



Blaine County

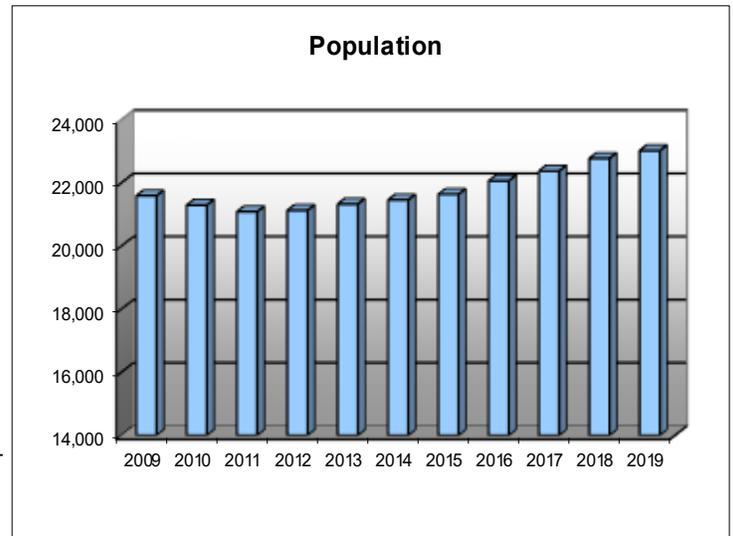
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Workforce Trends

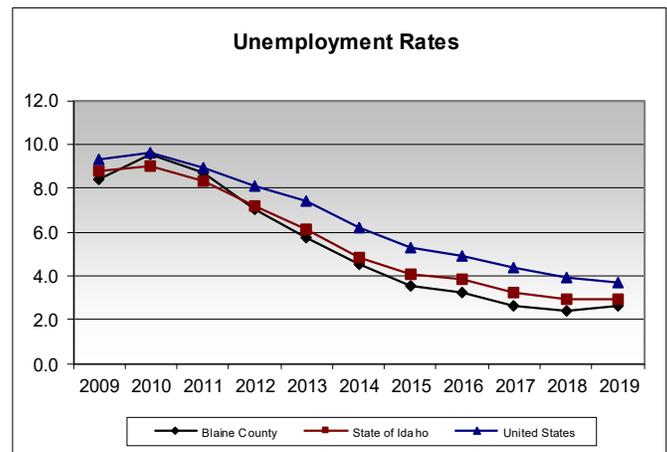
Population

Blaine County's population rose 6.6 percent from 2009 to 23,021 in 2019, slower than previous high growth decades. It experienced an uptick of 1.1% from 2018. Population and job losses coming off the Great Recession started the slow down. Hailey is the county seat and largest town at 8,689. Beautiful mountains and virtually unlimited recreational opportunities make Blaine County a destination for visitors, both domestic and international. The world famous Sun Valley Ski Resort reported skier days at 426,500 for the 2018-2019 season—up 12 percent from the previous year. This year, the resort closed abruptly due to COVID-19, losing its spring break tourism. Local leaders are working on issues such as affordable housing and how to attract workforce. Ketchum, the commercial hub, has two new hotels in the downtown—the Limelight and Hotel Ketchum, along with an excavated site. Bellevue opened the Silver Creek Hotel in 2017. Hailey has plans for a Marriott in its downtown core. COVID-19 shelter-in-place restrictions are causing economic woes for all but most poignantly in this tourism mecca.



Labor Force & Employment

Blaine County's workforce has suffered from the construction and housing slump that hit many tourism and high-growth areas across the nation. Unemployment is at its lowest level with the civilian labor force short 10% of its pre-recession peak. Spring and fall conferences had eased the seasonal slack but many have been canceled due to travel restrictions associated with COVID-19. Most jobs are in the relatively lower-paying hospitality and retail sectors so the labor pool continues to be constrained by a lack of affordable housing. The loss of long-standing Smith Optics opened opportunities for use of its facilities by the Community School. Efforts by communities to build their own housing are ongoing. The high cost of living more than offsets wages that are typically higher than elsewhere in the region. A significant number of workers commute to the county for higher-paying construction and landscape jobs. With two new hotels pulling permits, it leaves existing hotel-

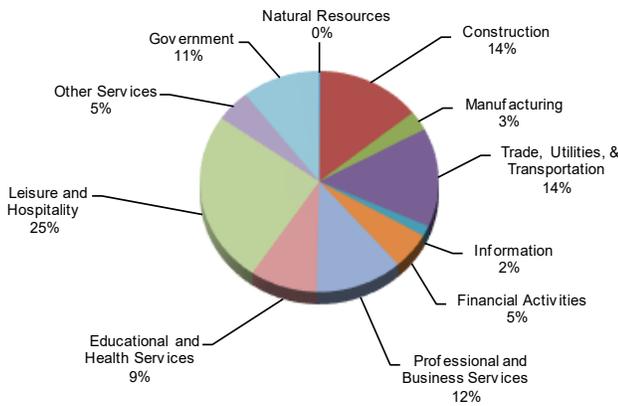


iers wondering if the market can handle more rooms. The Air BNB and VPO have opened up opportunities for second-home owners to increase their return on investment. In turn, negatively impacting the long-term rental availability and increasing already high rents. The opening of three new hotels has increased hiring pressure. The number of businesses is almost 10% down from the pre-recession peak of 1,800. Covered wages grew 2.1% from 2018 with Agriculture and Professional Business Services reporting declines.

Labor Force	Aug 19	Aug 20
Civilian Labor Force	12,330	13,101
Total Employment	12,008	12,398
Unemployed	322	703
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.6	5.4
State of Idaho % Unemployed	2.9	4.2
U.S. % Unemployed	3.7	8.4

Labor Force	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Civilian Labor Force	13,348	11,949	11,877	11,726	11,587	11,457	11,830	11,867	12,224	12,336	12,318
Unemployment	1,116	1,141	1,030	823	661	510	412	374	316	300	323
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.4	9.5	8.7	7.0	5.7	4.5	3.5	3.2	2.6	2.4	2.6
Employment	12,232	10,808	10,847	10,903	10,926	10,947	11,418	11,493	11,908	12,036	11,995

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2019



Major Employers
Atkinson's Market
180 Connect
Power Engineers
Rocky Mountain Hardware
St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center
Sun Valley Lodge aka Sinclair Company
Webb Landscape, Inc.

Wages & Income

The affluent are attracted to the county by its natural beauty and diverse recreational opportunities, impacting the per capita income—the highest among the 44 counties. The 2018 per capita income is \$113,780, up 6% over the year and driven by the bullish stock market and an increase in transfer payments. The older population base is tapping more extensively into the retirement system. Blaine's per capita income is 2X greater than the U.S. — about \$59,000 higher and 2.5X greater than the state—about \$70,000 higher. The county lost .8% of its covered employment from 2018 primarily in Leisure & Hospitality, Trade, Utilities and Transportation and Professional and Business Services—108 jobs. Financial Activities and Construction reported upticks. The county faces severe economic trauma from the COVID-19 crisis which hit the county early and harder than the state as a whole.

South Central Idaho Occupational Wages*	Entry Wage	Median Wage
Automotive Service Techs & Mechanics	\$12.17	\$18.87
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$10.60	\$19.29
Cashiers	\$8.96	\$10.99
Chefs & Head Cooks	\$16.17	\$21.97
Construction Labor	\$10.45	\$14.79
Electricians	\$15.07	\$24.12
Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	\$11.43	\$15.96
Legal Secretaries	\$13.54	\$19.09
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	\$9.00	\$12.52
Registered Nurses	\$23.14	\$31.54
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Counselors	\$16.34	\$23.77
Teachers, Elementary	\$33,645	\$52,710

* Additional occupational wage data can be found on the Idaho Department of Labor website at <https://lmi.idaho.gov/>

Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job for 2009, 2018 & 2019	2009		2018		2019	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	12,349	\$35,576	13,030	\$42,796	12,922	\$43,710
Agriculture	150	\$25,169	118	\$40,182	112	\$39,629
Mining	28	\$35,539	30	\$47,425	**	**
Construction	1,610	\$37,285	1,775	\$46,500	1,816	\$46,625
Manufacturing	409	\$51,188	385	\$46,416	371	\$47,788
Trade, Utilities & Transportation	2,012	\$30,817	1,930	\$37,698	1,864	\$38,525
Information	362	\$36,061	194	\$50,599	197	\$59,301
Financial Activities	632	\$49,918	636	\$59,047	675	\$65,895
Professional and Business Services	1,537	\$51,722	1,582	\$64,160	1,521	\$60,974
Educational and Health Services	864	\$42,669	1,190	\$51,624	1,173	\$53,467
Leisure and Hospitality	2,878	\$20,259	3,331	\$25,117	3,253	\$25,971
Other Services	424	\$33,184	536	\$38,862	571	\$40,397
Government	1,444	\$40,357	1,322	\$48,011	1,349	\$49,005

Per Capita Income	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Blaine County	\$65,137	\$61,847	\$68,226	\$78,373	\$80,974	\$87,613	\$95,926	\$98,311	\$107,468	\$113,780
State of Idaho	\$31,186	\$31,957	\$33,515	\$35,188	\$36,200	\$37,896	\$39,857	\$40,670	\$42,094	\$43,901
United States	\$39,284	\$40,546	\$42,735	\$44,599	\$44,851	\$47,058	\$48,978	\$49,870	\$51,885	\$54,446

Information provided by Bureau Economic Analysis



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