96
Otter Rock	64	20.93%	8.37
Seal Rock	64	29.74%	13.81
Siletz	43	28.48%	22.71
Gleneden Beach	65	19.56%	3.79
Toledo	43	17.75%	13.77
Waldport	58	30.75%	16.83
Tidewater	53	29.35%	20.04
Yachats	58	24.37%	12.01

*Table 3* Median age, disability, and poverty rates in Lincoln County by ZIP Code, 2014-2018 estimates. High medians and rates are highlighted red, lows are blue.



## Ethnicity, Race, and Language

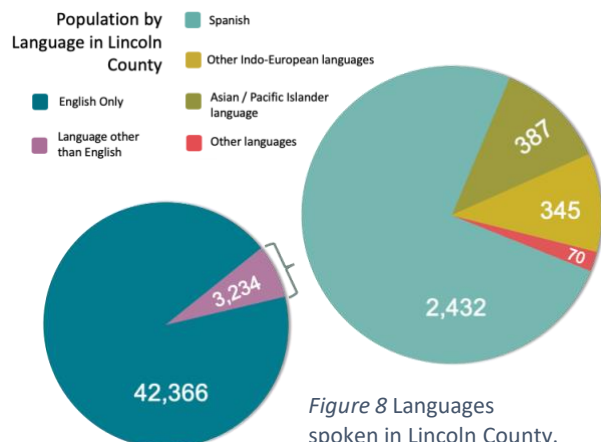
Lincoln County is overwhelmingly white and English speaking. The Latinx population is the largest minority in the area followed by American Indian and Alaskan Native<sup>14</sup>.

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians is a significant population in the county. This community is significant both historically and culturally. Reservation lands are located north and east of the City of Siletz.

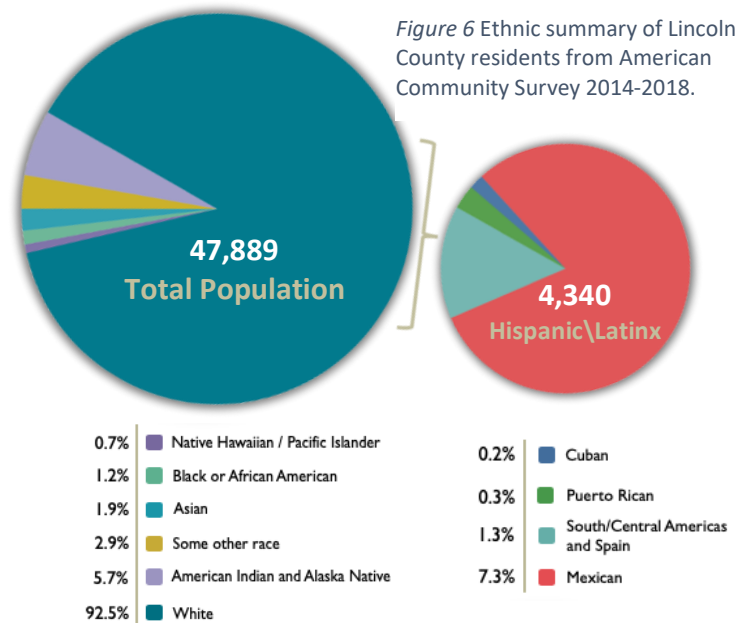
Race and ethnicity information collected by the school district shows an increase in diversity among enrolled students than the county-wide numbers<sup>15</sup>. *Table 4* displays the higher percentages of Latinx students—22.6%. This is an increase of 13.5% when compared to the Census results. Additionally, the

Race or Ethnicity	LCSD Only	Total
<b>American Indian/Alaska Native</b>	4.5%	5.7
<b>Asian</b>	0.8%	1.9
<b>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</b>	0.3%	0.7%
<b>Black/ African American</b>		
<b>American</b>	0.4%	1.2%
<b>Hispanic/Latinx</b>	22.6%	9.1%
<b>White (non-Hispanic)</b>	62.3%	83.4%
<b>Multiracial</b>	9.1%	N/A

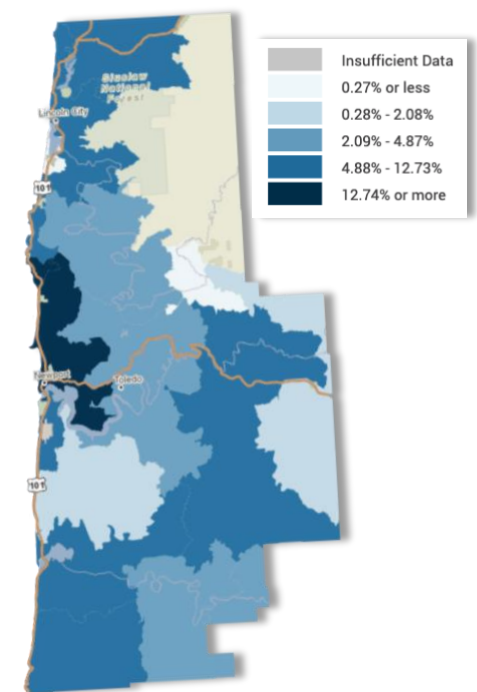
*Table 4* Lincoln County School District (LCSD) student race and ethnicity percentages from school year 2019-2020. The total LCSD K-12 student enrollment for this period is 5,631.



*Figure 8* Languages spoken in Lincoln County.



inclusion of a multiracial designation allows for the representation of more than 500 students. There is no multiracial equivalent within the Census. The distribution of Hispanic and Latinx populations are displayed in *Figure 7*. Like the majority of the general population, Lincoln County's Latinx community is concentrated on the coast. More narrowly, in the county's central coast region in and around Newport. In terms of the LCLD service area, South Beach and areas north of Lincoln City are key areas to provision multilingual communication when implementing the feedback campaign



Language diversity is in-keeping with the county's broad ethnic makeup. However, the available data does not fully represent the Spanish-speaking population or those who speak languages indigenous to Central and South America.

## LCLD Libraries and Current Library Users

This part of the profile is meant to briefly analyze the distinct communities of each LCLD library and how their rural users (those living in unincorporated regions) are represented. Each library in the district uses an LCLD patron type, meaning the patron lives in Lincoln County but outside the library’s service area.

A key takeaway from a government report examining national library usage by household indicates that distance plays a significant role in frequency of use. Usage is highest (52% nationwide) when households live within a mile of a public library. This number decreases to 34% (and below) when residents live 10 miles or more from a library<sup>16</sup>.

Area	Avg. miles to library
<b>West (region)</b>	1.9
<b>Oregon</b>	2.1

Table 5 Shows average distance to public libraries from households in the Western United States and Oregon.

A later national study evaluates regional differences in the average distances from households to public libraries. After dividing the country into four large regions, average distances were calculated by region and state<sup>17</sup>. In the context of Lincoln County, distances between libraries and distances to the nearest public library from remote areas of the county will dictate potential opportunities for service expansion.

In performing a similar—though much simpler—analysis, the populated areas marked in *Figure 4* were used to track the library-library and area-library distances within the county. Since only LCLD libraries were included, academic libraries and Yachats Public Library were not part of the calculation. This analysis yields an average distance of 10.35 miles from populated areas to a public library within the LCLD district<sup>18</sup>.

Region	ZIP Code	Count
Alsea	97324	13
Blodgett	97326	47
Depoe Bay	97341	1529
Eddyville	97343	180
Logsdan	97357	109
Neotsu	97364	507
Newport	97365	1115
South Beach	97366	752
Lincoln City	97367	1098
Otis	97368	1560
Otter Rock	97369	156
Rose Lodge	97372	2
Seal Rock	97376	813
Siletz	97380	715
Gleneden Beach	97388	568
Toledo	97391	1383
Waldport	97394	2421
Tidewater	97390	214
Yachats	97498	467

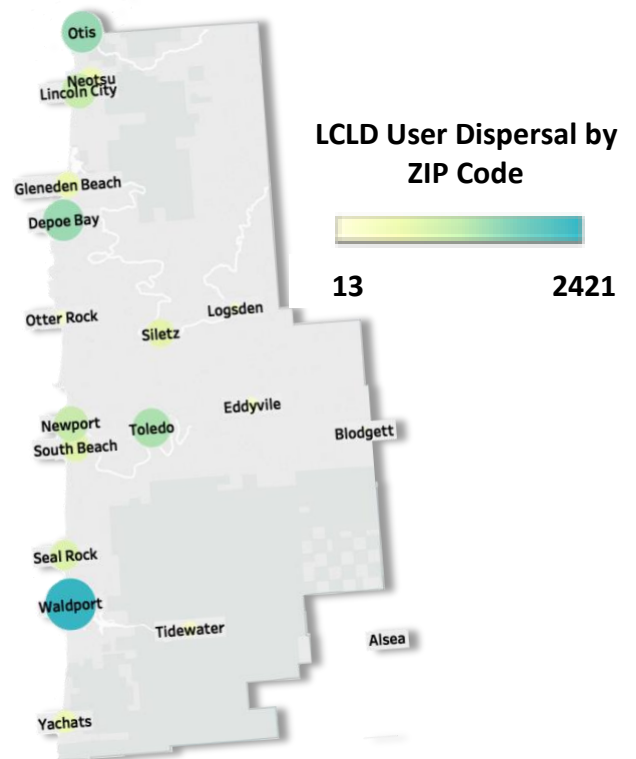


Table 6 Shows library users with the LCLD patron type, indicating residence within unincorporated areas of the county. Counts are given by ZIP Code. The presence of Newport, Toledo, and Lincoln City addresses may be attributed to the use of post office boxes by rural residences or staff error selecting patron type when creating patron account.

This figure is much higher than the Oregon average taken from the U.S. Department of Education study. An analysis of the home ZIP codes of LCLD library users (shown in Table 5) indicates that distance is a barrier to library use in Lincoln County, as well.

### ***LCLD Libraries***

This section describes the residents of Lincoln County who currently use its libraries. Each branch represents a different community with various geographies, demographics, services, and collections. Unless otherwise noted, patrons included in this portion in the profile are LCLD patrons living outside the county's incorporated areas. Service area populations and registered patron totals are taken from the 2018-2019 Oregon Public Library Statistical Report. Newport Public Library's registered patron total is updated to exclude patron accounts that had expired before April 2020.

As a rule, libraries are very careful to limit the amount of patron personal information that is gathered and preserved. "Data for data's sake" can be a dangerous philosophy with potentially serious implications for library users. The recent cyber-attack perpetrated against Tillamook County illustrates this risk. Additionally, data collection related to identifiable information or circulation history impedes vital efforts to guarantee the intellectual freedom and privacy of library users.

It is necessary to collect some user information in order to establish patron identity and provide services. Home or mailing address, birthdate, and total counts of registered patrons are the only datapoints used in this profile. No other information is necessary for the delivery of library services. In fact, birthdate is not a required field in patron accounts at Lincoln City's Driftwood library, further limiting the amount of personally identifiable data in the system. Ages analysis can be helpful when designing programs and developing collections. Low usage rates by an age group may reflect a lack of appropriate programs or library materials. Maps and charts depicting the information discussed below can be viewed online<sup>19,20,21</sup>.

***Siletz Public Library (SPL)*** is the most recently constructed library in the District. It was built to serve the rural communities of the central county to the north Toledo. The City of Siletz has one of the lowest median ages in the county (43 years). Similarly, the library has the youngest dominant age range of all the LCLD branches—10 to 20 years old. SPL's service area has a population of 3,007. Out of 2,350 registered patrons (78% of the service population), 26% are LCLD patrons. These patrons live in each region of the county but mostly occupy the areas around Siletz, Logsden, and Toledo.

***Toledo Public Library (TPL)*** has a service area population of 5,725. 50 % of this service area hold a Toledo library card. Like Siletz, Toledo has one of the lowest median ages in the county (43 years). Though the dominant age range for library users is 60-70 years, the next highest range is from 10-20 years. The combined total of these two ranges is aligned with Toledo's overall age demographic. Among TPL's LCLD patrons, there is representation from most of the south county. The majority of TPL's LCLD patrons live in the Toledo, Newport, and Eddyville areas. The high volume of Newport area patrons can be attributed to a reciprocal agreement between Toledo and Newport libraries not to charge city residents for library cards but to designate them LCLD patrons instead.

***Waldport Public Library (WPL)*** serves a population of 5,658. 85% of this population hold a library card. Despite having their own municipal library, this service area pays the LCLD tax levy. As seen in *Table 1*, Waldport returned the second highest approval rate for the 5-year levy extension. This, coupled with high

library usage, paints a picture of strong public library support in the area. Waldport's median age is 58 and its LCLD patrons' dominant age range is 65-75. Unlike Siletz and Toledo libraries, WPL does not have a parallel spike in young LCLD users. This indicates that Waldport's younger population lives mostly inside the city limits. The majority of WPL's LCLD users live close to Waldport. Other large populations of LCLD users live in Seal Rock, Tidewater, and Yachats.

**Newport Public Library (NPL)** serves a population of 18,021. Based on the calculated patron total, 86% of NPL's service area have library cards. Of these, 28% are LCLD patrons. The highest volume of NPL LCLD patrons live in Waldport, but there are sizable numbers in Seal Rock, Depoe Bay, Toledo, and Siletz. Newport has a relatively low median age of 45 years. Among LCLD patrons, the dominant age range is 65-75 years. This leading age range aligns with a high rate of Waldport users.

NPL is a significant outlier within the Public Library Statistical Report and has been for a number of years. NPL claims a number of registered patrons that is almost equal with its service population. This draws the accuracy of these numbers into question. Therefore, this profile offers an alternative. If the calculation described at the top of this section is altered to exclude all expired accounts as of April 2020, the total percentage of registered NPL patrons drops from 86% to 39% and the LCLD patron percentage changes from 28% to 30%. Regardless of the actual number of registered patrons, the percentage of LCLD patrons remains fairly constant.

**Driftwood Public Library (DPL)** in Lincoln City has a service population of 15,055. 43% of the population are library users. Of these users, 53% are LCLD patrons. DPL does not collect birthdates to identify their patrons, so no age analysis is available for this location. DPL's LCLD patrons are largely located in the area surrounding Lincoln City, Otis, and Depoe Bay. Very few LCLD patrons live in other areas including Siletz and Logsden. This may be due to the way the LCLD designation is applied to DPL patrons (lack of reciprocal agreements used by NPL and TPL), the use of P.O. boxes, or limited road infrastructure between central county and Lincoln City.

## Feedback Campaign

### Goals

The goal of this endeavor is two-fold. Feedback collection will allow the District and local libraries to better serve their users. Increased interaction with community members will spread awareness of the existence of the District and its purpose. Awareness of the District will bolster library consciousness in general.

### Marketing

A feedback campaign creates various opportunities to interact with current and potential library users. By initiating a marketing campaign just before or concurrent to feedback collection, the District can easily meet its awareness goal. Though they positively affect each and every library patron regardless of LCLD designation, District services are performed out of sight and are largely unknown to users. As a result, points of contact between the District and the public are limited.

However, the courier service can be leveraged to distribute information and contribute to District promotion. The courier shifts hundreds of library materials between LCLD libraries each week. For a limited amount of

time, paper inserts placed in items transported by the courier can be used to thank users and share information. *Figure 10* presents an example of what information a courier insert may contain. A link to the feedback survey, the District website, and a statement of LCLD’s purpose are some basic details to include.

Placing inserts in courier items will temporarily divert staff time and require buy-in from local libraries.

Another way the courier can draw more attention to the District is through the courier vehicle itself in the tradition of library outreach vehicles. The District owns a large, white panel van that displays the District name and generic library symbol. Wrapping the van with more dynamic LCLD branding and an exciting message is a passive way to increase District presence across the county.

Additional marketing that specifically addresses the feedback campaign including survey questions, tabling locations, and incentives can be communicated through various local platforms.



Figure 9 Courier insert example.



Figure 10 Example of colorful LCLD van.

- Local Radio Programs
- Lincoln County Connections
- Hot Topics
- Newport Today
- KYAQ

- Online Locations
- LCLD Website
- Public Library Websites
- Social Media

- Local Online Newspapers
- Beachconnection.net
- Newslincolncounty.com
- Oregoncoastdailynews.com
- Yachatsnews.com

- State and Local Print
- Newport News-Times—Newport
- News Guard—Lincoln City
- Oregon State Grange
- Ruralite

It is important that marketing and feedback collection materials be offered in Spanish. Additionally, there is an opportunity to partner with Oregon State University’s Extension Services to record a bilingual statement. KYAQ’s Sunday Spanish language segment is the ideal platform for this statement. A partnership with Centro de Ayuda in Newport will allow the District to expand its respondent pool and incorporate the needs of the Spanish-speaking community into local library services.

### Financial Impact

Staff time is the most significant investment of this feedback campaign. The campaign can be scaled up or down based on initial response rate or financial limitations. Costs associated with printing, advertising, and postage will vary based on survey modality and how robust the marketing campaign becomes. If the District

decides to include an incentive to support higher response rates, this can also be done fairly inexpensively. A well-promoted raffle can ignite interest and free candy can draw respondents to an even table.

## Feedback Modes

Community feedback collection is driven by surveys and a survey will be the main data collection method for this campaign. There are some aspects of feedback collection for which surveys are not optimized. Ideally, a few feedback methods are used concurrently. Some methods, like a survey, are passive and some are engaging, establishing relationships between District staff and community members. In order to simplify this process, the campaign will encompass the entire county and embrace responses from residents of both incorporated and unincorporated areas. However, residents of unincorporated areas should make up the majority of the sample. The target sample size for a county-wide feedback campaign is at least 379 respondents.

### Survey

While guidance pertaining to library services is a main outcome, best practices outline the use of general language when phrasing questions. This allows respondents to consider the questions as they relate to their whole lives and not feel limited when completing the survey. A short length of 7-10 questions supports a high response rate and reduces analysis time.

### Online

This modality is low cost, supports wide distribution, and streamlines response analysis. In addition to linking to the survey from the District website and social media, cooperation with LCLD libraries will boost responses and diversify respondents. External partnerships will extend the survey's reach. The Lincoln County School District can help the campaign reach children and their families. Local institutions and agencies that provide access to public computers like Oregon Coast Community College and WorkSource Oregon can link to surveys from their landing pages. The simple online survey form is located below in *Figure 11*.

### Paper

Since portions of the county have no access to a computer or the internet, a paper survey is necessary in order to reach the most diverse group of respondents. City libraries are friendly locations for passive survey responses, though samples from these locations will be limited to current library users.

In addition to dispensing surveys at city services like laundromats and food pantries, rural businesses are an option to provide paper surveys and a drop box for completed forms. Bless Your Heart Café and Bakery in Burnt Woods, Rose Lodge Market, and several mobile home parks are all located in unincorporated areas of the county. Utilizing popular boat launches, RV parks, and recreation areas as distribution locations allows the District to meet rural non-library users where they are, especially in the summer months.

A mailed survey is especially important for non-library users who are homebound or otherwise difficult to reach. Addresses can be obtained from the Lincoln County Assessor's Office for residences that fall in the LCLD service area. These addresses can be easily cross-referenced against a list of predefined criteria—like low internet connectivity—in order to produce a deliberate list. The Eddyville Post Office



### ***In-person Events***

Summer in Lincoln County offers a variety of weekly, annual, and monthly events. Many are free and attract visitors from unincorporated areas of the county. In-person events are an opportunity to provide passive and engaging feedback collection at the same time. Depending on the event, staff may decide to focus on collecting responses to a single question, like “Describe your ideal community,” and provide means to answer the question in an interactive way. Sticky notes on a poster-board or colorful pens on butcher paper are popular ways to achieve this.

Conversations with community members can take place inside and outside of the library to collect anecdotal representations of the challenges patrons face to reach the library and navigate information in their daily lives. In many ways this the most meaningful approach to understanding how local libraries can best serve their rural communities.

When in-person events are scheduled, these venues will be ideal for reaching rural residents.

- Yachats Commons
- Siletz Valley Grange
- Salmon River Grange

### **Questions**

- 1. What do you like most about where you live?**
- 2. Describe your ideal community.**
- 3. How is this ideal community different from where you live now?**
- 4. What is a significant challenge in your life?**
- 5. What would improve your chances of overcoming this challenge?**
- 6. Is there a particular subject or skill you would like to learn?**
- 7. Do you live in an unincorporated area of Lincoln County?**
- 8. If yes, where do you call home? Ex. Depoe Bay, Rose Lodge, Elk City, Seal Rock, Logsden, etc.**

### ***Focus Groups***

Enlisting the help of existing advisory and community groups will provide deeper, more nuanced feedback. Some potential groups to partner with are: Friends groups and volunteers from District libraries, Lincoln County School District staff and students, library staff, local chambers of commerce, and local service groups.

### ***Timeline***

Due to increased demand on staff, feedback collection time should be limited to four weeks. Late spring to early summer is the ideal time to begin collecting feedback. Summer Reading season is a busy time for staff,

but it draws large numbers of respondents to libraries and public spaces in general. Here on the coast, there are events just about every weekend that draw people from all areas of the county.

**Lincoln County Library District**  
COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SURVEY 2021

Take a few minutes to answer some questions about your Lincoln County community. We appreciate your feedback!

What do you like most about where you live?

Your answer

Describe your ideal community.

Your answer

How is this ideal community different from where you live now?

Your answer

What is a significant challenge in your life?

Your answer

What would improve your chances of overcoming this challenge?

Your answer

Is there a particular subject or skill you would like to learn?

Your answer

Do you live in an unincorporated area of Lincoln County?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, where do you call home? Ex. Depoe Bay, Rose Lodge, Elk City, Seal Rock, Tidewater, Logsden, etc.

Your answer

*Figure 11* Online surveys streamline response and analysis but are not universally accessible. The paper version will have the same questions.

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<sup>20</sup>View Patron Distribution Maps: <https://tinyurl.com/LCLD-patrons>

<sup>21</sup>View Community Profile Maps: <https://tinyurl.com/lcld-community-profile>