Employment Growth Trends

After recording sizable non-agricultural job gains between 1995 and 1998, Snohomish County has since entered a period marked by modest job reductions.

Since 1990, a total of 44,300 non-agricultural jobs have been added to the Snohomish County economy, amounting to a 26.2% increase in employment (compared with a 32.9% increase in total population during this same time period). Most of the employment growth (nearly three-quarters) occurred within a single three-year span, beginning in 1995 and ending in 1998, when 32,600 non-agricultural jobs were added to Snohomish County's employment base. See Figure 13 and Table 7 for more detailed information.

With a net increase of 17,300 manufacturing jobs between 1995 and 1998, this sector alone accounted for over half (53%) of the County's total three-year job gain. This increase was primarily due to increases in transportation equipment manufacturing employment (Boeing) during this time period.

Since 1998, however, total non-agricultural employment within Snohomish County has undergone some modest reductions, with total non-agricultural jobs dropping by 1.3% in 1999, 0.8% in 2000, and 0.9% thus far in 2001, bringing the countywide total down to 213,500 – 6,500 fewer jobs than the peak recorded in 1998. These job reductions occurred during a period when a significant number of jobs (15,000) were lost in the manufacturing sector of the economy, primarily due to layoffs at Boeing. Job growth in other sectors during the same time period (retail trade, services, construction, and government) helped to attenuate the effects of the manufacturing job losses on the Snohomish County economy.

Service sector employment continues to gain importance within Snohomish County.

As can be seen in Table 7, services have accounted for an increasingly larger share of Snohomish County's total employment over the past two decades. This sector (which includes hotel, business, health, legal, educational, social, engineering and management services), rose from 14.3% of total county non-agricultural employment in 1980, to 18.3% in 1990, and to 22.2% in 2001. This has been accompanied by a corresponding decline in the importance of manufacturing employment in Snohomish County over the same time period. In 2001, manufacturing employment is estimated to account for 24.1% of total county nonagricultural employment, down from 30.5% in 1990, and 32.6% in 1980.

Snohomish County's unemployment rate has remained below 5% since 1997, however an upward trend in the unemployment rate is now apparent.

During the three-year period from 1995 through 1998, during which Snohomish County experienced a 32,600 non-agricultural job gain, unemployment rates dropped markedly to reach a low of 3.1% in 1998 (see Figure 14). Remarkably, unemployment rates have remained below 5% for the past five years. Prior to 1997, Snohomish County had had only two years since 1980 in which the annual average unemployment rate fell below 5% (1989 and 1990). Unfortunately, Snohomish County's unemployment rate is showing a gradual upward trend since 1998, reaching 4.8% as the Jan-Nov 2001 average. More dramatic, however, is the most recent monthly estimate for Snohomish County, which shows an unemployment rate of 6.3% for November 2001 (not seasonally adjusted), up from 5.7% in October and 4.8% in September.

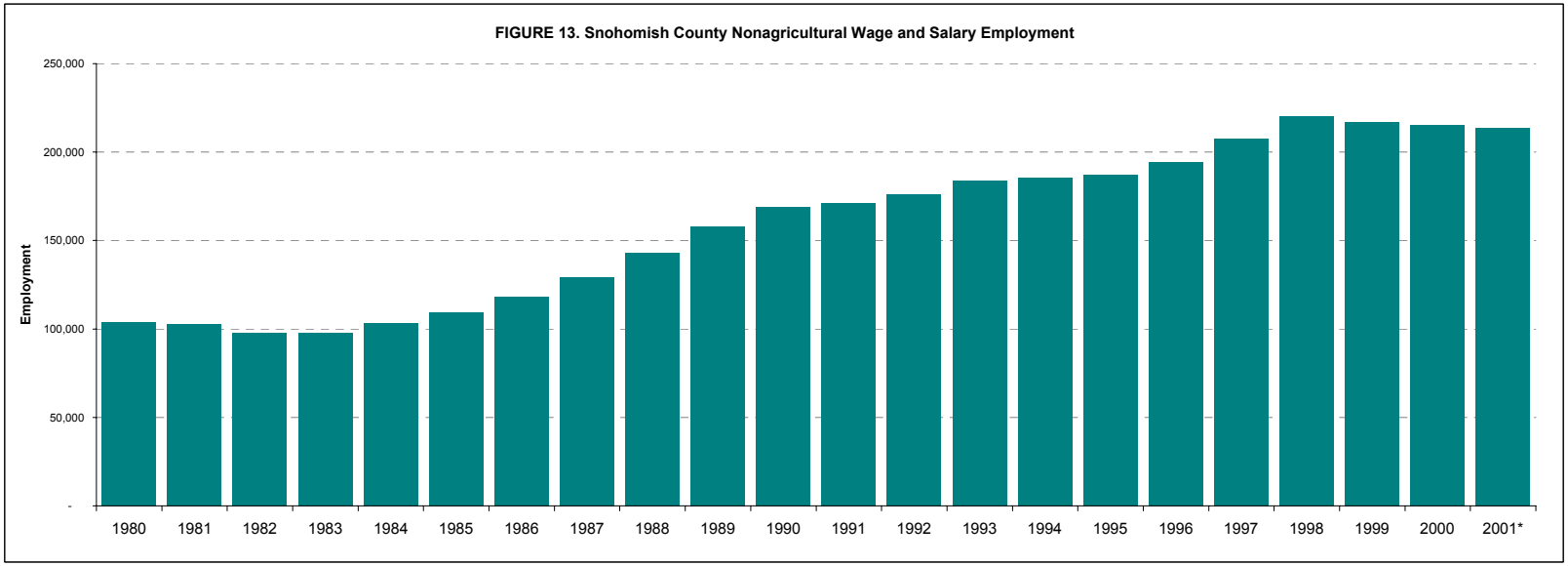


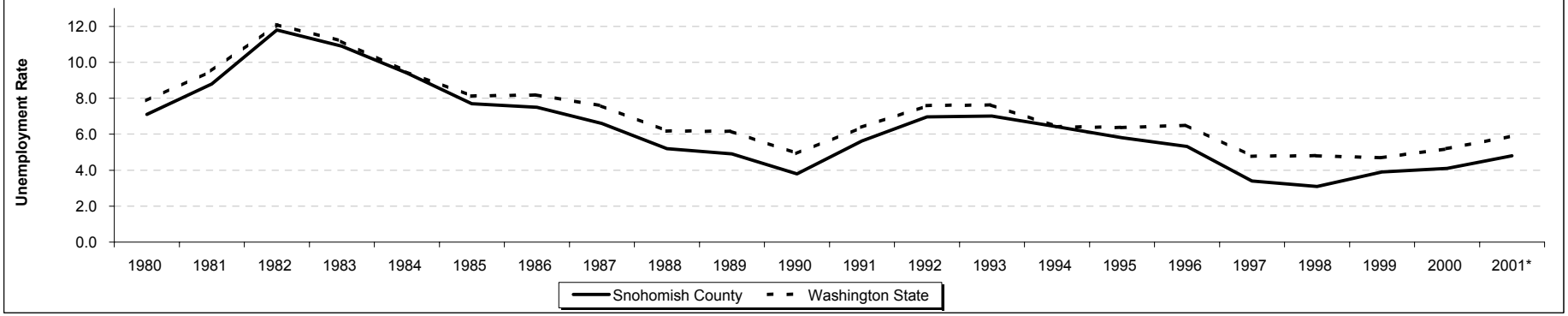
TABLE 7. Snohomish County Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment, 1980 - 2001

	1980	% Dist.	1990	% Dist.	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001 *	% Dist.	1995-1996 Change No.	1995-1996 Change Pct.	1996-1997 Change No.	1996-1997 Change Pct.	1997-1998 Change No.	1997-1998 Change Pct.	1998-1999 Change No.	1998-1999 Change Pct.	1999-00 Change No.	1999-00 Change Pct.	2000-01 Change No.	2000-01 Change Pct.
Total	103,600	100.0%	169,200	100.0%	170,900	175,900	183,700	185,300	187,400	194,000	207,800	220,000	217,100	215,400	213,500	100.0%	6,600	3.5%	13,800	7.1%	12,200	5.9%	(2,900)	-1.3%	(1,700)	-0.8%	(1,900)	-0.9%
Manufacturing	33,800	32.6%	51,600	30.5%	50,300	50,200	54,900	52,900	49,200	53,600	63,000	66,500	60,300	54,400	51,500	24.1%	4,400	8.9%	9,400	17.5%	3,500	5.6%	(6,200)	-9.3%	(5,900)	-9.8%	(2,900)	-5.3%
Transportation Equip.	*18,400*	*17.8%*	*30,000*	*17.7%*	*29,500*	*29,800*	*34,400*	*32,900*	*28,900*	*32,200*	*40,200*	*43,300*	*37,400*	*31,600*	*31,000*	*14.5%*	3,300	11.4%	8,000	24.8%	3,100	7.7%	(5,900)	-13.6%	(5,800)	-15.5%	(600)	-1.9%
Other Manufacturing	*15,400*	*14.9%*	*21,600*	*12.8%*	*20,800*	*20,400*	*20,500*	*20,000*	*20,300*	*21,400*	*22,800*	*23,200*	*22,900*	*22,800*	*20,500*	*9.6%*	1,100	5.4%	1,400	6.5%	400	1.8%	(300)	-1.3%	(100)	-0.4%	(2,300)	-10.1%
Construction/Mining	7,200	6.9%	12,200	7.2%	11,400	12,200	11,900	11,600	11,400	12,700	13,700	15,100	15,900	17,400	16,800	7.9%	1,300	11.4%	1,000	7.9%	1,400	10.2%	800	5.3%	1,500	9.4%	(600)	-3.4%
Trans./Public Util.	5,400	5.2%	6,300	3.7%	6,400	6,500	6,500	5,900	5,900	5,800	6,100	6,500	6,400	6,200	5,700	2.7%	(100)	-1.7%	300	5.2%	400	6.6%	(100)	-1.5%	(200)	-3.1%	(500)	-8.1%
Wholesale/Retail Trade	22,300	21.5%	38,800	22.9%	39,300	39,900	40,800	42,300	45,300	44,300	45,400	47,100	48,000	49,300	48,800	22.9%	(1,000)	-2.2%	1,100	2.5%	1,700	3.7%	900	1.9%	1,300	2.7%	(500)	-1.0%
Finance/Ins./Real Estate	3,400	3.3%	6,700	4.0%	7,300	8,000	7,900	8,300	8,000	8,400	8,800	9,500	9,300	9,600	10,800	5.1%	400	5.0%	400	4.8%	700	8.0%	(200)	-2.1%	300	3.2%	1,200	12.5%
Services	14,800	14.3%	31,000	18.3%	32,300	34,100	35,700	37,400	39,500	40,300	41,300	44,600	45,600	46,700	47,400	22.2%	800	2.0%	1,000	2.5%	3,300	8.0%	1,000	2.2%	1,100	2.4%	700	1.5%
Government	16,700	16.1%	22,600	13.4%	23,900	25,000	26,000	27,000	28,100	28,900	29,600	30,600	31,600	31,800	32,500	15.2%	800	2.8%	700	2.4%	1,000	3.4%	1,000	3.3%	200	0.6%	700	2.2%

*November 2001 preliminary estimate
NOTES: Nonagricultural employment excludes proprietors, self-employed, members of the armed services, workers in private households and agricultural workers. Includes all full and part-time wage and salary workers.
Data reported are annual averages (except for 2001). Detail may not add to indicated totals due to rounding.

Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

FIGURE 14. ANNUAL AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR SNOHOMISH COUNTY AND WASHINGTON STATE, 1980-2001



	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001*
Snohomish County																						
Resident Civilian Labor Force	183,500	184,800	188,700	191,500	179,600	185,500	199,600	208,800	217,900	232,700	261,400	259,700	269,800	275,100	279,300	288,800	298,900	320,800	335,600	346,400	343,800	347,300
Total Employment	170,400	168,600	166,500	170,600	162,700	171,300	184,700	195,100	206,500	221,400	251,400	245,100	251,000	255,800	261,400	272,200	283,100	309,900	325,100	332,800	329,700	330,400
Total Unemployment	13,100	16,200	22,200	20,900	16,900	14,200	14,900	13,700	11,400	11,300	10,100	14,600	18,800	19,300	17,900	16,600	15,900	10,900	10,500	13,600	14,100	16,800
Unemployment Rate	7.1	8.8	11.8	10.9	9.4	7.7	7.5	6.6	5.2	4.9	3.8	5.6	7.0	7.0	6.4	5.8	5.3	3.4	3.1	3.9	4.1	4.8
Washington State																						
Unemployment Rate	7.9	9.5	12.1	11.2	9.5	8.1	8.2	7.6	6.2	6.2	4.9	6.4	7.6	7.6	6.4	6.4	6.5	4.8	4.8	4.7	5.2	5.9

* Year-to-Date (Jan-Nov 2001) average

Source: WA State Employment Security Department, figures may not add due to rounding.