



Grant County

Labor Area Summary

March 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 Marches of 2014 and 2015) and average annual (between 2013 and 2014) labor market changes.

Unemployment rates

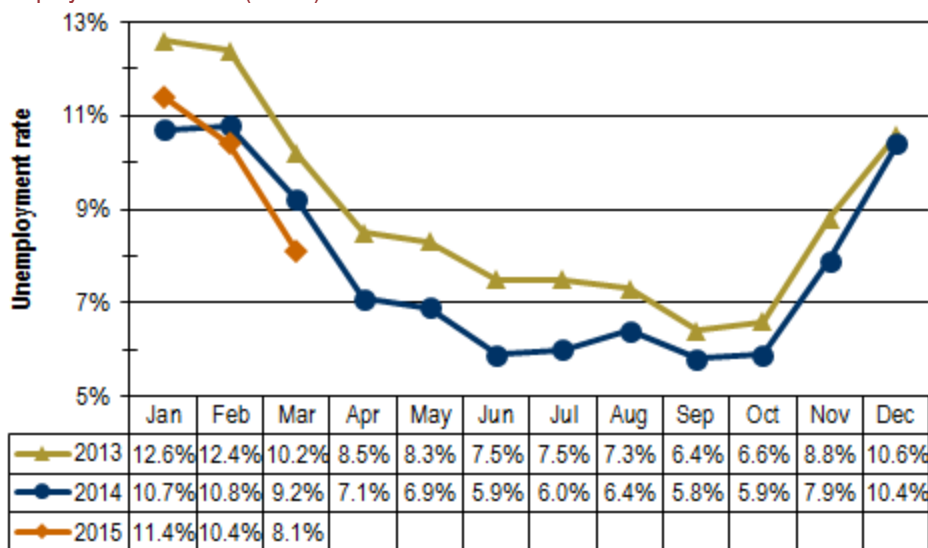
Preliminary labor force data show that Washington state’s average annual not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased eight-tenths of a percentage point between 2013 and 2014, from 7.0 percent to 6.2 percent. Between the Marches of 2014 and 2015 the rate declined one and one-tenths points, from 6.8 to 5.7 percent.

In Grant County, the average annual unemployment rate decreased one and one-tenths percentage points between 2013 and 2014, from 8.8 to 7.7 percent. The rate decreased one and one-tenths points this March to 8.1 percent from the 9.2 percent reading in March 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 March 2015

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



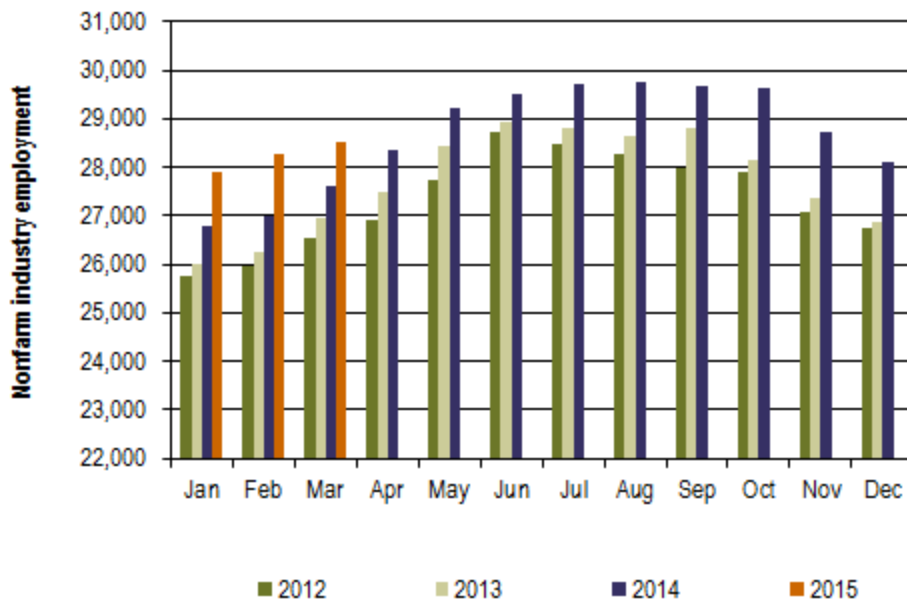
The Grant County unemployment rate decreased from 9.2 percent in March 2014 to 8.1 percent in March 2015.

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 March, businesses and government organizations across Washington supplied 3,124,500 nonfarm jobs (not seasonally adjusted), compared to 3,023,600 jobs in March 2014, a 3.3 percent year-over-year employment increase. The state's economy has posted nonfarm employment increases for the past 54 consecutive months (October 2010 through March 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 March 2015, local nonfarm employers provided 28,500 jobs; a 3.2 percent and 880 job expansion from the 27,620 recorded in March 2014 (see *Figure 2*). The Grant County economy has registered year-over-year nonfarm employment increases for the past 30 months (from October 2012 through March 2015).

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



Nonfarm employers in Grant County provided 28,500 nonfarm jobs in March 2015, a 3.2 percent upturn from March 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 14 months (February 2014 through March 2015). Between the Marches of 2014 and 2015 the state's labor force grew by 2.0 percent. This March, Washington's CLF tallied 3,543,990 residents versus 3,476,060 in March 2014 equating to 67,930 more Washingtonians in the labor force.

The Grant County CLF increased 7.1 percent in 2014. In fact, the labor force has grown for the past 20 months (August 2013 through March 2015). Between the Marches of 2014 and 2015 the CLF expanded 3.1 percent, from 42,060 to 43,360 residents (meaning that 1,300 more residents were in the labor force). The number of unemployed residing in Grant County declined from 3,870 in March 2014 to 3,530 in March 2015 (meaning that 340 fewer residents were out of work). The net result was the county's unemployment rate fell by one and one-tenths percentage points between the Marches 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, March 2015
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

Grant County	Preliminary Mar-15	Revised Feb-15	Revised Mar-14	Change		
				Feb-15	Mar-14	Mar-14
				Mar-15	Mar-15	Mar-15 %
Labor force and unemployment						
Civilian labor force	43,360	42,940	42,060	420	1,300	3.1%
Resident employment	39,830	38,480	38,190	1,350	1,640	4.3%
Unemployment	3,530	4,460	3,870	-930	-340	-8.8%
Unemployment rate	8.1	10.4	9.2	-2.3	-1.1	
Industry employment						
Total nonfarm ¹	28,500	28,260	27,620	240	880	3.2%
Total private	20,090	19,810	19,370	280	720	3.7%
Goods producing	6,140	6,080	5,740	60	400	7.0%
Mining, logging and construction	1,260	1,170	1,080	90	180	16.7%
Manufacturing	4,880	4,910	4,660	-30	220	4.7%
Durable goods	2,270	2,270	2,190	0	80	3.7%
Nondurable goods	2,610	2,640	2,470	-30	140	5.7%
Service providing	22,360	22,180	21,880	180	480	2.2%
Trade, transportation and utilities	5,900	5,840	5,690	60	210	3.7%
Wholesale trade	1,580	1,550	1,570	30	10	0.6%
Retail trade	3,260	3,240	3,160	20	100	3.2%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	1,060	1,050	960	10	100	10.4%
Information and financial activities	1,260	1,260	1,150	0	110	9.6%
Professional and business services	1,110	1,110	1,330	0	-220	-16.5%
Education and health services	2,830	2,750	2,720	80	110	4.0%
Leisure and hospitality	2,310	2,240	2,180	70	130	6.0%
Government	8,410	8,450	8,250	-40	160	1.9%
Federal government	760	750	700	10	60	8.6%
State and local government	7,650	7,700	7,550	-50	100	1.3%
State and local government education	3,700	3,740	3,670	-40	30	0.8%
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 3.2 percent, a gain of 880 jobs, between March 2014 and March 2015.

Nonfarm industry employment

Preliminary estimates (see *Figure 3*) illustrate that Grant County’s nonfarm employers provided 880 more jobs in March 2015 than in March 2014, a 3.2 percent upturn. 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 ten months (June

2014 through March 2015). Between the Marches of 2014 and 2015 construction jumped 16.7 percent, a 180 job expansion. Statewide, the construction has been adding workers for the past 37 months (March 2012 through March 2015).

- Grant County's manufacturing industry has been adding workers for the past 19 months (September 2013 through March 2015). Between the Marches of 2014 and 2015, this industry increased 4.7 percent, from 4,660 to 4,880 jobs, a strong 220 job expansion. This year over year expansion was led by local nondurable goods manufacturing (primarily food processors) which advanced from 2,470 jobs in March 2014 to 2,610 this March, a 140 job and 5.7 percent upturn (as shown in *Figure 3*). Statewide, manufacturing employment has been growing for the past 54 months (October 2010 through March 2015) with a more modest 1.8-percent upturn between the Marches of 2014 and 2015.
- Retail trade accounted for 3,160 jobs in March 2014 versus 3,260 in March 2015, a 3.2 percent increase and a gain of 100 jobs.
- 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 1,330 jobs countywide in March 2014 versus 1,110 in March 2015, a 16.5 percent decrease and a downturn of 220 and estimates indicate that this year-over-year downtrend has been occurring for the past four months (December 2014 through March 2015). This industry averaged 1,310 jobs in 2013 versus 1,430 in 2014, a 120 job and 9.2 percent upturn. Hence this recent trend bears watching. In fact, it was the only major Grant County industry to lose jobs between March 2014 and March 2015. How has employment in this industry been faring statewide? It has been adding workers to its payrolls for at least the past 59 months (May 2010 through March 2015).
- Private education and health services advanced by 110 jobs, a 4.0 percent increase, between the Marches of 2014 and 2015. Year over year, Grant County's private education and health services industry has added jobs for the past nine consecutive months (July 2014 through March 2015). Statewide, this industry has been in the expansion mode for at least the past 87 months (January 2008 through March 2015).
- Leisure and hospitality (primarily hotels and restaurants) grew robustly between the Marches of 2014 and 2015. This industry gained 130 jobs, from 2,180 jobs to 2,310, a 6.0-percent upturn during this timeframe. By comparison, Washington's leisure and hospitality industry increased 2.1 percent from March 2014 to March 2015.

Agricultural employment/production

An April 21, 2015 Associated Press article entitled “Yakima Basin drought forces early use of stored water” stated: “The federal Bureau of Reclamation has had to start using stored reservoir water to supplement natural flows early because of a worsening drought in central Washington's Yakima Basin. According to a mid-month forecast released by the bureau, some Yakima Basin water users may only get 54 percent of their supply. Chuck Garner, the bureau's Yakima Project River Operations supervisor, told the Tri-City Herald that weather conditions forced them to use stored reservoir water starting April 15. Typically the stored water in reservoirs is not used until June. Garner says a record low snowpack, the cold weather and the low amount of April precipitation caused a decline in the natural flows. Last month, Gov. Jay Inslee declared a drought emergency for the Yakima Basin, Walla Walla, Wenatchee and the Olympic Peninsula.”