

Gooding County Situation Analysis



University of Idaho
Extension

Revised 2010

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GOODING COUNTY SITUATION ANALYSIS

DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTY

Gooding County adjoins the Snake River plain in south-central Idaho. It ranks 21st among Idaho counties in population and 36th in area. Over 50 percent of the county land is owned by the federal government. Agriculture and food processing are the primary industries, with additional employment provided by government, trade, and services. Annual average total civilian employment increased 32.0 percent from 1991 to 2001. Major employers include Glanbia, Inc., Gooding County government, Gooding County School District, Gooding County Hospital, Clear Springs Foods, the Walker Center, Idaho Power Corporation and the Idaho State School for the Deaf and Blind. Several dairies are counted as major employers by themselves.

Location

Gooding County is located in the western portion of an eight county area of South Central Idaho, commonly referred to as the “Magic Valley”. It is bound on the north by the Bennett Mountain Hills dividing Gooding and Camas counties. The Snake River Canyon separates Gooding and Twin Falls counties to the south. Jerome and Lincoln counties form its eastern boundary and Elmore County to the west.

The cities of Jerome (20 miles) and Twin Falls (30 miles) are the major metropolitan areas where Gooding County residents go for shopping and other major services. Twin Falls is the home of the College of Southern Idaho (CSI) and Gooding houses a CSI outreach center (Northside Center) for workforce and college preparation. The University of Idaho has a Research and Extension Center (R&E) in Twin falls (located on the CSI campus) and a Research Station at the city of Kimberly (40 miles)

Gooding, Jerome and Twin Falls Counties contain the majority of Idaho’s aquaculture and dairy Industry. Idaho is number one in production of food size trout 12 inches or longer and number four in milk production in the USA. Gooding County is ranked first in the state for milk production and number of dairy cows per acre. Other markets of crops and livestock are also in the Jerome and Twin Falls areas.

Gooding has a small local airport used for private planes and for crop dusters. Twin Falls Airport flies Delta Connections to Salt Lake City, Utah (245 miles by route). Major routes crossing Gooding County are the interstate 84, US 26, US 30, and ID 46. Gooding County has a railroad cargo station for the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) on the line named Northwest Corridor . The Eastern Idaho Railroad Company (offices located in Twin Falls) operates connection lines between the city of Wendell and other Magic Valley cities, providing connections to move agricultural products to the UP main lines.

Recreation and tourists attractions within Gooding County include the Hagerman Valley with the Thousand Spring Scenic Byway and the Hagerman Fossil Beds. The county is known for its fishing and hunting of water fowl, pheasants, sage grouse and trophy mule deer. Others come to Gooding County for float trips, rock climbing, bird watching, golf, hiking and the County Fair and multi-awarded Rodeo and many other rodeo events throughout the year.

Geographic Features

Gooding County is a sage brush desert, with plateaus and canyons and volcanic rock scattered among farm ground. Rivers found within the county include The Big and Little Wood Rivers that join together to make the Malad River. The Malad River then joins the Snake River which borders the county to the south. There are also many canals and ditches which cross the county to provide irrigation water to livestock and farms including: the Northside Canal, the American Falls Irrigation district and Magic Water Irrigation district.

Climatic Characteristics

Gooding's mild climate compares favorably with the rest of the state. A four season environment, the water features a definitive spring, summer, fall and winter. The average high temperature of the area is 88 degrees, average low temperature of 30 degrees and average precipitation of 9.78 inches. 33% of the precipitation usually falls in April through September. The growing season for most crops falls within this period. The average date for the first and last frost is September 22nd and May 3rd respectively. The growing season for Gooding County is an estimated 150 days. Microbursts of wind and weather are also found in the area. Microbursts can upset wheel lines, pivots, power lines, crops, and other structures in its path.

Historical Facts

Pre 1800's Gooding County was traversed by Indian Trails as they traveled to and from the Snake River. There are still places along the Snake River where Indian pottery, arrowheads, etc. can be found. The Shoshone and Bannock tribes lived and transited during their annual migrations what is now Gooding County. It is estimated that the Shoshone people arrived in southern Idaho about 4,000 years ago following hunting herds as they were migrating north pushed by climatic change. The climatic change brought at the end of the Pleistocene, 8,000 years ago, had triggered a huge migration from what now is New Mexico, Arizona, and northern México. When those areas weren't able to support populations due to growing arid conditions, people migrated to the south, north, and east. Shoshone people found in southern Idaho (including Gooding County) were then part of a major human group with related linguistic characteristics, known as the Uto-Aztecan languages. This related linguistic group includes the Shoshone people at its northern limit, the Comanche people on the east (Oklahoma), and it includes Aztecs and other civilizations as south as Guatemala and Southern Mexico (very advanced civilizations compared to the northern relatives). Previous 1800's Shoshone people in Southern Idaho didn't have a political organization as a unified tribe, instead they were organized as extended families related by marriage. Families usually lived much separated one from each other due to the extensive territory. During certain times of the year however, families would gather together for harvesting, hunting, and other labors strengthening their bonds. Shoshone people used to name themselves according to what they eat, so they recognized the different areas they came from based on their most common diet. They used names like "rabbit eaters", "fish eaters", etc. Their life style was nomadic, living in the valleys during the winter and traveling to the mountains throughout the spring and summer. With the arrival of white people and its increased and rapid pressure and competitiveness for territory and resources, Shoshone people's way of life was changed dramatically in a few decades. By the end of the 19th century, all of Idaho's Indian population had been forced onto reservations.

The first introduction of white men into the county was trappers in the Malad River Valley in the early 1800's. In this early time there was an abundance of fur bearing animals along the Snake and Malad Rivers.

It was however, the numerous springs, the rich agricultural lands of Hagerman Valley, and gold in the sands of the Snake River that first attracted new people to remain in this region. Then farming settlements and stock ranches were developed in the late 1800's. In early 1860, the famous Ben Halladay stages ran through the county with a station at Uhrlab's crossing, and the horses were rested near-by in the Horse Haven. The stages ran through this area until mid 1880 as the Union Pacific main line came through Bliss in 1883. The Union Pacific railroad sided a rail car and put a telegraph in the car and called the station Bliss. David R. Bliss, who the station was named after settled in the area in 1879 and began raising livestock. His ranch had become the center of activity by 1883, as it was a rendezvous and headquarters for placer miners and cowboys in the area.

Also in 1883, the Oregon Short Line Railway became first established in Gooding; then called Toponis as named by Chief Engineer Blickensdorfer of the Oregon Short Line. "Toponis" was a name originated from a Shoshone Indian name meaning "Black Cherries." The name was changed to "Gooding" in honor of Frank Gooding, Governor of Idaho 1902-1909, as he used part of his ranch to lay-out and develop the town site. Much of the early development of Gooding County is credited to the ambitions and vision of Frank Gooding.

Gooding County can boast of its railroad, Idaho Southern Railroad, that was incorporated for \$250,000 and made its first run December 28, 1908. The first run was made on a trip from Gooding to Wendell and on to Jerome. The train made daily runs from Gooding to Jerome for eight years before the strengthening of the Oregon Short Line and the Automobile finally eroded its business away. The rails were not removed for several years and were used by Charles Young as he ran his "Gallopig Goose," a Stanley Steamer, on the rails. Finally the rail bed was used to build a highway between Wendell and Gooding that now has been replaced by a newer, wider highway.

Gooding County in its beginning was part of what historians refer to as the "The Mother of Counties." Alturas County was established February 4, 1864, and included the counties now established as Blaine, Camas, Elmore, Gooding, Lincoln, Jerome, Minidoka, and greater parts of Custer, Bingham, and Power. The name of Alturas came from the Spanish language, meaning "Heights" (probably referring to the mountainous areas). Elmore County was established in 1881, then Alturas County was ended by Supreme Court decision on June 3, 1891, with the development of Blaine County on March 5, 1895, and Lincoln County on March 8, 1895. Lincoln County included Gooding, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Jerome Counties.

Idaho became a state in 1890 and the Carey Act of 1894 opened up the area to a stampede of homesteaders eager to claim the land. Irrigated agriculture was first developed in areas along the Big Wood and Little Wood Rivers; however the modern agricultural base resulted from the construction of large-scale government irrigation projects. The Reclamation Act of 1902 provided the funding and coordination needed to build dams and large canal systems, most of which were completed in 1920.

In 1904-1907, there were three irrigation districts from the Snake River: the North Central (Richfield and Dietrich) with a reservoir on the Big Wood River; the Northside tract of Hazelton-Eden with 30,000 acre, and the south central segregation extending to the Hagerman Valley, with Snake River diversion from the Milner Dam. With the completion of these irrigation systems, the farming industry became more stabilized in the area, thus enhancing interest and farm growth.

By 1910, it became apparent the towns of Jerome and Gooding were becoming interested in securing county seats. A split of Lincoln County was diverted by Frank Gooding and his brother Fred W. Gooding, a State Senator, until 1913, when John Thomas teamed with Frank Gooding to guide through an act in Congress to establish Gooding County. Also, with Gooding County, Minidoka County was established in 1913 with Camas County being created from the western part of Blaine County in 1917. Then Jerome County was partitioned as it is today in 1919.

Gooding County was approved January 28, 1913, with Gooding being designated as the temporary county seat. The description of the county was given as follows: beginning at the northeast corner of section six, township three, range sixteen, East Boise Meridian in the north boundary line of Lincoln County, Idaho as now constituted; thence south 24 miles, more or less, along the section line to southeast corner of section thirty-one, township six south, range sixteen east; thence east one mile, more or less, to the northeast corner of section four, township seven south, range sixteen East Boise Meridian; thence south along the section line to the thread of the Snake River, being the southern boundary of Lincoln County, as now constituted; thence northwesterly along the thread of the said Snake River to the west line of township six south, range twelve east of the Boise Meridian to the northwest corner of township three south, range twelve East Boise Meridian; thence east along the north line of township three south, to the place of beginning.

The county vote was taken in 1914 to establish a permanent county seat with the vote county being, Gooding 1419 and Wendell 1117, thus Gooding became the permanent county seat.

The growth of agriculture from 1907 through 1920 in Gooding and the surrounding counties had caused such a demand of irrigation water that the Northside Canal Company and other irrigation districts established the American Falls Dam, which went under construction in the mid 1920's. The advent of this additional irrigation water coming into the system created explanation to its potential in the 1960's. In the later years though, the ability of pumping deep well water for sprinklers has increased agriculture potential even greater.

Gooding County's growth has also been financially tied to the Idaho Power Company. Birth was given to the Idaho Power Company in 1916 with the consolidation of five separate electric companies serving various areas of the Snake River Valley. It has employed numerous people and supplied a large amount of tax revenue to the county. There are six plants now located in Gooding County with Thousand Springs, Lower Salmon and Malad being inherited by Idaho Power Company in 1947. Also in 1947 the additions were made of two plants at the Upper Salmon Dam, one at Clear Lakes, and

one at Bliss. With these plants and subsidiary elements of electricity movement, Idaho Power Company employs 80 plus people to make its functions workable.

The growth of Gooding County has been aided by the Extension Service in 1919 A.N. Smith was appointed County Agent in that year. The tract was very new at that time and he was faced with the problem of producing enough feed to maintain livestock through the winter months. O.E. McConnell was then County Agent from 1923-1935 during which he did much work in getting better market activities by using wool, lamb, hog, and turkey pools. In these times hogs were a very important commodity as a variety of feeds were used to fatten them. Dairying was having a very tough beginning as dairy stock was bought and sold as feed became available. Only when adequate irrigation water supplies were maintained and development of more farming land was established did dairying become economically stable.

Over the years many sheep ranchers based their operations from Gooding County which brought a rich Basque culture to the area. In 2003 a new Basque Cultural Center opened serving dinner the first Friday of every month. The goals of the Basque Association is to promote the Basque culture through food, dance, language and a variety of other activities.

The County has now developed into a sophisticated agriculture community from its rough beginnings. Since the beginning, Gooding County has had several developments that placed it in the Nation's eyes. One such was the discovery of the fossil beds in Hagerman Valley in early 1906. With its vast treasure in fossil remains, it presented one of the greatest fields of endeavor for scientific research in the United States.

The Dairy Industry has a significant impact on the county. Many crops of hay, grain, corn, and silage are sold to dairy's for feed and bedding. Dairymen also purchase veterinary and other supplies and services. Dairies also employ many people directly and many more indirectly. Gooding County is the largest dairy county in the state (149,000 head in 2009) and the fastest growing county in the country. Most milk is sold for cheese production. Gooding dairies range in size from small (150 head) to very large (15,000 head) in one location. A new Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) ordinance was implemented in 2007.

Many thanks must go to the past farmers and ranchers who struggled to develop this area, and to the early agricultural agents that put their time and experiences into programs that we can expand and develop as changes occur in Gooding County.

POPULATION AND LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Population

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>
Total	8,645	11,874	11,633	14,155	14,295
Pop. Per square mile	11.9	16.3	15.9	19.4	19.6
	<u>1970-1980</u>	<u>1980-1990</u>	<u>1990-1999</u>	<u>2000-2008</u>	
Population change %	37.4	(-3.1)	19.7%	1.0% (ID:10.4%)	
		<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	
Percent Rural		75.2	75.8	74.6	
Percent Urban		24.8	24.2	25.4	
Age Distribution					
	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	
Median Age	32	34.7	35.1	35.8	
Under 18 Years (%)	30.9	30.3	29.6	28.5	
18-64 Years (%)	53.9	52.5	55	57.3	
65 Years (%)	15.2	17.3	15.4	14.3	
Race & Ethnicity					
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>		
White	10,886	12,399	13,874		
Black	7	33	48		
Am Indian	43	119	162		
Asian	29	33	48		
Pac Islander	2	8			
Hispanic	1021	2414	3,470		
Total	11,633	14,155	14,461		
Hispanic Origin					
	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	
(not same as race)	6.8%	8.8%	17.1%	24.3%	
County Population by Cities					
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>			
Bliss	275	260			
Gooding	3,384	3,320			
Hagerman	656	838			
Wendell	2,338	2,396			
Balance of Gooding County	<u>7,647</u>	<u>7,502</u>			
Total	14,155	14,461			

Education Characteristics

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Educational attainment of the population 25 years and older			
No High School Diploma	34%	27.5%	27.4% (ID:15.3%)
High School Grad (& GED)	35.9%	32.3%	34.7%
Some College (no degree)	17.2%	27%	20.9%
Bachelor degree	11.2%	11.4%	8.5
Graduate or Prof. degree	1.6%	1.9%	3.5% (ID: 21%)

High School Drop out rates for public school districts

	<u>1998-99</u>	<u>2000-01</u>	<u>2001-02</u>
Bliss	0.0	1.9	3.8
Gooding	5.3	8.1	5.5
Hagerman	6.5	.8	1.5
Wendell	5.8	6.7	5.1
ISDB	NA	0.0	NA

Student Teacher Ratio for public school districts

	<u>1998-99</u>	<u>2000-01</u>	<u>2001-02</u>
Bliss	10.9	9.9	9.9
Gooding	17.3	15.2	15.9
Hagerman	14	13.6	14.2
Wendell	17	15.3	15.9
ISDB	3.7	NA	2.3

Education Funding Level per ADA 2000-2001

<u>School Dist</u>	<u>State Funds</u>	<u>Local & State Funds</u>	<u>All Funds</u>
Bliss	\$6,804	\$7,562	\$9,178
Gooding	\$4,710	\$5,297	\$7,332
Hagerman	\$5,238	\$6,183	\$7,957
Wendell	\$5,005	\$5,768	\$11,344

Poverty Levels

	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2003</u>
Persons living below pov.	17.8%	17%	13.8%	11.7%
Families living below pov.	13.4%	12.3%	11.6%	

Labor Force

Employment – Full & Part Time by Place of Work:

	1980	1990	2000	2008
Total employment	5,425	5,703	7,948	8,133
Annual Labor Force Unemployed	4.8%	4.2%	3.9%	3.4%
Females (16+) in Labor Force	45%	52.9%	51.9%	

Employment by Type

Wage & Salary Employment	3,746	3,984	5,763
Farm Proprietors	722	671	725
Non-Farm Proprietors	957	1,048	1,460

Employee Commute Time

Total 6,155 workers commute for an average commute time of 20.2 minutes

Percentage	Type of Commute
69%	Car, truck or van –alone
17.5%	Carpool
.16%	Public Transport
4.8%	Walk
1.6%	Other
6.8%	Work at home

Work destinations

70%	Gooding County
11%	Jerome County
11%	Twin Falls County
3%	Blaine County
2%	Lincoln County
.5%	Elmore County
2.5 %	Other

Employment by Industry

	1980	1990	2000	2007
Farm	1,410	1,538	2,078	1,806
Ag. Service, Forest, fish & Other	136	284	595	464
Manufacturing	460	255	613	824
Construction	271	256	440	585
Transport., comm., & Pub. Utlies	318	418	522	399
Wholesale Trade	302	187	201	168
Retail Trade	612	655	910	808
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	267	193	353	136
Services	746	1,004	1,106	1,143
Federal Civilian	54	71	67	
Federal Military	78	75	58	
State & Local Government	764	763	999	
Government (all)				1,180

Wage per job (all wage/salary payments by # of jobs)

1994 2004

\$22,483 \$24,196

Labor Force Participation Rate	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>			
	60%	62%	61%			
Unemployment rate				<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2008</u>
				3.0%	2.4%	3.4%
Self-employment rate	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2008</u>	
	30.9%	30.2%	27.4%	27.7%	28.6%	

FAMILY LIVING

Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Programs

The University of Idaho (UI) Gooding Extension Office doesn't have a Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) educator at the office. Even though, several FCS programs are available in the county and for county residents. These programs are delivered by FCS Extension Educators from neighbor counties like Jerome, Twin Falls, and Cassia counties. Some programs are presented in Gooding and others require the audience to travel to nearby cities like Jerome, Twin Falls, Shoshone, etc.

As 2010, FCS programs are offered in four main areas, those areas and available programs are:

Family Nutrition and Health: 4-H Cooking Camp, Cooking for One or Two, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, Extension Nutrition Program, Fit and Fall Proof, Got Calcium?, Healthy Eating-Healthy Aging, Healthy Eating with Diabetes, Meal Time in Less Time, Meals Made Easy with the Diabetes Plate, My Pyramid, Osteoporosis: Prevention and Treatment-Your Bones Your Body, Read it Before you Eat it, Seafood at its Best, Senior Extension Nutrition Program, Steps to a New You, Strong Women-Stay Young and Strong Women-Strong Bones, The Healthy Diabetes Plate, The Healthy Diabetes Plate Physical Activity Program.

Food Safety: Food Preservation, Food Safety Advisor Program, Food Safety Advanced Advisor Program, Food Safety for Seniors, Germ City: Clean Hands-Healthy People, Kitchen Safety, Preserve at Home, Ready- Set-Food Safe, Servsafe, Targeting Food Safety.

Family Relationships: 4 Generations at Work-Home-and Play, Active Parenting, Married & Loving it, Stress Management, Stress-Time-and Laughter, The Kid in a Hat, Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?

Personal Finances: Credit Cents: Making Sense of Credit-Debt-and Identity Theft, Dollar Decisions, Gaining Financial Fitness/Budgeting, Hassle-Free Holidays, Kids Kredit Card, Legally Secure Your Financial Future, Long Term Care: Planning for Quality of Life, Medicare Part D Education, Money on the Bookshelf, National Endowment for Financial Education-High School Financial Planning Program, Protect Against Identity Theft, Rx for Record Keeping, Saving for Retirement, Should I Purchase Long-Term Care Insurance?, Welcome to the Real World.

YOUTH

University of Idaho Extension Youth Programs

The primary focus of 4-H and other Extension work with youth is to provide opportunities for the physical, mental, social and spiritual growth of young people in Gooding County. Our program is designed to involve adult and youth volunteers in helping our young people to learn about real life situations and skills by doing hands-on activities.

4-H is the largest extension program conducted within the county. 4-H is a practical education program of learning-by-doing for young people at the local county level. Anyone between the ages of 8 and 19 may become a part of the program. 4-H members participate in informal, out-of-school experiences in citizenship, leadership, healthful living, homemaking, agriculture and related activities. The formal 4-H club is a group of young people both boys and girls organized and developed in our community under the guidance of local volunteer 4-H leaders. Local clubs hold regular meetings in which the officers conduct business, members give demonstrations related to their project area and participate in some type of recreational activity. Local clubs form the base upon which the entire 4-H program rests. District, state and national activities are also available to youth and volunteers who want to expand past the county level.

Gooding County has 70 different project areas available for 4-H participants in the county. Youngsters become involved to learn skills and gain knowledge about agriculture, home economics, and miscellaneous subject matter areas. Our major goal is to involve volunteers and youngsters in a setting that will not only teach life long skills but to also develop a sense of self worth and leadership. In 2009, 275 youth and 30 volunteer adult leaders were enrolled in organized clubs. Both traditional and short term projects and activities are supported. We have also shared our 4-H curriculum and other youth programs with the Gooding After School Program, Gooding Elementary and High School, Wendell High School, North Valley Academy Charter School, Accelerated Learning Center Preschool, and the Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind. Gooding County 4-H has a strong livestock program. Our goal is to increase participation and completed projects in horse, non-animal projects and overnight camps.

GOODING 4-H STATISTICS

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2009</u>
Total Members	372 (reach 2%)	385	1050	440
Members – Organized	240	292	336	275
Members – Other	177	93	714	165
Clubs – Organized	20	25	38	19
Clubs – Other	4	34	38	25
Leaders	73	49	53	30
Members under 9	15 (4%)	64	291	185
9-11	264 (71%)	156	546	99
12-14	62 (16%)	106	110	77
15-19	30 (9%)	52	88	79
Over 19	1	2	4	0
Caucasian	94%	97%	67%	76%

Black	.20%	0%	.09%	0%
American Indian	.60%	.01%	.19%	0.09%
Hispanic	5%	2.34%	32%	23.18%
Asian	.20%	.01%	.0%	0
Curriculum Enrolments (projects)		417	1434	918

Other youth programs not related to the University of Idaho Extension

Youth Sport programs

There are a variety of youth sport programs organized through the school districts they include: 8-man and 11-man football, soccer, volleyball, boys and girls basketball, tennis, golf, track, rodeo, and bowling. These programs target junior and senior high school youth. Many summer league programs are also offered: baseball, t-ball, and basketball

Church youth groups

Churches within the communities of Gooding County conduct a variety of programs; Youth can participate in Rangers, Awanas and Young Life. Summer vacation bible schools are also conducted typically in July and August.

Other youth groups

Youth can also participate in boy scouts, gymnastics, karate, bowling, and dance programs.

LEADERSHIP

There are many leadership groups within the county; each have a very important role to the communities they serve. Many have volunteer boards and may or may not have a paid program coordinator. The groups include:

City Councils
County Commissioners
City and County Planning and Zoning
Mayors
Disaster Services Coordinator
Rural MV Economic Development Association
Wood River Resource Conservation & Development
Chamber of Commerce – Wendell, Gooding, Bliss, Hagerman
MAC group (elected official group; Mayor, A, Commissioner)
SCRIDA (Southern Idaho Tourism group; local base in Twin Falls)
Gooding Fire Mitigation Group – Firewise program, red zone, fire readiness, help fire chief inventory the communities.
Fire Departments; Bliss – volunteer, Gooding 1 paid staff, Wendell, Hagerman,
Emergency Medical Services- volunteer
Gem Communities – Gooding, Wendell
Grange, Basque Center, Wendell
Farm Bureau
Churches: Assembly of God, Nazarene, Catholic, Mormon, Methodists, Baptist, Community, Christian, Lighthouse, Calvary Chapel.

HEALTH & WELFARE

Average Monthly Fourth Quarter Welfare Roll

	1992	2001
Aid to Aged, Blind & Disabled	26	77
Aid to Families with Dependent Children	50	NA
Temporary Assistance for Families	NA	5
Food Stamps	212	161
Medicaid Cases	559	1268

Health Care	2010
Physicians per 1,000	0.5
Number of Physicians	28
Number of Hospitals	1 (Gooding; no babies delivered)
Total Hospital Beds	15
Urgent care in Gooding	EMS and Emergency Room

South Central Health Department is in the town of Gooding with a nurse there three times a month by appointment. They also have an Environmental Officer, Immunizations, and Wick Program on designated days.

Gooding is also the home of the Walker Center which is a residential center for drug and alcohol rehabilitation. They serve a clientele of 400 to 500 persons per year. In addition, Gooding County has a SUWS rehabilitation program.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Soils

Most agricultural lands are dominated by well-drained, light colored, sandy loom soils which are moderately deep. Areas to the north are dominated by darker or slightly darker loamy and clay soils with steep to moderately steep mountains and foothills. Some of the major non-farm land in Gooding County is extremely rough and remains in semi-desert growth. The dominant exposed rocks are lavas and are visible throughout the county.

Precipitation and Climate

Gooding County has a semiarid climate characterized by a low precipitation of 9.26 inches a year and comparatively low humidity.

Growing Season:

Years of Record	-57
Median Last spring Freeze	-May 16
Median First Fall Freeze	-October 10
Median Length Days	-145
Median Annual Precipitation	-9.26
Lowest average daily minimum temperature	13.5 degrees in January
Highest average daily maximum temperature	90.8 degrees in July
Hottest Month – July	
Coldest month – January	
Driest month – August	
Wettest month - January	

Geology/Minerals

Gooding County lies within the Snake River Plain section of the Columbia Plateau Province where lavas are the dominant rock exposed. Lava flowed into the synclinal valley of the Snake River area starting during the late Tertiary through recent times as this trough slowly sank. There is an estimated accumulation of at least 2,000 feet of basalt overlaying older rocks at places in the Snake River Plain.

Rocks exposed in Gooding County range in age from early Tertiary when the Challis Volcanoes flowed over granites, gneiss and sedimentary rocks to present time when sediments are being deposited by streams, rivers, lakes and by the wind. The youngest rock mapped in Gooding County has been named McKinney basalt (Omk) deposited during recent time from McKinney Butte eight miles northwest of Gooding. Most of the rock outcroppings in the county are of basaltic composition which tends to be dark brown to black in color. Older and lighter colored Challis (Tov) and Idavada (Tiv) silicic volcanics, however, outcrop in the northern part of the county.

In the late 1800's placer mining for gold was done along the Snake river. Since the 1930's no major gold mining has been done. Current mining includes gravel and road fill materials. Gems found in Gooding County include fire opal and petrified wood.

There is a large deposit of diatomaceous earth located on the upper portion of Clover Creek. This deposit covers 6,480 acres and has a thickness of 1,200 feet. At some places the deposit is exposed to the surface, while in other areas it is covered by 600 to 800 feet of overburden.

There is a large deposit of gravel in Hagerman Valley, however, deposits north of the valley are limited.

Water Resources

The Snake River borders the county on the south. The lower reaches of the Big and Little Wood Rivers enter Gooding County from the east and join together approximately four miles west of Gooding, forming the Malad River, which empties into the Snake River north of Hagerman. The other main drainages include Clover Creek on the west side of Gooding County. Dry Creek is in the middle and Thorn Creek on the eastern side.

Approximately half of Gooding County lies in the Snake River Aquifer. This aquifer has a large volume of water which rises from springs along the Snake River Canyon from Blue Lakes to Bliss. The flow in Gooding County from the springs is approximately 5,588 cubic feet per second. The depth of the ground water varies from approximately 300 feet south east of Gooding to less than 100 feet south of Wendell. The average depth of the wells is about 200 to 320 feet, but depths, range from artesian to more than 600 feet.

The main source of irrigation water is from the Snake River. This water is diverted at the Milner dam. The American Falls Reservoir No. 2 Company has 400,000 acre feet of storage in the American Falls Reservoir. This is for 65,000 acres; 35,270 acres of which are in Gooding County, and about 2,000 acres have Big and Little Wood River water rights. The average storage, however, has been 444,000 acre feet. About 55-percent of the cropland in the area is irrigated with water supplied by the Northside and Milner-Gooding Canals. The remaining cropland is irrigated by water pumped from the Snake River Aquifer, which is also the source of water for domestic, municipal, and industrial use.

The North Side Canal company serves Gooding (The Wendell area) and Jerome Counties. Storage rights include Palisades, 116,000 acre feet; Jackson Lake, 312,000 acre feet; and American Falls, 397,470 acre feet. They also have a fifteen second feet right on Big Wood River (1890). They have Snake River rights on filing of 300 CFS, (1900); 2,250 CFS, (1905); 350 CFS, (1908); 1,260 CFS, (1920); and 300 CFS, (1915).

Other lands are irrigated from:

1. Ground water (deep wells)
2. Pioneer Reservoir
3. Clover Creek
4. Bray Lake
5. Hagerman Springs

Reservoirs within the county are Pioneer, Bray Lake, Thorn Creek, Dog Creek, Clear Lakes, Upper and Lower Salmon, Patterson and Bliss Reservoirs.

Ground water is one of the most valuable resources on the Snake River Plain. The best ground water aquifers in this area have been in course textured alluvium in the valleys of

large streams and from the Snake River basalts. The younger basalts are variable in nature but generally have a higher permeability in the vicinity of a fault zone and can be witnessed as a spring discharge at the ground surface from some fault zones in this area. Wells located at higher elevations usually must be drilled relatively deep and may require moderate to high pump lifts from the saturated zone which lies at an elevation of about 3,400 feet at Gooding for example. The lowest water table elevation in the county is about 2,600 feet above sea level at the Snake River at the west edge of the county.

Wildlife

Gooding County supports a variety of fish and wildlife, including resident mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and migratory avian species. A wide array of fish and wildlife are in the area because of the variety of wildlife habitat present. The foothills, deep rocky canyons, lava flows, bottomland and scattered areas of farmland and the associated soils precipitation, land uses and topography provide diverse habitat.

Big game animals within the county include the mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion and bear. Predators within the county are coyotes, red fox, bobcats, bear and mountain lions. Fur bearing animals are primarily the muskrat, mink, beaver, weasel, raccoon, otter, badger, coyote and bobcat. Non-game or small animals are the jackrabbit, rock chuck, puma rabbit, cottontail rabbit, badger and various other species of small rodents.

Birds within the county include the pheasant, chukar, Hungarian partridge, sage grouse, California or valley quail and mourning doves. Some blue grouse, bobwhite and mountain quail are also found. Pheasant and Hungarian partridge are the main game birds associated with the agricultural areas. Wild turkeys have been introduced and a small resident population is found along the Snake River Canyon.

Many nongame birds are in the area. The diverse habitat along the Snake River corridor, Little Wood River, Big Wood River, Clover Creek, and other small creeks supports the highest densities of nongame birds. Nongame birds in the area include kingfishers, woodpeckers, larks, swallows, magpies, crows, chickadees, wrens, thrashers, thrushes, flycatchers, starlings, vireos, warblers, finches, blackbirds, tanagers, and sparrows.

Waterfowl are concentrated along the streams, rivers, reservoirs, and irrigation canals and in the wetland throughout the area. Waterfowl species include Canada geese, mallard, gadwall, widgeon, teal, goldeneye, canvasback, ring-necked duck, redhead, pintail, and scaup. The Snake River corridor provides critical breeding and wintering areas for large numbers of Canada geese and mallards.

Raptors are throughout the area. Species that use the habitat in the area include golden eagle, bald eagle, prairie falcon, red-tailed hawk, ferruginous hawk, rough-legged hawk, northern harrier, kestrel, burrowing owl, short-eared owl, great horned owl, and a few peregrine falcons.

Fisheries in the area are limited to streams and the few reservoirs. Game fish species in the reservoirs include rainbow trout, brown trout, small-mouthed bass, large-mouthed bass, perch and crappie. Stream and creek fisheries are in the Snake, Big Wood, and Little Wood Rivers; in Clover Creek; and in other tributaries that have permanent flow

throughout the year. Game fish species associated with the streams and creeks are rainbow trout, brown trout, brook trout, small-mouth bass, and large mouthed bass.

At present the recreational value of the wildlife resources of Gooding County are highly utilized both for consumptive and non consumptive uses. Game ranching and hunting clubs are beginning to prosper as an alternative agricultural enterprise in the county. Wildlife is therefore considered a valuable resource.

Recreation

Deep canyons, open deserts, and rolling uplands provide year-round outdoor recreational opportunities for hunters, fishermen, water sports enthusiasts, picnickers, hikers, campers, sightseers, photographers, and students of nature. Some natural areas that provide opportunities for outdoor activities are the Snake River; the Thousand Springs area, near the town of Hagerman; and the “City of Rocks”, north of Gooding. Other natural features in the area are the Mammoth and Shoshone Ice Caves, north of Shoshone.

Many urban recreational facilities are available. Gooding presently has two recreational districts, one each in Wendell and Gooding. Other recreational opportunities exist in the county that attracts considerable tourist interest. The Snake River area of Thousand Springs and Crystal Springs attract attention by their beauty and uniqueness. Both State and Federal fish hatcheries are located along the same area.

The 600 acre Malad State Park provides many travelers with a spectacular view of the area and specifically the Malad Gorge before it enters the Snake River. Other attractions include Big and Little city of Rocks to the north, Lava Caves, Lyle Lake and water skiing on the Snake River. Sportsmen from all over the area and particularly out of state are attracted to the abundance of fishing and hunting opportunities with pheasant hunting of particular interest.

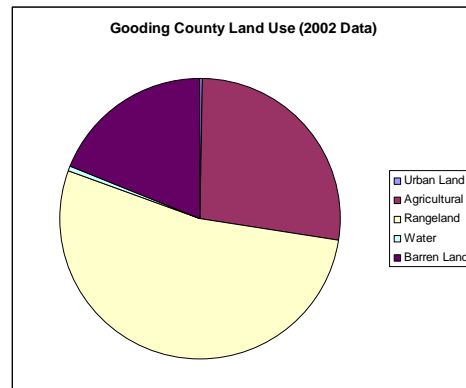
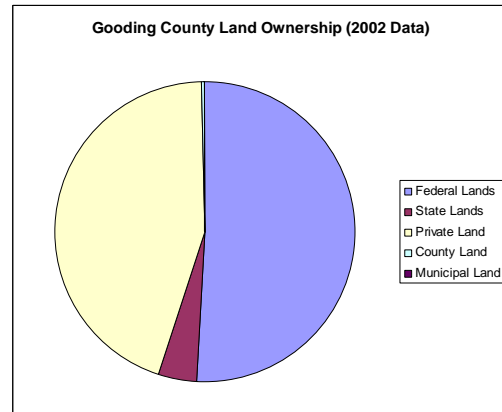
AGRICULTURE

Land Use and Ownership:

Gooding County has a land area of 722 square miles represented by 467,712 acres.

Land ownership, in acres, is as follows;

Federal Land 237,503
 BLM – 237,129
 National Forests -0
 Other – 374
 State Land 20,124
 Endowment Land – 17,119
 Fish & Game – 2,274
 Parks and Recreation – 731
 Private Land 209,238
 County Land 750
 Municipal Land 97



Land Use (in acres):

Urban Land 1,300
 Agricultural 126,900
 Rangeland 246,200
 Water 2,200
 Barren Land 87,400

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

	1990	2002	2007
Inventory: Farms, Cropland and livestock			
Total Number, All Farms	729	663	665
Total Acres in Farms	239,328	194,827	223,068
Average Farm Size (Acres)	328	294	335
Total Farms in Crops	644		
Total Acres in Crops – Table I	128,133		
Hogs and Pigs Inventory	4,005		
Sheep Inventory	22,000		

Farms by size (Acres)	1987	1992	1997	2002
Under 10	68	71	111	134
10-49	201	165	191	203
50-179	229	206	162	157
180-499	147	156	123	84
500-999	40	44	45	47
1,000 & over	44	41	43	38

Value of land and Buildings and Products	<u>1987</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2002</u>
Average Value Per Farm	\$270,800	495,833	795,709
Average Value Per Acre	846	1,567	2535
Average Value Per Farm of Product Sold	154,600	369,535	531,928

Gooding County Farm Products

PRODUCTS (CROP)	1990		1997		2002	
	Planted	Yield	Harvested	Yield	Harvest	Yield
Alfalfa Hay	30,000 A	5.61 ton	32344	5.5	28,079	5.01
Barley	4,400 A	96.5 bu	5,060	84.6	2,007	104.6
Dry Beans	5,600 A	19.9 cwt			885	24
Corn, Grain	4,200 A	134 bu	5,750	149	4,119	153.8
Corn, Silage	7,200 A	24.9 ton	18,783	28	31,413	28
Oats	1,000 A	87.7 bu	190	102.9	159	96
Pasture	37,500 A					
Potatoes	10,000 A	345 cwt			5590	406
Sugar Beets	3,400 A	23.3 ton			3268	24.8
Wheat, spring	5,000 A	82.9 bu	7402	96.7	954	73.9
Wheat, Winter	5,000 A	95.3 bu			2,179	95.9
Set Aside	6,809 A					
CRP	223 A					

Product (Livestock head)	<u>1990</u>	<u>2002</u>
Cattle & Calves		210,092
Beef Cattle (all)	92,000	
Beef Cows	17,000	15,174
Other Cattle	50,000	79,892
Dairy Cows (Milk)	22,000	115,026
Sheep (all)	22,000	18,052
Weight per fleece	9.8 lbs	
Swine (all)	8,250	703
Trout	18,750,000 lbs	

Market value of all crop products sold:

<u>1990</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
\$29,211,000	35,090,000	\$51,369,000

Market value of all livestock products sold:

<u>1990</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
\$83,493,000	317,578,000	\$573,051,000

Total value of all products:

<u>1990</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
112,704.00	352,668,000	\$624,420,000

COMMERCE & INDUSTRY LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVENUES

Travel & convention Room Tax (2%)

	<u>Total Sales</u>	<u>Tax Receipts</u>
FY 1983	\$198,544.49	\$3,973.58
FY 1998	\$730,520	\$13,731
FY 2002	\$656,399	\$13,306

Property Taxes

Taxable Market Value All Property – 2002	\$642,262,824
Property Taxes Budgeted – 2002	\$8,308,475

Property Tax As A % Of Market Value – 2002*

Urban	1.79292
Rural	1.15026

*After homeowner exemption

INCOME

	<u>1969</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2004</u>
Per Capita Income	\$13,699	\$7,804	\$15,756	\$32,124
National Average	\$20,415		\$29,104	\$34,170
State Average	\$17,237		\$23,496	\$27,788
Government Transfer Payments (in thousands of dollars)		\$14,988	\$26,716	\$51,330 (2001)

BUSINESS

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2001</u>
Total Business Establishments	212	266	315
Total Retail Businesses	53	69	50

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Gooding County Situation has been updated in April, 2010.

Mario E. de Haro Martí, Extension Educator
University of Idaho, Extension–Gooding County
203 Lucy Lane
Gooding, ID 83330
(208) 934-4417