Wisconsin Report Essay, Research Paper

Wisconsin

The first settlers of Wisconsin were the Native Americans, who arrived over 10,000 years ago. At the time of statehood there were a total of four different Indian tribes that made the western great lakes their home. Fur trading is what attracted the first Europeans to Wisconsin in the 17th century. In the 1840 s large numbers of German settlers started to arrive in Wisconsin, most of them being political and religious refuges. Wisconsin is a very multi-ethnic state, but it still remains the most German state in the US. In the 1600 s the area that would become Wisconsin was actually claimed as part of new France by French fur traders. Great Britain acquired Wisconsin at the end of the French and Indian war in 1763. British control ended with the war of 1812. Wisconsin was first governed by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, and then by the laws of Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan. On July 4,1836, Wisconsin joined the Union. Wisconsin was admitted to the United States as the 30th state on May 29,1848.

Agriculture has played a huge role in Wisconsin since the 1830 s, and it is still a big part of the state today. Early on wheat was one of the most important crop, but as time moved on the dairy industry dominated. This is what gave Wisconsin it s nickname, America s Dairyland . In the northern forests of Wisconsin logging became a very poplular industry. Although these were the more exclusive industries, there was also shipping, milling, and smolting. In the later part of the 19th century paper making ,meat processing, cheese-making, metal working, and the manufacturing of farm implements grew from Wisconsin s abundant natural assets.

Since statehood Wisconsin has seen steady population growth. Wisconsin has acquired over 418,600 residents since the 1990 census. The four strongest areas of growth are the Fox Valley along the Wisconsin River, Dane County, and southeastern Wisconsin. Dane and Waukesha Counties each have 51,000 residents. Metropolitan counties grew at a faster rate than did non-metropolitan counties. Metro counties gained population at a combined rate of 8.74%, while the rate of non-metro counties increased 8.17% since 1990. University counties grew 11.43%, while manufacturing and recreational counties grew 10%. Finally agricultural counties increased only 3.55% since 1990. Of the largest municipalities, those with 10,000 or more residents, the city of Madison had the largest numeric change with 16,482 additional residents. The cities of Green Bay, Kenosha, Janesville, Oak Creek, Oshkosh, and Waukesha increased by 7,000 to 8,000 residents. The city of Milwaukee was the largest loser-nearly 22,500 residents since the 1990 census.

Wisconsin s population is predominantly white (92.2% in 1990), but racial minorities have increased since 1940. In 1990 the black population was 5% of the total population. In recent years the Asian population increased at a rapid rate, along with the Native Americans. Most of the Native Americans live on reservations, approximately 10,000 out of the 38,000. The immigrant heritage is a direct reflection of Wisconsin s majority white population. In 1995, 26.4% of Wisconsin s population was under 18, and 13.3% was over 65.

The location of Wisconsin is in the central United States, and the total surface area is 65,499 square miles. It is also ranked as the 22nd largest state. It s land is made up of rolling hills, valleys, ridges, lakes, and shoreline. Its mold was primarily created by Ice Age glaciers. The glaciers left Wisconsin with a huge number of small fresh water lakes. The Mississippi river is where most of the water drains into, but some also drains into Lake Superior. Wisconsin is also covered by dense forests, which include trees such as ash, maple, elm, balsam, fir, pine, spruce, and hemlock. That is why logging is one of their largest industries. The lakes in Wisconsin provide a habitat for fish such as musky, pike, bass, and trout. Mineral resources include lead deposits in the southwestern part of the state and iron ore in the north. Copper and zinc deposits are also found in northern Wisconsin. Among the most notable resources of Wisconsin are its soils, which vary from rich loams in the southern half of the state to thin, sandy soils in some parts of central and northern Wisconsin.

The climate consists of short mild summers and long cold winters. Lake Michigan usually experiences the extreme temperatures of being very hot and very cold. The northern part of the state suffers from a low agricultural season due to the cold weather. The average temperature is from 46.2F in the south to 40.2% in the north. In January the average temp is 8.7F in the north, and 18.1F in the south. In July the average temperature is 66.9F in the north and 71.8 in the south. They usually receive average rainfall and precipitation throughout the state.

The Government of Wisconsin includes a separate legislative, executive and judicial branch. Constitutional officers include the governer, lieutenant governer, secretary of state, attorney general, state treasurer, and state superintendent of public instruction, each elected by the people for four-year terms. The legislature is divided into two houses: the Senate with 33 members, and the Assembly with 99 members. Senators are elected to serve four-year terms, and representatives to the assembly are elected to serve two- year terms. There are seven Supreme Court Justices elected to serve 10-year terms. The court of appeals is divided into four districts, with judges serving six-year terms. Each county has it s own trial court with one or more branches. Each branch has a judge elected to serve a six-year term on a non-partisan ballot. Wisconsin is made up of 72 counties, each governed by a county board of supervisors. They are elected on a non-partisan ballot in the spring elections. Each county can choose to have an elected county executive, an appointed administrator, or an administrative coordinator. Wisconsin has 189 cities, 359 villages and 1,266 towns. The cities are usually governed by a mayor-common council form of government. Most villages are governed by a village board. The towns are governed by a town board of supervisors, which are elected on the spring non-partisan ballot.

Wisconsin is the home to numerous institutions of higher learning, both public and private. The University of Wisconsin system includes 13 four-year campuses and 13 two-year centers. They enroll about 150,000 students. The University-Madison is the largest campus with an enrollment of 40,000 students. The private institutions include 20 universities and colleges, 4 technical and professional schools and 5 theological seminaries with 50,000 students. They started vocational schooling in 1911, and today they enroll over 431,000 students in technical college systems. Public libraries are organized into 17 federated systems around the state; 2.9 million of the state s 5 million residents are registered users in their local system.

State Symbols

+ State Motto: Forward reflecting Wisconsin s continuous drive to be a national leader, the state adopted Forward as the official state motto in 1851.

+ State Flag: Last altered in 1979, the state flag flutters in the breeze over Wisconsin representing the rich history of our great state.

+ State Song: On Wisconsin It was already a popular football song, and in 1959 it became the official state song.

+ State Flower: Wood Violet. It was adopted on Arbor Day in 1909.

+ State Bird: Robin, a welcome sign for spring adopted in1926-27.

+ State Tree: Sugar Maple, adopted in 1949.

+ State Fish: Musky – This fish is the source of many fish tales in Wisconsin, and it became the official state fish in 1955.

+ State Animal: Badger – It is seen on the flag, coat of arms, song, and is even the mascot of the University of Wisconsin.

+ State Wildlife Animal: White-tailed Deer (1957)

+ State domesticated animal: Dairy cow, represents the importance of the dairy industry of Wisconsin, 1971.

+ State Mineral: Galena (1971)

+ State Rock: Red Granite (1971)

+ State symbol of Peace: Mourning Dove (1971)

+ State Insect: Honeybee, sweet contributor,1977.

+ State Soil: Antigo Silt Loam, created by the glaciers.

+ State Fossil: Trilobite (1985).

+ State Dog: American Water Spaniel,hunter 1985.

+ State Beverage: Milk (1987).

+ State Grain: Corn (1989)

State dance: Polka, reflects rich German heritage,1993.