OCONEE COUNTY

Date Formed: 1868
Form of Government: Council-Administrator
Land Area (Sq. Mi.): 625
Council Members: 5
Council of Government: Appalachian
Term Length: 4 years
County Seat: Walhalla
Method of Election: Single Member
Other Municipalities: Salem, Seneca, West Union, Westminster

Population Trends

- Population Estimate 2017: 77,270
- Population Estimate 2016: 76,407
- Census Population 2010: 74,273
- Census Population 1990: 57,494
- Persons Per Square Mile: 118.84

Economic Data

- Jobs 2018: 25,029
- Jobs 2015: 25,191
- Jobs 2010: 23,204
- Jobs 2000: 27,827
- Jobs 2000 - 2010, Ann. Avg. Growth Rate: -1.7%
- Jobs 2015 - 2016, Percent Change: -0.6%

Tax Data

- Assessed Property 2016: $559,921,105
- Per Capita Assessed Propert Tax 2016: $7,539
- County Base Millage Rate 2017: 0.07100
- Value of One Mil 2017: $559,921
- Net Taxable Sales FY 2016: $558,654,271
- State Admissions Tax Collected FY 2016: $254,100
- State Accommod. Tax Collected FY 2016: $251,846

County Finance and Employment

- Total Revenues FY 2016: $64,134,724
- General Fund Budget FY 2018: $44,397,501
- Total Debt Outstanding FY 2017: $20,002,103
- Payroll FY 2018: $27,708,472
- Full-Time Employees FY 2018: 464
- Part-Time Employees FY 2018: 20
- Full-Time Employees/1,000 Residents: 6.2

County History

Oconee County, which was formed in 1868 from Pickens County, takes its name from an Indian word. This area in the northwest corner of the state on the edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains was home to several Indian tribes, including the Creeks and the Cherokees, but the Indians gave up their lands in treaties signed in 1777 and 1785. After the American Revolution, settlers from other parts of the state began moving in, including the Germans from Charleston who founded the town of Walhalla in 1850. In 1856, work began on a tunnel for the Blue Ridge Railroad that would have linked Charleston with Knoxville, Tennessee, but the Civil War ended that project; the unfinished Stumphouse Tunnel can still be seen today. Several Revolutionary War heroes moved to present day Oconee County after the war, including Andrew Pickens (1739-1817), Robert Anderson (1741-1813), and Benjamin Cleveland (1738-1806).

County histories obtained from the S.C. State Library Reference Room at www.statelibrary.sc.gov/sc-counties. All other sources listed in the county comparison tables in the appendix.