



# Bear Lake County

IDAHO  
DEPT. OF LABOR

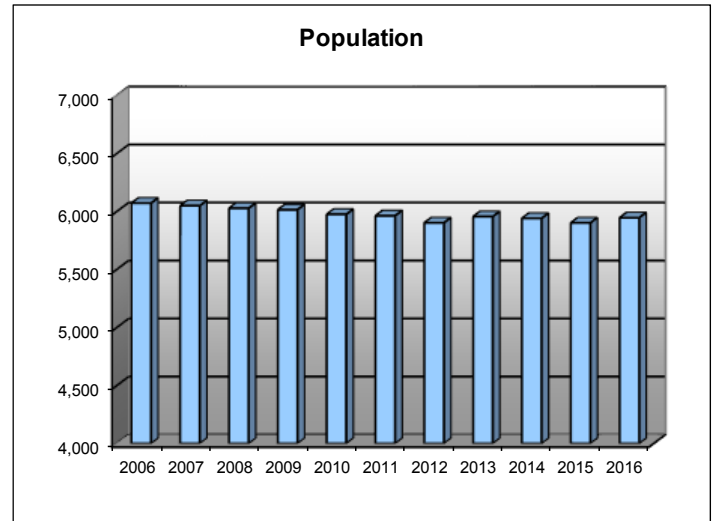
January 2018

## Workforce Trends

### Population

Bear Lake County was discovered during the early 1990s. Throughout that decade, half the population growth was spurred by development of affordable recreational homes near Bear Lake, also known as the “Caribbean of the Rockies” for its spectacularly blue water. During the last half of the 1990s, population fluctuated but held fairly steady. By 2002 with population at 6,164, the county started a slow but steady decline, until 2013. The 2016 census population estimates place the county’s population at 5,945. The local communities in the county continue to work to promote tourism to create jobs and retain young people in the community.

Montpelier, Bear Lake County’s largest city, is home to the Oregon/California Trail Interpretive Center. Other attractions include the 20-mile long Bear Lake that extends in to Utah, the historic Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ Tabernacle in Paris and Bear Lake National Wildlife Refuge near the north end of Bear Lake.



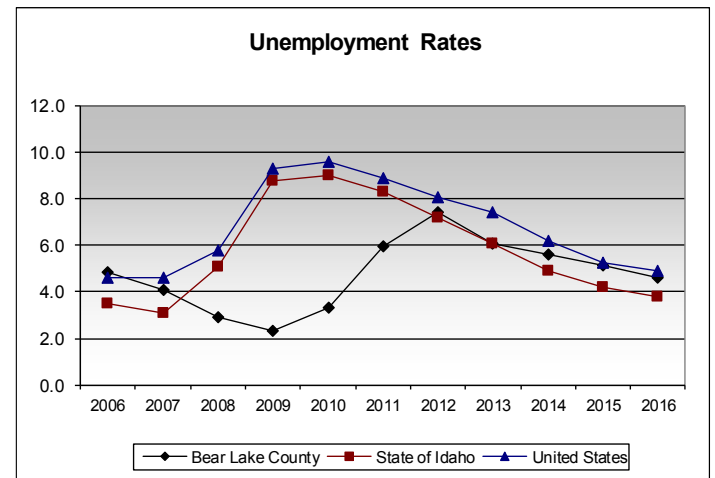
### Labor Force & Employment

During the last 10 years, Bear Lake County’s labor market has been tight, providing jobs for most individuals who wanted to live in the county.

The unemployment rate trends in Bear Lake County lagged statewide and national trends, peaking at 7.4 percent in 2012, 2 years after the recession ended. Since then, unemployment rates have been in decline. As of June 2017, the seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rate for the county was 2.9 percent,

The county’s civilian labor force peaked in 2011 at 3,365 but has declined since then. In 2016, the labor force was 2,827, 16 percent below the 2010 peak. The number of unemployed workers have increased from a low of 73 in 2009 to 130 in 2016.

The largest nonfarm industries in Bear Lake County include trade, leisure and hospitality and government. Retail trade, accommodation and food service jobs are



connected to the county’s tourism efforts. The Bear Lake Scenic Highway and the Oregon/California Trail Interpretive Center attract tourists driving between Salt Lake City and Jackson Hole, Wyo., and Yellowstone National Park.

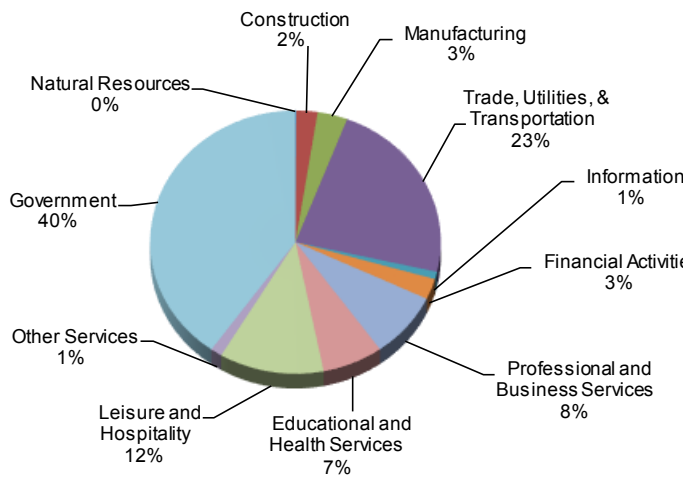
Government accounted for 38 percent of the nonfarm jobs. The largest employer in the county is Bear Lake Memorial Hospital followed by the Bear Lake County School District #33.

During the last decade the industry composition has changed little with government, trade and services supplying most of the nonfarm jobs.

Labor Force	Dec 16	Dec 17
Civilian Labor Force	2,831	2,790
Total Employment	2,713	2,694
Unemployed	118	97
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.2	3.5
State of Idaho % Unemployed	3.6	2.9
U.S. % Unemployed	4.7	4.1

Labor Force	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Civilian Labor Force	3,027	3,055	3,051	3,158	3,302	3,365	2,883	2,921	2,880	2,885	2,827
Unemployment	146	124	89	73	110	200	214	178	161	149	130
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.8	4.1	2.9	2.3	3.3	5.9	7.4	6.1	5.6	5.2	4.6
Employment	2,881	2,931	2,961	3,085	3,192	3,165	2,670	2,743	2,719	2,736	2,697

## Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2016



## Major Employers

Artic Circle
Bear Lake County
Bear Lake County School District #33
Bear Lake Memorial Hospital
Broulims Foodtown
Jenson Lumber
National Employers Council
U.S. Forest Service
Walton Feed, Inc.

## Industry Employment & Wages

Because of Bear Lake County's tourism-based economy, trade, utilities, transportation and leisure and hospitality go hand in hand to provide 35 percent of all nonfarm jobs and 33 percent of all covered jobs. But those jobs pay relatively low wages.

Government also provides 40 percent of the jobs, paying higher wages than most other industries.

Wages in Bear Lake County are lower than in most of the state due in large part to the dominance of tourism.

Southeast Idaho Occupational Wages*	Entry Wage	Median Wage
Cashiers, Retail	\$8.32	\$9.34
Cooks, Restaurant	\$8.25	\$9.78
Food & Beverage Servers	\$8.33	\$8.82
Janitors	\$8.29	\$9.50
Construction Laborers	\$8.62	\$13.41
Maids	\$8.26	\$9.08
Nurses, Registered	\$22.26	\$28.47
Information & Record Clerks	\$14.33	\$17.94
Auto Mechanics	\$9.43	\$16.55
Teachers, Elementary	\$29,091	\$41,298
Teachers, Secondary	\$27,556	\$40,945

\* Additional occupational wage data can be found on the Department of Labor website at [lmi.idaho.gov/](http://lmi.idaho.gov/).

Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job for 2006, 2015 & 2016	2006		2015		2016	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
<b>Total Covered Wages</b>	1,587	\$20,276	1,637	\$27,305	1,589	\$27,681
<b>Agriculture</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Mining</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Construction</b>	43	\$20,150	36	\$22,437	35	\$23,785
<b>Manufacturing</b>	58	\$22,042	49	\$33,831	56	\$39,711
<b>Trade, Utilities, &amp; Transportation</b>	388	\$20,125	313	\$25,680	312	\$24,789
<b>Information</b>	*	*	18	\$20,386	15	\$8,681
<b>Financial Activities</b>	52	\$21,571	43	\$33,143	40	\$36,423
<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	53	\$26,870	131	\$36,007	134	\$29,004
<b>Educational and Health Services</b>	71	\$18,416	111	\$19,259	113	\$23,720
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	226	\$7,678	259	\$13,858	193	\$10,993
<b>Other Services</b>	23	\$14,693	20	\$27,282	21	\$27,240
<b>Government</b>	648	\$24,640	651	\$32,103	665	\$33,089

Per Capita Income	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Bear Lake County</b>	\$25,601	\$28,023	\$28,161	\$28,827	\$30,470	\$33,461	\$33,848	\$35,076	\$35,942	\$36,620
<b>State of Idaho</b>	\$32,580	\$33,031	\$31,436	\$31,726	\$33,296	\$34,695	\$35,720	\$37,186	\$38,848	\$39,470
<b>United States</b>	\$39,821	\$41,082	\$39,376	\$40,277	\$42,461	\$44,282	\$44,493	\$46,494	\$48,451	\$49,246

Information provided by Bureau Economic Analysis



This county is served by the office located at the address below:  
 Idaho Department of Labor  
 430 N. 5th Ave.  
 Pocatello, ID 83205-4087 Ph: (208) 236-6710

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

This publication is produced by the Idaho Department of Labor and is funded at least in part by federal grants from the U.S. Department of Labor. Costs associated with this publication are available upon request. The Idaho Department of Labor is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Dial 711 for Idaho Relay Service.