



Grant County

Labor Area Summary

February 2014

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Overview

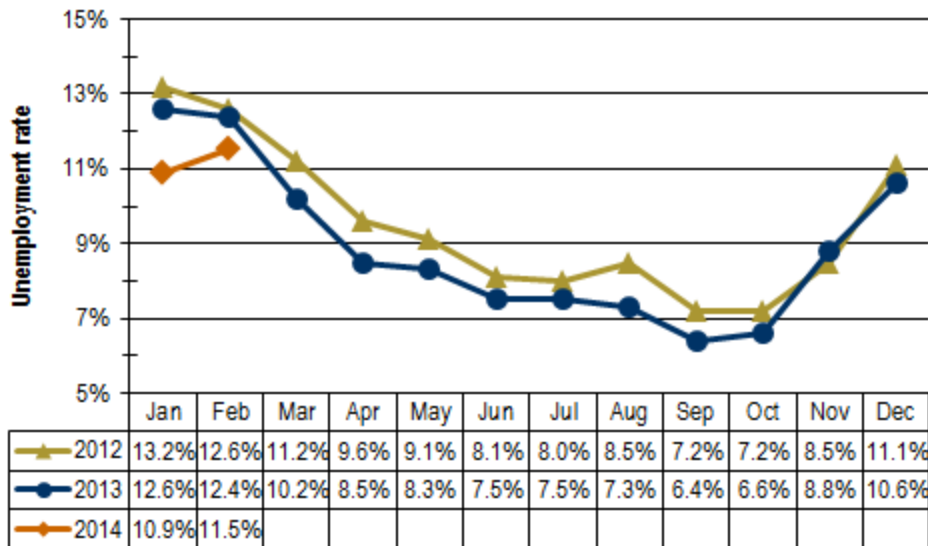
This report provides a current update on the Grant County economy incorporating current, not seasonally adjusted, nonfarm and agricultural employment, and civilian labor force data. Analysis focuses on year-over-year (between February 2013 and February 2014) and on annual average changes in the labor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

Unemployment rates

Washington state's annual average not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased one and one-tenths percentage points between 2012 and 2013, from 8.1 percent to 7.0 percent. Between the Februarys of 2013 and 2014 the rate decreased from 8.0 to 7.3, a decline of seven-tenths percentage point.

In Grant County, the annual average unemployment rate decreased six-tenths of a percentage point between 2012 and 2013, from 9.4 to 8.8 percent. It decreased nine-tenths of a percentage point this February to 11.5 percent from the 12.4 percent reading in February 2013 (as shown in *Figure 1*). Countywide, the number of residents unemployed fell from 4,900 in February 2013 to 4,450 in February 2014.

Figure 1. Unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted
 Grant County, January 2012 through February 2014
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)



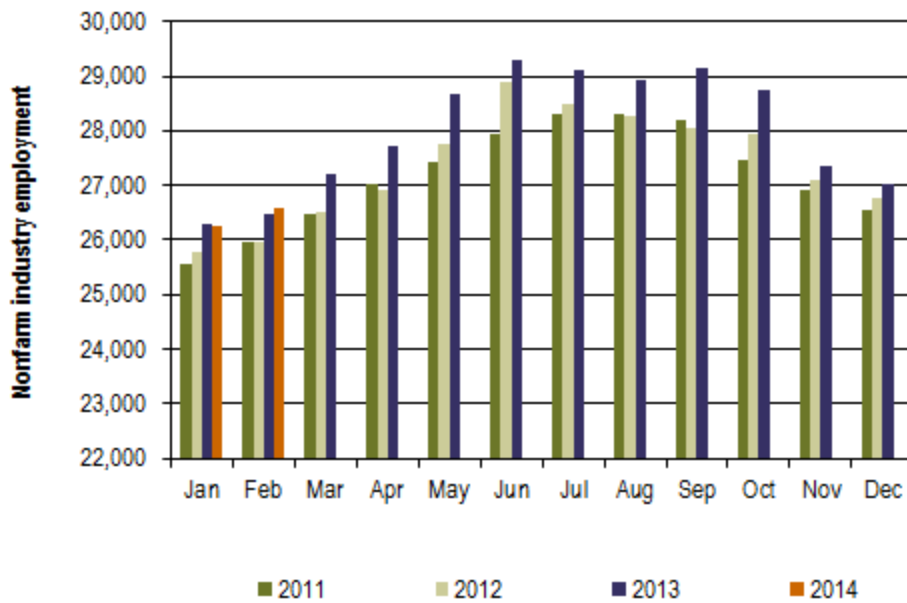
The Grant County unemployment rate decreased nine-tenths of a percentage point between February 2013 and February 2014.

Total nonfarm employment

Businesses and government organizations across Washington supplied 2,984,400 nonfarm jobs this February (not seasonally adjusted), compared to 2,930,000 jobs in February 2013. This equated to a 1.9 percent year-over-year employment increase statewide. Washington's labor market provided 65,200 new jobs in 2013, an annual average increase of 2.2 percent. The State's economy has posted nonfarm employment increases for the past 41 months (October 2010 through February 2014).

Grant County's nonfarm labor market registered fifteen consecutive months of job growth (from October 2012 through December 2013) before declining 0.1 percent in January 2014. In February 2014 local nonfarm employers provided 26,580 jobs, a 0.3 percent and 90 job increase from the 26,490 jobs tallied in February 2013.

Figure 2. Nonfarm industry employment
Grant County, January 2011 through February 2014
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



Nonfarm employers in Grant County provided 26,580 nonfarm jobs in February 2014, a 0.3 percent upturn from February 2013.

Employment and unemployment

Washington's Civilian Labor Force (CLF) shrank by 23,600 residents (a 0.7 percent downturn) in 2013. In fact, Washington's CLF contracted from January 2013 through January 2014 (13 consecutive months) until it expanded 0.2 percent between the Februarys of 2013 and 2014. In February 2014 the state's labor force tallied 3,468,710 residents versus 3,461,480 in February 2013, equating to 7,230 more residents in the CLF (up 0.2 percent) – an encouraging sign.

The CLF in Grant County shrank by 1.6 percent in 2013, by 3.2 percent in January 2014, and by 2.1 percent in February 2014. This February, 38,570 residents were in the local labor force versus 39,400 in February 2013. The upside was that 450 fewer residents were unemployed in February 2014 compared with the corresponding month in 2013 (4,900 residents were unemployed in February 2013 versus 4,450 in February 2014). The labor force shrinkage between the Februarys of 2013 and 2014 did not counter the more rapid decrease in the number of unemployed, hence the County's unemployment rate declined from 12.4 percent to 11.5 percent during this timeframe (as shown in *Figure 3*).

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

Grant County	Preliminary Feb-14	Revised Jan-14	Revised Feb-13	Change		
				Jan-14 Feb-14	Feb-13 Feb-14	Feb-13 Feb-14 %
Labor force and unemployment						
Civilian labor force	38,570	37,330	39,400	1,240	-830	-2.1%
Resident employment	34,120	33,270	34,500	850	-380	-1.1%
Unemployment	4,450	4,060	4,900	390	-450	-9.2%
Unemployment rate	11.5	10.9	12.4	0.6	-0.9	
Industry employment						
Total nonfarm ¹	26,580	26,260	26,490	320	90	0.3%
Total private	18,390	18,080	18,330	310	60	0.3%
Goods producing	4,840	4,820	5,390	20	-550	-10.2%
Mining, logging, and construction	980	940	1,060	40	-80	-7.5%
Manufacturing	3,860	3,880	4,330	-20	-470	-10.9%
Durable goods	1,800	1,800	1,920	0	-120	-6.3%
Nondurable goods	2,060	2,080	2,410	-20	-350	-14.5%
Service providing	21,740	21,440	21,100	300	640	3.0%
Trade, transportation, and utilities	5,870	5,740	5,530	130	340	6.1%
Wholesale trade	1,500	1,430	1,440	70	60	4.2%
Retail trade	3,270	3,210	3,120	60	150	4.8%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	1,100	1,100	970	0	130	13.4%
Information and financial activities	1,080	1,040	980	40	100	10.2%
Professional and business services	1,600	1,370	1,140	230	460	40.4%
Education and health services	2,100	2,080	2,730	20	-630	-23.1%
Leisure and hospitality	2,330	2,460	1,960	-130	370	18.9%
Government	8,190	8,180	8,160	10	30	0.4%
Federal government	690	700	730	-10	-40	-5.5%
State and local government	7,500	7,480	7,430	20	70	0.9%
State and local government education	3,620	3,580	3,600	40	20	0.6%
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 0.3 percent, a gain of 90 jobs, between February 2013 and February 2014.

Nonfarm industry employment

Preliminary estimates (see *Figure 3*) illustrate that Grant County's nonfarm employers tallied 90 more jobs in February 2014 than in February 2014, a 0.3 percent upturn. Following is a summary of these recent over-the-year changes, by industry:

- Mining, logging, and construction declined from 1,060 jobs in February 2013 to 980 in February 2014, an 80 job and a 7.5 percent downturn. Most jobs in this combined “mining, logging, and construction” category are in construction. Year over year, Grant County's construction industry has either stagnated or lost jobs from July 2012 through February 2014. Statewide, construction has been adding workers for the past 24 months (from March 2012-February 2014).
- Manufacturing decreased between the Februarys of 2013 and 2014, from 4,330 to 3,860, a 470 job and 10.9 percent contraction. Approximately 120 jobs were lost in durable goods manufacturing while 350 fewer jobs were available this February in nondurable goods manufacturing (primarily at food processing companies).
- Retail trade stores provided 3,120 jobs in February 2013 and 3,270 in February 2014, a 4.8 percent increase and a gain of 150 part- or full-time jobs.
- Transportation, warehousing, and utilities netted 130 more jobs in February 2014, a 13.4 percent year over year expansion. Trucking firms account for the lion's share of employment in this combined “transportation, warehousing, and utilities” category.
- Professional and business services gained 460 jobs, a strong 40.4 percent increase, between the Februarys of 2013 and 2014. On an annual average basis this category increased from 1,250 in 2012 to 1,440 in 2013, a 190 job and 15.2 percent increase. Professional and business services is a broad category that includes legal offices, accounting and tax preparation firms, private security companies, temporary job placement agencies, etc.
- Private education and health services lost 630 jobs from February 2013 to February 2014, a 23.1 percent downturn. On an annual average basis, losses were not as severe. Education and health services provided 2,870 jobs across Grant County in 2012 and 2,710 in 2013, a 160 job and 5.6 percent contraction. Also, note that the estimate of 2,100 private education and health services jobs in February 2014 is a preliminary, sample-based figure that will likely be revised upwards with the release of March 2014 nonfarm employment data.
- Leisure and hospitality (primarily hotels and restaurants) rose from 1,960 in February 2013 to 2,330 one year later, a substantial 370 job and 18.9 percent upturn. This Grant County industry averaged 2,310 full- and part-time jobs in 2012 and 2,520 in 2013 (up 9.1 percent).
- State and local government expanded from 7,430 positions in February 2013 to 7,500 in February 2014, a 0.9 percent upturn. Conversely, federal government agencies tightened their belts during this period as payroll employment contracted from 730 to 690, a 5.5 percent downtrend.

Agricultural employment

LMEA's Agricultural Employment and Wage report for February 2014 showed the total number of agricultural jobs rose 9.3 percent over the year in the Columbia Basin Area 4, an agricultural reporting area that includes Adams and Grant counties. Total agricultural employment was 8,580 in February 2013 versus 9,380 in February 2014, an 800-job increase. A little more than 80 percent of agricultural jobs provided in this two-county area are on farms and orchards in Grant County. It should also be noted that seasonal agricultural employment in the Columbia Basin's Area 4 decreased from 3,630 in February 2013, to 3,530 in February 2014, 2.8-percent abatement. Why? According to the Agricultural Employment and Wage report, “Columbia Basin (Area 4) seasonal employment decreased 2.8 percent due to decreased cherry work (-270).”

In other agricultural news, weather conditions were colder and wetter than normal during the reporting period. Earlier drought fears have been washed away by a wet February. Statewide snowpack levels have improved to 91 percent of average. Earlier in the month, many basins were at 55 percent of normal.