



# Lemhi County

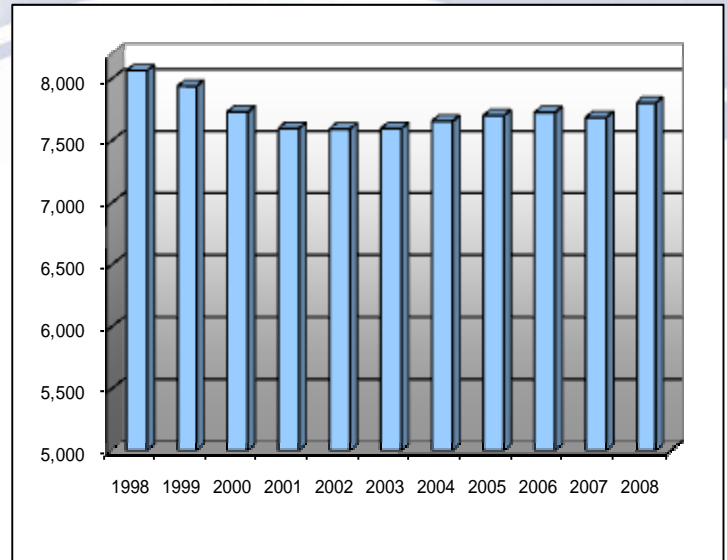
November 2009

## Population

Lemhi County has depended on mining for most of its history, and the last decade reflects it. The population of nearly 8,100 in 1998 steadily eroded before stabilizing in the early 2000s and began to slowly rise amid some signs of life in the mining sector. The county's population ranked 32<sup>nd</sup> in the state at 7,808 in 2008, down 262 from 1998. Recent population fluctuations have been relatively minor.

Mine closures idled high-paid workers who had thrived in the low cost-of-living economy. As commodity prices recovered, the Thompson Creek Mine in Custer County has taken on employees, and there is still discussion of selling and re-starting mines. In the past several years, the county has also built a business incubation center, a large hospital and the impressive Sacajawea Education & Interpretive Center.

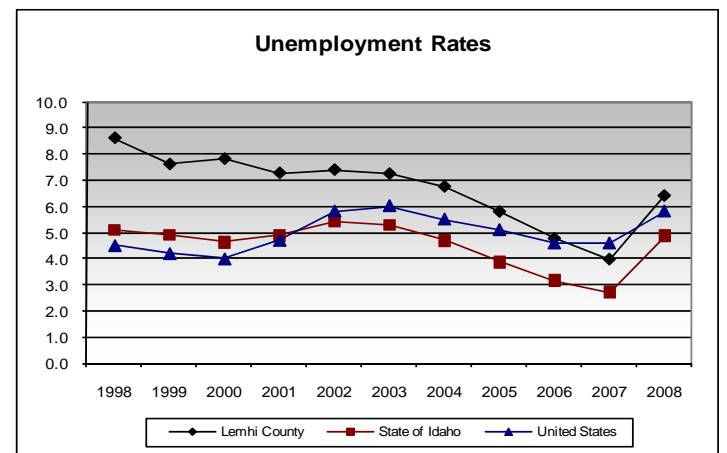
## Work Force Trends



## Labor Force & Employment

Lemhi County's unemployment rate at over 8 percent in 1998 gradually declined to 4 percent by 2007 only to reflect the impact of the national recession in rising substantially in 2008. The county is diversifying while capitalizing on its strengths. Summer fires over the last decade, some demanding national help, temporarily boosted employment. But the county has rebounded with the support of residents and leaders.

Government employs 32 percent of the county's workers. Over 90 percent of the land is owned by the federal government so land management agencies like the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and the Idaho Fish & Game Department employ many. Agriculture employs others although they are not included in the nonfarm payrolls. Total acreage for cattle is almost as high as total acreage for crops. Trade, transportation and utilities along with leisure



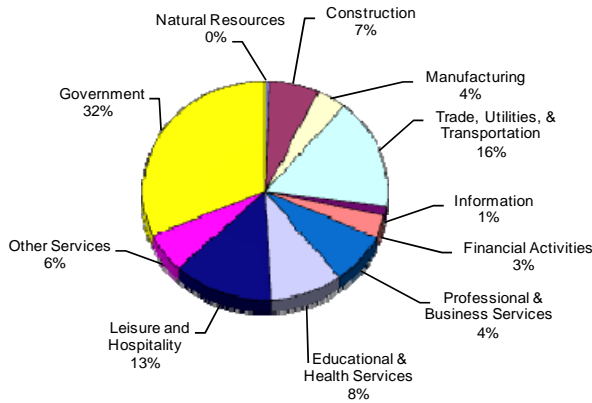
and hospitality employ almost 30 percent of the labor force. Trade represents many jobs not only in food stores, restaurants and bars but also in auto dealerships, who serve a large geographic area that includes bordering states.

Over the decade, education and health care increased employment by 27 percent, or 54 jobs, followed by leisure and hospitality. Mining and construction jobs posted the largest average annual wage increases for the decade. Overview and cleanup after mine closures and maintenance of government lands also account for many jobs.

Labor Force	Oct 2008	Oct 2009
Civilian Labor Force	3,767	3,744
Total Employment	3,447	3,359
Unemployed	320	385
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.5	10.3
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	4,075	3,852	3,841	3,886	3,807	3,825	3,955	4,035	3,964	4,006	3,913
Unemployment	349	292	300	282	281	277	267	234	189	159	250
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.6	7.6	7.8	7.3	7.4	7.2	6.7	5.8	4.8	4.0	6.4
Employment	3,726	3,560	3,541	3,604	3,526	3,548	3,688	3,802	3,775	3,847	3,663

## Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2008



### Major Employers

Discovery Care Center LLC
Lemhi County
Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Q B Corporation
Salmon Public Schools #291
Saveway Market Inc.
Steele Memorial Hospital
U.S. Government

East Central Idaho Occupation Wages*	Average Wage
Agricultural Workers	\$8.59
Cashiers	\$8.17
Farmworkers, Farm & Ranch Animals	\$7.64
Food & Beverage Serving Workers	\$7.60
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses	\$16.22
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	\$10.05
Health Diagnosing & Treating Practitioners	\$24.50
Production Occupations	\$13.98
Receptionists & Information Clerks	\$10.24
Retail Sales Workers	\$10.31

## Covered Employment & Wages

Average covered employment increased by 44 jobs during the decade while wages rose more than \$5,600. Per capita income has been steadily increasing after suffering a setback in 2002. The county is seeing gradual growth as it focuses on economic development.

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.

\* Wages include 12 counties of eastern Idaho. Additional occupational wage data can be found on the Idaho Department of Labor Web site at [lmi.idaho.gov](http://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
<b>Total Covered Wages</b>	2,536	\$21,047	2,688	\$25,327	2,580	\$26,726
<b>Agriculture</b>	38	\$20,739	28	\$18,815	30	\$23,221
<b>Mining</b>	173	\$43,453	*	*	12	\$61,044
<b>Construction</b>	134	\$17,966	196	\$27,234	177	\$29,912
<b>Manufacturing</b>	134	\$22,179	121	\$32,564	103	\$32,956
<b>Trade, Utilities, &amp; Transportation</b>	452	\$15,969	463	\$21,451	423	\$22,409
<b>Information</b>	41	\$13,985	39	\$14,831	36	\$17,078
<b>Financial Activities</b>	72	\$17,804	81	\$22,066	78	\$20,863
<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	85	\$22,801	*	\$27,975	12	\$31,353
<b>Educational and Health Services</b>	199	\$16,387	274	\$17,536	253	\$20,177
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	334	\$8,267	376	\$11,435	349	\$11,759
<b>Other Services</b>	69	\$13,212	98	\$18,552	109	\$16,711
<b>Government</b>	805	\$27,026	819	\$35,954	806	\$36,821

Per Capita Income	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>Lemhi County</b>	\$18,689	\$18,984	\$19,696	\$21,186	\$20,678	\$21,461	\$23,131	\$23,361	\$24,460	\$26,131
<b>State of Idaho</b>	\$21,789	\$22,786	\$24,077	\$25,024	\$25,234	\$25,543	\$27,389	\$28,681	\$30,374	\$31,804
<b>United States</b>	\$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:  
 Idaho Department of Labor  
 1301 Main St., Unit 1  
 Salmon, ID 83467 Ph: (208) 756-2234

[labor.idaho.gov](http://labor.idaho.gov)

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