



# South Central Idaho

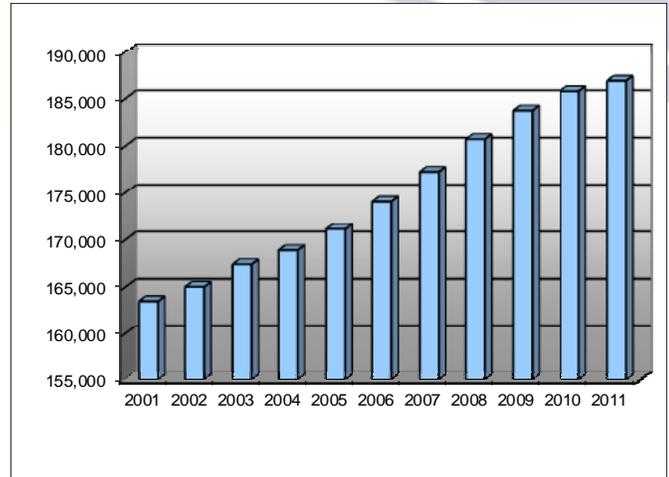
August 2012

## Work Force Trends

### Population

South central Idaho has grown steadily from 163,424 in the eight-county area in 2000 to 187,012 in 2011, an increase of 14.4 percent. The highest growth counties were Lincoln at 25 percent, Jerome at 22 percent and Twin Falls at 21 percent. The region's largest city, Twin Falls, ranked eighth among the state's 200 cities at 44,564 while the county was ranked sixth. This growth has been attributed to the diverse recreational opportunities provided by the mountains, waterways, deserts and canyons that make up the region, the relatively mild climate that attracts retirees and the low cost of living and doing business which has resulted in job creation. The area continues to see high growth among the Hispanic population at 71 percent in the last decade. That raised the region's share of the statewide Hispanic population from 14.5 percent to 21.5 percent. Most who may have initially been attracted by seasonal farm jobs have permanently settled in the region that offers reasonably priced education so their children have career options. The outlook for annual growth is about 1.5 percent.

### Population

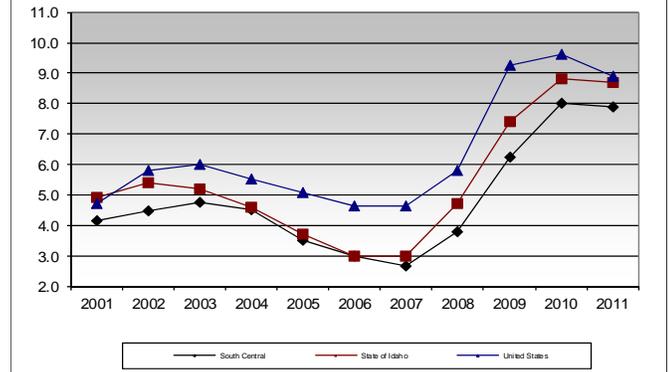


### Labor Force & Employment

Employment opportunities slowed in 2009 when the recession fully hit south central Idaho. Before then, manufacturing rose with the relocation of national recreational vehicle makers such as Jayco in Twin Falls and Dutchmen RV in Burley. Plastic bag maker Hilex Poly set up shop in Jerome and expanded soon after. High-volume dairy production continues to attract milk processors and cheese companies such as Brewster Dairy, Glanbia Foods, Gossner Cheese, Idaho Milk Products, Jerome Cheese, High Desert Milk and the latest addition, Chobani Greek Yogurt. Other large manufacturers include Amalgamated Sugar, ConAgra, McCain Foods and corrugated box makers Boise Paper and Longview Fibre. Food processing has been strong through the downturn, but Blaine County was battered by the loss of consumer interest in both tourism and real estate.

The trout and plastics industries continue automating, reducing job growth but increasing production and improving corporate financial health. Health care weathered the downturn, continuing to provide high-quality jobs. Residential construction, manufacturing and retail have been hit hardest with job losses. Commercial construc-

### Unemployment Rates

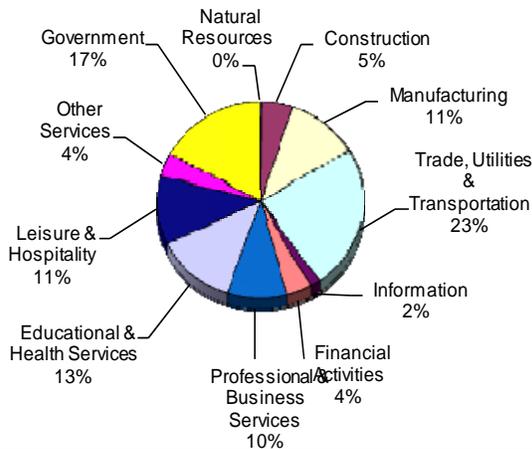


tion in much of south central Idaho has slowed with completion of a \$250 million hospital in Twin Falls, the College of Southern Idaho's new LEED-certified Health Science Building, a new bypass and six new hotels with more than 400 rooms. The college offers curricula custom designed for employers in coordination with economic development efforts. The college offers dual credit to high school students and provides two-year degrees at a third the cost of a four-year university. The region is ready for its next growth spurt with investment in infrastructure such as electrical transmission lines, waste water treatment plants and lines and renewable energy such as wind, hydroelectricity, geothermal and biomass.

Labor Force	July 11	July 12
Civilian Labor Force	96,503	96,134
Total Employment	88,733	89,853
Unemployed	7,771	6,282
South Central % Unemployed	8.1	6.5
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	86,310	88,142	87,078	88,659	90,667	93,682	93,924	95,307	93,477	95,333	96,701
Unemployment	3,592	3,963	4,126	4,018	3,200	2,809	2,506	3,618	5,849	7,641	7,616
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.5	3.5	3.0	2.7	3.8	6.3	8.0	7.9
Employment	82,718	84,179	82,952	84,641	87,467	90,873	91,419	91,689	87,628	87,692	89,084

## Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2011



## Major Employers

Amalgamated Sugar	Independent Meat Co.
Bettencourt Dairies	Jayco Inc
C3 Call Center	Jerome Cheese Co.
Clear Springs Foods	Kroger Group dba Smiths/Fred Meyer
College of Southern Idaho	McCain Foods
ConAgra Foods	Spears Manufacturing, Inc.
Dutchmen RV	St. Luke's MVRMC
Glanbia Foods NA	Sun Valley Company
Hilex Poly	Wal-Mart

## Covered Employment & Wages

Wages in south central Idaho are some of the lowest in the state, likely due to the high percentage of agricultural jobs that are traditionally seasonal and require less skill. There is minimal wage competition from neighboring Nevada. No employer or industry is quite large enough to pull in corporate back-office positions providing executive wages and professional jobs. But many believe the region carries less risk than others that rely on the military, large corporations or government, which all must regularly renew funding or contracts. The region continues to diversify.

Per capita income in south central Idaho had grown at a faster clip than the state and the rest of the nation until the recession hit and knocked per capita income down 7.7 percent in 2009. The decline statewide was 3.6 percent and 2.5 percent nationally. Retirees are a plus to the area with yearly cost-of-living pension adjustments and little draw on resources such as schools. Construction continues to languish.

## Occupational Wages\*

## Starting Wage

Bookkeeper	\$10.16
Cashiers	\$8.05
Child Care Workers	\$7.90
Computer Tech	\$14.80
Customer Service Rep	\$9.26
Dental Assistant	\$10.49
Janitor & Cleaner	\$8.05
Laborer & Material Handler	\$8.15
Office Clerk/Secretary	\$8.50
Production Assemblers	\$9.35
Registered Nurse	\$21.87
Salesperson, Retail	\$8.07
Teacher, Elementary	\$32,259
Teacher, Secondary	\$38,819
Truck Drivers, Heavy	\$11.00

\* 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 2001, 2010 & 2011	2001		2010		2011	
	Ave Employment	Ave Wages	Ave Employment	Ave Wages	Ave Employment	Ave Wages
<b>Total Covered Wages</b>	69,026	\$22,312	82,718	\$29,659	78,676	\$29,884
<b>Agriculture</b>	6,520	\$18,587	9,219	\$27,319	9,223	\$27,610
<b>Mining</b>	156	\$26,802	235	\$30,508	165	\$31,961
<b>Construction</b>	4,361	\$25,634	5,995	\$35,083	4,415	\$33,344
<b>Manufacturing</b>	8,203	\$27,221	8,316	\$36,029	7,848	\$37,564
<b>Trade, Utilities &amp; Transportation</b>	15,999	\$21,313	17,266	\$29,176	16,564	\$29,131
<b>Information</b>	1,029	\$24,572	1,251	\$34,219	1,224	\$34,355
<b>Financial Activities</b>	2,389	\$27,754	2,917	\$39,694	2,806	\$38,589
<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	4,909	\$26,182	7,471	\$31,211	6,706	\$32,540
<b>Educational and Health Services</b>	4,907	\$22,740	8,404	\$30,762	8,412	\$31,694
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	7,103	\$12,781	7,804	\$14,885	7,450	\$14,953
<b>Other Services</b>	1,778	\$18,063	2,207	\$24,465	2,057	\$25,345
<b>Government</b>	11,672	\$24,339	11,634	\$30,959	11,806	\$31,169

Per Capita Income	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>South Central Region</b>	\$24,666	\$26,944	\$26,958	\$27,009	\$30,088	\$31,359	\$32,910	\$35,637	\$36,781	\$33,931
<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 region is served by the office listed below:  
 Idaho Department of Labor  
 420 Falls Ave.  
 Twin Falls, ID 83301-5129 Ph: (208) 735-2500

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

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