



# Benewah County

August 2012

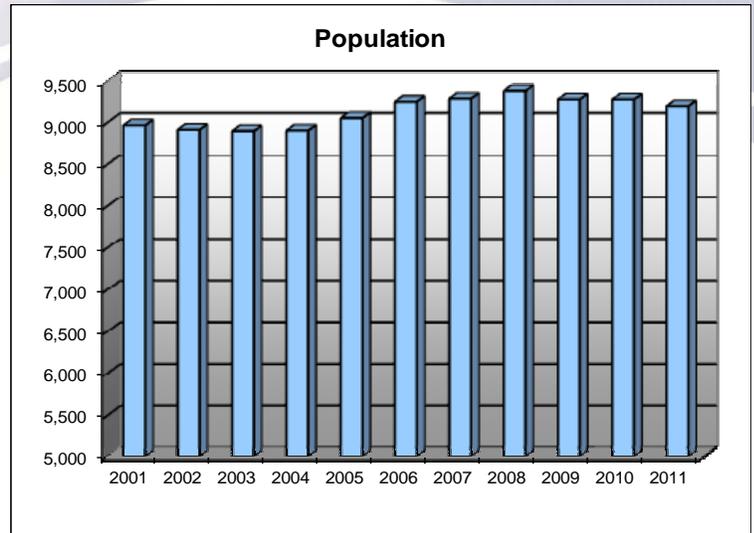
## Work Force Trends

### Population

Benewah County experienced fairly strong population growth in the early 1990s. Its rural lifestyle and great hunting and fishing opportunities persuaded many people to move there. Then the county stagnated during and after the 2001 recession before growth resumed from 2004 to 2008 as more retirees discovered its attractions. The recession reversed that. Population declined from 9,385 in 2008 to 9,285 in 2010.

From 2000 to 2010, the county's population grew 1.2 percent despite the decline in late 2010. The state grew 20 percent and the nation 9.5 percent.

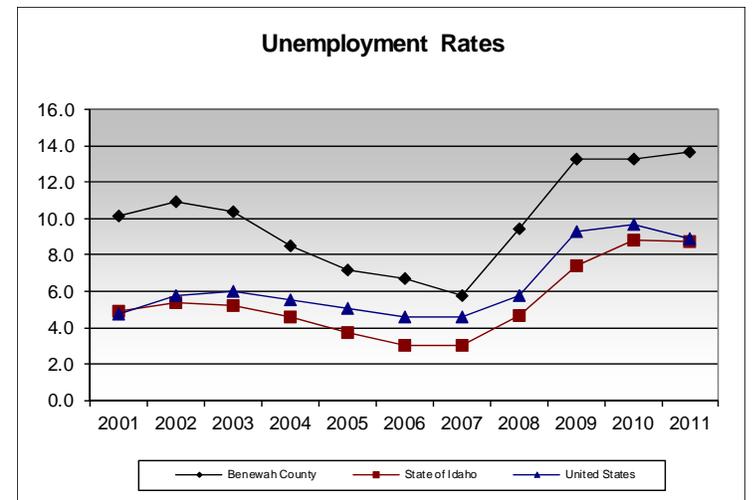
The county seat, St. Maries, had a population of 2,402 in 2010 while Plummer had a population of 1,044 and Tensed 123.



### Labor Force & Employment

Benewah County's economy remains heavily dependent on forest products. Over one in six jobs is in the forest products industry. Until 2004, the county had only 60 jobs in manufacturing outside forest products. But in 2006, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe purchased Berg Integrated Systems and moved it to Plummer, where it employed about 100 people. Since then, Berg built and moved to a larger facility in Post Falls and Ground Force, an international manufacturer of mining support equipment, expanded its operations into the old Berg plant in Plummer, where it continues to grow. Despite the county's beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities, tourism employs just 150. Dependence on forest products makes the county vulnerable to high unemployment particularly following the collapse of the housing industry. Since 2006, extremely low lumber prices have reduced employment. However, lumber prices were on the rise in 2009 and have continued to increase.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe – its reservation extending from



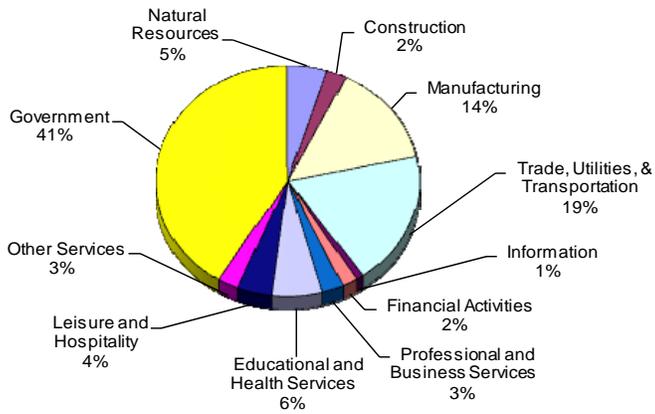
western Benewah County into southern Kootenai County – has driven growth in the last 10 years. Today, 590 people work at its headquarters, retail stores, medical clinic, farm, and school and nearly 1,000 at its newly expanded casino, hotel and golf course in Worley just over the Kootenai County line.

Because so much of the county's income is from forests and farms, employment peaks in late summer and drops off as winter approaches, hitting its lowest level in spring when load limits on muddy roads force many loggers out of the woods. In 2008, for example, the unadjusted unemployment rate peaked at 14.4 percent in April and fell to 6.6 percent in July.

| Labor Force                 | July 11 | July 12 |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|
| Civilian Labor Force        | 4,213   | 4,182   |
| Total Employment            | 3,587   | 3,639   |
| Unemployed                  | 626     | 543     |
| % of Labor Force Unemployed | 14.8    | 13.0    |
| State of Idaho % Unemployed | 8.9     | 7.5     |
| U.S. % Unemployed           | 9.1     | 8.3     |

| Labor Force                 | 2001  | 2002  | 2003  | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  | 2007  | 2008  | 2009  | 2010  | 2011  |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Civilian Labor Force        | 4,029 | 4,008 | 3,938 | 3,956 | 3,980 | 3,888 | 4,044 | 4,083 | 4,105 | 4,226 | 4,219 |
| Unemployment                | 409   | 438   | 410   | 335   | 284   | 261   | 233   | 384   | 544   | 559   | 577   |
| % of Labor Force Unemployed | 10.2  | 10.9  | 10.4  | 8.5   | 7.1   | 6.7   | 5.8   | 9.4   | 13.2  | 13.2  | 13.7  |
| Employment                  | 3,620 | 3,570 | 3,528 | 3,621 | 3,696 | 3,627 | 3,812 | 3,699 | 3,561 | 3,667 | 3,642 |

## Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2011



## Economic Development Efforts

Benewah County is struggling to overcome a legacy of economic stagnation, which has hampered business growth. The number of private sector businesses with employees in Benewah County edged down from 308 in 2000 to 286 in 2010.

Timber Plus, the county's economic development organization, and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe are strenuously recruiting job opportunities to the area.

### Major Employers

|   |
|---|
| Benewah Community Hospital                    |
| Valley Vista Care (nursing home & corp. HQ)   |
| Coeur d'Alene Tribe                           |
| Jack A. Buell Trucking                        |
| Potlatch Corp.                                |
| Stimson Lumber (Plummer & St. Maries)         |
| Archies IGA                                   |
| Benewah Medical & Wellness Center (CdA Tribe) |

### Occupational Wages\*

| Occupational Wages*       | Starting Wage |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Bookkeepers, Full-charge  | \$8.75        |
| Carpenters, Journey-level | \$15.00       |
| Cashiers/Checkers         | \$7.25        |
| Clerks, General Office    | \$7.75        |
| Clerks, Retail            | \$7.25        |
| Cooks, Restaurant         | \$8.00        |
| Janitors                  | \$7.75        |
| Laborers, Construction    | \$10.00       |
| Loggers                   | \$15.50       |
| Millwrights               | \$17.40       |
| Nurses, Registered        | \$18.50       |
| Sawmill Workers           | \$13.75       |
| Secretaries, General      | \$8.50        |
| Truck Drivers, Heavy      | \$15.75       |

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

| Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job for 2001, 2010 & 2011 | 2001               |               | 2010               |               | 2011               |               |
|---|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
|   | Average Employment | Average Wages | Average Employment | Average Wages | Average Employment | Average Wages |
| <b>Total Covered Wages</b>  | 3,457              | \$26,292      | 3,388              | \$32,284      | 3,315              | \$32,922      |
| <b>Agriculture</b>  | 286                | \$31,895      | 163                | \$38,546      | 153                | \$41,308      |
| <b>Mining</b>   | *                  | *             | 27                 | \$37,583      | 26                 | \$39,266      |
| <b>Construction</b>   | 91                 | \$25,687      | 116                | \$30,916      | 83                 | \$27,999      |
| <b>Manufacturing</b>  | 608                | \$32,402      | 526                | \$43,934      | 483                | \$46,531      |
| <b>Trade, Utilities, &amp; Transportation</b>                           | 587                | \$25,130      | 628                | \$29,767      | 626                | \$30,882      |
| <b>Information</b>  | 36                 | \$19,541      | 28                 | \$33,460      | 31                 | \$39,927      |
| <b>Financial Activities</b>   | 61                 | \$17,208      | 59                 | \$21,347      | 58                 | \$22,353      |
| <b>Professional and Business Services</b>                               | 121                | \$37,093      | 81                 | \$24,995      | 89                 | \$26,657      |
| <b>Educational and Health Services</b>                                  | 211                | \$20,620      | 218                | \$26,615      | 208                | \$27,041      |
| <b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>  | 157                | \$7,028       | 144                | \$8,769       | 143                | \$9,573       |
| <b>Other Services</b>   | 142                | \$18,934      | 67                 | \$24,737      | 60                 | \$25,116      |
| <b>Government</b>   | 1,110              | \$26,231      | 1,333              | \$32,859      | 1,355              | \$32,672      |

| Per Capita Income     | 2001     | 2002     | 2003     | 2004     | 2005     | 2006     | 2007     | 2008     | 2009     | 2010     |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>Benewah County</b> | \$22,598 | \$22,437 | \$23,166 | \$25,212 | \$26,346 | \$27,589 | \$29,965 | \$30,616 | \$29,366 | \$31,058 |
| <b>State of Idaho</b> | \$25,665 | \$26,042 | \$26,452 | \$28,412 | \$29,544 | \$31,493 | \$32,607 | \$33,110 | \$30,997 | \$31,897 |
| <b>United States</b>  | \$31,157 | \$31,481 | \$32,295 | \$33,909 | \$35,452 | \$37,725 | \$39,506 | \$40,947 | \$38,846 | \$39,937 |

Information provided by Bureau of Economic Analysis



This county is served by the office located at the address below:  
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