

Sáttítla Highlands National Monument

A summary of forecasted economic performance in surrounding counties



Photo courtesy Bob Wick

BACKGROUND

The 225,000-acre Sáttítla Highlands National Monument was designated in 2025 to protect tribal ancestral homelands, historic and scientific treasures, rare flora and fauna, vital sources of water, and the home of the Medicine Lake Volcano, one of the largest volcanoes in the Cascades Volcanic Arc, covering roughly 10 times that of Mount St. Helens in Washington. Located in Siskiyou County, California, the monument is managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Monument designation was led by the Pit River Tribe.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND USES

The monument allows access to explore amazing geology and viewing of some of the darkest skies in the United States in addition to hiking, biking, snowmobiling, camping, hunting, and canoeing. The Medicine Lake Recreation Area receives 40,000 visitors annually.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Travel and tourism are important to communities in the Sáttítla Highlands region, representing about 21% of total private wage and salary employment, or 2,107 jobs, in 2024.² Outdoor recreation contributed more than \$83.9 billion to California's economy in 2023.³

SUMMARY FINDINGS

Research shows that conserving public lands like the Sáttítla Highlands National Monument helps to safeguard and highlight amenities—such as the lava tubes, obsidian flows, and alpine lakes found here—that are expected to draw new visitors, businesses, and residents to surrounding communities.⁴

When public lands are protected, in general the economies that have been growing will continue to grow and economies that have been contracting will continue to contract. In the region near the Sáttítla Highlands National Monument, long term economic trends are likely to continue. Monument designation is projected to help increase incomes and attract new investment in the region.

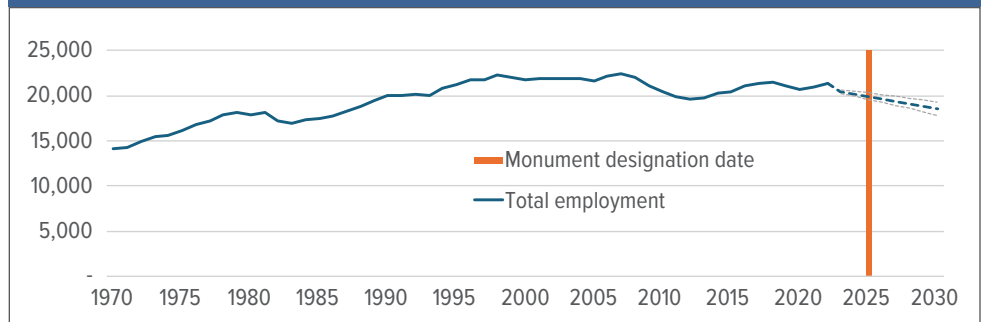
ECONOMIC TRENDS UNAFFECTED BY DESIGNATION

The economy of Siskiyou County, California, neighboring the Sáttítla Highlands National Monument has slowly declined since 2001. After the monument was designated, similar trends are likely to continue.

Based on historical economic performance in Siskiyou County from 2001 to 2022:⁵

- Employment decreased by 2%. By 2030, it is expected to decrease by another 13%.
- Population decreased by 1%. By 2030, it is expected to decrease by another 9%.

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT



SERVICE JOBS STEADY

Services jobs—such as doctors, hospitality workers, and teachers—reflect economic diversification in many communities. These jobs are increasingly mobile, and many entrepreneurs locate their businesses in areas with a high quality of life.

From 2001 to 2022 in the Sáttítla Highlands region:⁵

- Service jobs remained steady, changing from 13,066 to 13,010 jobs.
- Non-service jobs grew slightly from 3,389 to 3,484 jobs, a 3% increase.

Following monument designation in 2025, forecasts predict a slight decrease in both services and non-services jobs by 2030.

EMPLOYMENT BY MAJOR INDUSTRY

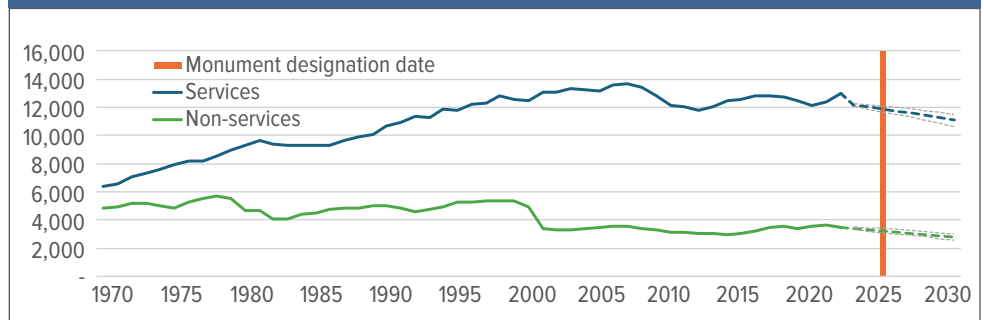




Photo courtesy Bob Wick

The communities in Siskiyou County neighboring the S ttitla Highlands National Monument are expected to experience strong growth following its designation in 2025. The projected increases in population, jobs, personal income, and per capita income are expected to mirror other Western counties with national monuments or other protected lands.

ABOUT

This fact sheet is part of a series created by Headwaters Economics that assesses the economic performance of local communities adjacent to national monuments. Economic growth for 2023–2030 was projected using data for large national monuments in the western United States. Trends before and after monument designation were modeled, controlling for unique characteristics of each monument. For more information, see <https://headwaterseconomics.org/public-lands/economic-performance-national-monuments>.

1. The Conservation Alliance. (2024). National Monument: Save S ttitla – Medicine Lake Highlands. Mount Shasta, CA: The Conservation Alliance. Retrieved from <https://conservationalliance.com/grants/national-monument-save-sattitla-medicine-lake-highlands/>
2. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023). Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/cew/>
3. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2024). Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved from <https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation>
4. Headwaters Economics. (2021). National Monuments Can Boost Local Economies. Bozeman, MT: Headwaters Economics. Retrieved from <https://headwaterseconomics.org/public-lands/national-monuments-studies/>
5. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2023). Regional Economic Accounts. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved from <https://www.bea.gov/data/economic-accounts/regional>
6. Lawson, M. (2019). Non-Labor Income in the Rural West. Bozeman, MT: Headwaters Economics. Retrieved from <https://headwaterseconomics.org/public-lands/papl-lawson/>

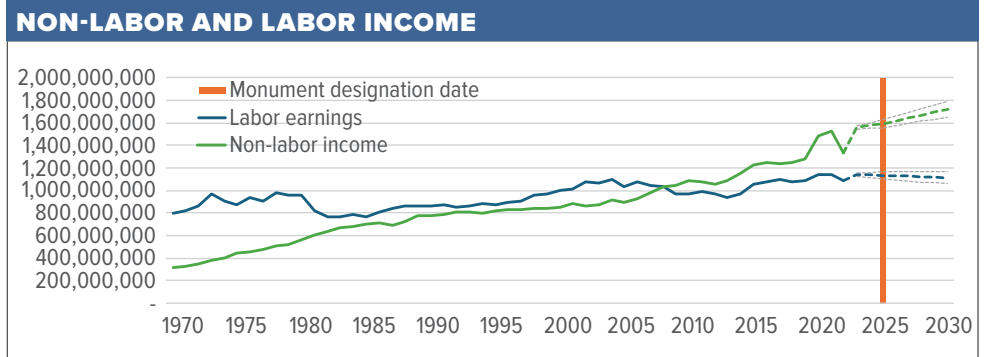
NON-LABOR INCOME IS PROJECTED TO GROW

One of the largest, fastest growing future sources of new personal income in the S ttitla Highlands region is expected to be non-labor income, which is made up of investment income such as dividends, interest and rent, and government transfer payments such as Social Security and Medicare.

For people with investment income and many retirees, protected public lands and recreation provide important aspects of a high quality of life. Non-labor income already represents more than a third of all personal income in the West—and is projected to grow as the Baby Boomer generation retires.⁶

From 2001 to 2022 in the S ttitla Highlands region:⁵

- Non-labor income grew from \$885.6 million to \$1.33 billion, a 50% increase.
- In 2022 non-labor income made up 55% of total personal income and is projected to account for 62% of all personal income by 2030.



TRADITIONAL JOBS HOLD STEADY

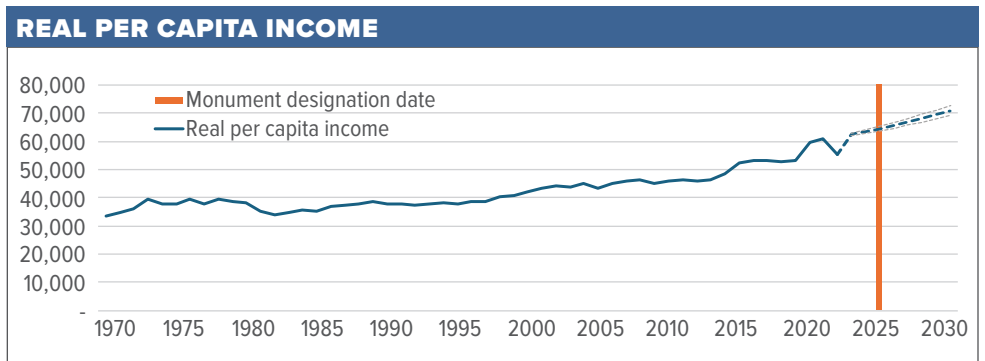
Long before the monument’s creation, commodity industries (agriculture, mining, timber) were becoming a smaller share of the overall economy in the S ttitla Highlands region. These industries are projected to remain a small part of the region’s economy in the future.²

INCOME ON THE RISE

While some aspects of the economy are forecasted to remain steady following the designation of the S ttitla Highlands National Monument, per capita income and earnings per job are projected to grow. This indicates expected growing prosperity in the region.

From 2001 to 2022 in the S ttitla Highlands region:⁵

- Real per capita income increased from \$43,262 to \$55,516, a 28% increase. By 2030, it is expected to increase another 28% to \$70,622.
- Real earnings per job increased from \$51,998 to \$59,857, a 15% increase. By 2030, it is expected to increase another 19% to \$70,932 annually.



Headwaters Economics is an independent, nonprofit research group that works to improve community development and land management decisions.