



Custer County

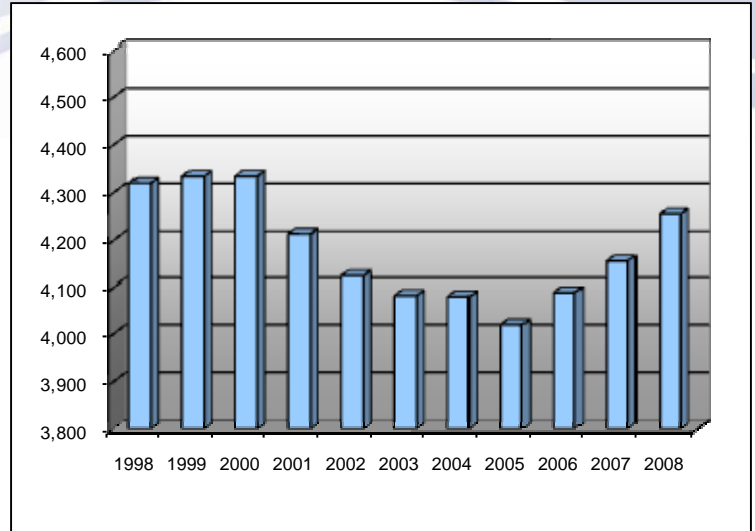
November 2009

Work Force Trends

Population

Custer County ranks 38th in the state with a 2008 population of 4,254. For each person the county offers more than a square mile. The county reflects the fortunes of the mining industry. Population peaked in 1998 to 2000 and then declined to its low in 2005 as Hecla Mining closed and Thompson Creek Mining, still considered one of the largest employers, started phasing out its operation. The county lost 316 residents from 2000 to 2005 but picked up 234 since.

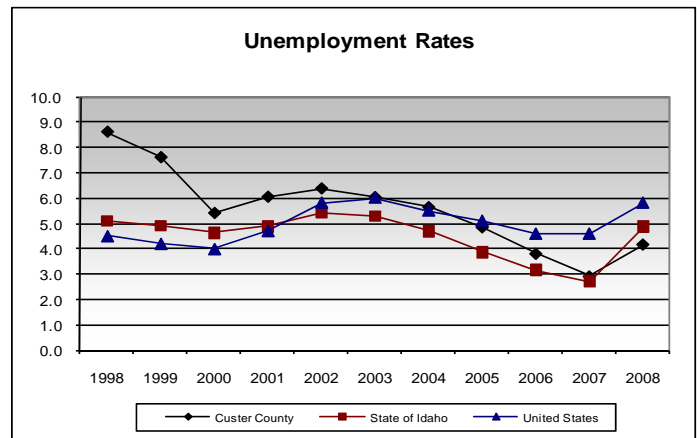
The county has been concentrating on economic development to diversify beyond mining. Economic developers are working hand-in-hand with government officials to attract new business and help existing ones expand in order to reverse, or at least slow, future decline.



Labor Force & Employment

Custer County recorded a higher unemployment rate than either the state or nation throughout the decade until 2003 when it began to match and then slip below the national rate and finally the state rate. The civilian labor force steadily decreased from 2001 to 2006 but has picked up almost 170 workers since then. Because the county has limited employers, mergers and changes in management can severely affect the work force, many of whom travel from other counties. The 2007 unemployment rate was the lowest of the last decade. It rose again in 2008 as the national recession took its toll. The county has been affected by forest fires, the national terror attacks and mine closures throughout the decade.

Half of the county's jobs are in government or natural resources. With only 5 percent of the land in private ownership, the state Department of Fish & Game and the

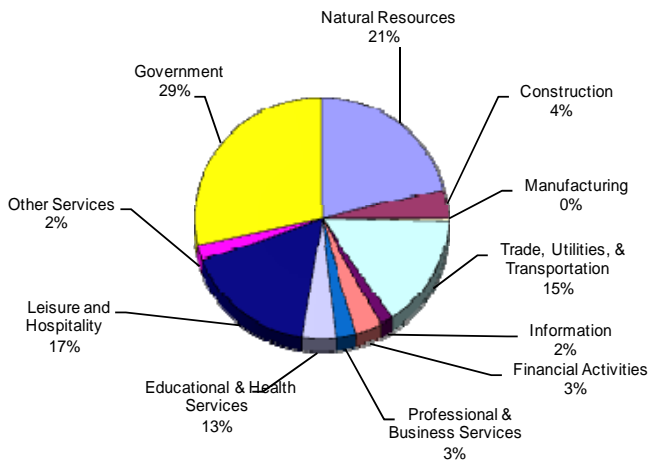


federal departments of Interior and Agriculture maintain cadres of employees to maintain the land. They complement employees of school districts and local government. Trade is still a large industry as is leisure and hospitality because of locations like Redfish Lake, the Sawtooth National Recreation Area and Borah Peak, the highest point in Idaho. Dubois is virtually the last stop with accommodations when rough winter conditions force closure of Interstate 15.

Labor Force	Oct 2008	Oct 2009
Civilian Labor Force	2,520	2,557
Total Employment	2,357	2,353
Unemployed	163	205
% of Labor Force Unemployed	6.5	8.0
State of Idaho % Unemployed	5.6	8.9
U.S. % Unemployed	6.6	10.2

Labor Force	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Civilian Labor Force	2,129	2,003	2,617	2,692	2,555	2,526	2,566	2,580	2,512	2,528	2,677
Unemployment	184	153	142	163	163	152	145	125	96	74	112
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.6	7.6	5.4	6.0	6.4	6.0	5.6	4.8	3.8	2.9	4.2
Employment	1,945	1,850	2,475	2,529	2,392	2,374	2,421	2,455	2,417	2,454	2,566

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2008



Covered Employment & Wages

Covered employment grew by 160 over the decade. At the same time, covered wages increased by \$14,063. The county's per capita income is just under the state's average with mining wages still the highest of all industries.

Covered employment includes employers who are subject to state and federal unemployment insurance laws. These laws apply to approximately 92 percent of Idaho's employers.

Major Employers
Challis & Mackay Jnt School Dist #181 & #182
Custer County
Idaho & U.S. Government (BLM, F&G, Ag)
Lamb's Foodtown
The Village Inn
Thompson Creek Mining Co
Village Square

Occupational Wages*	Starting Wage
Agricultural Workers	\$8.59
Cashiers	\$8.17
Excavation & Loading Machine & Dragline Operator	\$12.07
Food & Beverage Serving Workers	\$7.60
Industrial Truck/Tractor Operators	\$10.18
Laborers & Material Movers, Hand	\$9.38
Lodging Managers	\$19.42
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	\$7.55
Retail Sales Workers	\$10.31

- Wage data includes 12 counties of eastern Idaho. Additional occupational wage data can be found on the Idaho Department of Labor Web site at lmi.idaho.gov.

Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job for 1998, 2007 & 2008	1998		2007		2008	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	1,578	\$20,996	1,641	\$34,009	1,738	\$35,059
Agriculture	24	\$19,029	41	\$23,021	41	\$21,753
Mining	280	\$36,956	321	\$77,835	369	\$77,394
Construction	40	\$23,249	79	\$26,360	68	\$29,899
Manufacturing	16	\$13,646	9	\$24,603	6	\$12,157
Trade, Utilities, & Transportation	290	\$15,540	257	\$20,499	264	\$21,072
Information	22	\$24,159	25	\$43,042	28	\$45,833
Financial Activities	54	\$14,636	56	\$16,732	56	\$17,210
Professional and Business Services	29	\$12,962	57	\$23,933	48	\$28,142
Educational and Health Services	80	\$10,369	78	\$14,037	76	\$15,681
Leisure and Hospitality	285	\$12,345	242	\$14,293	295	\$13,193
Other Services	10	\$23,788	21	\$30,096	19	\$30,957
Government	449	\$23,265	456	\$30,991	468	\$31,732

Per Capita Income	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Custer County	\$22,391	\$20,834	\$22,643	\$23,591	\$22,169	\$22,794	\$23,479	\$25,871	\$26,615	\$27,973
State of Idaho	\$21,789	\$22,786	\$24,077	\$25,024	\$25,234	\$25,543	\$27,389	\$28,681	\$30,374	\$31,804
United States	\$26,883	\$27,939	\$29,843	\$30,574	\$30,838	\$31,530	\$33,157	\$34,690	\$36,794	\$38,615

Information provided by Bureau of Economic Analysis



This county is served by the office listed below:
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 Salmon, ID 83467-0990 Ph: (208) 756-2234

labor.idaho.gov