



Grant County

Labor Area Summary

June 2015

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Overview

This report provides an update on the Grant County economy incorporating current, not seasonally adjusted, nonfarm employment and civilian labor force data. Analysis focuses on year-over-year (between the Junes of 2014 and 2015) and average annual (between 2013 and 2014) labor market changes.

Unemployment rates

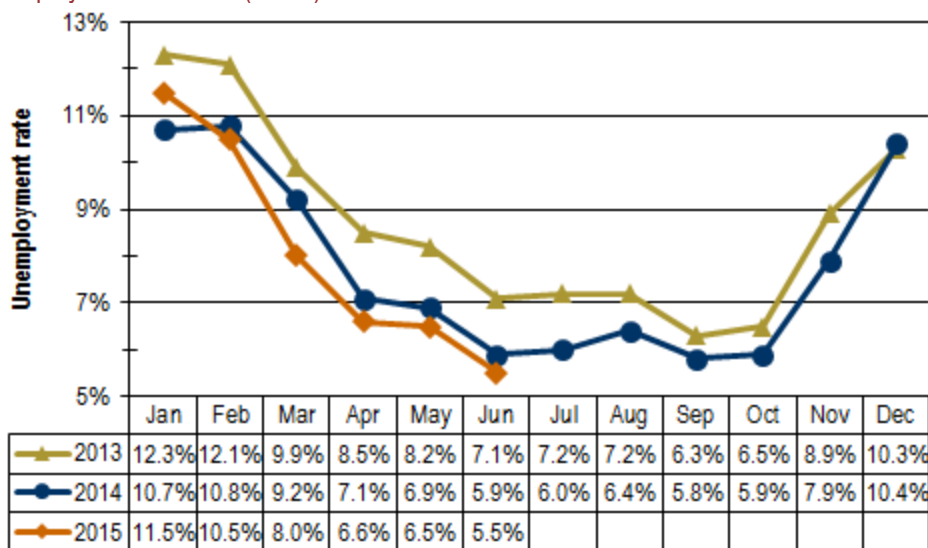
Preliminary labor force data show that Washington state's average annual not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased eight-tenths of a percentage point between 2013 and 2014, from 7.0 percent to 6.2 percent. Between the Junes of 2014 and 2015 the rate declined six-tenths of a point, from 5.9 to 5.3 percent.

In Grant County, the average annual unemployment rate decreased nine-tenths of a percentage point between 2013 and 2014, from 8.6 to 7.7 percent. The rate decreased four-tenths of a point this June to 5.5 percent from the 5.9 percent reading in June 2014 (see *Figure 1*) as the number of unemployed residents dropped and the labor force expanded (see *Figure 3*).

Figure 1. Unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted

Grant County, January 2013 through June 2015

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)



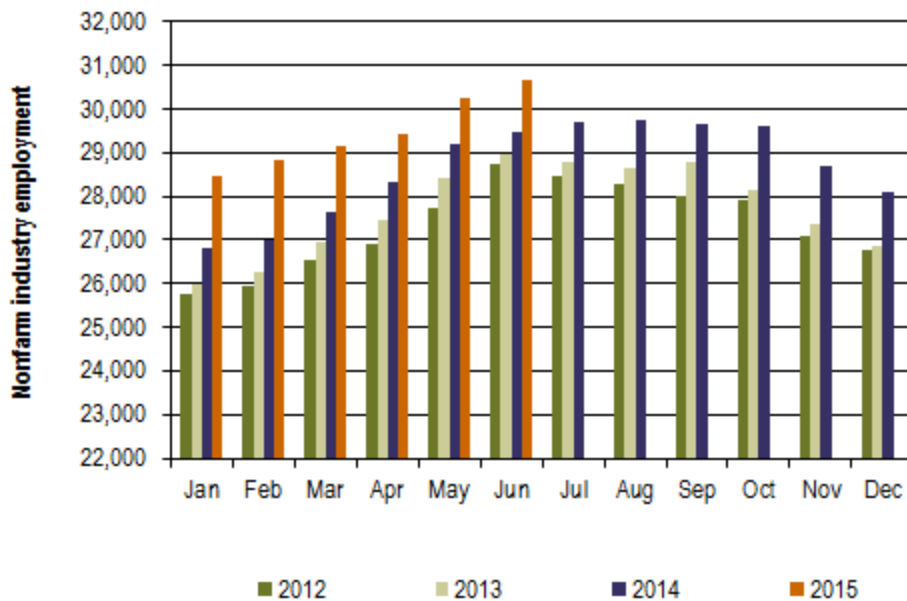
The Grant County unemployment rate decreased four-tenths of a point, from 5.9 percent in June 2014 to 5.5 percent in June 2015.

Total nonfarm employment

Between 2013 and 2014, Washington's labor market provided 82,900 new nonfarm jobs, an annual average increase of 2.8 percent. This June, businesses and government organizations across Washington supplied 3,200,300 nonfarm jobs (not seasonally adjusted), compared to 3,085,600 jobs in June 2014, a 3.7 percent year-over-year employment increase. The state's economy has posted nonfarm employment increases for the past 57 consecutive months (October 2010 through June 2015).

Between 2013 and 2014, Grant County's labor market provided 950 new nonfarm jobs, an average annual increase of 3.4 percent, more robust than the state's 2.8 percent job growth rate in 2014. In June 2015, local nonfarm employers provided 30,680 jobs; a 4.0 percent and 1,190 job expansion from the 29,490 recorded in June 2014 (see Figure 2). The Grant County economy has registered year-over-year nonfarm employment increases for the past 33 months (from October 2012 through June 2015).

Figure 2. Nonfarm industry employment
Grant County, January 2012 through June 2015
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



Nonfarm employers in Grant County provided 30,680 nonfarm jobs in June 2015, a 4.0 percent upturn from June 2014.

Employment and unemployment

Washington's Civilian Labor Force (CLF) expanded by 28,140 residents (a 0.8 percent upturn) from 2013 to 2014. The state's labor force has increased for the past 17 months (February 2014 through June 2015). Between the Junes of 2014 and 2015 the state's labor force grew by 1.7 percent. This June, Washington's CLF tallied 3,552,460 residents versus 3,493,970 in June 2014 equating to 58,490 more Washingtonians in the labor force.

The Grant County CLF increased 1.7 percent in 2014. The labor Force (CLF) has expanded for the past 14 months (May 2014 through June 2015). It increased 4.0 percent between the Junes of 2014 and 2015, from 47,420 to 49,590 residents (meaning that 2,170 more residents were in the labor force). The number of unemployed residing in Grant County declined from 2,790 in June 2014 to 2,740 in June 2015 (meaning that 50 fewer residents were out of work). The net result was the county's unemployment rate fell by four-tenths of a percentage point between the Junes of 2014 and 2015 (see Figure 3) – a good sign for the local economy.

Figure 3. Labor force and industry employment, not seasonally adjusted
 Grant County, June 2014, May and June 2015
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

Grant County	Preliminary Jun-15	Revised May-15	Revised Jun-14	Change		
				May-15	Jun-14	Jun-14
				Jun-15	Jun-15	Jun-15 %
Labor force and unemployment						
Civilian labor force	49,590	46,040	47,420	3,550	2,170	4.6%
Resident employment	46,850	43,060	44,630	3,790	2,220	5.0%
Unemployment	2,740	2,980	2,790	-240	-50	-1.8%
Unemployment rate	5.5	6.5	5.9	-1.0	-0.4	
Industry employment						
Total nonfarm ¹	30,680	30,240	29,490	440	1,190	4.0%
Total private	22,130	21,590	21,010	540	1,120	5.3%
Goods producing	6,760	6,380	6,370	380	390	6.1%
Mining, logging and construction	1,530	1,490	1,280	40	250	19.5%
Manufacturing	5,230	4,890	5,090	340	140	2.8%
Durable goods	2,280	2,280	2,240	0	40	1.8%
Nondurable goods	2,950	2,610	2,850	340	100	3.5%
Service providing	23,920	23,860	23,120	60	800	3.5%
Trade, transportation and utilities	6,000	6,030	5,730	-30	270	4.7%
Wholesale trade	1,610	1,600	1,590	10	20	1.3%
Retail trade	3,370	3,350	3,220	20	150	4.7%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	1,020	1,080	920	-60	100	10.9%
Information and financial activities	1,200	1,200	1,240	0	-40	-3.2%
Professional and business services	2,000	1,940	1,450	60	550	37.9%
Education and health services	2,980	2,950	2,860	30	120	4.2%
Leisure and hospitality	2,600	2,520	2,770	80	-170	-6.1%
Government	8,550	8,650	8,480	-100	70	0.8%
Federal government	780	770	770	10	10	1.3%
State and local government	7,770	7,880	7,710	-110	60	0.8%
State and local government education	3,490	3,700	3,450	-210	40	1.2%
Workers in labor/management disputes	0	0	0	0	0	
¹ Excludes proprietors, self-employed, members of the armed services, workers in private households and agriculture. Includes all full- and part-time wage and salary workers receiving pay during the pay period including the 12th of the month. Columns may not add due to rounding.						

Nonfarm employment in Grant County increased 4.0 percent, a gain of 1,190 jobs, between June 2014 and June 2015.

Nonfarm industry employment

Preliminary estimates (see *Figure 3*) indicate that Grant County’s nonfarm employers provided 1,190 more jobs in June 2015 than in June 2014, a 4.0 percent upturn, slightly greater than Washington’s 3.7 percent growth pace during this period. Following is a summary of these recent over-the-year changes by industry:

- Most jobs in the combined “mining, logging and construction” category in Grant County are in construction and this category has been increasing year over year for the past 13 months (June 2014

through June 2015). Between the Junes of 2014 and 2015 construction jumped 19.5 percent, a 250 job expansion. Statewide, the construction has been adding workers for the past 40 months (March 2012 through June 2015).

- Grant County's manufacturing industry has been growing for 22 months (from September 2013 through June 2015). Between the Junes of 2014 and 2015 manufacturing employment increased by 2.8 percent, from 5,090 to 5,230 jobs, a 140 job expansion. The June 2014 to June 2015 expansion was led by Grant County's nondurable goods manufacturers which rose from 2,850 jobs in June 2014 to 2,950 this June, a 100 job and 3.5 percent upturn (as shown in *Figure 3*). An example of a local firm contributing to the nondurable goods manufacturing upturn was given in a 16 May 2015 *Columbia Basin Herald* article entitled "AstaReal celebrates one year of success in Moses Lake." This firm celebrated its one-year anniversary in Moses Lake in May 2015. The article stated: "AstaReal Technologies is a subsidiary of the Fuji Chemical Industry group, which is headquartered in Japan. AstaReal cultivates microalgae to produce an antioxidant compound called astaxanthin." It was also reported that this company "has created 52 jobs in Moses Lake."
- Retail trade provided 3,220 full- and part-time jobs in June 2014 versus 3,370 in June of this year, a 4.7 percent increase (up 150 jobs). This industry has been posting year-over-year advances for the past ten months (September 2014 through June 2015). Statewide, retail trade employment has grown for the past 57 months (October 2010 through June 2015).
- Professional and business services consists of a diverse set of niche industries, ranging from computer systems design and accounting/tax preparation services to management services, legal services and temporary employment services. In short, professional and business services is the umbrella industry of businesses that support other businesses. Professional and business services provided 1,450 jobs countywide in June 2014 versus 2,000 in June 2015, a strong 37.9 percent increase and an upturn of 550.
- Leisure and hospitality employment in Grant County had posted year-over-year gains for seven consecutive months (October 2014 through April 2015) before posting year-over-year losses in May and June 2015. This industry, which consists primarily of hotel and restaurants, declined 6.1 percent and lost 170 jobs between the Junes of 2014 and 2015. Conversely, Washington's leisure and hospitality industry has been adding jobs for 57 months (from October 2010 through June 2015).

Agricultural employment/production

Drought is never a good word and the effects of this year's drought are becoming more deeply felt each passing day by growers, ranchers, sportsmen and campers throughout Central Washington. As snowpack shrank to historic lows and dwindling river flows caused irrigation districts to cut off water to some farmers, Governor Jay Inslee declared a statewide drought emergency on May 15, 2015. Washington's Department of Ecology provided the following drought information on their <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/drought> website: "We're really starting to feel the pain from this snowpack drought," Inslee said. "Impacts are already severe in several areas of the state. Difficult decisions are being made about what crops get priority water and how best to save fish." The website also stated that the Washington Department of Agriculture is projecting a \$1.2 billion crop loss this year as a result of the drought. Further, the Department of Natural Resources expects more early-season and higher-elevation wildfires. A 21 July 2015 update to this Ecology website announced that the Washington State Legislature has approved \$16 million in funding for drought relief work in 2015-17 biennium. "The funding will help ensure reliable public water supplies, augment water supplies for farmers and provide water to support stream flows for fish. A portion of the money will allow Ecology to provide grants to state and federal agencies, cities, counties, other political subdivisions and some Indian tribes for projects such as developing alternative water resources, purchasing or leasing water or water rights and building water transmission pipelines."