

**Loy, William J. ed. *Atlas of Oregon*, 2nd ed. Portland: University of Oregon Press, 2001.** (Reviewed by Kate Koehler)

The *Atlas of Oregon* is an excellent source on the political, physical, economical, and human history of Oregon. It is divided into three major categories, with an additional section consisting solely of reference maps. Each section contains maps, diagrams, charts, and texts.

The first section of the *Atlas* covers human geography, including topics such as human history, epidemics, wars, donation land claims, political boundaries, land grants, populations, immigration, race, religion, politics, education, crime, and health care. The second section, titled "The Economy," looks at information related to labor, public employment, taxation, land ownership, energy issues, public transportation, and the major industries in Oregon. The last section, on physical geography, examines the various landforms and their origins, volcanoes, earthquakes, geology, climate, rivers, lakes and vegetation. Following these three sections, there are detailed topographical maps of Oregon.

All of these sections contain information specifically related to the Willamette River and its watershed. For example, there is a map of population density in the Willamette valley, showing its concentration in the Portland, Salem, and Eugene areas, as well as a zoning map revealing that the majority of the Willamette valley is for agriculture usage. (pg. 34) This source also contains information on how the land was originally divided up, explaining the Donation Land Act of 1850, which granted each married couple 640 acres, and each single man 320 acres. (pg. 18).

Furthermore, the *Atlas of Oregon* contains information on the water quality and dam locations on the Willamette River, illustrating the decrease in water health as one heads north along the Willamette. (pg. 170) It shows where Oregon public and private lands are located; the majority of the Willamette River valley is privately owned. (pg 84). The *Atlas* also covers wildlife and vegetation in the valley, as well as showing protected natural areas. Because the Willamette valley is primarily privately owned, there is very little protected land within it.

## Critique

The *Atlas of Oregon* is an excellent source on the human and natural history of Oregon. It is set up in an easy to read fashion, and complete with a number of maps and charts. It was published in 2001, and so the information is up to date.

The *Atlas* is also a good source for background information on the Willamette River valley. However, this information is not located all in one section, so it takes a careful reading to find substantial information. Because this atlas focuses on all of Oregon, it gives the reader a larger perspective from which to examine the Willamette River. The details it includes about the Willamette River valley, specifically in relation to land use and land use change over time, are very interesting and pertinent. Overall, this is a useful source.

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