



# Clearwater County

IDAHO  
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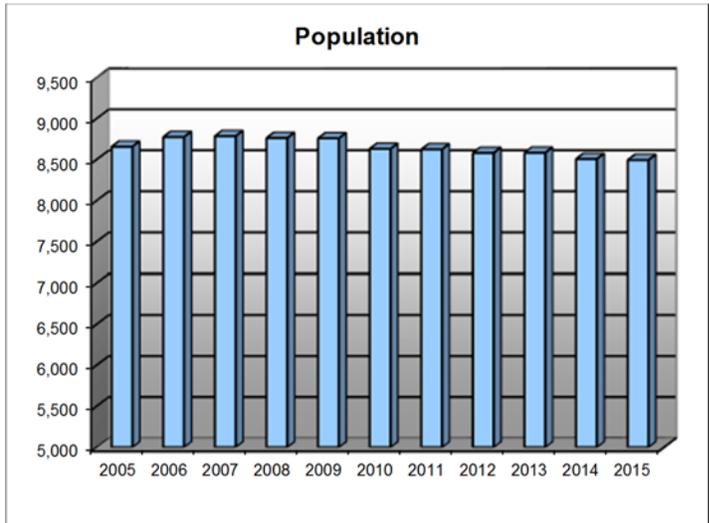
## Workforce Trends

### Population

Clearwater County's population peaked at 9,232 in 1996. The hard economic times drove the population down 6 percent to 8,659 by 2005. Between 2005 and 2015, its population fell 2 percent to 8,496, while the U.S. population grew 9 percent, and Idaho's population grew 16 percent.

New driver's license applications and job registrations indicate people who move to Clearwater County come from the Pacific Northwest and California to enjoy the scenery, recreational opportunities and rural lifestyle.

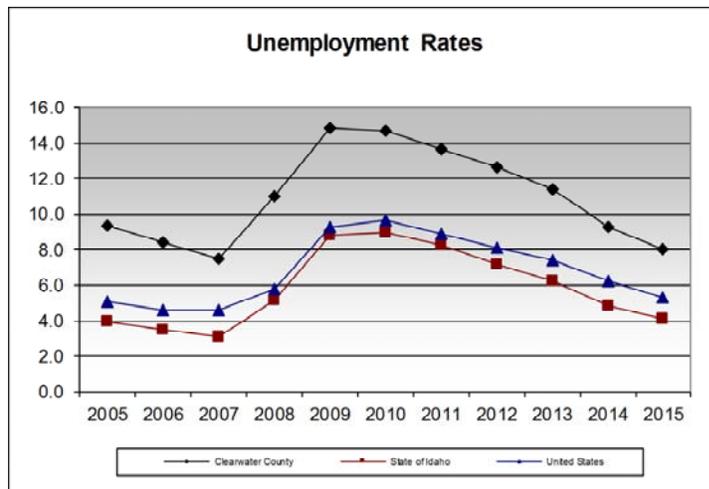
The county seat, Orofino, had a population of 3,054 in 2015 while Pierce was 487, Weippe 406 and Elk River 119.



### Labor Force & Employment

The long-term decline in the forest products industry climaxed in 2000 with the closure of Pierce's Jaype Mill. Finally in 2006, Clearwater County began to show signs of recovery. Jobs were added in manufacturing, construction, retail, health care and tourism. Unfortunately, trouble in the lumber industry again unsettled the area after 2007, pushing the unemployment rate above 10 percent. Most of the lumber and logging jobs that were lost then were restored by 2015. Then, the county's last major mill, Blue North Forest Products, closed in October 2016.

Economic development groups want to diversify with new businesses while helping existing businesses grow. An industrial park was built in Orofino, and Architectural Signs and Engraving Inc. was the first tenant. The SJX Boats plant opened there in 2008. Lightforce USA Inc moved to the area and now employs 100 people making high-quality rifle scopes for hunters, police and the mili-



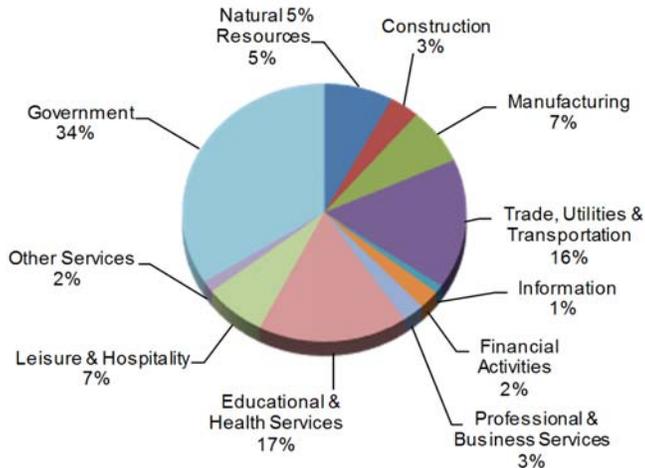
tary. Federal and state employment provides some job stability. The U.S. Forest Service employs 60 year-round and a few dozen more in the summer. Orofino is home to a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service hatchery, employing 30. The state penitentiary and mental health hospital employ 200. The Idaho National Guard opened a boot camp-style school for teens, employing 50 people in Pierce.

Tourists come to enjoy hunting and fishing and boating on Dworshak Reservoir and to learn about the area's role in the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Labor Force	Dec 15	Dec 16
Civilian Labor Force	3,106	3,049
Total Employment	2,862	2,820
Unemployed	244	229
% of Labor Force Unemployed	7.9	7.5
State of Idaho % Unemployed	3.9	3.7
U.S. % Unemployed	5.0	4.7

Labor Force	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Civilian Labor Force	3,358	3,319	3,208	3,217	3,523	3,422	3,354	3,271	3,194	3,137	3,108
Unemployment	313	278	241	353	522	501	459	413	363	291	250
% of Labor Force Unemployed	9.3	8.4	7.5	11.0	14.8	14.6	13.7	12.6	11.4	9.3	8.0
Employment	3,044	3,040	2,967	2,864	3,001	2,921	2,895	2,859	2,831	2,846	2,858

## Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2015



## Economic Development

Clearwater County has struggled with high unemployment since the mid-1990s. Because of that, the county is a labor surplus area, giving local businesses priority for government contracts.

Clearwater County Economic Development and local officials are making efforts to strengthen and diversify the economy. Over the next few years, the county expects to see those efforts pay off. Officials also plan to build a woody biomass plant in Orofino that would create jobs at the plant and in logging.

## Major Employers

Clearwater County  
 Clearwater Valley Hospital & Clinic  
 Idaho Correctional Institution  
 Nightforce Optics (manufacturer)  
 Orofino Joint School District 171  
 State Hospital North  
 Tri-Pro Forest Products  
 U.S. Forest Service

## Occupational Wages\*

### Starting

Assemblers	\$9.50
Bookkeepers	\$10.70
Carpenters	\$13.50
Cashiers	\$7.70
Equipment Operators	\$12.60
General Office Clerks	\$8.00
Guards	\$10.60
Janitors	\$8.40
Millworkers	\$9.80
Nurses	\$24.60
Salespersons, Retail	\$7.80
Secretaries	\$10.30
Teachers	\$22.70
Truck Drivers, Heavy	\$13.80

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

Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job for 2005, 2014 & 2015	2005		2014		2015	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	3,100	\$26,781	2,730	\$34,691	2,737	\$35,395
Agriculture	271	\$32,596	218	\$44,966	223	\$42,947
Mining	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Construction	134	\$36,711	99	\$37,467	88	\$36,679
Manufacturing	264	\$25,558	138	\$27,524	193	\$30,858
Trade, Utilities & Transportation	416	\$22,874	424	\$36,236	443	\$35,524
Information	25	\$20,675	36	\$41,243	26	\$48,005
Financial Activities	66	\$27,443	63	\$33,554	64	\$30,370
Professional and Business Services	96	\$25,640	86	\$32,891	62	\$29,785
Educational and Health Services	457	\$23,840	466	\$32,871	470	\$34,649
Leisure and Hospitality	204	\$9,971	189	\$11,757	194	\$12,186
Other Services	29	\$16,639	37	\$29,997	39	\$30,899
Government	1,138	\$30,574	975	\$37,952	934	\$40,084

Per Capita Income	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Clearwater County	\$26,669	\$27,654	\$28,081	\$28,738	\$29,323	\$30,198	\$30,381	\$31,439	\$32,274	\$33,885
State of Idaho	\$31,357	\$32,580	\$33,031	\$31,436	\$31,727	\$33,296	\$34,691	\$35,703	\$37,153	\$38,392
United States	\$38,144	\$39,821	\$41,082	\$39,376	\$40,277	\$42,453	\$44,267	\$44,462	\$46,414	\$48,112

Information provided by Bureau of Economic Analysis