

9. Economics



BACKGROUND/SETTING

San Joaquin County & the Lower Mokelumne River Economy

Overview of County & Representative Watershed Economy

Economic Measure	Data Description	San Joaquin County	LMR Watershed Representative Areas
Annual Average Unemployment Rate	1983-2001	11.6%	Not available
Range in Annual Average Unemployment Rate	1983-2001	Low: 8.7% (2001) High: 15.7% (1983)	Not available
Civilian labor force	Jan. 2002	267,300	Lodi: 31,200 Woodbridge: 2,200 Lockeford: 1,580
Taxable sales	2001 - 1st Qtr.	\$1,581,025,000	Lodi: \$159,654,000

Source: State of California, Employment Development Department, Labor Market information Division

INDUSTRY IN THE LOWER MOKELUMNE RIVER WATERSHED

Wine Grape and Other Agricultural Industries

The City of Lodi's website states that "premium quality wine grapes are the economic engine that drives the Lodi-Woodbridge region." As noted in the LMR's Agricultural Resource Element, about 80,000 acres of vineyards surround the Lodi community. The City of Lodi reports that Lodi wine grape growers annually produce a crop worth more than \$300 million. Nearly 20% of California's premium wine grapes are grown in this region making it the "Wine Grape Capital of the World."



The Lower Mokelumne River Watershed and the Lodi area in particular, has been part of California's wine industry for over 100 years. Today, grapes grown in the Lodi region are used by more than 80 wineries throughout the state including such wineries as Robert Mondavi, Ernest & Julio Gallo, and Sutter Home. As of 2001, the Lodi wine grape region of the Lower Mokelumne River Watershed was ranked first in California State Production for producing the following grape varieties: Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Merlot.

Local wineries are also an important part of the region's economy. At least twenty wineries have a presence and/or grow grapes in the watershed.

Other agricultural products contributing to the economy of the LMR watershed include: dairy/livestock, poultry, orchard products and row and field crops.

Non-Agricultural Industry

The Lower Mokelumne River Watershed area is home to approximately 50 manufacturing and non-manufacturing companies with 50 or more employees.

Manufacturing

Manufacturers within the watershed region produce a wide range of products including: cereals, trailer hitches, industrial storage racks, rubber products, cans, cushions and seat covers, computer components, warehouse racking, plastic pipe, Styrofoam containers, and nameplates. Manufacturers within the watershed region are also involved in plastic injection molding, distribution, printing, packaging and distribution of agricultural products (e.g., canning, fruit and nut packaging).



Non-Manufacturing

Non-manufacturing employers within the watershed region include schools, local government, a hospital, health care facilities including convalescent homes and rehabilitation centers, large and small general retailers and wholesalers, banks, car sales, home decorating, hardware and garden supply sales, RV sales, environmental specialists, newspaper publishing, grocery stores, fast-food restaurants, and refuse pick-up and disposal services.

Other

Mining, utilities, construction, transportation & information services, finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing, and services are also a large part of the industry of the Lower Mokelumne River Watershed area.

EXISTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Downtown Lodi Business Partnership (DLBP): The Downtown Lodi Business Partnership was formed in 1998. The primary purpose of this non-profit organization is to manage and promote downtown Lodi as a community shopping center. Approximately 240 businesses belong to the DLBP which extends from Locust Ave (North) to Lodi Avenue (including portions of the south side of Lodi Avenue) and from Sacramento Street and the Railroad (East) to Church Street (West).

Discover Lodi! Wine and Visitor Center This center, opened in September, 2000, promotes Lodi wines, local agro-tourism and provides education on the art and science of wine grape growing and wine making.

Chambers of Commerce The Lodi District Chamber of Commerce has promoted and advocated agricultural, industrial and commercial businesses in Lodi and Northern San Joaquin County since 1923. The Lockeford/Clements Chamber of Commerce performs a similar function for the communities of Lockeford and Clements.

Lodi Conference and Visitor's Bureau The Lodi Conference and Visitor's Bureau was established to serve as an information and planning resource for both Lodi residents and visitors. The organization promotes the Lodi Community, Lodi's wine industry, visitor services and other activities which assist in promoting economic development.

Lodi Economic Development Department The focus of the City of Lodi's economic development program is to plan, organize and coordinate the Economic Development and Revitalization Program for Lodi with other agencies and organizations; promote job growth; and market Lodi as a regional business center. The primary goals of the program are to: 1) promote new businesses; 2) retain and expand existing businesses; 3) create a "business friendly" atmosphere for conducting business; 4) promote a competitive fee and tax environment; 5) assist business ventures and 6) market Lodi as a business and tourist center.

One of the primary objectives of the Economic Development Program is to market Lodi as a tourist and business location through: a) coordination with the Lodi District Chamber of Commerce Tourist Committee; b) coordinating with the Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission and c) considering contracting with a business marketing specialist to represent Lodi in the State and nation.¹

The Economic Development Plan includes proposals to: a) host a quarterly business forum, b) host an "Economic Development Forum" in Lodi; c) coordinate activities with the Chamber of Commerce Committees; Support Chamber activities and resources, and d) use Chamber resources to enhance the economic development program.²

¹ See Objective #9 of Lodi's Economic Development & Revitalization Program

² See Objective #10 of Lodi's Economic Development & Revitalization Program

The Economic Development Department promotes economic development in the City of Lodi, in part, through an emphasis on the region's natural and cultural resources. It is this emphasis on the natural and cultural resources of the watershed for economic development purposes that the LMSP's Economic Development Element promotes.

San Joaquin Partnership

The City of Lodi is affiliated with the San Joaquin Partnership, a collaborative effort by private sector leadership and all cities of San Joaquin County to enhance its economic development program.

Resource Conservation & Development District

The purpose of the RC&D program is to accelerate the conservation, development and use of natural resources, improve the general level of economic activity and enhance the environment and standard of living in authorized RC&D areas. Authorized RC&D areas are locally sponsored areas designated by the Secretary of Agriculture for RC&D technical and financial assistance program funds.

GOAL

Support economic development activities which promote the watershed's resources while preserving and enhancing those resources.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS:

1. **Investigate the Potential Economic Development Benefits of Mokelumne River Watershed Resource Conservation & Development District**

Investigate the potential economic development benefits of a Mokelumne River Watershed RC&D (or, joining with an existing RC&D should one be established in the region) to promote economic development within the watershed emphasizing the region's natural and cultural resources.

Time Frame for Implementation: Investigate the feasibility and interest in forming a Resource Conservation & Development District in coordination with the current efforts of the San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District.

2. **Promote Resource-Based Tourism for Economic Development**

Promote and support, through advertising, Coordination with the Chambers of Commerce and Visitor's Centers, advertising in travel magazines, participation in local business associations and similar marketing venues:

Heritage Tourism programs which encourage the rehabilitation and/or maintenance of cultural resources for use as tourist-related facilities (e.g., museums, bed and breakfasts, antique shops, hotels, restaurants).

Eco-Tourism events which focus on the tourism-generating power of biological resources (e.g., Crane Festival, Salmon Festival, river rafting).

Agro-Tourism facilities and events which promote agricultural resources to attract tourism (e.g., wineries, wine-tasting, Grape Festival)

Recreational opportunities for tourists emphasizing the linkages between recreation and businesses in the watershed area.

Pursue opportunities to expand the economic development opportunities of resource-based tourism by promoting a multiple resource-based activities as “package” visits to prolong the staying time and expenditures associated with resource-based tourism (e.g., stay in an 1880s renovated bed & breakfast, go wine-tasting, take an aerial tour of the watershed, bike or hike along scenic trails, go kayaking, and eat at local restaurants—all in the same visit).

Time Frame for Implementation: Adopt plans for supporting an advertising campaign within three years of plan adoption.