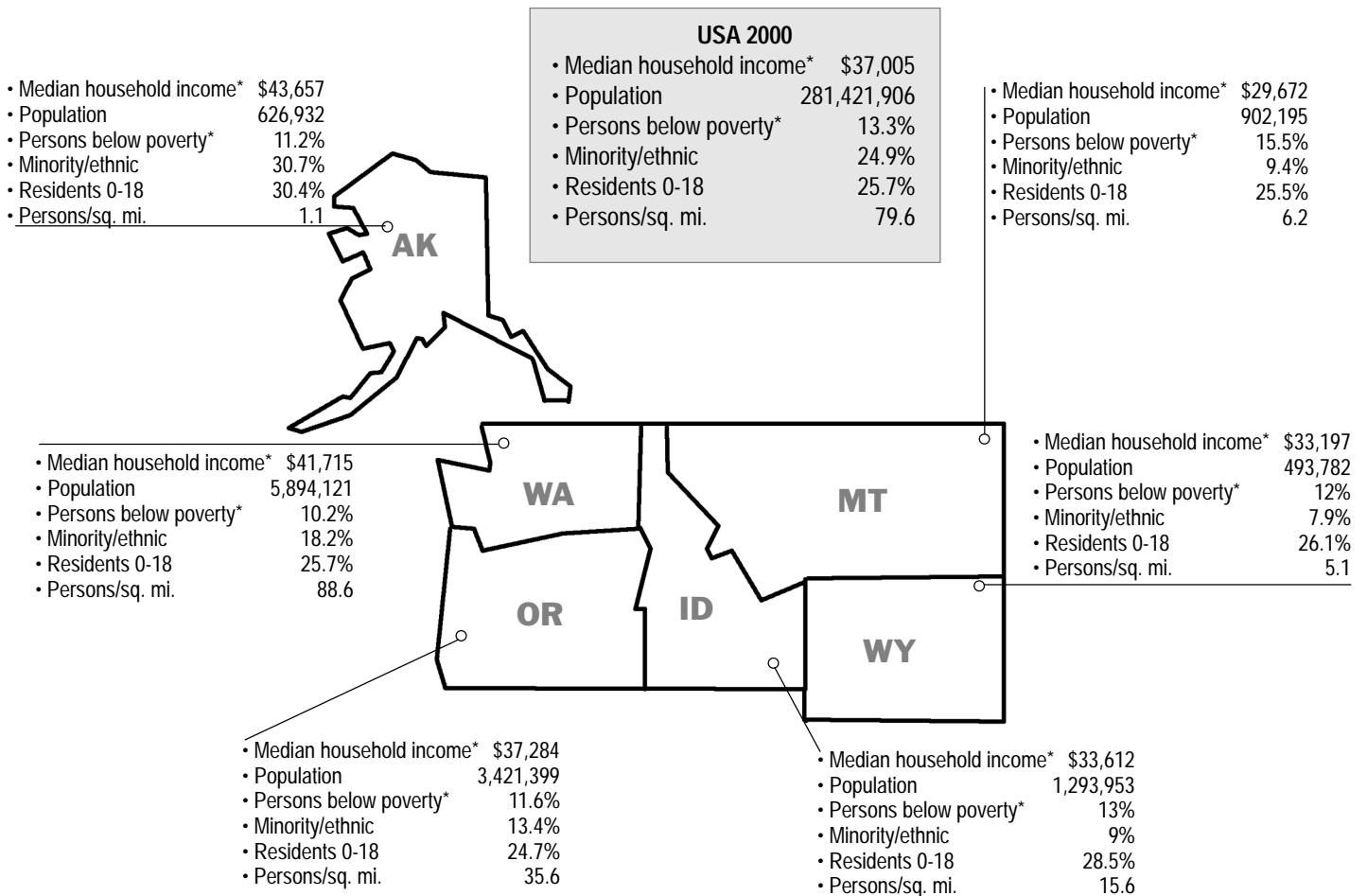


# Northwest Region at a Glance



Statistics from: U.S. Census Bureau State and County Quick Facts, 2000 (\*1997 model-based estimate), <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>

## The Northwest: Land of Contrasts

This six-state area covers 31% of the U.S. landmass and contains around 6% of the country's population. Despite the region's size, it is served by only one accredited school of public health, the University of Washington's School of Public Health and Community Medicine

Each of the six states of the northwest region is crossed by mountains—the Rockies run through the middle of Montana and Wyoming, and the Cascades split both Washington and Oregon. World-class mountains dominate Alaska, and several mountain chains quarter Idaho. The mountain ranges have created distinct cultural boundaries in each state, mirroring the economic divide between the populous urban areas and sparsely settled rural areas in the region.

Although the six states have mountains in common, their climactic zones range from arctic tundra to deserts and include rain forests, vast plains, and ocean islands. Population densities

range widely too, from Washington's Central Puget Sound region with 200 people per square mile to Alaska's statewide 1 person per square mile. (*The states' public health systems are as varied as their geography. For more about them, see "Snapshot: State Public Health Systems" on p. 7.*)

The Northwest region is also home to about 50 recognized Native American tribes, with others in the process of being recognized, and has about 13.25% of the total U.S. Native American population.

In all six states traditional industries are centered on natural resources—lumber, mining, fisheries, oil, and agriculture—with tourism becoming an increasingly important economic element. In the urban centers major industries include airplane and heavy equipment manufacturing, but in the 1990s Washington, Oregon, and Idaho saw their economies flourish with their diversification into high tech industries. 🍷