

Impacts of JBLM in Thurston County

SUMMARY

Q. In your opinion, does JBLM do enough to minimize any negative impact on the surrounding communities?

YES 48%
NO 35%
N/A 17%

Effects of Decrease in Service Members at JBLM:

A majority of Thurston Residents believe that losing “several thousand” service members from JBLM would have negative consequences on the region:

23.7% VERY NEGATIVE
40.6% MOSTLY NEGATIVE
20% NEUTRAL
9% MOSTLY POSITIVE
4.7% VERY POSITIVE

Q. How well do local school officials integrate and assist military families?

A **23%** of Thurston parents gave Local Schools an “**A**” for integrating military children
B **25%** said **B**
C **11%** said **C**
D **1%** said **D**
40% had no opinion



For residents of the South Puget Sound, Joint Base Lewis McChord is as much a part of the region as the Sound and Mount Rainier. Most locals would have a hard time imagining the region without it. Nor would they want to.

In Thurston, over **6 in 10** rated having JBLM nearby as positive. JBLM’s relationship with its neighbors, while generally positive, is complex: about **3 of those 6** said “mostly positive” instead of “very positive.” Most respondents could think of both advantages and disadvantages to living near the base.

45% of Thurston respondents have some relationship to the Department of Defense, with either a current employee or veteran in the household.

Not surprisingly, the prospect of a shrinking military presence in the region was greeted negatively. Almost **7 in 10** respondents said that larger troop reductions at JBLM would have a negative impact – mostly economic – on the area. However, the feeling was not universal: Roughly **35%** stated either that the impact would be positive, or were neutral.

Most did not think JBLM needs to be doing more to minimize its impact on the surrounding communities or that surrounding communities needed to be doing more to improve their relations with JBLM.

The “JBLM Traffic” Myth

This survey highlighted an ongoing perception that JBLM is the primary cause of the traffic congestion on I-5 in Pierce and Thurston Counties.

The Facts: I-5 has not been widened through JBLM since 1975, and is inadequate to meet today’s demand. Between 1970 and 2010, the population of Washington State increased 97 percent, Pierce County grew by 95 percent, and Thurston County grew by 228 percent.

Population Growth 2000-2010:

- Military on-base population increase: **4,611**
- Military off-base pop. increase estimate: **10,759**
- Civilian Pierce and Thurston pop. increase: **128,577**

Population growth in Pierce and Thurston counties is projected to continue at a similar pace through 2040. SSMCP, with regional partners, is working to improve Transportation in the region.

Over \$500 million in I-5 improvements are currently underway

[For Updates:](#)

www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I5/default.htm



MISSION

To foster effective communication, understanding, and mutual benefit by serving as the most effective point of coordination for resolution of those issues which

6000 Main St. SW, Lakewood, WA 98499
 Phone: 253.983.7772 | 253.983.7774
 E-mail: tspeir@cityoflakewood.us
ssmcp.org



2015 SSMCP Community Survey:
 Greater Thurston County

SSMCP 2015 Community Survey



Joint Base Lewis McChord & the South Sound
Joint Base Lewis McChord is an over 86,000 acre military installation in the South Puget Sound, nestled among two counties and 17 cities and towns, and bisected by Interstate 5. JBLM is the third largest employer in Washington, and an economic driver for the state.

SSMCP: The South Sound Military & Communities Partnership, a regional partnership of governments and organizations in Thurston and Pierce Counties, works to improve outside knowledge of the military's direct and indirect impact on the region and the State, as well as increase coordination between military and civilian counterparts.

About the Survey

Purpose: To capture community perceptions, knowledge, and interactions with Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

The survey area covered 39 zip codes surrounding JBLM in Thurston and Pierce Counties. Approximately 69% of the Survey participants lived in Thurston county. Data was gathered through online and telephone questionnaires. Percentages in this brochure may be rounded.

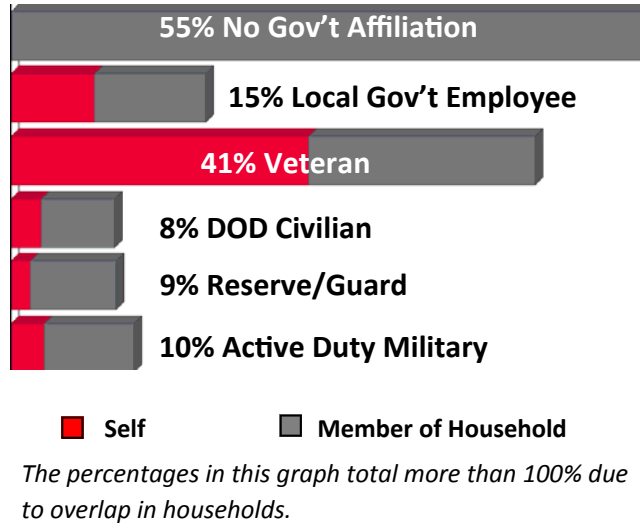
For full survey results, visit ssmcp.org.

Survey conducted by *Elway Research, Inc.*

Key Findings

Thurston County Connections to Military

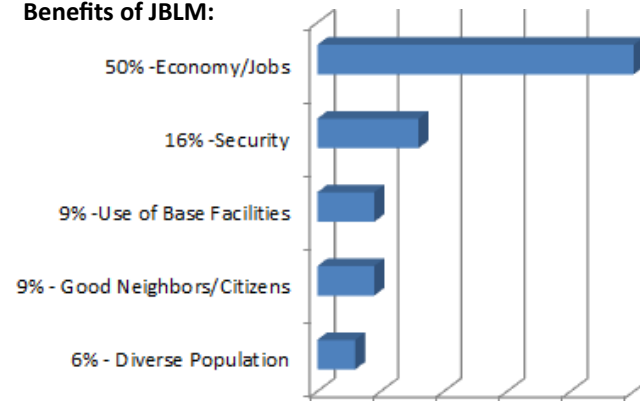
More than **1 in 4** of Thurston households included a **DoD employee**, and **40%** included a **veteran**.



Thurston County Rates JBLM as a Neighbor

County residents were asked to volunteer any positive aspects of having JBLM as a neighbor...

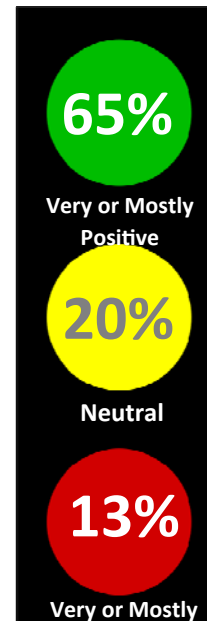
Benefits of JBLM:



Military/Community Relations in Greater Thurston County

Neighborhood Support

- **49%** of Thurston County Residents rated their neighborhood attitude towards Service members as **“Very Supportive”**
- **32%** said **“Generally Supportive”**



Thurston Co. Residents feel JBLM has a largely positive effect on the South Sound

6 in 10 Thurston Residents feel that having JBLM nearby is **POSITIVE** for the region.

Most commonly listed **NEGATIVES** were

- **Traffic**, with **57%** rating it a Significant Issue, and
- **Noise from Base**, with **9%** rating it a Significant Issue

Thurston Residents Interact with JBLM in a variety of ways

- **28%** of Thurston Participants have accessed the JBLM Website
- **9%** have attended a JBLM Meeting
- **70%** have visited JBLM

Do local governments do enough in the following areas?

Some Thurston participants felt communities could be doing **MORE** to...

