Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

(CEDS)

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epedc.com

2012-2017

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WASHINGTON, DC 20510–2602

April 25, 2012

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Denver Regional Office
410 17th Street, Suite 250
Denver, CO 80202

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased express my support for the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPEDC) and their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

A primary concern for communities hit by the impacts of the energy boom is planning for an appropriate level of development that is affordable and sustainable to their population. Eastern Montana counties and communities are considering phased-in development of resources, as many entities were most recently contending with outmigration or stagnation rather than growth.

I have recently participated in several meetings about the issues affecting Eastern Montana's economy with Jason Rittal and members of the EPEDC. I am prepared to work with this organization, and other regional organizations, to help focus the attention of Congress and federal departments and agencies on this phenomenon of a boom economy in an area that has experienced years of stagnant growth or outmigration. Without the ability to focus on a plan of development, these factors cause severe economic distress and dislocation for local taxpayers and residents.

Communities and counties have identified priority areas which I and my staff will focus our efforts: water/wastewater infrastructure, housing, transportation, law enforcement and emergency services, and education and training. EPEDC will be an important partner in maintaining a stable but diverse economy as well as improving economic conditions through cooperation and communication between public and private entities, now focused on the impacts of energy development. The CEDS is critical to the success of this effort.

Sincerely,

Max Baucus

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May 2, 2012

Robert Olson
Regional Director
U.S. Department of Commerce
EDA Denver Regional Office
410 17th Street, Suite 250
Denver, CO 80202-4454

Dear Mr. Olson,

I write in support of the continuing regional development efforts of the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation.

The corporation is updating the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the counties of Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie and Wibaux. This strategy update will help these Eastern Montana communities prosper and provide them with a guiding document that reflects a unified regional approach to creating healthy and vibrant communities. A unified regional approach is especially critical due to the area's ongoing energy development.

Thank you for your attention to this application. If I can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would also appreciate you informing my office of the eventual decision on this application.

Thank you for your attention to this application. If I can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would also appreciate you informing my office of the eventual decision on this application.

Sincerely,

Jon Tester
United States Senator

BOZEMAN (406) 586-4450 | BUTTE (406) 723-3277 | GLENDIVE (406) 365-2391 | GREAT FALLS (406) 452-9585 | HELENA (406) 449-5401 | KALISPELL (406) 257-3360
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Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
2012-2017

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Executive Summary

The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation was established in 2006 as a public benefit, regional non-profit corporation. The five (5) counties of **Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie,** and **Wibaux**, along with the communities of **Baker, Ekalaka, Glendive, Plevna, Richey, Terry,** and **Wibaux**, joined forces to create a means to stimulate and promote economic development in southeastern Montana.

The 2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) update compiled by the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPEDC) represents a continued commitment and effort by our staff and our Board of Directors to listen, deliver, and sustain a high level of attention and service to each of the counties, communities, and citizens we serve. Included in this CEDS is the most recent social and economic data from the U. S. Census Bureau and other sources. Also provided are an assessment of the region's economic condition and a discussion of the region's current strategy for economic development.

The CEDS, which includes implementation and evaluation components, is designed to increase new jobs and tax base, to foster a more stable and diverse economy, to improve the standard of living, and to help the region focus on its communities' future needs and responsibilities. The planning process involved gathering input from individuals and organizations within the EPEDC Economic Development District (EDD). We analyzed local conditions and trends, identified problems and opportunities, and established goals, objectives and strategies to address regional needs. Consequently, the CEDS is intended to create an on-going foundation for future economic planning and activity in the region.

During CEDS meetings held throughout the region, residents expressed a desire to continue initiating projects that will provoke sustainable, multi-faceted economic development. Projects that were mentioned most often involved diversifying the local economy, enhancing local housing, improving and expanding local infrastructure, capitalizing on the existence of natural resources, and encouraging tourism within the area. Public input helped the Eastern Plains EDC focus on the following five main categories—**Economy, Housing, Infrastructure, Natural Resources, and Tourism.**

Without the active participation of local elected officials, area business people, government employees, local economic development representatives, and private citizens, this CEDS update would not have been possible. It represents input received from District residents over the past 12-15 months, used to identify specific economic development goals and objectives, reviewed by an economic development committee that worked together to develop mutually beneficial strategies to meet those needs.

CEDS Process

What is the "CEDS"?

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, hereafter referred to as "CEDS", is the culmination of efforts by the five (5) counties of **Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie,** and **Wibaux**, along with the communities of **Baker, Ekalaka, Glendive, Plevna, Richey, Terry,** and **Wibaux**, to define and improve upon regional economic conditions.

The Economic Development Administration (EDA), a division of the U.S. Department of Administration states:

> A comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies. The CEDS should analyze the regional economy and serve as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources. A CEDS integrates a region's human and physical capital planning in the service of economic development. Integrated economic development planning provides the flexibility to adapt to global economic conditions and fully utilize the region's unique advantages to maximize economic opportunity for its residents by attracting the private investment that creates jobs for the region's residents. A CEDS must be the result of a continuing economic development planning process developed with broad-based and diverse public and private sector participation, and must set forth the goals and objectives necessary to solve the economic development problems of the region and clearly define the metrics of success. Finally, a CEDS provides a useful benchmark by which a regional economy can evaluate opportunities with other regions in the national economy.

The CEDS document is mandated by the EDA and is used to define Economic Development Districts (EDD) throughout the nation. Goals and objectives are revised annually, while the entire CEDS document must be updated to reflect regional growth and change every five (5) years.

Organization Profile ("Who are we?)

Background

The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPEDC) was established in 2006. This public benefit, regional economic development corporation is a private, nonprofit corporation recognized by the State of Montana. The five (5) counties of **Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie,** and **Wibaux**, along with the incorporated communities of **Baker, Ekalaka, Glendive, Plevna, Richey, Terry,** and **Wibaux**, joined forces to create a means to stimulate and promote economic development in southeast Montana. The commissioners of each county government agreed to the formation of the EPEDC and passed resolutions in support of an Economic Development District (EDD) as federally defined and regulated by the Economic Development Administration (EDA).

The EPEDC initially received assistance for the development of its first Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in 2006 from Eastern Plains Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area, Inc. formerly headquartered in Sidney, Montana. Upon completion of the CEDS and a successful EDA application, the EPEDC received independent certification from EDA as an Economic Development District. The EPEDC operated through a subcontract with the Eastern Plains RC&D for its first few years to provide Certified Regional development services, but independent Certified Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) status from the State of Montana Department of Commerce was applied for and received January 1, 2011.

The EPEDC is funded in part via EDA and is able to leverage those funds by matching them with CRDC funding, along with local government and private contributions. Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the neighboring Southeastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC) for management of Revolving Loan Funds (RLF), the EPEDC is able to provide certain types of development funding to projects within the region. The EPEDC also works in cooperation with SEMDC to provide Small Business Development Center (SBDC) services. Area banks, town/city/county governments, and the private sector recognize the regional development organizations for their technical assistance in business development and their willingness to partner to meet business financing needs.

Membership Structure

The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPEDC) is an organization of towns, cities, counties, local economic development groups, and civic leaders brought together for the purpose of forming and maintaining an Economic Development District (EDD). The region was also recently approved as a Certified Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) by the State of Montana (**Appendix A**).

The participating governments and communities are:

Carter County
Dawson County
Fallon County
Prairie County
Wibaux County

Town of Ekalaka
City of Glendive
Town of Richey
City of Baker
Town of Plevna
Town of Terry
Town of Wibaux

The EPEDC strives to continuously increase membership activity, develop relationships, and welcome new interests. Building a good track record and fostering opportunities that enhance connections and communication between public and private entities within the District are priorities.

Nonprofit Status

The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPEDC) is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, classified as a 501(c)(3) by the IRS.

Copies of the EPEDC Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws can be supplied upon request.

Management and Staff

Self-contained governments with typical county functions and departments administer the five counties that comprise the EPEDC region. The administrative centers, or county seats, are located in **Ekalaka** (Carter County), **Glendive** (Dawson County), **Baker** (Fallon County), **Terry** (Prairie County), and **Wibaux** (Wibaux County). The District's planning and implementation components involve local elected officials. Several are represented on the District's Board of Directors and CEDS Committee, and all have input in the planning process.

The EPEDC independently employs two (2) full-time staff members, and contracts the assistance of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Director through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Southeastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC). Staff consists of one full-time, salaried Executive Director and one full-time hourly wage Economic Development Assistant, who both work solely on activities of benefit to objectives identified in the CEDS.

Jason Rittal
Title: Executive Director

Jason Rittal is a 1990 graduate of Terry High School and a 1994 graduate of Montana State University-Bozeman with a degree in Business Management. He has 14 years' experience in community development, business planning, grant writing, and grant administration.

Jason is also quite familiar with owning and operating a small business, securing funding for infrastructure projects through various funding programs at both the state and federal level, reviewing and developing business plans, and assisting local governments. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) and is a Certified Economic Development Finance Professional through the National Development Corporation.

Jason returned to the area in 2005 and has functioned as the Executive Director for the EPEDC since March 1, 2008. As a native of eastern Montana with family still in the area, he is excited to be in a position to help the region served by the EPEDC.

Elizabeth Smith
Title: Economic Development Assistant

Elizabeth Smith is a 1998 graduate of Terry High School. After graduating in 2001 from Northern State University in Aberdeen, SD with a BA in Fine Art, she moved to the west coast before returning in the fall of 2004 to raise her family in Prairie County.

She has garnered significant experience in the area of historic preservation and served a one-year VISTA volunteer term with the Prairie Economic Development Council from July 2008-July 2009, giving her valuable experience in economic development. Continued interest in further capitalizing on eastern Montana's diverse beauty, small-town community spirit, and abundant resources for the betterment of the local population led Elizabeth to pursue a more permanent position in the field of economic development. She was hired to fill the role of Economic Development Assistant by the EPEDC in August 2009.

John Sisson
Title: Small Business Development Center Director

Hired in 2012, John Sisson is a highly qualified professional and native of southeastern Montana. As the director for the regional Small Business Development Center (SBDC), John provides confidential business counseling, in addition to training on everything from creating a business plan to ongoing operational, financial, and technical services.

SBDC services are provided on a no fee basis to both existing and start-up businesses in Carter, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Powder River, Prairie, Rosebud, Treasure, and Wibaux Counties.

Board of Directors

Each of the EPEDC's five (5) counties is represented by a county commissioner on the Board of Directors. Six (6) of the seven (7) town/city councils are also represented by individuals appointed by their respective local governments. Furthermore, members of the Dawson County Economic Development Council (DCEDC), Southeastern Montana Area Revitalization Team (SMART), Baker Chamber of Commerce, Prairie County Economic Development Council (PCEDC), and Wibaux County Chamber of Commerce serve in various capacities on the Board of Directors.

The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors currently has 19 members. The Board of Directors is comprised of 11 elected officials (58%), 7 non-government representatives (37%), and 1 at-large member (5%). Currently, 12 men (63%) and 7 women (37%) serve on the Board. Minority representation includes 0 Directors (2%), which is consistent with District percentages. Each Director is assigned one or two areas of interest to represent the district. *The official EPEDC Board Roster follows on page 9.*

EASTERN PLAINS EDD BOARD MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

1. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES *(51-65%)*

Elected officials and/or employees of a general purpose unit of state, local or Indian tribal government who have been appointed to represent the government.

Name	Government	Position
Bill Loehding	Carter County	Commissioner
Todd Devlin	Prairie County	Commissioner
Bill Randash	Fallon County	Commissioner
Adam Gartner	Dawson County	Commissioner
Leif Bakken	Wibaux County	Commissioner
Kevin Dukart	City of Baker	Clerk (council appointed)
Dave Bertelson	Town of Wibaux	Council Member
Lisa Jourdan	Town of Ekalaka	Clerk (council appointed)
Vivian Panasuk	Town of Plevna	Clerk (council appointed)
Ron Kiosse	Town of Terry	Mayor
Linda Jones	City of Glendive	Council Member

2. NON-GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES *(35-49%)*

A. **Private Sector Representatives:** *Any senior management official or executive holding a key decision-making position, with respect to any for-profit enterprise. (At least one required)*

Name	Company / Enterprise	Position
Sharon Gookin	Gookin Ranch & Trucking	Owner
Lance Kalfell	Kalfell Ranch, Inc.	Owner
Amy Deines	Slade Ranch, Inc.	Owner
Mike Quade	Summit National Bank	Branch President and Senior Loan Officer

B. **Stakeholder Organization Representatives:** *Executive directors of chambers of commerce, or representatives of institutions of post-secondary education, workforce development groups or labor groups. (At least one required)*

Name	Organization	Position
Renee Nelson	Wibaux Chamber	Vice President
Lonnie Cross	Job Service	Manager
Mona Madler	Baker Chamber	Vice President

3. AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVES *(0-14%)*

Other individuals who represent the principal economic interests of the region. (No minimum required)

Name	Area of Interest	Background
Parker Powell	Health Care	Health Care Administration

CEDS Committee

The CEDS Committee is comprised of seventeen members on the Board of Directors to provide continuity. Since many of them are private business owners and elected officials or representatives of other organizations, the Board of Directors and the CEDS Committee embody a wide variety of talent, leadership skills, and geographic representation. Each member is also assigned one or two areas of interest to represent the district. These areas of interest are:

Local Government
Business
Industry
Finance
Agriculture
Professions
Natural Resources

Labor
Utilities
Education
Community
Public Health
Transportation

The Disabled
The Unemployed
The Underemployed
Minorities
Women
The Elderly

In addition to CEDS committee members, other interested business owners, citizens, and/or organizations representatives are encouraged to give us their perspectives and ideas.

The CEDS Committee met to evaluate, review, and make decisions concerning the agenda and work plan to complete the CEDS process.

The official EPEDC Strategy Committee Roster follows on page 11.

EASTERN PLAINS EDD STRATEGY COMMITTEE ROSTER

1. PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES *(At least 51%)*

Any senior management official or executive holding a key decision-making position, with respect to any for-profit enterprise.

Name	Company	Position
Mike Quade	Summit National Bank	Branch President and Senior Loan Officer
Lance Kalfell	Kalfell Ranch, Inc.	Owner
Bill Loehding	Loehding Ranch, Inc.	Owner
Ron Kiosse	C&R Auction Service	Co-owner
Sharon Gookin	Gookin Ranch & Trucking	Owner
Todd Devlin	Devlin Ranch, Inc.	Owner
Leif Bakken	Bakken Ranch, Inc.	Co-owner
Amy Deines	Slade Ranch, Inc.	Owner
Renee Nelson	Nelson Livestock Company	Co-owner

2. REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER ECONOMIC INTERESTS *(No more than 49%)*

Persons who provide additional representation of the main economic interests of the region. These may include, but are not limited to: public officials, community leaders, representatives of workforce development boards, institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and private individuals.

Name	Area of Interest	Position
Lisa Jourdan	Women/Finance	Clerk/Treasurer
Adam Gartner	Labor/Elderly	Commissioner
Parker Powell	Public Health	Administrator
Dave Bertelson	Education/Community	Extension Agent
Kevin Dukart	Economic Development	Clerk/Treasurer
Bill Randash	Business	Commissioner
Lonnie Cross	The Unemployed/Underemployed/Disabled	Job Service
Vivian Panasuk	Local Government	Clerk/Treasurer

CALCULATIONS

	Number	Percent
Private Sector Representatives (at least 51%)	9	53%
Representatives of Other Economic Interests (no more than 49%)	8	47%
Total Committee Membership	**17**	**100%**

Analysis of the Region and Its Economy ("Where are we?")

A. Background Information

Passage of the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909 attracted tens of thousands of homestead farmers to Montana in search of inexpensive land. Farmers were rather well-off until an extended drought and a drop in market prices after World War I ruined them economically. The homestead "bust" forced many farmers to leave the state.

Montana's post-World War I depression extended through the 1920s and right into the Great Depression of the 1930s. With FDR's "New Deal," came the formation of various projects and agencies that benefited the state and marked the first real dependence of the state on federal spending in the 20th century. From 1945-2000, "modern" Montana was characterized by a slow shift from an economy that relied on the extraction of natural resources to one that was service-based, while agriculture remained Montana's primary industry. This era also witnessed the state's transportation system move from a heavy reliance on railroads to more convenient cars, trucks, and highways. Economic and major technological advancements also occurred during this period.

Historically, ups and downs in the economy have been caused by escalating oil prices, sharp increases in interest rates, and drought conditions which led to decreased livestock numbers and irregular prices for agricultural commodities. The enrollment of farm land into the Federal CRP program in the mid-1980s, followed by low commodity prices in the mid-1990s, coupled with rising input costs and poor weather conditions, drastically cut into the financial health of Montana's farm economy. Now, rural Montana faces an even greater challenge as the median age of farmers and ranchers rises, while their children leave to pursue more lucrative job opportunities.

In February 2006, Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer announced that "Economic development in central and eastern Montana is a priority." Schweitzer reported that seven years of extreme drought resulted in regional socio-economic treads comparable to the "dustbowl era" of the 1930s. These socio-economic trends included an aging and declining population, wage and salary income that was both depressed and stagnant, a high prevalence of poverty, and an increased reliance on federal farm subsidies.

After this significant period of overall decline and stagnation, an upsurge in activity began to occur in 2008 due to technological advances that allowed for increased oil and gas extraction in northeastern Montana and western North Dakota. An economic "boom" that is both a blessing and a curse as good paying jobs become more readily available, business owners witness an increase in sales, and county tax revenues begin to grow. All while strain is placed on aging infrastructure, cities and towns face unforeseen planning and development issues, and housing demands force citizens and communities to deal with a steep rise in the cost of living.

1. Demographic and Socioeconomic Data

Population Statistics - The 2010 Census indicates that the EPEDC's total population decreased 2% from a total population of 15,523 in 2000 to a total population of 15,212 in 2010; the total population has decreased 8.8% since 1990 (**Table 1***, found on page 13*). Dawson County's 2010 population of 8,966 residents represents 58.9% of the District's total population. Population in the District peaked at 25,293 persons for the 1930 Census and declined to 15,212 persons by the 2010 Census. All of the counties within the EPEDC region are generally referred to as "rural."

However, "…more than 15 definitions of rural are currently used by federal programs. The two most commonly used classification systems are those of the Census Bureau and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The Census Bureau's classification of rural consists of all territory, population, and housing units located outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters. Urbanized areas include populations of at least 50,000, and urban clusters

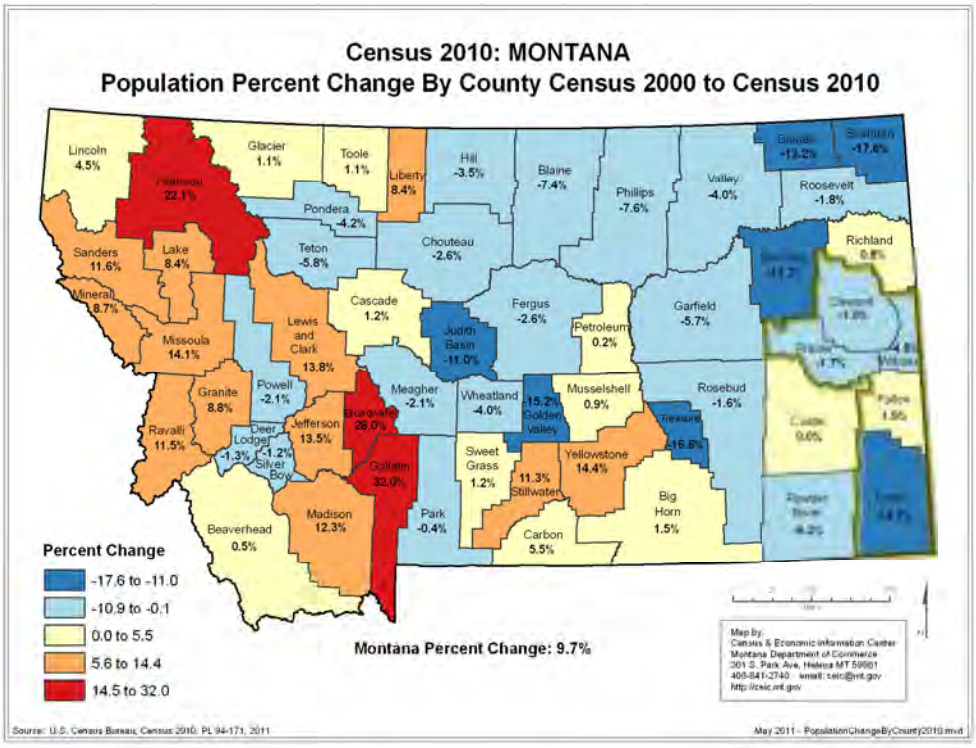
include populations between 2,500 and 50,000. The core areas of both urbanized areas and urban clusters are defined based on population density of 1,000 per square mile and then certain blocks adjacent to them are added that have at least 500 persons per square mile. OMB states that a metropolitan area must contain one or more central counties with urbanized areas. Nonmetropolitan counties are outside the boundaries of metropolitan areas and are subdivided into two types, micropolitan areas and noncore counties. Micropolitan areas are urban clusters of 10,000 or more persons." According to the Census Bureau, Glendive is the District's only urban cluster.
Mueller, Keith, Ph.D. *Issue Brief #2*, "Choosing Rural Definitions: Implications for Health Policy." March 2007.

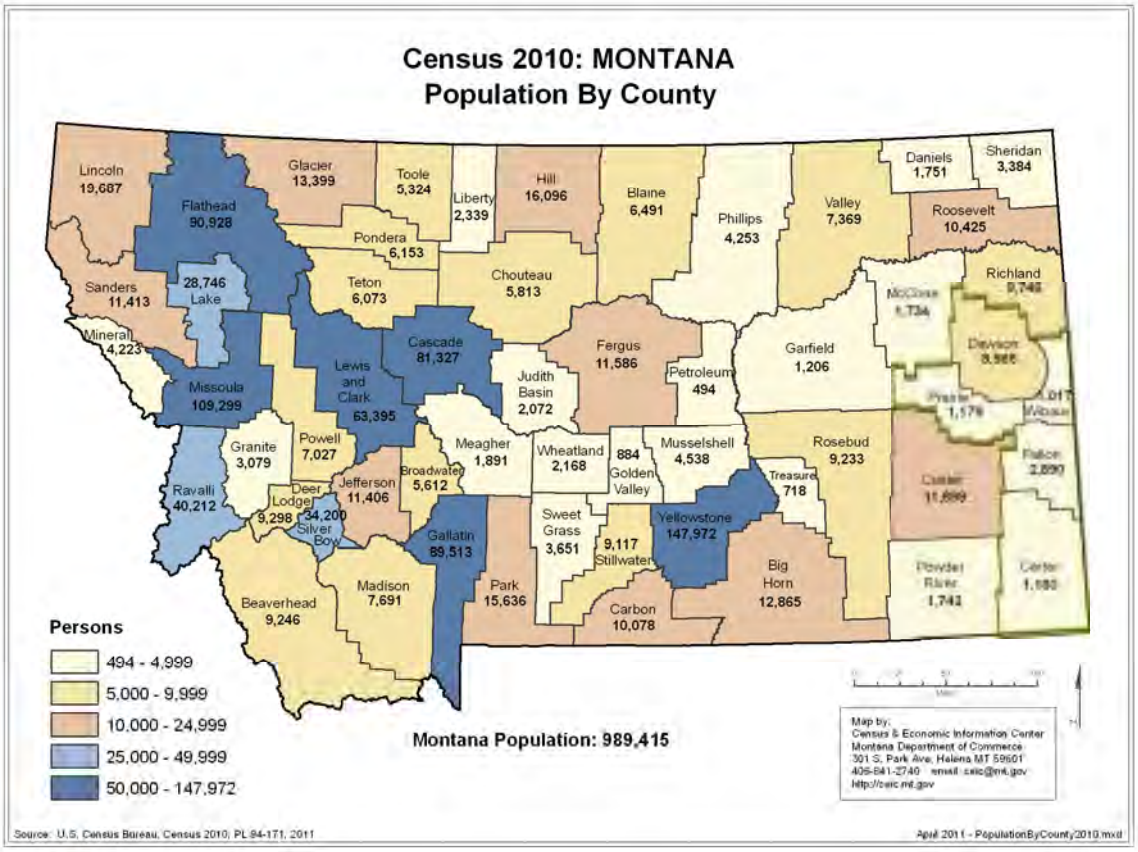
All of the counties in the EPEDC region are more accurately defined as "frontier," i.e. counties with a population density of six or fewer people per square mile. The definition is also based on other factors such as travel distance in miles to the nearest medical facility and marketplace, as well as the travel time to the nearest medical facility and marketplace (http://www.raconline.org/topics/frontier/frontierfaq.php).

TABLE 1: Population of the EPEDC Region by County

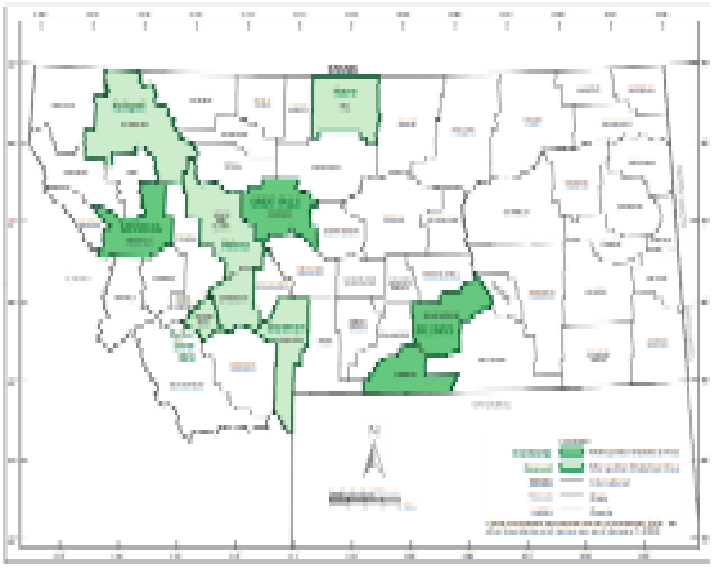
	Percent of change from 2000-2010	2010	2000	1990
Carter	-14.7	1,160	1,360	1,503
Dawson	-1	8,966	9,059	9,505
Fallon	1.9	2,890	2,837	3,103
Prairie	-1.7	1,179	1,199	1,383
Wibaux	-4.6	1,017	1,068	1,191
TOTAL	**-2**	**15,212**	**15,523**	**16,685**

http://ceic.mt.gov/Census2010.asp



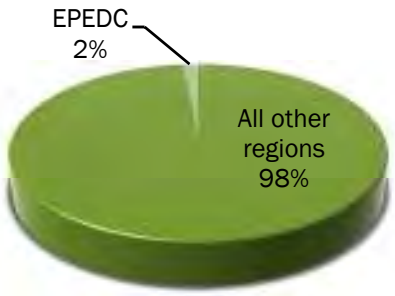


MONTANA – Core Based Statistical Areas and Counties

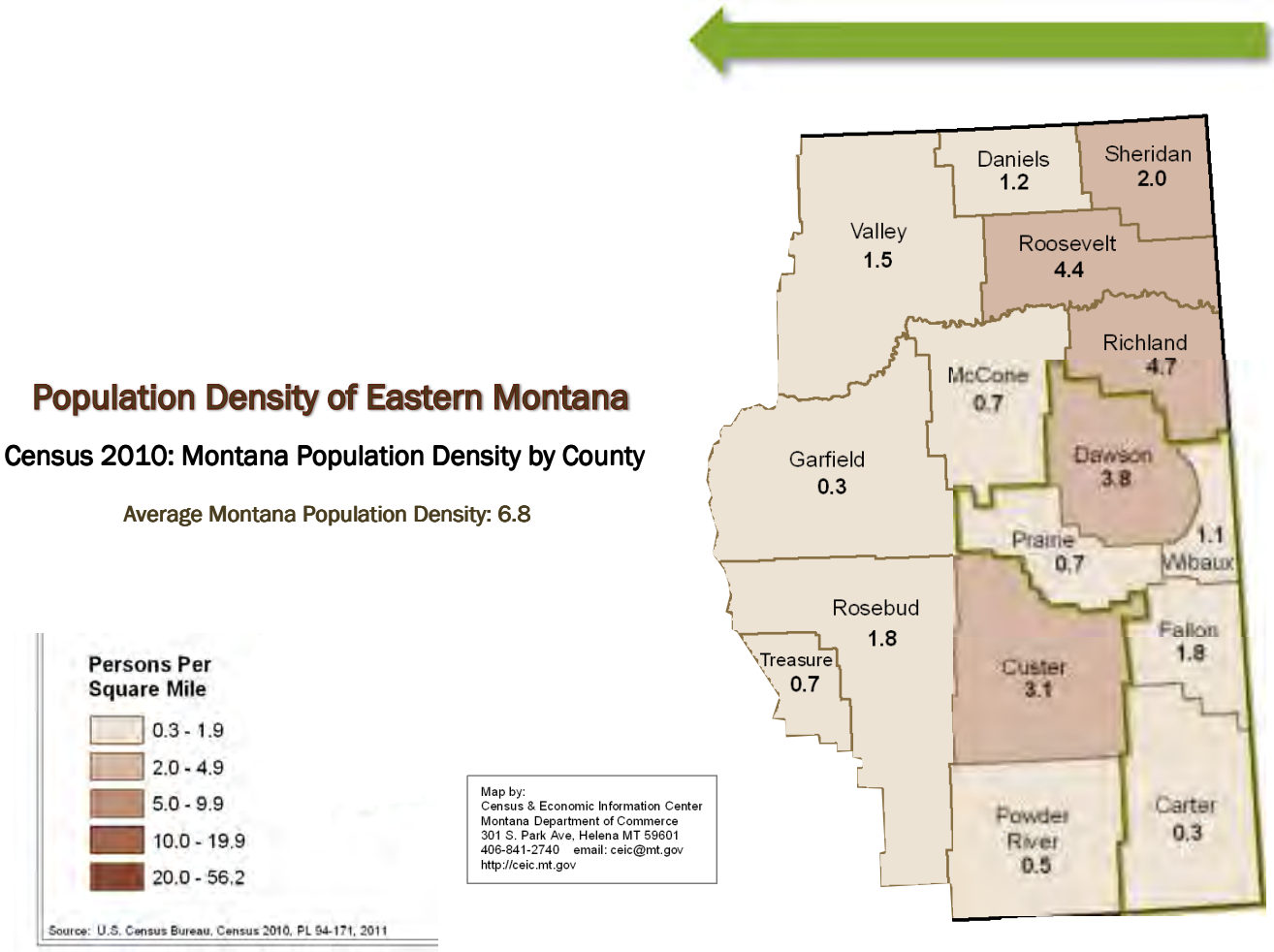


U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration

EPEDC as a Portion of Montana's Population



State of Montana's Total Population: 989,415
http://ceic.mt.gov/Census2010.asp



The EPEDC region has very little racial or ethnic diversity as indicated in **Table 2**. 95.4% of the District's population is identified as "white" according to the 2010 Census, compared to Montana's 87.8% white population. 3.0% of the EPEDC population claimed another race(s), while only 1.6% claimed Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. Comprising over half the District's total population, only Dawson County reported a 94.5% white population, below the District average.

TABLE 2: **2010** EPEDC Population by Race

County	White	Hispanic/Latino	Black	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific	Some Other Race	Two or More Races	Total Population
Carter	1,132	8	1	11	1	0	0	7	1,160
Dawson	8,477	178	25	141	26	3	3	113	8,966
Fallon	2,793	34	2	9	17	2	0	33	2,890
Prairie	1,125	16	0	2	6	0	0	30	1,179
Wibaux	987	13	0	4	5	0	0	8	1,017
Total	**14,514**	**249**	**28**	**167**	**55**	**5**	**3**	**191**	**15,212**
Montana	*868,628*	*28,565*	*3,743*	*59,902*	*6,138*	*609*	*540*	*21,290*	*989,415*

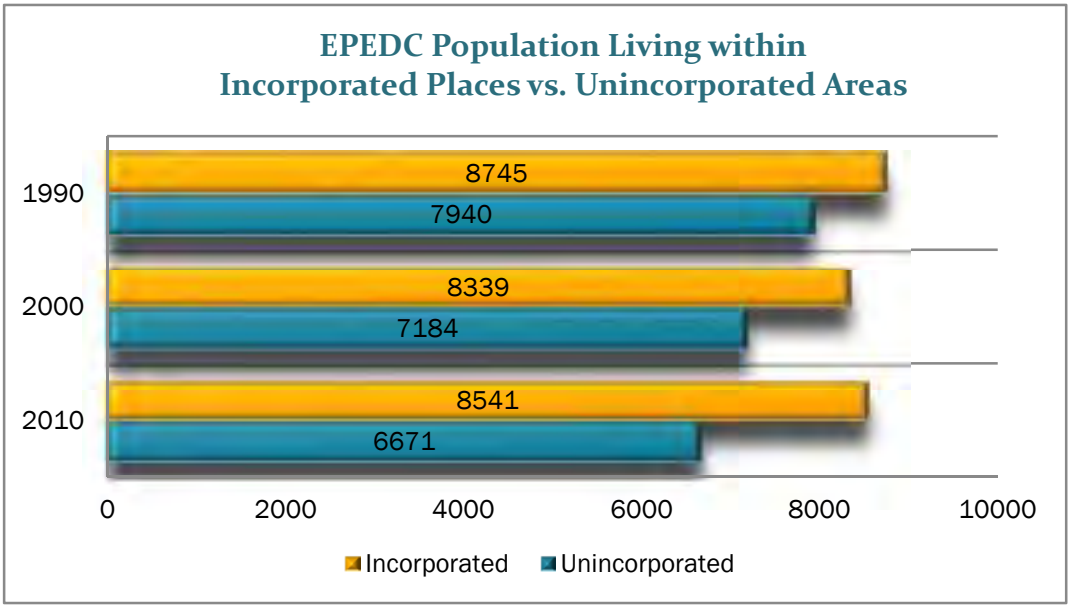
http://factfinder2.census.gov

TABLE 3: Population of Incorporated Places in the EPEDC Region

	County	Percent of change from 2000-2010	2010	2000	1990
Ekalaka	Carter	-19	332	410	439
Glendive	Dawson	4.4	4,935	4,729	4,802
Richey	Dawson	-6.3	177	189	259
Baker	Fallon	2.7	1,741	1,695	1,818
Plevna	Fallon	17.4	162	138	140
Terry	Prairie	-1	605	611	659
Wibaux	Wibaux	3.9	589	567	628
TOTAL		**2.4**	**8,541**	**8,339**	**8,745**

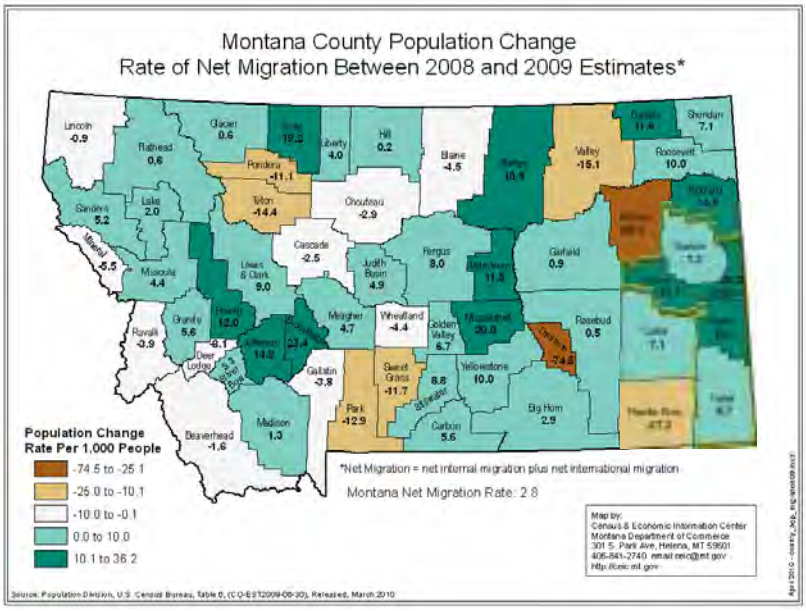
http://ceic.mt.gov/Census2010.asp

While four out of five EPEDC counties noted a population decline, only three out of seven municipalities also experienced a decline in population. Overall, population growth within incorporated places was strong enough to offset the significant double digit percentage decrease in Ekalaka. While the number of residents living within incorporated areas is increasing, agricultural populations living within unincorporated areas are still declining significantly. A loss of 9.5% within the EPEDC area occurred between 1990 and 2000, and another loss of 7.1% was witnessed between 2000 and 2010, for a total unincorporated population decline of 16.6%. A trend that is prevalent throughout rural America, especially in eastern Montana. Incorporated populations now account for 56.1% of the EPEDC total population, while unincorporated populations amount to 43.9% of the District's total (Table 3). The decline in unincorporated areas can be attributed to the rising median age of farmers and ranchers. Increased mechanization has also eroded the need for on-farm workforce.



MT County Population Change:

The State of Montana estimated an increased rate of net migration in eastern Montana for those counties bordering North Dakota, nearest increased oil and gas development activity.



As detailed in **Table 5**, the average median age of residents was 47.8 in 2010, 43 years in 2000, compared to 37.9 years in 1990. The median age of residents increased for all five counties in the area during this period. It is interesting to note the District's "Population over 65 years" (**Table 4**) was nearly a full 7% higher than the Montana average. At 26%, Prairie County had the highest percentage of population over the age of 65 out of any other county in Montana. Population diversity by gender indicates the 2010 male population represents 49.4% and the female population represents 50.6% of the population in the District.

TABLE 4: **2010** EPEDC Specific Age and Sex Demographics

	Montana	EPEDC Regional Average	Carter	Dawson	Fallon	Prairie	Wibaux
Population under 18 years	22.6	20.2	17.5	20.8	23.5	17.7	21.3
Population over 65 years	14.8	21.7	23.2	17.9	17.4	26	23.9
Percent of females	49.8	49.4	49.5	49.5	49.3	49	49.6
Percent of males	50.2	50.6	50.5	50.5	50.7	51	50.4

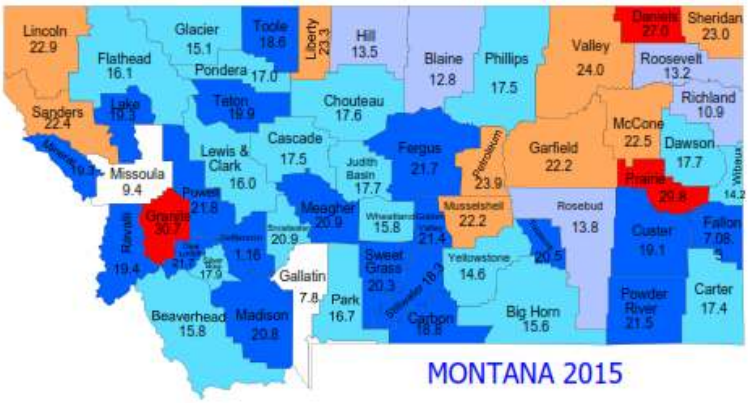
http://factfinder2.census.gov

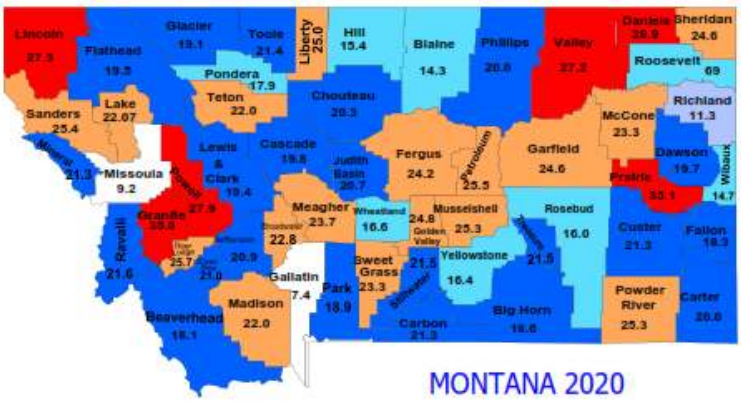
TABLE 5: Median Age of Population

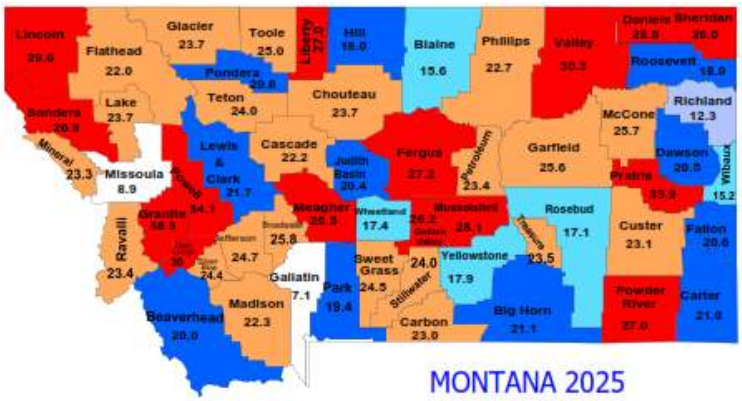
County	1990	2000	2010
Carter	38.3	41.8	50.2
Dawson	35.5	41	43.5
Fallon	35.2	41.1	42.9
Prairie	43	48.9	53.6
Wibaux	37.4	42.3	49
EPEDC Regional Average	**37.9**	**43**	**47.8**

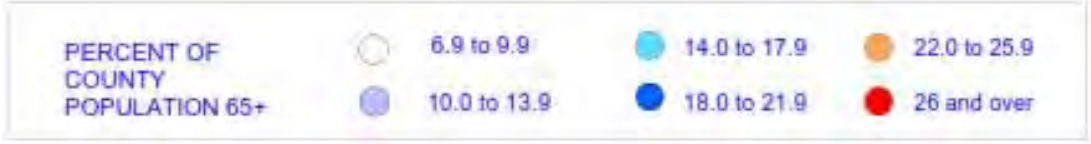
http://factfinder2.census.gov

Montana's Aging Population Estimates









http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/sltc/services/aging/Reports/Maps.pdf

TABLE 6: 2010 Percent of Population 85 Years and Older by County

Carter	3.4
Dawson	2.7
Fallon	2.6
Prairie	4.4
Wibaux	3.8
EPEDC Regional Average	**3.4**
Montana	*2*
U.S.	*1.8*

U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Estimates indicate that the percent of EPEDC county population over 65 years of age will continue to increase over the next fifteen years, subsequently increasing the need for transitional facilities, elderly services, and specialized medical care.

The Eastern Plains regional average percent of population over age 85 was already nearly twice the national percentage in 2010 (**Table 6**).

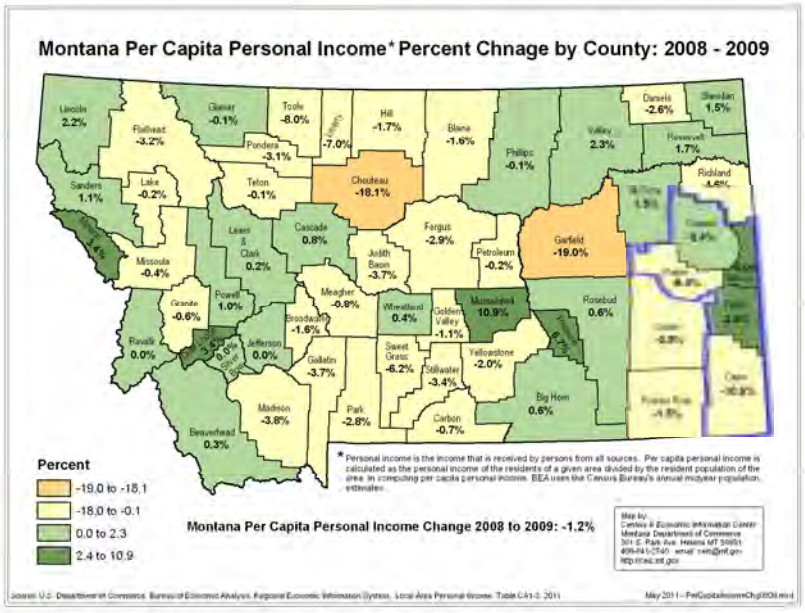
Poverty, Income, Business Overview - Information on 2010 households is presented in **Table 7**. There were 6,522 total households reported in the EPEDC region; 64.6% of those were family households, compared to 62.8% family households for Montana. Both the "male alone" (15.1%) and "female alone" (16.3%) as a percentage of total households for the region were higher than Montana's 14.5% and 15.2%, respectively. Most significantly, the EPEDC percentage of households with "individuals under 18" (25.7%) is nearly three percentage points lower than the state's 28.4%, and the EPEDC's percentage of households with "individuals over 65" (30.9%) is more than five percentage points higher than the state's 25.6%.

TABLE 7: **2010** EPEDC Household Statistics

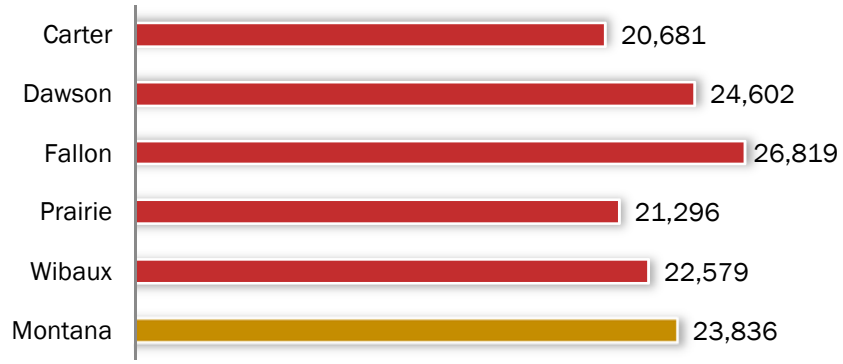
County	Total households	Average household size	Family Households	Non-family households	Male alone	Female alone	Households with individuals under 18	Households with individuals over 65
Carter	532	2.16	354	178	74	87	109	182
Dawson	3,749	2.26	2,429	1,320	535	633	1,003	1,112
Fallon	1,233	2.32	810	423	187	184	350	359
Prairie	551	2.10	342	209	103	85	102	208
Wibaux	457	2.17	281	176	85	77	110	157
Total	**6,522**	**2.20**	**4,216**	**2,306**	**984**	**1,066**	**1,674**	**2,018**
Montana	*409,607*	*2.35*	*257,087*	*152,520*	*59,524*	*62,251*	*116,376*	*104,994*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Per capita income, *found on page 20*, varies substantially from year to year in eastern Montana due to the heavy influence of agriculture, which is inevitably affected by weather and market conditions. Typically, eastern Montana per capita income is less than the Montana average. In 1999, per capita income was $15,041 in the EPEDC district compared to $17,151 for Montana. By 2003, per capita was $21,377 in the district, and $25,406 in Montana (CEDS 2006). With the increase in oil and gas production and a rise in the need for related service industries, the EPEDC district average rose to $23,195 compared to Montana's $23,836 (2006-2010), with two counties outpacing the state average.



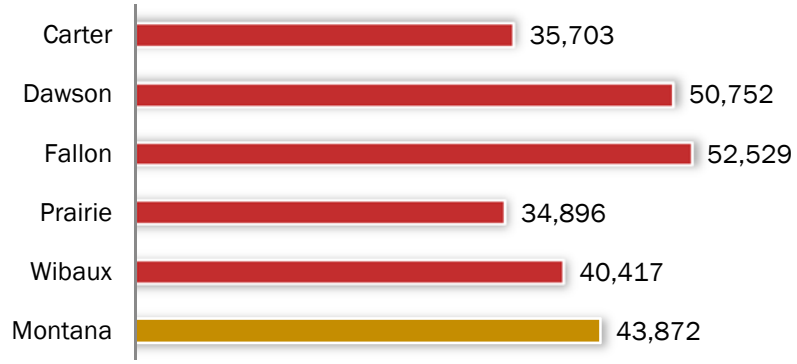
Per Capita Income in the Past 12 Months, average 2006-2010



**in 2010 inflation-adjusted dollars*

http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/montana/income-per-capita#map
Source: U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates. Updated every year. http://factfinder2.census.gov

Median Household Income, average 2006-2010



http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/montana/median-household-income#map
Source: U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates. Updated every year. http://factfinder2.census.gov

The median family income average also rose. In 1999, the median family income was $35,182 in the EPEDC area compared to $40,487 for Montana (CEDS 2006). Household income levels increased to $42,859 for the area between 2006 and 2010, relative to the state's $43,872.

The composition of each county's total personal income has undergone dramatic change over the past three decades. The annual total personal income estimates compiled by the *Bureau of Economic Analysis* (BEA) note the composition of personal income divided among three income components. **Earned income** can be viewed as compensation for labor services. **Property income** represents payments in the form of dividends, interest and rent for the services of capital owned by persons. In contrast to the other two components of income, **Transfer Payments** are by definition payments that are not related to the provision of services (**Table 8**, *found on page 21*).

TABLE 8: 2009 Major Components of Personal Income, as a %

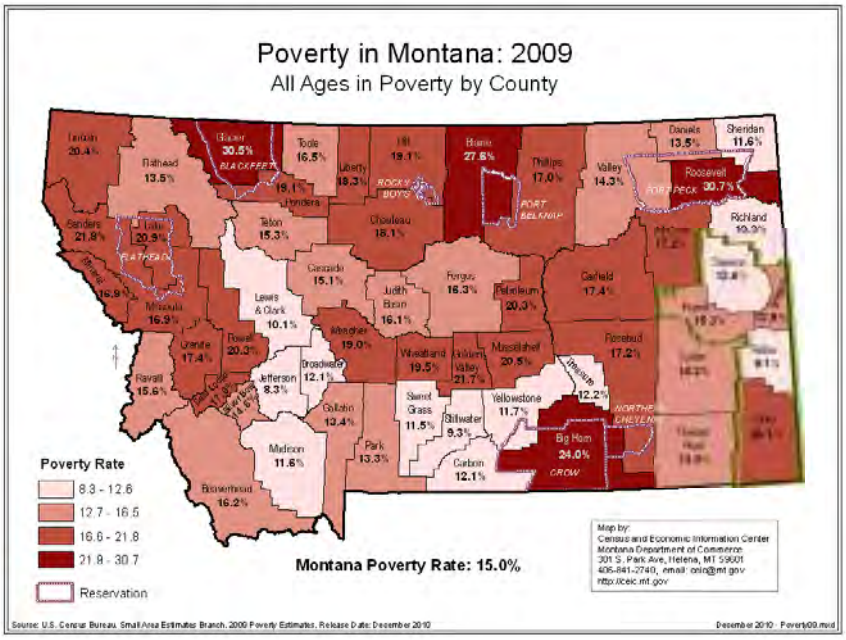
	Earned Income	Property Income	Transfer Payments
Carter	39.95	40.45	19.71
Dawson	57.85	19.59	22.56
Fallon	66.08	17.79	16.13
Prairie	38.89	31.90	29.21
Wibaux	48.24	22.73	29.03
TOTAL	**50.20**	**26.48**	**23.32**
Montana	*58.4*	*22.5*	*19.1*
United States	*64.5*	*18*	*17.5*

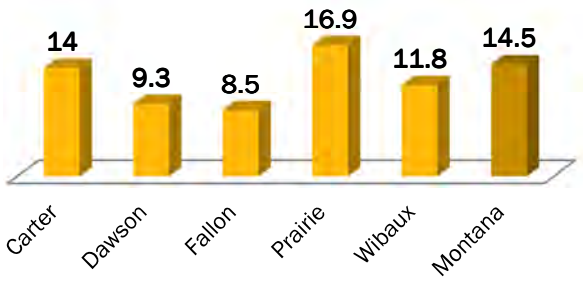
http://montana.reaproject.org/reap-report.php

"In Montana, 47% of the state's 65+ populations would have incomes below the poverty line if they did not receive Social Security. Social Security is the only source of income for three in ten Montana residents age 65+. The average yearly Social Security benefit for a Montana retiree in 2010 was $13,213—or about $1,101 a month. While 67% of the beneficiaries in 2010 were retirees, 33% were not: 15,650 were widow/ers; 26,077 were people with disabilities; 9,014 were spouses; and 13,344 were children."
AARP. "Social Security: 2012 Montana Quick Facts."

For example, "if Prairie County residents didn't receive their monthly Social Security payments, 13.2 percent of the total personal income in the county would be lost—a total of $4,281,077 in 2009. ...Social Security payments in Prairie County amounted to $3,864 per person in 2009, compared to the Montana average of $2,410." Changes in benefits would result in a disproportionate negative impact on rural counties and small communities as the average age of residents continues to rise.
Bishop, Bill and Roberto Gallardo. "13.2 percent of income in county is made up of social security," *Terry Tribune*. November 2, 2011.

In 1999, 17.2% of the EPEDC area's population was in poverty (CEDS 2006). The average between 2006 and 2010 noted a significant decrease to 12.1%. The State of Montana reported a 14% poverty rate for the EPEDC region in 2009. The most likely reason for the substantial decrease in regional poverty over such a short period of time is due in part to manual labor jobs and revenue generated by the oil and gas industry.





http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/montana/percent-of-people-of-all-ages-in-poverty#map
Source: U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates. Updated every year. http://factfinder2.census.gov

Civilian Labor Force - The District's April 2000 civilian labor force (CLF) was 8,243 (**Table 9**). That number increased by 4.3% to 8,601 in 2012 (**Table 10**). Unemployment for the region was 4.1% for the District in 2000 and has decreased by a full percentage point to 3.1%. The remainder of the State of Montana is experiencing a decline in natural resource extraction and overall development represented by the 2012 state unemployment rate of 6.3%. Meanwhile, eastern Montana is on the forefront of a large boom in natural resource production and distribution as workers migrate to the area in search of jobs. It can be assumed due to chronic unemployment issues within the EPEDC region that the current unemployed population will remain unemployed, and new laborers will need to come from other regions to fill any available jobs.

TABLE 9: April 2000 County Labor Force Statistics

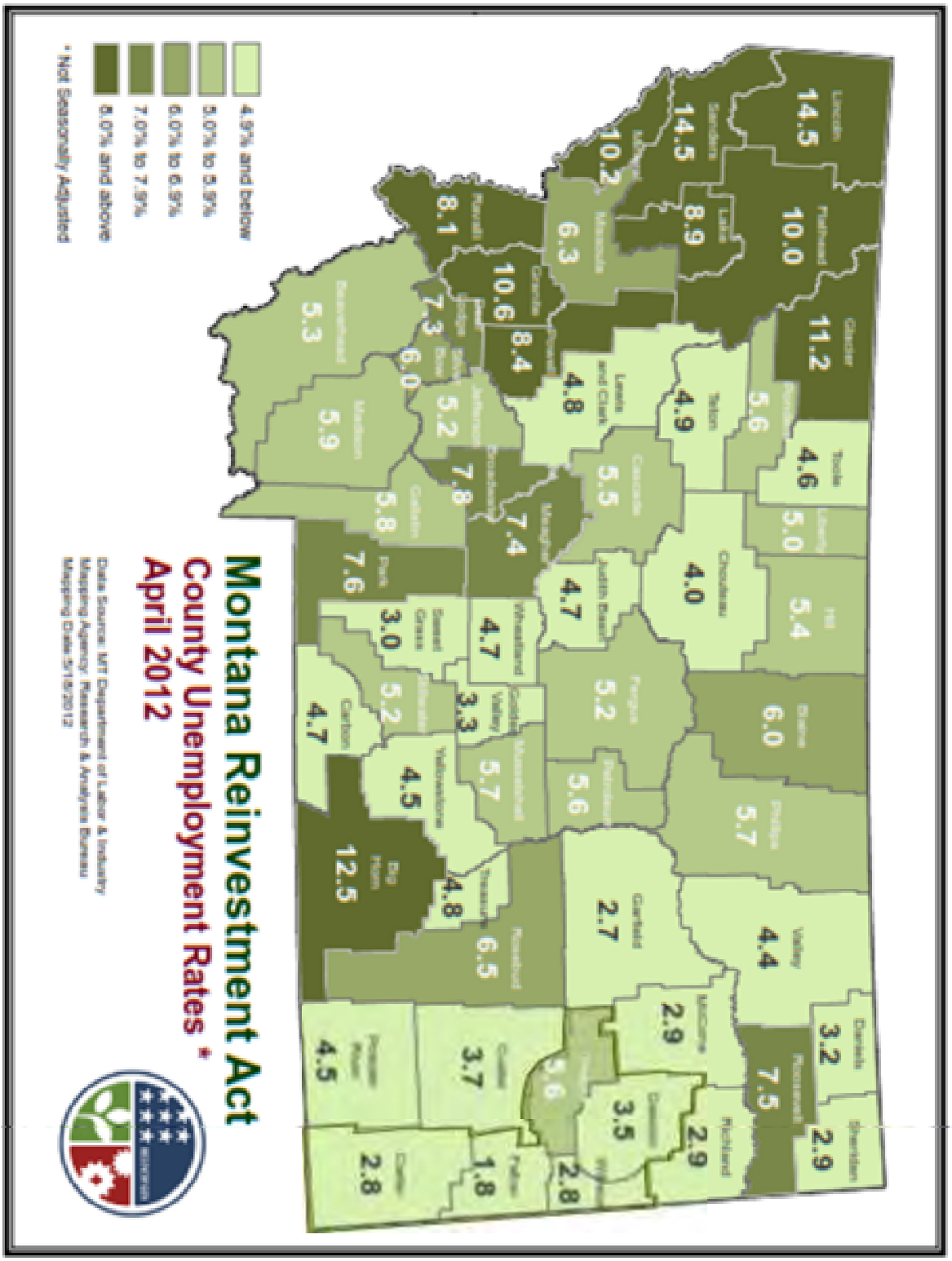
	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
Carter	793	766	27	3.4
Dawson	4,718	4,524	194	4.1
Fallon	1,545	1,491	54	3.5
Prairie	635	605	30	4.7
Wibaux	552	522	30	5.4
TOTAL	**8,243**	**7,908**	**335**	**4.1**
Montana	*470,839*	*448,356*	*22,483*	*4.8*

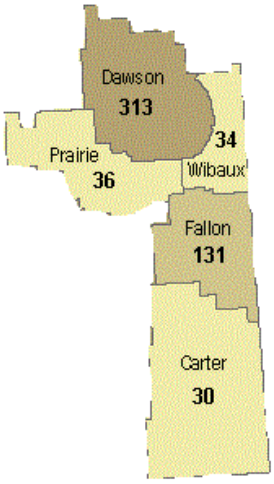
*non-seasonally adjusted
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/dataanalysis/labForceReport.asp?menuchoice=LABFORCE

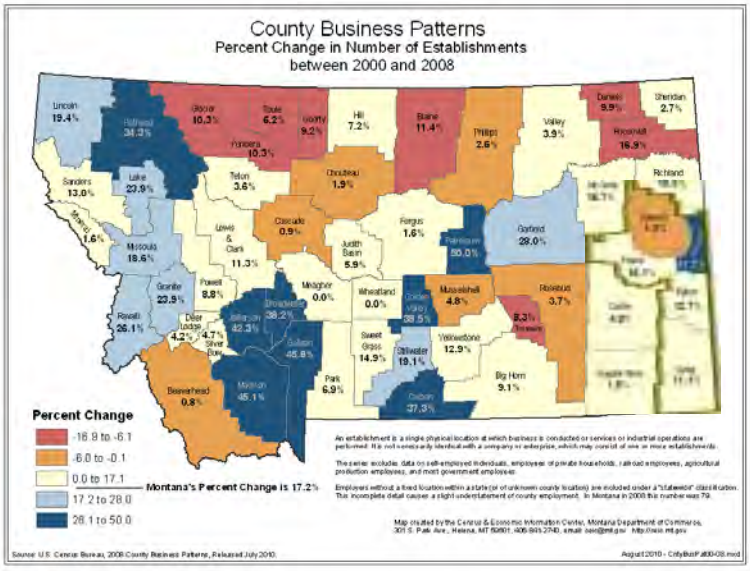
TABLE 10: April 2012 County Labor Force Statistics

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
Carter	727	707	20	2.8
Dawson	4,527	4,367	160	3.5
Fallon	2,131	2,092	39	1.8
Prairie	572	540	32	5.6
Wibaux	644	626	18	2.8
TOTAL	**8,601**	**8,332**	**269**	**3.1**
Montana	*508,029*	*476,052*	*31,977*	*6.3*

*non-seasonally adjusted, preliminary
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/databrowsing/?PAGEID=4&SUBID=205


Montana Reinvestment Act
County Unemployment Rates *
April 2012
Data Source: MT Department of Labor & Industry
Mapping Agency: Research & Analysis Bureau
Mapping Date: 5/18/2012
* Not Seasonally Adjusted
4.9% and below
5.0% to 5.9%
6.0% to 6.9%
7.0% to 7.9%
8.0% and above
Lincoln 14.5
Flathead 10.0
Glacier 11.2
Toole 4.6
Liberty 5.0
Hill 5.4
Blaine 6.0
Phillips 5.7
Valley 4.4
Daniels 3.2
Sheridan 2.9
Roosevelt 7.5
Richland 2.9
Sanders 14.5
Lake 8.9
Missoula 6.3
Powell 8.1
Granite 10.6
Ravalli 8.4
Lewis and Clark 4.8
Teton 4.9
Pondera 5.6
Chouteau 4.0
Cascade 5.5
Judith Basin 4.7
Fergus 5.2
Petroleum 5.6
McCone 2.9
Garfield 2.7
Powder River 4.5
Custer 3.7
Dawson 3.5
Prairie 2.9
Wibaux 2.8
Deer Lodge 7.3
Silver Bow 6.0
Beaverhead 5.3
Jefferson 5.2
Broadwater 7.8
Meagher 7.4
Wheatland 4.7
Sweet Grass 3.0
Stillwater 5.2
Carbon 4.7
Yellowstone 4.5
Big Horn 12.5
Treasure 4.8
Rosebud 6.5
Powder River 4.5
Carter 1.8
Fallon 2.8
Madison 5.9
Gallatin 5.8
Park 7.6
Golden Valley 3.3
Musselshell 5.7
Custer 5.6

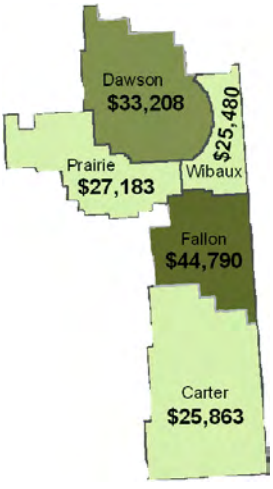


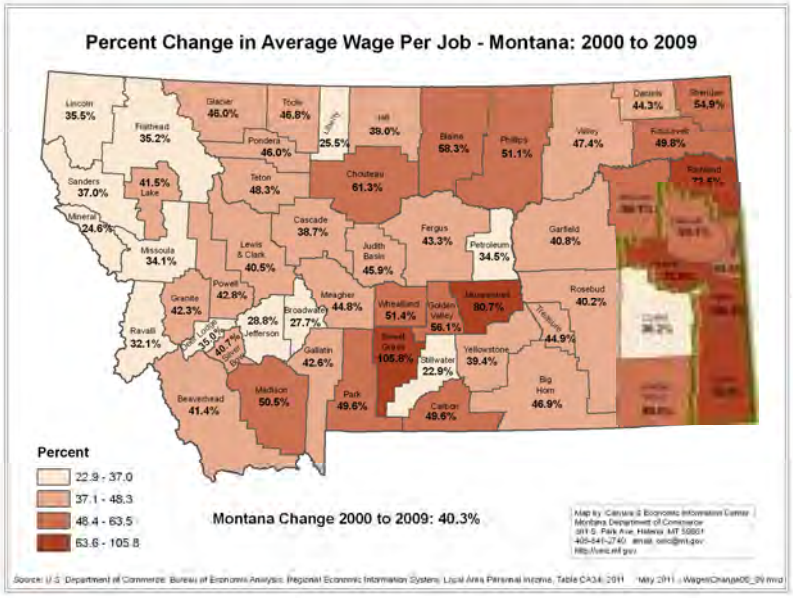


2009 EPEDC Number of Establishments

http://ceic.mt.gov/graphics/Data_Maps/CntyBusPat09.pdf

The overall number of business establishments in the EPEDC region grew by 16.58% between 2000 and 2008. In 2009, there were 544 reported businesses within the District.





2009 EPEDC Average Wage Per Job

http://ceic.mt.gov/graphics/Data_Maps/Wages09.pdf

The average wage per job in the region increased by an incredible 72.78%, nearly double the state average, between 2000 and 2009. In 2009, the average wage for the District was $31,305.

Ag industries – Eastern Montana has colder winters, warmer summers, less cloudiness, and experiences its heaviest precipitation in late spring and early summer. Eastern Montana also has considerably higher average wind velocities, and summer hailstorms may cause severe crop and property damage. Frost-free periods in the east and in the state's low-lying river valleys range from 120 to 150 days per year.

"Montana ranked second nationally, in 2007, for the production of lentils, dry peas and barley. The same year, the state ranked third for total wheat production. The state ranks 10th nationally for sheep and goat production and their products, like wool. Montana's most valuable crop is wheat, followed by hay, and then barley. In 2009, Montana livestock were valued at 1.2 billion dollars."
http://www.agclassroom.org/kids/stats/montana.pdf

"Shifts in agricultural resource uses have contributed to population declines in many counties in eastern Montana, where local communities have not benefited from growth in other sectors of their economies.
Within the state as a whole, historically agriculture has been critical to the economic wellbeing of almost all Montana residents. When agricultural incomes have been high, state and local government tax revenues have generally been healthy and provided funds for expanded public services, including education, roads, and other forms of infrastructure. Moreover, consumer expenditures and purchases of agricultural business services have generally been higher when agricultural incomes have been high, increasing economic activity throughout the service sectors of the state's economy. In contrast, during hard agricultural times, government tax revenues have generally been anemic, restricting the ability of state and local government to supply public services and causing consumer expenditures and agricultural business service activities to fall, leading to harder economic times for the entire state. Although agriculture's relative importance in the state-wide economy has moderated over the past forty years, it continues to be important for the state as a whole and the major determinant of the economic performance of many highly rural counties."
http://fwp.mt.gov/doingBusiness/reference/montanaChallenge/reports/agr.html

Montana's Top 5 Agriculture Commodities, 2010

	Value of receipts thousand $	Percent of state total farm receipts	Percent of US value
1. Cattle and calves	1,084,644	35.6	2.1
2. Wheat	1,032,557	33.9	9.5
3. Hay	267,970	8.8	5.0
4. Barley	157,348	5.2	21.2
5. Lentils	77,593	2.5	37.0
All commodities	3,049,592		1.0

http://www.ers.usda.gov/StateFacts/mt.htm

TABLE 11: Major Agricultural Crops and Livestock in the EPEDC Region, 2000 and 2010

Commodity	2000 Production	2010 Production
Wheat Winter All	1,396,000 bushels	2,088,000 bushels
Wheat Spring Other	5,796,000 bushels	7,538,000 bushels
Wheat Durum	249,000 bushels	----
Corn (Grain)	210,000 bushels	428,000 bushels
Barley All	626,000 bushels	396,000 bushels
Peas Dry Edible	26,500 hundredweight	181,200 hundredweight
Beans Dry Edible	134,000 hundredweight	65,000 hundredweight
Lentils	----	146,600 hundredweight
Sugarbeets	88,400 tons	72,000 tons
Hay Alfalfa	99,500 tons	418,000 tons
Hay Other	77,000 tons	134,500 tons
Flaxseed	10,500 bushels	----

Livestock	2000	2010
Cattle and Calves	197,000 head	229,000
Sheep Inventory	71,500 head	43,700
Hogs and Pigs	2,700 head	700

www.nass.usda.gov/quickStats/PullData_US_CNTY.jsp

Oil and gas production –33 counties, including **all five** in the EPEDC region, out of 56 in Montana produce oil and gas products. Fallon County is the 2nd largest producer of oil and gas in the entire state, following Richland County just to the north of the District.

According to 2011 MCA 15-36-331 and 15-36-332 oil and gas tax distributions are made to the EPEDC counties based on the following percentage disbursements of total receipts from production: Carter 50.15%; Dawson 47.79%; Fallon 41.79%; Prairie 40.38%; and Wibaux 49.16% (**Table 12**). Out of those county shares a specified percentage allocation must be then given to school retirement funds, countywide transport, school districts and, in the case of Dawson County, to the community college. Of the $223,530,400 collected by the State of Montana from oil and gas producing counties in 2011, 29.3% of the funds came from the EPEDC region.

TABLE 12: 2011 State Collections and Distributions of Oil, Gas, and Natural Resource Account Funds by County

County	Collections	Distributions
Carter	209,479.60	105,054.04
Dawson	4,048,790.92	1,934,917.10
Fallon	53,428,557.83	22,322,451.26
Prairie	524,476.05	211,783.45
Wibaux	7,220,707.81	3,549,699.93
TOTAL	**65,432,012.20**	**28,123,905.78**

http://revenue.mt.gov/forbusinesses/taxes_licenses_fees_permits/natural_resources_quarterly_distribution_reports.mcpx

TABLE 13: Annual Oil and Gas Production by EPEDC County

County	2011			2008			2005			1986		
	OIL	NATURAL GAS	ASSOC. GAS	OIL	NATURAL GAS	ASSOC. GAS	OIL	NATURAL GAS	ASSOC. GAS	OIL	NATURAL GAS	ASSOC. GAS
Carter	27436	49295	0	72724	69311	0	0	0	0	7452	40834	300
Dawson	594834	0	36515	430112	0	190856	601609	0	208115	425108	0	112453
Fallon	4834378	14061818	3542689	6619702	21184764	8007554	7547096	21514611	2127517	6410247	159855	1538765
Prairie	63325	430	0	80043	641	7278	123405	1129	9767	88152	0	13950
Wibaux	741512	221939	229797	739324	310112	244920	824004	426454	263545	1386282	0	364565
TOTAL	**6261485**	**14333482**	**3809001**	**7941905**	**21564828**	**8450608**	**9096114**	**21942194**	**2608944**	**8317241**	**200689**	**2030033**

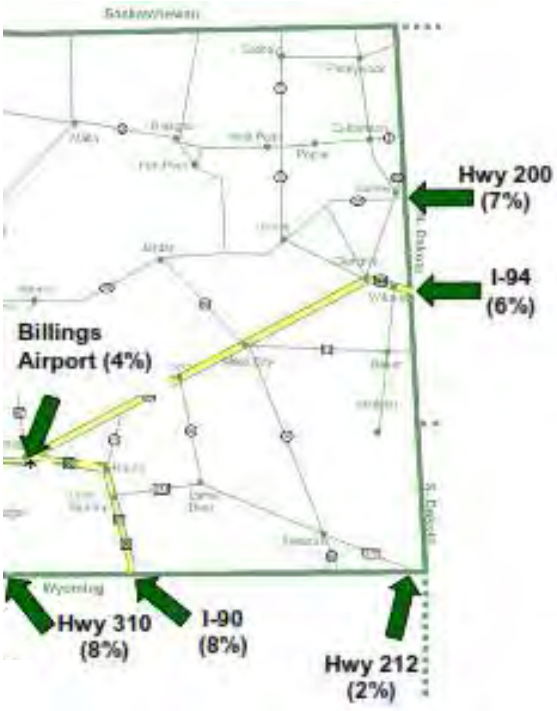
http://www.bogc.dnrc.mt.gov/WebApps/DataMiner/Production/ProdAnnualCounty.aspx

Tourism and recreation – The EPEDC region's economy is greatly influenced by tourism. The health and well-being of our downtowns depends on revenue received from visitors to our counties. Hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, social events, and historic/cultural tourism attract both residents and nonresidents. This economic area can be improved upon with increased marketing, hospitality efforts, and growth planning.

Top 10 Activities for Vacationers to Montana, Quarter 3, 2009

Rank	Activity	% who indicated participation[1]
1	Scenic driving	80%
2	Wildlife watching	64
3	Nature photography	59
4	Day hiking	51
5	Camping	40
6	Recreational shopping	33
7	Visiting historical sites	31
8	Visiting museums	26
9	Fishing	21
10	Visit Lewis & Clark sites	20

Source: ITRR.
[1] Respondents could select more than one activity



Main Entrance Points for Tourists to the Region

In 2011, nonresident visitors to Montana spent an average of $131.88 daily per group. Their group size averaged 2.33 people, and their length of stay averaged 4.66 nights (ITR, Quarterly Travel Comparison). The EPEDC region falls within Montana State Park Region 7, and park visitation in the region was up 39% from 2008 to 2009.

An April 2004 report compiled by the Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research regarding "Dawson County Visitor Characteristics" stated that 93% of those surveyed were repeat visitors to the area. 88% planned to return within two years.

The Town of Terry was named a Preserve America Community in 2006, and both Glendive and Terry belong to the MT Department of Commerce's Main Street Program, which offers grants and technical assistance for downtown development.

State Parks Visitation Estimates: 3-Year Trends

Region & FWP Office Location	2007	2008	2009	2008-09 % change
1-Kalispell Area	358,046	391,037	417,993	7%
2-Missoula Area	173,908	174,105	194,048	11%
3-Bozeman Area	326,814	287,417	317,934	11%
4-Great Falls Area	355,415	354,650	373,473	5%
5-Billings Area	400,033	352,383	398,691	13%
6-Glasgow Area	5,491	6,210	4,558	-27%
7-Miles City Area	205,858	163,558	227,704	39%
Total	1,916,843	1,815,828	2,031,121	12%

Source: Montana State Parks

Montana Non-Resident Traveler Expenditures by Category

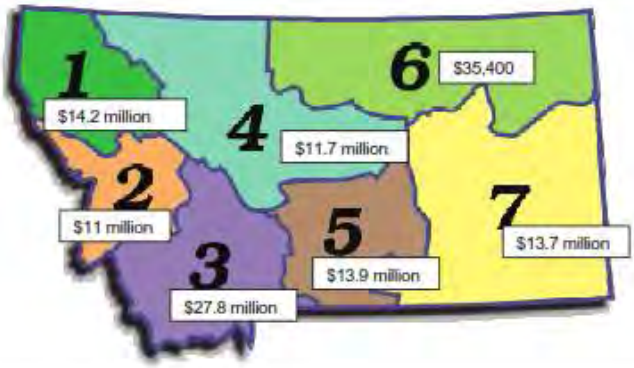
Source: Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research
"2010 Montana Non-Resident Traveler Economic Impacts and Expenditures."

Tourism Region:

The EPEDC's counties fall within "Southeast Montana." One of six state defined tourism districts that collects bed tax revenue from visitors to reinvest in regional marketing and development.

2002 State Park Regions and Revenues

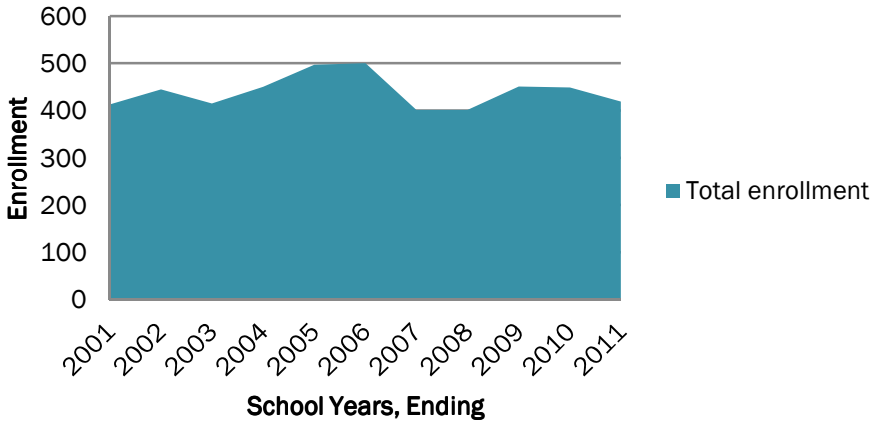
Figure 1: Nonresident Economic Impact - Industry Output by Region



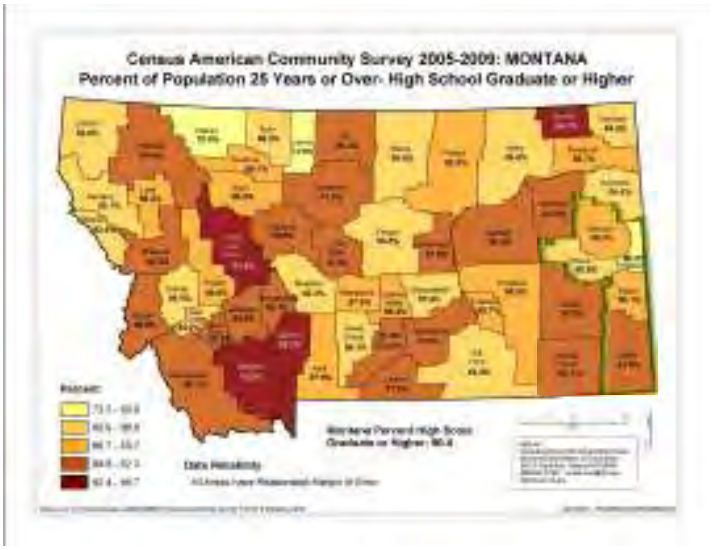
Nickerson, Norma and Thale Dillon. "2002 Economic Impact Survey of Visitors to Montana's State Parks and Fishing Access Sites," November 2002.

Education and workforce development – According the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey's 5-Year Estimates, the EPEDC's percentage of persons over 25 with a high school degree or higher education averaged 85.2%, over 5% lower than the rest of the state.

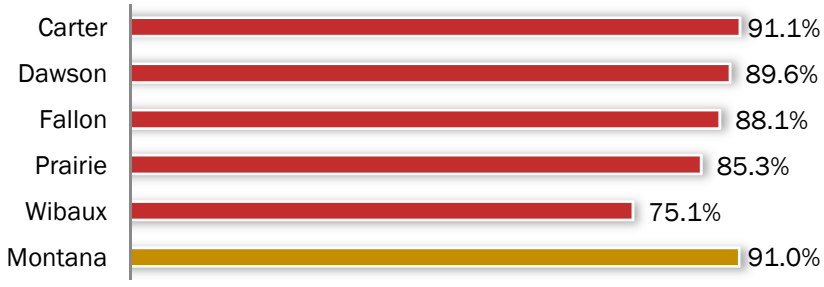
Dawson Community College, 2001-2011



There is one community college in the District—Dawson Community College (DCC) in Glendive. The college is a great asset to the region and offers a wide range of transfer programs and vocational degrees along with one year certificates to meet the educational needs of eastern Montana. The college also offers workshops, short courses, adult education opportunities, and workforce development. Courses are available on campus, online, and by instructional television. Moreover, oil and gas development in the region has prompted the Montana University System to form a taskforce with the mission of addressing the educational needs of a rapidly changing workforce and their families.



Persons 25 and Over--High School Graduate or Higher, average 2006-2010



http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/montana/percent-of-people-25-years-and-over-with-high-school-degree-or-higher#map
Source: U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates. Updated every year. http://factfinder2.census.gov

Housing – Beyond the lack of affordable workforce housing and transitional housing for senior citizens, there is a degradation of housing infrastructure in general (**Table 16**, see also ***Appendix B: Condition of Structures for regional municipalities***). A lack of quality housing continues to be one of the region's primary concerns. There is only one non-profit housing organization serving the EPEDC area—Action for Eastern Montana in Glendive. They deliver some weatherization and energy assistance programs but are also stretched to serve 18 counties in eastern Montana with limited staff.

TABLE 14: Total Housing Units

	2010	2000	1990
Carter	810	811	816
Dawson	4,233	4,168	4,487
Fallon	1,470	1,410	1,525
Prairie	673	718	749
Wibaux	538	587	563
Total	**7,724**	**7,694**	**8,140**

TABLE 15: 2010 Occupancy, as a %

	Owned	Rented	Vacant
Carter	49.1	16.5	34.3
Dawson	62.8	25.8	11.4
Fallon	61.4	22.5	16.1
Prairie	65.1	16.8	18.1
Wibaux	61.3	23.6	15.1
Average	**59.9**	**21.0**	**19.0**
Montana	*57.7*	*27.2*	*15.2*

http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org

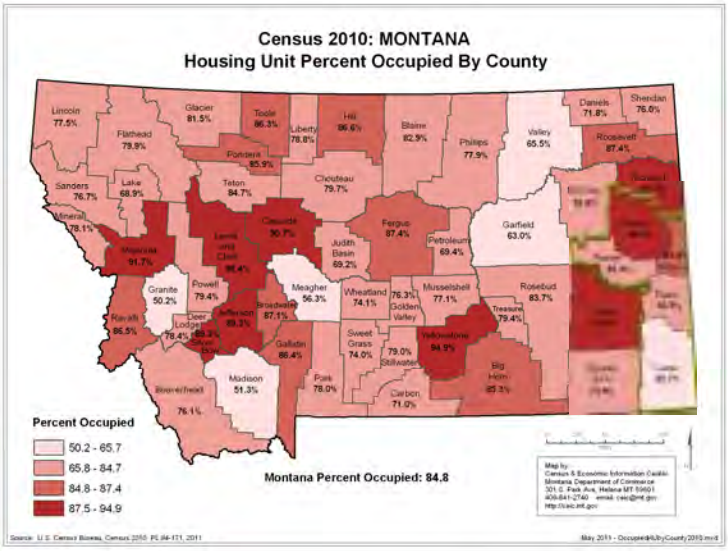
While home ownership within the EPEDC well exceeds the state average, so too does the region's vacant housing rate; Carter County's 34.3% vacant housing is more than double the state average (**Table 15**). Most often, as children leave their parents to age in place, parents die leaving vacancies that remain untended and unfilled by new occupants due to lack of property management or the dilapidated state of the housing itself. Seasonal occupants also account for a lack of available housing. Out-of-state residents frequently own homes that are only used during the summer and fall/hunting season. While the added revenue brought by seasonal visitation is welcomed, its impact on the District's tax base and overall housing availability at such a critical juncture in development is significant.

A vast majority of the single-family homes in the District were constructed before 1959 with materials that were cost effective and available at the time, leading to the need for rehabilitation that exceeds the budgets of both limited income seniors and first-time homebuyers. The Montana Department of Commerce estimated in its 2010 *White Paper* that the EPEDC region would need to create 4,072 new housing units by 2025 (**Table 17**, *page 31*).

TABLE 16: 2005 Physical Condition by Structure

	County	Total sample size	Unsound	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Ekalaka	Carter	**258**	33	61	77	68	19			
Glendive	Dawson	**1,787**	131	316	230	339	471	261	38	1
Richey	Dawson	**143**	40	60	19	14	6	4		
Baker	Fallon	**726**	33	104	139	158	292			
Plevna	Fallon	**69**	3	16	16	28	6			
Terry	Prairie	**338**	24	18	60	190	43	3		
Wibaux	Wibaux	**308**	7	35	33	100	107	26		
TOTAL		**3,629**	**271**	**610**	**574**	**897**	**944**	**294**	**38**	**1**

Montana Department of Commerce, "Housing Condition Study." February 2005.



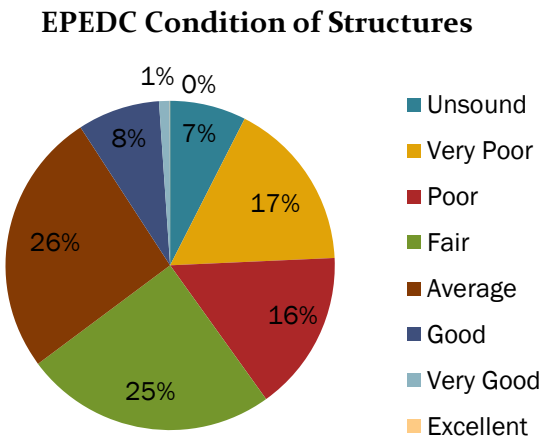
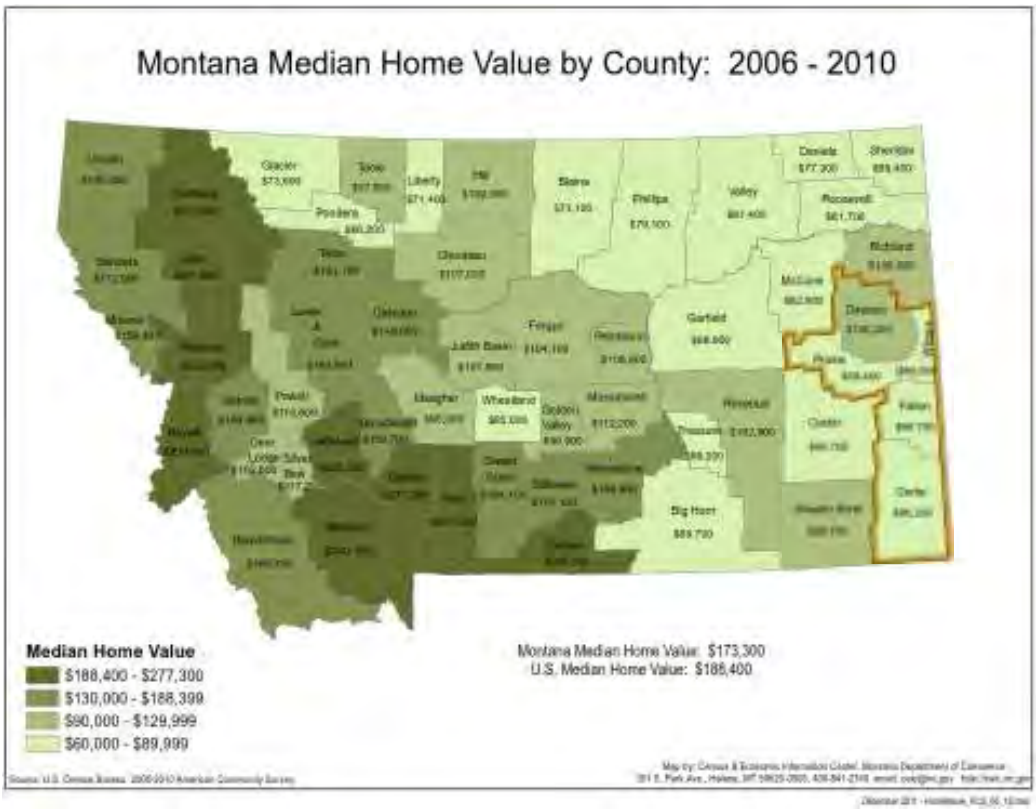


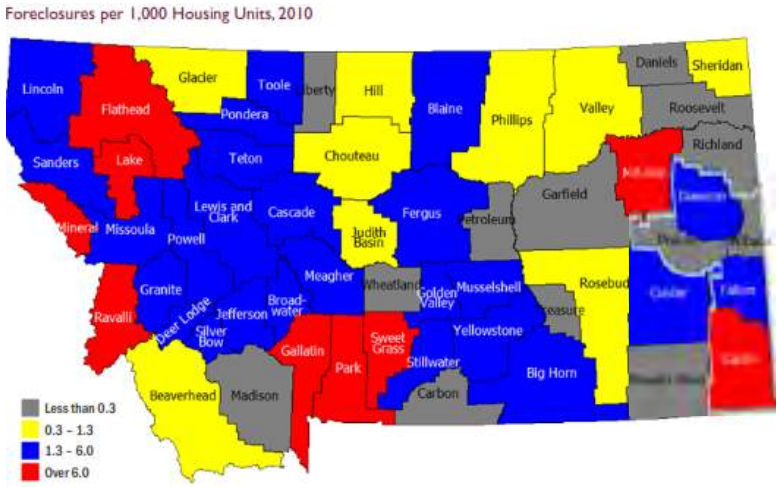
TABLE 17: Estimated Housing Units Needed by 2025 in the EPEDC region

County	Housing Units	Units in Poor Condition Lost by 2025	Units in Good Condition Available in 2025	Total Housing Units Needed by 2025	New Housing Units that must be created by 2025
Carter	**TOTALS**	**744**	**92**	**645**	**553**
	Single-family	*527*	*39*		
	Mutli-family	*1*	*11*		
	Mobile	*216*	*42*		
Dawson	**TOTALS**	**2,143**	**1,931**	**3,827**	**1,896**
	Single-family	*1,698*	*1,497*		
	Mutli-family	*230*	*110*		
	Mobile	*215*	*324*		
Fallon	**TOTALS**	**895**	**526**	**1,474**	**948**
	Single-family	*652*	*374*		
	Mutli-family	*7*	*53*		
	Mobile	*236*	*99*		
Prairie	**TOTALS**	**568**	**149**	**588**	**439**
	Single-family	*482*	*92*		
	Mutli-family	*25*	*10*		
	Mobile	*61*	*47*		
Wibaux	**TOTALS**	**346**	**191**	**427**	**236**
	Single-family	*298*	*108*		
	Mutli-family	*15*	*22*		
	Mobile	*33*	*61*		

Montana Department of Commerce, Housing Coordinating Team. *White Paper*. June 2010.



While median home values between 2006-2010 averaged well below both the state and the nation, current trends in development are causing a rapid rise in home prices as well as rental costs. The Glendive Ranger review reported in December of 2011 that "only four of the 23 houses listed with city and county realtors were priced below $100,000; nine were listed between $100,000 and $200,000, and six homes were listed for over $200,000," which prices most local residents and young families hoping to relocate to the area out of the market.



Barkey, Patrick M. and James T. Sylvester. "Housing Affordability and Montana's Real Estate Markets." June 2011.

Health and Social Services –The region is served by a limited amount of physicians, dentists, and pharmacists (*maps found on page 36*). One mental health facility has been newly constructed in Dawson County. However, an average of 23.9% of the population within the area is without insurance. An unusually high percentage of those over the age of 65 and increasingly burdensome medical costs often result in delayed or no care for a large portion of the EPEDC population. Consequently, the most prevalent causes of death are cancer, heart disease, and lower respiratory illnesses (**Table 20**, *found on page 35*). Moreover, the average Medicaid payment received per recipient per month is 80% higher than the average received for the rest of Montana (**Table 21**, *found on page 35*).

In addition, 19.1% of the EPEDC population reported living with a disability (2000 Census, *map found on page 34*). Wibaux County had the highest percentage in the entire state of Montana—an alarming 26.1%. However, the region's 14.3% veteran average was lower than the state's 16.2% in 2000 (**Table 18**, *found on page 34*).

A regional symptom resulting from a declining population with a rising median age is roughly 1.2 deaths for every birth (**Table 19**, *found on page 35*).

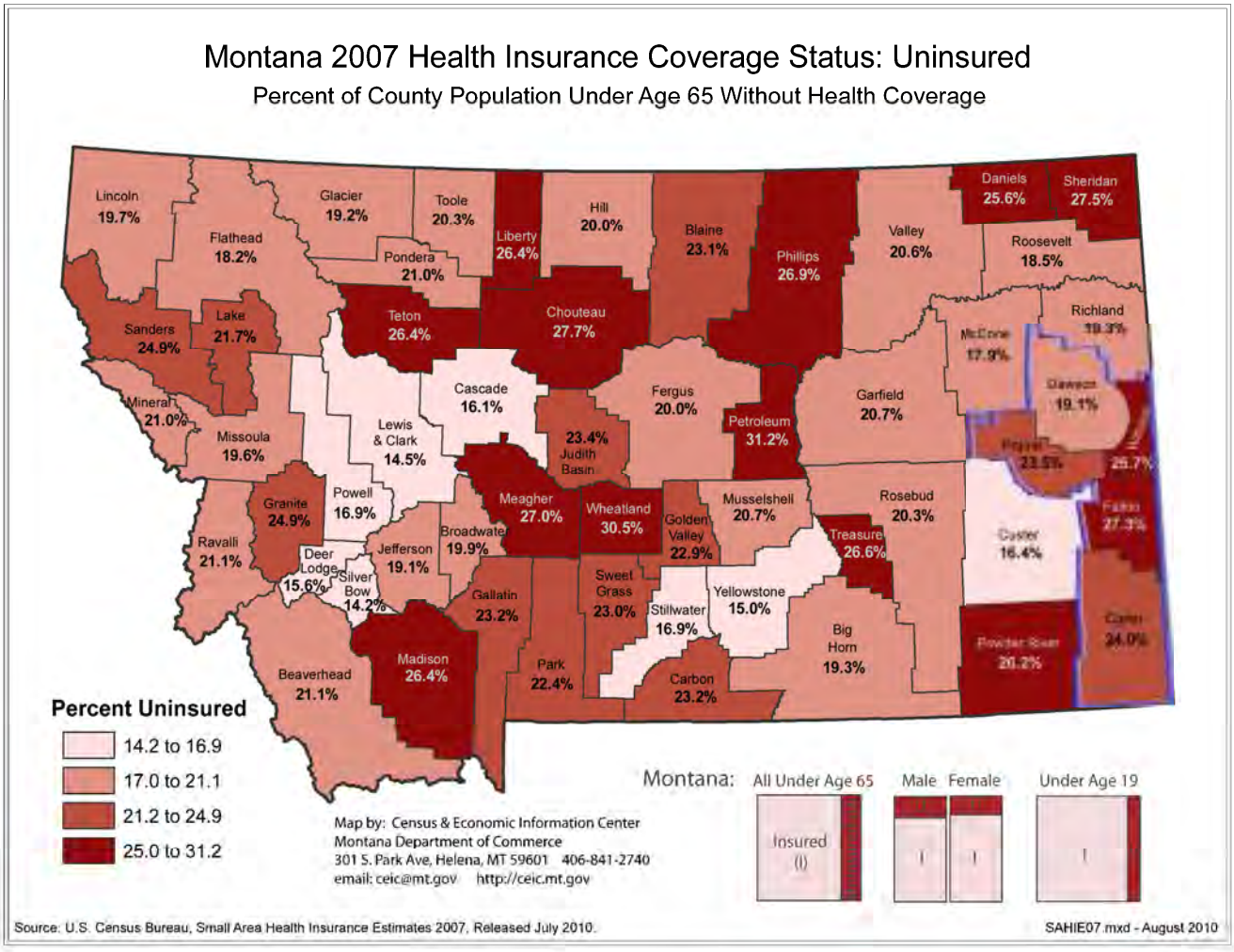


TABLE 18: Census 2000 Veteran Status		
County	Number of Civilian Veterans	Percent, as a portion of population 18 years and over
Carter	106	10.6
Dawson	1,112	16.0
Fallon	269	12.8
Prairie	185	19.1
Wibaux	101	12.8
Montana	*108,476*	*16.2*

U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

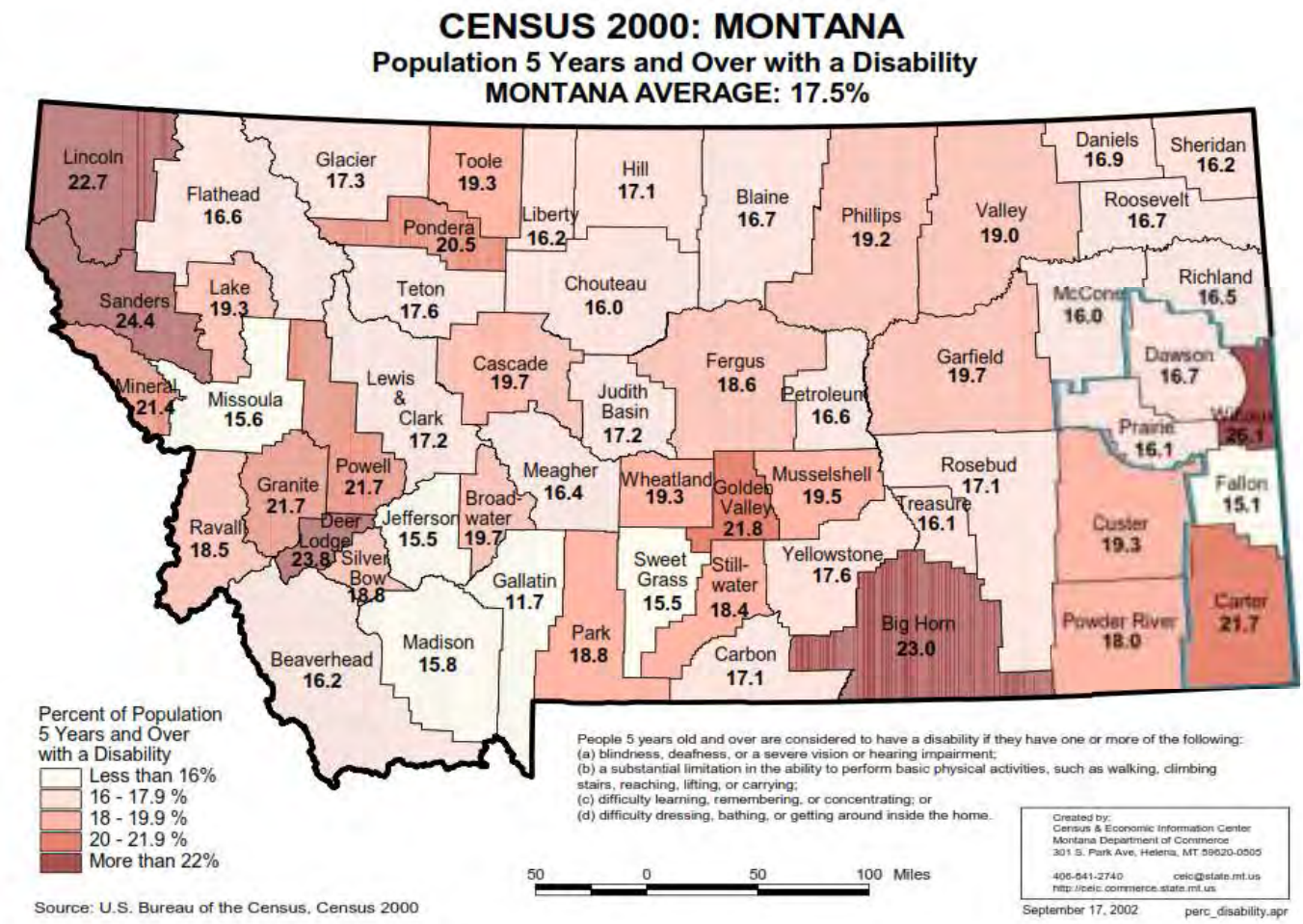


TABLE 19: Births and Deaths by County

	2008		2006		2004		2002		2000		1998	
	Births	Deaths	Births	Deaths	Births	Deaths	Births	Deaths	Births	Deaths	Births	Deaths
Carter	4	15	5	12	7	13	8	18	7	18	11	12
Dawson	93	117	102	90	89	108	79	112	103	93	99	96
Fallon	39	37	52	36	31	24	29	33	25	24	36	35
Prairie	9	14	7	13	7	18	5	18	10	14	10	19
Wibaux	5	27	9	20	8	23	6	13	10	13	10	21
Total	**150**	**210**	**175**	**171**	**142**	**186**	**127**	**194**	**155**	**162**	**166**	**183**

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Office of Vital Statistics

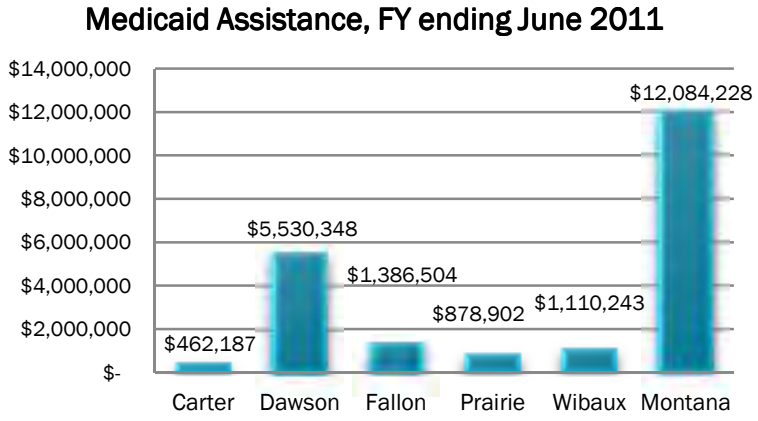
TABLE 20: 2010 Selected Vital Statistics

	Carter	Dawson	Fallon	Prairie	Wibaux
Most Prevalent Causes of Death	(1) Malignant neoplasms/cancer (2) Diseases of the heart (3) Chronic lower respiratory (4)Accidents	(1) Malignant neoplasms/cancer (2) Diseases of the heart (3)Accidents (4) Chronic lower respiratory (5) Cerebrovascular diseases	(1) Diseases of the heart (2) Malignant neoplasms/cancer (3) Chronic lower respiratory (4) Cerebrovascular diseases (5) Accidents	(1) Diseases of the heart (2) Malignant neoplasms/cancer (3) Chronic lower respiratory (4) Cerebrovascular diseases (5) Accidents	(1) Malignant neoplasms/cancer (2) Diseases of the heart (3) Chronic lower respiratory (4) Cerebrovascular diseases (5) Alzheimer's

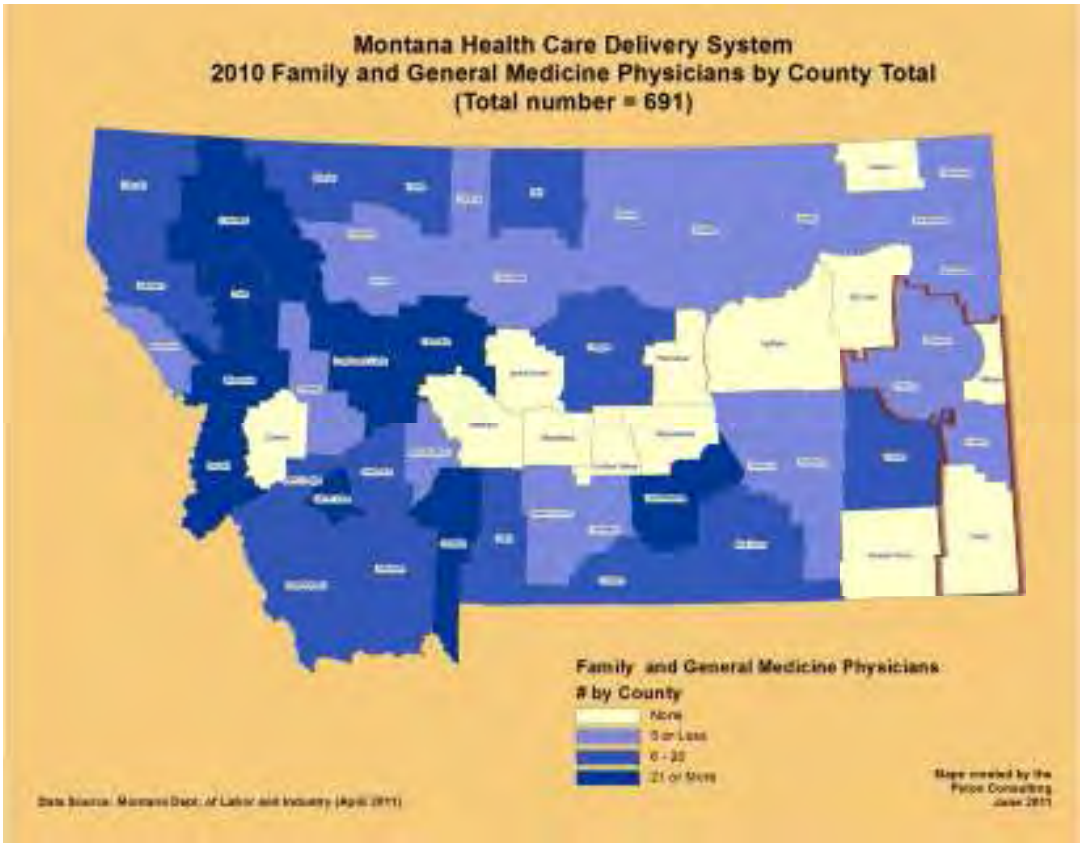
Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Office of Vital Statistics

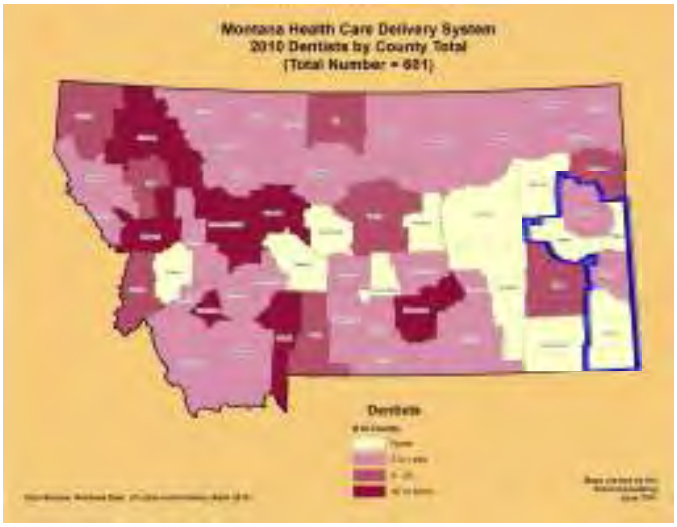
TABLE 21: Medicaid Payments

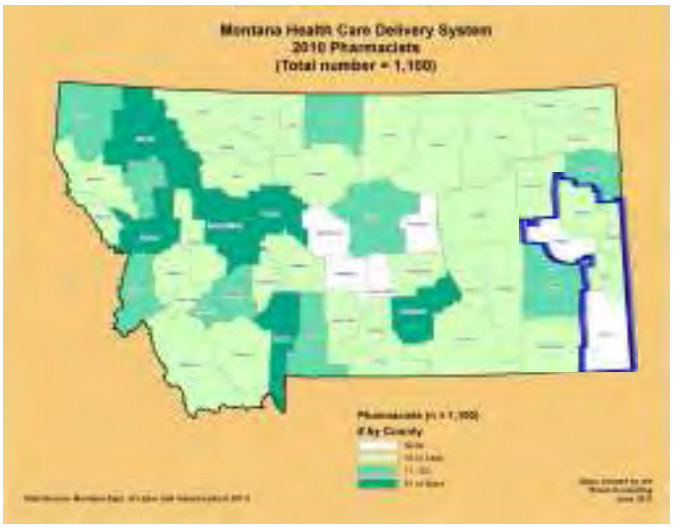
County	AVERAGE MEDICAID PAYMENT PER RECIPIENT PER MONTH
Carter	849.61
Dawson	776.30
Fallon	751.09
Prairie	1,036.44
Wibaux	1,838.15
Regional average	**1,050.32**
Montana	*583.72*



Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Medical Assistance: Amount and Monthly Averages by County







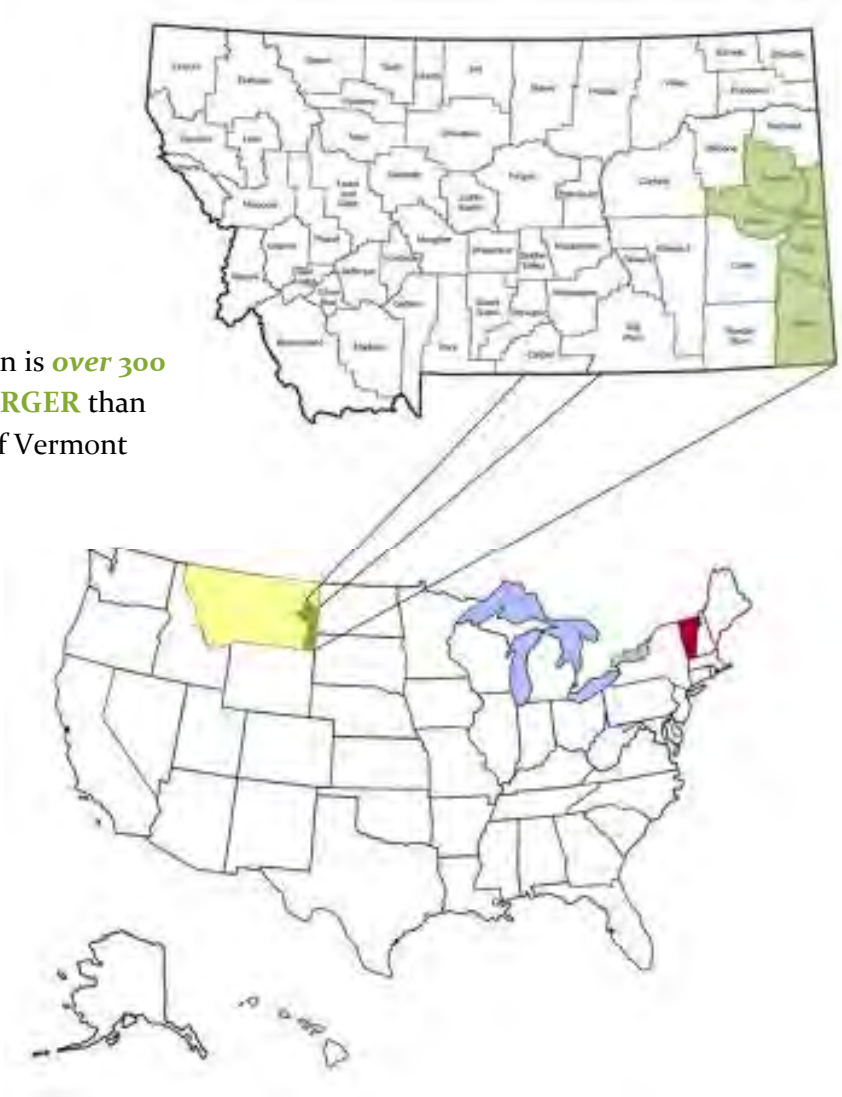
http://healthinfo.montana.edu/Downloadable%20Maps.html

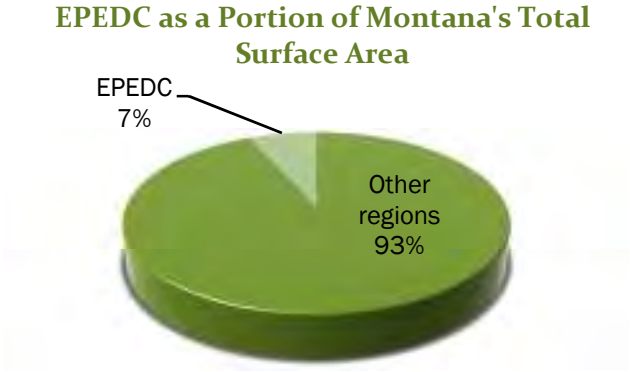
2. Geographic, Climatic, Environmental, and Natural Resource Profile

The Eastern Plains Economic Development District (EDD) encompasses the five (5) counties of **Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie,** and **Wibaux** in southeastern Montana. The area is approximately 188 miles long by 96 miles wide (at its greatest width). The eastern boundary is formed by the state borders of North and South Dakota, and the Wyoming state border forms the District's southern boundary. The area includes rolling farmland, large expanses of rangeland, rough breaks and badlands, as well as pine-covered hills.

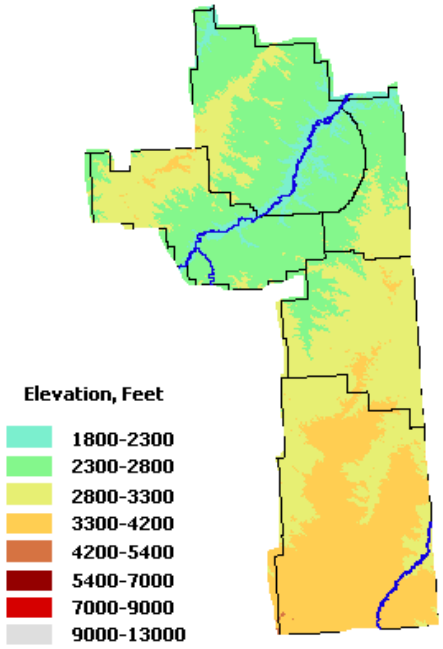
The Eastern Plains EDD covers 9,985.3 square miles or 6,390,592 surface acres. Elevations range from under 2,000 feet near the northern border of Dawson County to 4,100 feet in the forested areas of Carter County.

The EPEDC region is ***over* 300 square miles LARGER** than the entire State of Vermont





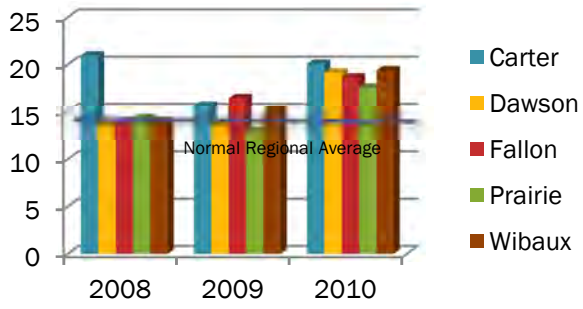
State of Montana's Total Surface Area: 147,040 square mile
http://nris.mt.gov/montanafacts/county_areas.asp



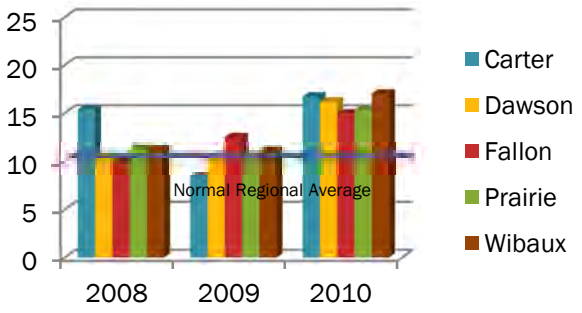
Climatic Profile

Average annual rainfall for this area of Montana ranges from 13.6 to 17.3 inches (**Table 22**). Severe drought conditions prevailed in eastern Montana throughout the 1980s—rainfall was below average and temperatures were very high. Rainfall returned to what residents considered more normal in the 1990s; however, winters in the early 1990s were very mild. The fall of 2010 into the spring of 2011 witnessed the highest levels of precipitation the EPEDC region has seen in over two decades. An early winter, coupled with record snowfall, and a cool spring shortened the year's growing season. Variable to extreme climatic and windy conditions are common in eastern Montana.

Annual Precipitiation by County



Precipitation from April to September by County



SOURCES: http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Montana/Publications/Annual_Statistical_Bulletin/2011/general.pdf and National Climatic Data Center, NOAA, Asheville, North Carolina.

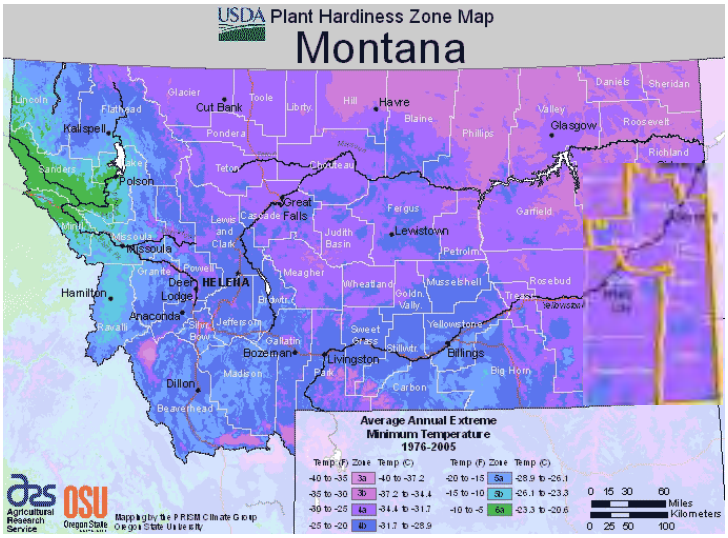
TABLE 22: Normal Annual and Growing Season Precipitation and Frost-Free Days

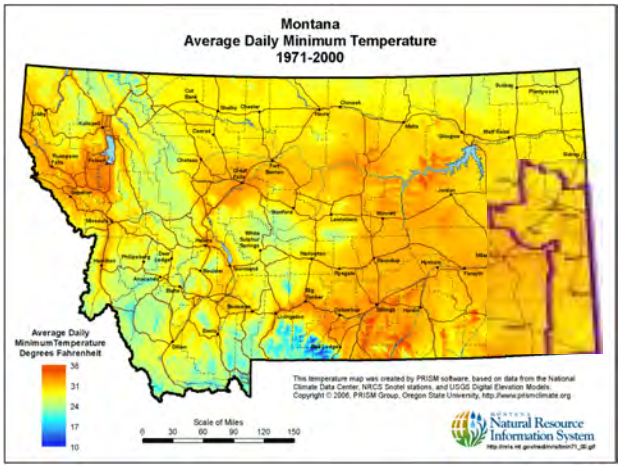
County	Normal Precipitation (inches)[1]		Average Frost-Free Days[2,3]
	Annual	April - September	
Carter	17.25	12.39	123
Dawson	13.62	10.42	144
Fallon	14.69	10.67	114
Prairie	13.67	10.44	126
Wibaux	14.01	11.17	113

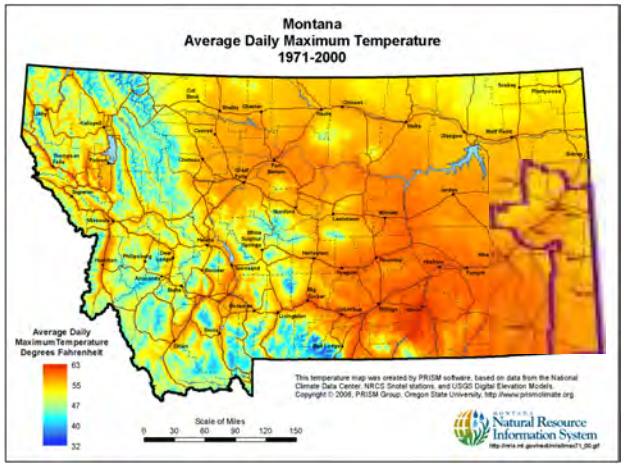
[1] Normal for period 1971-2000
[2] The number of days between the last frost (32 degrees) in the spring and the first frost (32 degrees) after June 30
[3] Average frost-free days for period 1991-2000
Source: 2011 Montana Agricultural Statistics

USDA Zones for the EPEDC region:

- **3b** (along the Yellowstone River in Prairie County only)/ -35 to -30 degrees F
- **4a** (covers a majority of the district)/ -30 to -25 degrees F
- **4b** (localized pockets in 4 out of 5 counties)/ -25 to -20 degrees F







Environmental Profile

This section identifies several issues which may impact economic development. Some issues may impede development, while others may provide opportunities. A balance between economic development and the environment is necessary to contribute to a high quality of life, as well as healthy tourism and recreation.

State parks include Makoshika State Park bordering the City of Glendive and Medicine Rocks State Park near Ekalaka. Lamesteer National Wildlife Refuge is located in Wibaux County. The Terry Badlands Wilderness Study Area (WSA) is 44,000 acres of public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). In addition, Custer National Forest, totaling over 1.3 million acres, covers much of southern Carter County. The EPEDC region contains no national parks, or wild or scenic rivers under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Endangered and threatened animal species identified by the U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which occur within Montana, include:

1. grizzly bear
2. black-footed ferret
3. interior least tern
4. whooping crane
5. pallid sturgeon
6. white sturgeon
7. Canada lynx
8. piping plover
9. bull trout

Detailed collaborating information can be found on the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks website (http://fwp.mt.gov) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website (http://www.fws.gov/endangered).

There is no designated critical habitat for federally listed endangered or threatened species within the District. Potentially, black-footed ferrets may be found in conjunction with prairie dog colonies.

Threatened plant species in Montana currently are not located in the EPEDC area. Contact the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks website or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website for information on plant species that may be listed in the future.

Prime/Unique Agricultural Lands - The 1981 Congressional report, *Compact/Cites: Energy-Saving Strategies for the Eighties*, identified the need for Congress to implement programs and policies to protect farmland and combat urban sprawl and the waste of energy and resources that accompanies sprawling development. Congress passed the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 containing the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA). The final rules and regulations were published in the Federal Register on June 17, 1994.

The FPPA is intended to minimize the impact Federal programs have on the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. It assures that, to the extent possible, Federal programs are administered to be compatible with state and local units of government and private programs and policies to protect farmland. Activities that may be subject to FPPA include:

- State highway construction projects (through the Federal Highway Administration)
- Airport expansions
- Electric cooperative construction projects
- Railroad construction projects
- Federal agency projects that convert farmland
- Other projects completed with Federal assistance

A Federal agency and/or project that has the potential to convert important farmland to non-farm use should contact the local office of the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or USDA Service Center.

Hazardous waste and toxic contamination investigation and clean up in Montana is administered by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) under the 1989 Montana Comprehensive Environmental Cleanup and Responsibility Act (CECRA). The 1997 Legislature adopted the Controlled Allocation of Liability Act, which provides a voluntary process for the apportionment of liability at CECRA facilities and established an orphan share fund.

Currently, there are two CECRA sites identified in the Eastern Plains EDC area, both located in Glendive, Montana. They are the Burlington Northern Fueling Facility (still in operation and listed as "High Priority") and the Dowell Schlumberger Inc. (an inactive oil field service facility and listed as "Medium Priority"). Further information on these sites is available on the DEQ website: http://www.deq.mt.gov/StateSuperfund. There are no sites in the Eastern Plains EDC area listed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Priorities List (NPL) Sites.

The Montana DEQ maintains a list of **leaking underground storage tanks** in the Petroleum Release Section, Remediation Division. The list includes 12 sites in Carter County with four of those having been resolved, 85 sites in Dawson County with 44 of those listed as resolved, 23 sites in Fallon County with 14 resolved, 21 sites in Prairie County with 16 resolved, and seven sites in Wibaux County with four resolved. Location and current information on these sites is available online at http://nris.mt.gov/deq/remsitequery/portal.aspx.

The **Abandoned Mine** Section, Remediation Division, Montana DEQ also maintains an abandoned mine query system on the previous website. There are 363 mines listed as abandoned in the EPEDC region. However, none of them are considered "priority abandoned mines."

There are potentially hundreds of **brownfield sites** in Montana. Brownfields are real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties takes development pressures off of undeveloped and open land, as well as improves and protects the environment. Montana DEQ's assessment assistance is crucial to the redevelopment or reuse of brownfield sites. DEQ receives funding from EPA each year to conduct a limited number of targeted brownfield assessments on qualified sites.

The Eastern Montana Brownfield Coalition (EMBC) was formed to both identify and mitigate Brownfield sites in eastern Montana. The coalition is made up of the EPEDC, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation, and Great Northern Development Corporation and covers the 15 counties within the three Economic Development Districts.

The EMBC has successfully secured $1,500,000 in Brownfield "cleanup" funds, and $750,000 in assessment funds, for the combined economic development regions. The funds have been utilized on two sites in the EPEDC region for cleanup and reuse of existing structures, specifically for asbestos abatement. It is suspected that many more sites exist; with both assessment funds for identification of sites and mitigation dollars available, the regional benefits will be significant. At this point, the EMBC is marketing and managing the funds for use in each respective region.

Groundwater remediation program – Sites regulated under the Montana Water Quality Act (WQA) are addressed by the Groundwater Remediation Program of the Montana DEQ. These sites typically require long-term soil, surface water, and/or groundwater remediation and monitoring. This program addresses sites that are not addressed by the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program, CECRA Program, Permitting and Compliance Division, or other state authorities.

The Groundwater Remediation Program (http://deq.mt.gov/statesuperfund/gwrem.mcpx) has overseen remediation at sites contaminated with petroleum, pesticides, and solvents. Sites range from small to large in scale. Sites are ranked as maximum, high, medium, or low priority sites, or as operation and maintenance sites. Currently there are four locations in the Eastern Plains EDC area identified as WQA priority sites—the Cenex

Glendive Pump Station Gasoline Release site in Glendive (low priority), the Cenex Pipeline Release in Glendive (referred to another program), the Farstad Oil Diesel Release near Ismay (high priority) and the Shell Oil Pipeline Release Baker site in Baker (low priority).

The Groundwater Remediation Program works cooperatively with the Department of Agriculture when pesticides impact groundwater.

The Montana Agricultural Chemical Ground Water Protection Act regulates investigation and cleanup of sites contaminated with agricultural chemicals. The program ensures the proper and correct use of agricultural chemicals, the management of agricultural chemicals to prevent, minimize and mitigate their presence in ground water, and provides education and training to agricultural chemical applicators, dealers, and the general public on ground water protection, agricultural chemical use, and the use of alternative agricultural methods. The program is comprised of ground water monitoring/education and ground water management plan development and enforcement.

The Montana Department of Agriculture conducts ambient ground water monitoring for agricultural chemicals. The ground water monitoring program's purpose is to determine whether residues of agricultural chemicals are present in ground water and to assess the likelihood of an agricultural chemical to enter ground water. If agricultural chemicals are found in ground water, the Montana Department of Agriculture is tasked to verify, investigate, and determine an appropriate response to the findings.

Permanent monitoring wells serve as the foundation from which the Montana Department of Agriculture looks for current and new agricultural chemicals. The program has a permanent network of 42 monitoring wells. In addition, investigative and special projects are conducted in vulnerable areas, watersheds, and urban environments. In the District, monitoring wells are located in Dawson County. The department also evaluates new chemicals when they are labeled for use in Montana as analytical methods are established.

In 2005, the department incorporated two areas into their sampling plans. In eastern Montana, the Lower Yellowstone Characterization Project entails sampling 15 wells twice during the year in agricultural settings from Stillwater County to Richland County (http://agr.mt.gov/agr/Programs/Pesticides/Environmental/Groundwater/Reports). The wells are predominantly located within 2 miles of the Yellowstone River. Dawson and Prairie Counties are included in this stretch of the Yellowstone River.

Wetlands benefit the environment by providing fish and wildlife habitat, improving water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals, reducing flooding, and recharging groundwater.

The USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). WRP provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agriculture. Montana's goals and objectives for the WRP are to assist eligible applicants in the restoration, enhancement, protection, and creation of wetlands on their property through a voluntary, environmentally safe and cost-effective manner. In Montana, the types of WRP restoration projects most often fall into the following categories: pothole restoration, floodplain restoration, and riparian corridors. In the EP EDC area, wetlands primarily consist of floodplain wetlands along riverine systems, in addition to the North Fork Burns Creek Wetland in Dawson County and Lamesteer National Wildlife Refuge in Wibaux County.

Major manufacturers and users of hazardous chemicals – There are no major manufacturers of hazardous chemicals in the Eastern Plains EDC area. Farm chemical agri-businesses, farmers, and oil related industries in the area are users of hazardous chemicals.

Major manufacturers and users of pesticides – There are no major manufacturers of pesticides in the Eastern Plains EDC area. Farm chemical agri-businesses and farmers are users of pesticides.

Single source (drinking water) aquifers – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines a sole or principal source aquifer as one which supplies at least 50 percent of the drinking water consumed in the area overlying the aquifer. There are no designated sole source aquifers in the EPEDC area.

Wellhead protection areas for protecting drinking water in ground water wells – Montana is required under 1996 amendments to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act to carry out a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP). Among other things the SWAP requires the participation of all public water systems (PWS) in identifying and protecting their water sources (http://nris.mt.gov/wis/swap/swapquery.asp). Carter County has 6 PWSs with delineated wellhead protection areas; Dawson County, 29 PWSs; Fallon County, 3 PWSs; Prairie County, 9 PWSs; and Wibaux County, 1 PWS.

If an agricultural establishment or other agribusiness has an on-site water source (well) that qualifies as a public non-community drinking water system, the facility must take the steps required by the State/Tribe to protect the wellhead from contaminants. A wellhead protection area is the surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or a well field, supplying a public water system, through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach such a water well or well field.

Non-attainment areas for any criteria pollutants under the Clean Air Act – There are no air quality nonattainment areas in the EPEDC area.

Floodplains– Floodplain management in Montana is administered through the Floodplain Management Program housed in the Water Resources Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). This program is responsible for the overall development and administration of two major programs and various subprograms—including the Montana Floodplain and Floodway Management Program, Community Assistance Program, Flood Mitigation Assistance Program, National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and the Cooperative Technical Partnership Program (CTP). The program performs a variety of administrative, managerial, technical, and educational duties relative to the state and federal floodplain management programs to ensure that local governments monitor and regulate floodplain development in a manner that minimizes the loss of life and property in the event of a 100-year flood.

The Floodplain Management Section of the DNRC is responsible for the oversight and NFIP coordination of 130 locally administered floodplain management programs throughout Montana. The primary goal of the program is to reduce the loss of life and structural property through wise floodplain development. The secondary goals are to reduce the loss of functional floodplains and reduce the amount of erosion of stream banks due to unwise floodplain development. More floodplain information can be found at http://dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_op/floodplain/. It should be noted that neither Prairie County (Town of Terry) or Wibaux County participate in the NFIP.

The Floodplain Management Program is statutorily required to initiate a comprehensive program for the delineation of designated floodplains and designated floodways for every watercourse and drain way in the state. Currently, the only funding available to accomplish this is funding through the CTP, which are funds provided by FEMA. Unfortunately, the amount of funding can only meet 10-15% of the need for Montana. The average age of flood maps in Montana is 19 years; the average age of flood maps for the EPEDC region is 24 years. Most NFIP communities in Montana with maps have portions of their floodplain with no detailed base floodplain elevation (BFE). Lack of information coupled with floodplain regulations hinders development, since a home/building located within the 100-year floodplain has a 26% chance of being inundated by a base flood over the life of a 30-year mortgage.

The most recent disaster declaration for severe storms and flooding was granted by FEMA June 17, 2011 and included individual assistance for Carter, Fallon, and Wibaux Counties, in addition to public assistance for all five of the EPEDC counties for the repair and replacement of disaster-damaged facilities.

NFIP Loss Statistics for Participants the EPEDC Region / January 1, 1978 through March 31, 2012					
	Total Losses	Closed Losses	Open Losses	Closed Without Payment Losses	Total Payments
City of Baker	1	0	0	1	.00
City of Glendive	5	5	0	0	11,738.81
Town of Wibaux	3	3	0	0	77,084.26

http://bsa.nfipstat.com/reports/1040.htm#30

Environmental Justice Issues – There is no indication that proposed development in the Eastern Plains EDC area will adversely affect minority and low-income populations. In this rural area, any well-planned economic development can only benefit all citizens, both socially and economically.

Archeological, Historic, Prehistoric, or Cultural Resource Sites - The region contains paleontological sites, archaeological sites, historical sites, buildings, and bridges which are significant cultural resources. The area contains sites covering a wide array of past activities including prehistoric, tribal history, missionary work, historic battlefields, mining, homesteading, early settlements, transportation, and agricultural practices. Historic trails and routes, from Lewis and Clark to famous cattle drives, crisscross the District. Undiscovered paleontological and archaeological resources also exist.

Any proposed economic development projects are required to go through a review process by the Montana Historic Preservation Office (SHPO, http://mhs.mt.gov/default.asp) prior to the start of such development. A cultural resources survey must be conducted before a direct physical change begins on a project that uses federal money or requires a federal permit. It is illegal to dig for fossils on public lands without a permit.

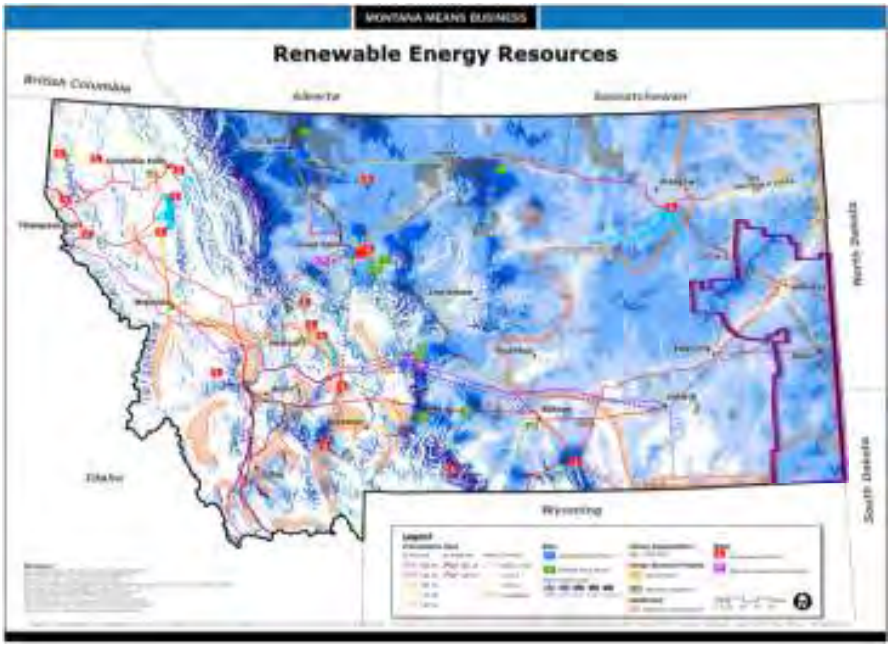
Growth Policies – Montana's cities and towns have been authorized to adopt master plans or comprehensive plans since 1957; counties, since 1971. The Montana State Legislature passed revised land use planning legislation in 1999. The new laws contained in Title 76, Chapter 1, Montana Code Annotated (MCA) provide requirements related to the creation of local government planning boards and the completion of a "Growth Policy," a new term that replaces the "Master Plan," as the local government's guiding document regarding subdivisions, growth, and land use. The 2003 Legislature set a deadline of October 1, 2006, by which time local growth policies must include the required minimum elements listed in Montana's Growth Policy Act 76-1-601(3), MCA.

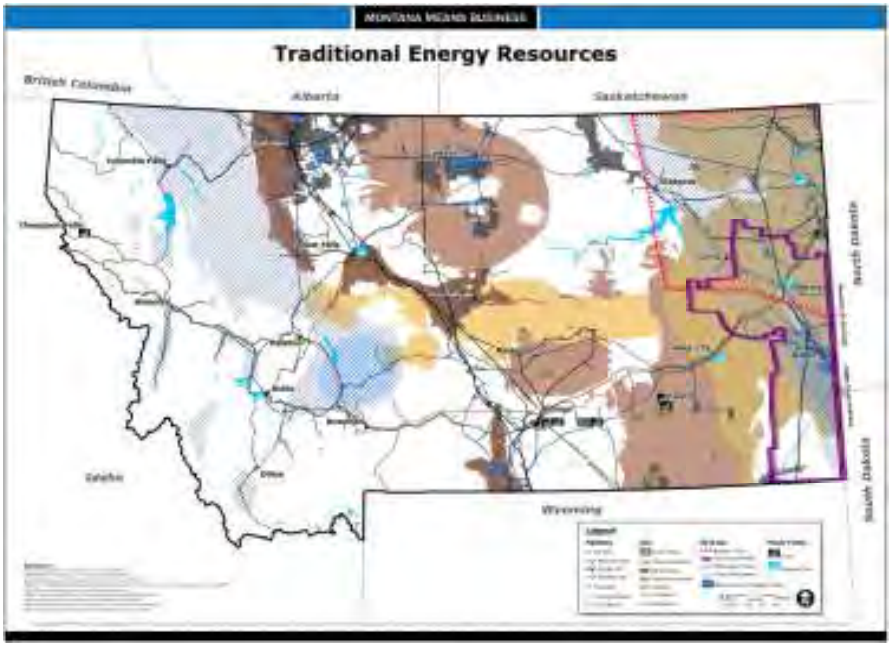
Development of a growth policy is optional. However, failure to comply with the law can have impacts on the ability to adopt or amend zoning regulations. Currently, Carter, Fallon, Dawson, and Prairie Counties have adopted growth policies.

Montana's Growth Policy Resource Book dated April 2009 and distributed by the Montana Department of Commerce, Community Development Division, provides information to people involved with county and municipal planning in Montana. The majority of cities/towns and counties within the Economic Development District have either completed or are nearing the completion of a growth policy.

Natural Resource Profile

Natural resources have been the sustaining feature of the District through the last century; these include soil, rangeland, and wildlife. Sustainable use and conservation of all natural resources is important to the area's residents. Agriculture, mining, and oil and gas production have long been the area's primary industries.



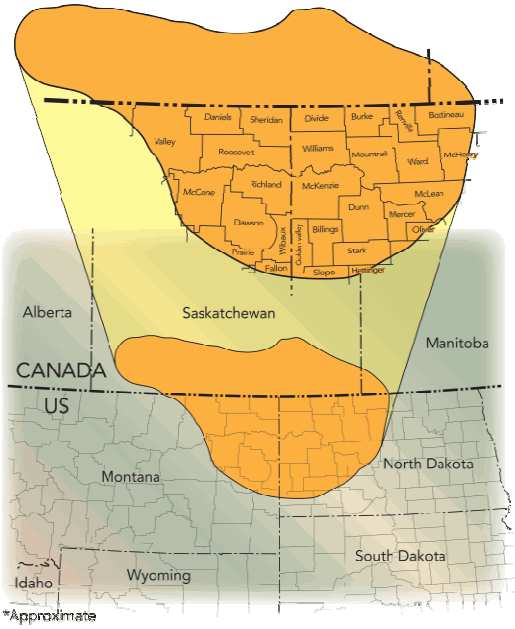


Farming and ranching are the major income producing businesses. Rainfall, energy costs, and commodity prices greatly influence the profitability of this industry.

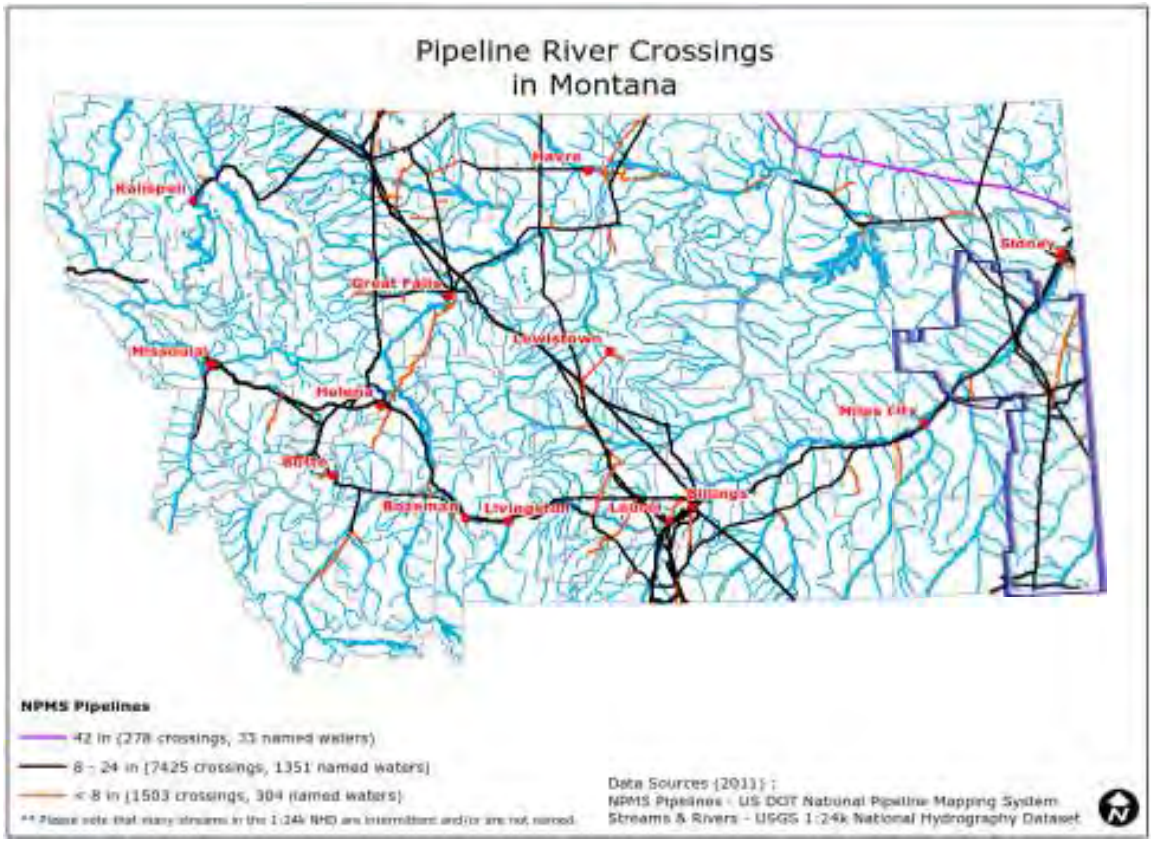
Coal mining played an important historic role in eastern Montana's development. Lignite coal-bearing deposits are found in Dawson, Fallon, and Wibaux counties. Currently, there are no coal mining activities in the region.

Oil and gas reserves development is subject to demand on the national and international market. The oil industry boomed in the area during the 1970s and early 1980s, but crashed when oil prices dropped in 1985. Oil activity in the region has typically been focused on the Cedar Creek Anticline in Prairie, Dawson, and Fallon Counties.

Recently, a significant increase in drilling is occurring near the Bakken Shale subsurface formation. Located in the Williston Basin in Montana and North Dakota and in the Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the Bakken formation is estimated to contain approximately 3.5 to 4.0 billion barrels of oil equivalent, which makes it the largest oil find in US history outside the oil fields of Alaska. The Bakken formation extends into the EPEDC region; a rise in oil leases and test wells indicates that further drilling in eastern Montana will occur. It can be anticipated that this increase in oil production and the "fracking" of wells will provide for a significant economic impact on the entire region, the beginning of which is already being felt. Responsible and sustainable development, along with impact mitigation, will be essential throughout the next several years to ensure the long term stability of the region.



The region is a corridor for pipeline development. Several lines already crisscross the area; infrastructure development positively affects a county's tax base. Pipeline routes also affect agricultural producers and land owners.



The proposed route of TransCanada Corporation's Keystone XL pipeline will impact four out of five of the region's counties as it passes through eastern Montana. "The Perryman Group, an economic and financial analysis firm based in Texas, estimates that Montana could see nearly $2.1 billion in property taxes to counties and local governments during the lifespan of the pipeline. 'During the construction phase of the project, Montana [could] see $421 million in new spending, the creation of 6,000 new jobs, and increased personal income of $286 million.'" ("Governor approves permit for XL pipeline," *Glendive Ranger Review*. December 22, 2011.)

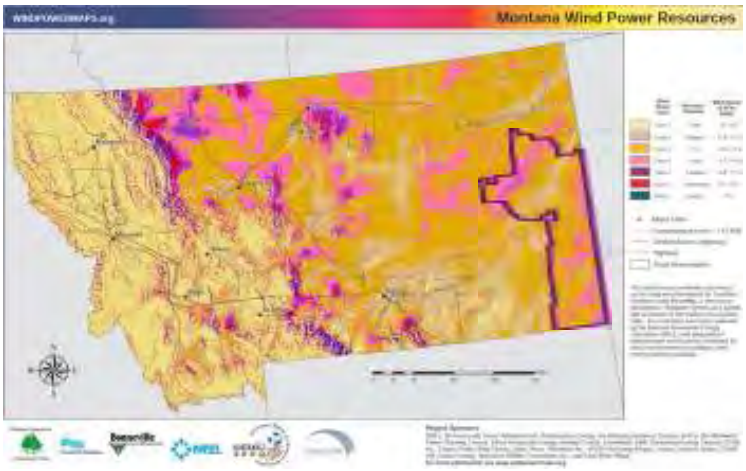
TransCanada also has plans to put an oil on-ramp in Fallon County, which will be the only location where American oil enters the Canadian oil transport system, resulting in an additional "65,000 barrels per day shipped through Fallon County" to refineries in the South. ("Oil on-ramp to be located in Fallon County," *Fallon County Times*. February, 4, 2011.)

Non-metallic mineral reserves of bentonite are found in the southeast portion of the area near Alzada in Carter County. Signification quantities of commercial-scale gravel deposits are available in Dawson and Prairie counties for road surface, concrete, and general construction.

Wind energy development potential exists in all five counties. Maps pinpoint areas of high potential for the generation of wind energy in all five counties. Wind monitoring stations have been constructed in the region. Tax credits and other incentives are available for the generation of wind energy and other alternative generation means. The main development obstacle remains the lack of available power transmission lines.

Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. (MDU) owns two wind farms in the region, both in Fallon County.

- Diamond Willow I (constructed in 2007-2008)/ 19.5 megawatts
- Diamond Willow II (began operation in June 2010)/ 10.5 megawatts



Geology - The geology of the EPEDC area is composed Cenozoic and Mesozoic era formations. The Cenozoic formations were formed during the Quaternary and Tertiary periods; the Mesozoic formations, during the Cretaceous, Jurassic, and Triassic periods.

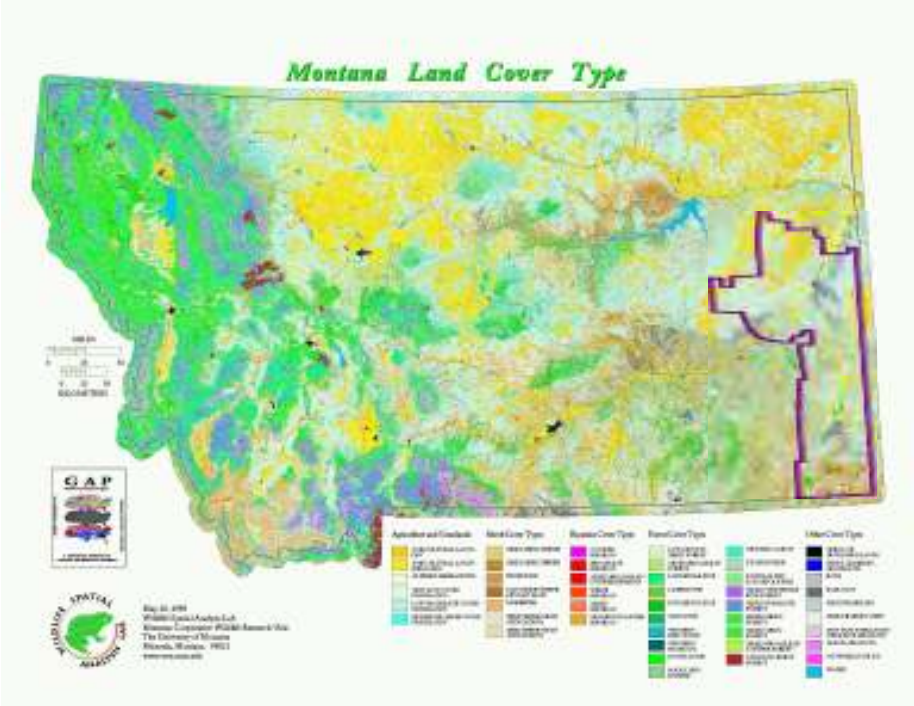
Soils - Specific soil series information and capability descriptions can be found within the published soil survey of each county, available at the USDA, National Resource Conservation Service field offices. Regional land use consists of mainly cropland, cropland with grazing land, and rangeland.

In general, the soils in the EPEDC area are made up of five major land resource areas: 1) northern dark brown glaciated plains and the rolling soft shale plains, 2) northern rolling high plains, 3) brown glaciated plains, 4) Pierre shale plains, and 5) areas of badlands and entisols.

Vegetation - Dominant vegetative cover in the five counties is rangeland, with some forest areas in the southern portion near the South Dakota and Wyoming borders. Predominant native plants on the rangeland are western wheatgrass, blue bunch wheatgrass, needle and thread, little bluestem, big sagebrush, silver sagebrush, and various forbs species. Predominant native plants of forested areas are ponderosa pine, chokecherry, Oregon grape, needle grass, sedges, porcupine grass, western wheatgrass, snowberry, bluegrasses, and timber danthonia.

Woody draws and bottomland hardwoods are prevalent along major water courses. The woody draws contain rocky-mountain juniper, chokecherry, buffalo-berry, snowberry and other brushy species. Bottomland hardwoods include cottonwood, willows, green ash, red osier dogwood, and other woody species.

Primary crops grown in the area are spring and winter wheat, barley, oats, corn, beans, alfalfa and irrigated sugarbeets. Alternative crops include peas, lentils, onions, potatoes, and flaxseed.



http://nris.mt.gov/gis/gisdatalib/downloads/gap90.gif

Timber - The timber industry in eastern Montana is located in Carter County on the Custer National Forest. Additionally, some private timber is harvested each year. The timber industry statewide and in the entire northwestern United States has faced huge cutbacks in timber harvest and lumber mill closures. The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation foresters serving these counties provide information, technical assistance and encourage responsible utilization of timber resources.

Water Resources – The area lies within the watershed of the Yellowstone River, a major tributary to the Missouri River System. This river is a very important source of municipal and irrigation water and has recreation and tourism potential. The Yellowstone River flows from the southwest in a northeasterly direction through Prairie and Dawson counties for convergence with the Missouri River just across the North Dakota border within sight of historic Fort

Union. Major tributaries to the Yellowstone River in eastern Montana are the Bighorn, Powder, and Tongue Rivers and the Big Porcupine, Rosebud, Sunday, and O'Fallon Creeks.

Water quality in the region is generally good. However, some water quality issues face the area. First is sedimentation and deposition caused from natural water erosion in runoff, streambank erosion, and return flows from irrigation. Second is increased temperature from changing streambed dynamics and loss of riparian vegetation. Shallow groundwater can be affected by leaching of undesirable elements. Surface and groundwater can also be impacted by saline seep.

Water quality needs to be maintained and improved for many municipal water systems and individual rural water users. The feasibility for construction rural water systems in the district needs to be determined.

Water quantity issues within the area deal with both surface and groundwater. Surface water quantity issues include in-stream flows, domestic versus agricultural verses recreational use, and putting to beneficial use water reserved by conservation districts. Groundwater quantity issues center around the capacity of underground aquifers for surface pumping and effects on surface wetlands from pumping.

Conservation districts are charged with administration of the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act of 1975, more commonly known as the "310 Law." The act is designed to protect Montana's perennial streams from soil erosion and sedimentation. A 310 permit is required before an individual engages in any activity that will modify a streambed or streambank.

Land ownership is predominately private with 75.68% of the total. Federal land comprises 17.58% of the total surface area for the second largest holding. State land makes up 6.56% and water 0.12% (**Table 23**).

TABLE 23: Land Ownership

County	Percent Federal Land	Percent State Land	Percent Private Land	Percent Water	BLM Acreage	
					Surface	*Subsurface*
Carter	27.7	6.7	65.5	0.0	503,790	1,196,783
Dawson	4.1	6.5	89.0	0.3	62,016	630,214
Fallon	11.2	6.9	81.8	0.0	115,261	254,410
Prairie	40.1	6.9	52.7	0.3	447,462	601,804
Wibaux	4.8	5.8	89.4	0.0	26,033	213,797
Average/Total	**17.58**	**6.56**	**75.68**	**0.12**	**1,154,562**	**2,897,008**

http://nris.mt.gov/montanafacts/county_own.asp
BLM Acreage – Montana FY 2011

3. Regional Infrastructure

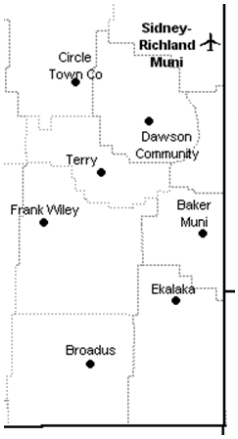
The five counties in the Eastern Plains Economic Development District are governed by three-member county commissions, elected for 6 years on a rotating basis. Within these counties are seven incorporated cities or towns, operating under the jurisdiction of city/town councils. Five to nine council members are elected every 4 years in rotation, usually in nonpartisan elections (**Table 24**, *found on page 50*). A mayor is elected separately and votes only in the event of a tie. Cities and counties staff qualified law enforcement professionals. Unincorporated communities have no organized governmental structure other than that provided by the county where the city/town is located.

TABLE 24: County and Municipality Government

County/City/Town	FTE FY 2009	Mileage	Form of Government	Powers of Government	Method of Election	Size of Commission or Council	Number of Other Elected Officials
Carter	**34**	**762.57**	**COM**	**Gen**	**P**	**3**	**7**
Ekalaka	2.75	10.39	Com-Ex(A)	Gen	NP	5	
Dawson	**133**	**1135.84**	**COM**	**Gen**	**P**	**3**	**9**
Glendive	57.79	44.74	Com-Ex	Gen	NP	9	
Richey	2	6.11	Com-Ex	Gen	NP	5	
Fallon	**48**	**783.82**	**COM**	**Gen**	**P**	**3**	**7**
Baker	16	27.59	Com-Ex	Gen	NP	5	
Plevna	1	4.62	Com-Ex(A)	Gen	NP	5	
Prairie	**19.34**	**625.23**	**COM**	**Gen**	**P**	**3**	**7**
Terry	2	21.75	Com-Ex	Gen	NP	5	
Wibaux	**21**	**481.47**	**COM**	**Gen**	**P**	**3**	**7**
Wibaux	4.1	12.03	Com-Ex	Gen	NP	5	

Transportation Modes - The area has restricted surface and air transportation. A commercial airport and subsidized air service is available in Glendive. Non-commercial airports are located in Baker, Ekalaka, and Terry. Interstate 94 runs east-west across the northern part of the District through Dawson, Prairie, and Wibaux Counties. Rail freight is carried by Burlington Northern Santa Fe with spurs servicing grain elevators. Trailways bus lines travel along I-94 providing service to the communities of Terry, Glendive, and Wibaux. Limited taxi service is available in certain parts of the District. No passenger train travel is available at this time.

While east-west transportation is adequate, north-south travel is limited. There is no public north-south transportation, and limited paved routes occasionally leave area residents dependent on gravel roads. Highway 323 in Carter County was finally paved in 2010. However, Highway 261 from Wibaux to Sidney needs to be paved due to increased truck traffic transporting freight from the oil fields. Another restriction on transportation is the ability of counties to maintain roads and bridges due to a finite tax base.



GLENDIVE	2009 PASSENGERS			2010 PASSENGERS			%2010 VS. 2009		
MONTH	ON	OFF	TOTAL	ON	OFF	TOTAL	ON	OFF	TOTAL
Jan	0	0	0	14	17	31	N/A	N/A	N/A
Feb	11	8	19	10	14	24	-9.1%	75.0%	26.3%
Mar	13	12	25	9	11	20	-30.8%	-8.3%	-20.0%
Apr	20	16	36	20	20	40	0.0%	25.0%	11.1%
May	25	25	50	19	23	42	-24.0%	-8.0%	-16.0%
Jun	31	28	59	18	23	41	-41.9%	-17.9%	-30.5%
Jul	31	25	56	28	44	72	-9.7%	76.0%	28.6%
Aug	27	29	56	33	33	66	22.2%	13.8%	17.9%
Sep	21	17	38	53	59	112	152.4%	247.1%	194.7%
Oct	17	23	40	51	49	100	200.0%	113.0%	150.0%
Nov	25	20	45	62	57	119	148.0%	185.0%	164.4%
Dec	22	13	35	106	101	207	381.8%	676.9%	491.4%
TO DATE	243	216	459	423	451	874	74.1%	108.8%	90.4%
TOTALS	243	216	459						

Note: Great Lakes Airlines did not begin operations in Glendive until February, 2009

http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/docs/datastats/boardings-2010.pdf

Burlington Northern Santa Fe

2012 Montana Rail System map

2012 Montana Highway Map

Water Supply and Treatment Systems - Typically, a public water supply is defined as supplying 25 or more people or 10 or more service connections daily or at least 10 service connections at least 60 days out of the calendar year. The review of community water systems in the district indicated system sources and storage volume are considered sufficient for domestic use. In addition to the domestic demand, most systems have adequate source and storage for protection from fire and have fair distribution capabilities. However, most are over 50 years old and age is taking a toll on these systems. An ongoing effort to upgrade community water supply and treatment systems is common throughout the district. *See individual county sections for further information*.

Sewage Treatment and Collection Systems - As with water systems, the majority of communities work consistently to keep their sewage facilities within the regulations required. There are nine wastewater treatment facilities in the area. Most systems are facultative lagoons and the primary problem is seepage and/or dike maintenance. All communities who have deficiencies are aware of the problems. Discharge standards are also becoming

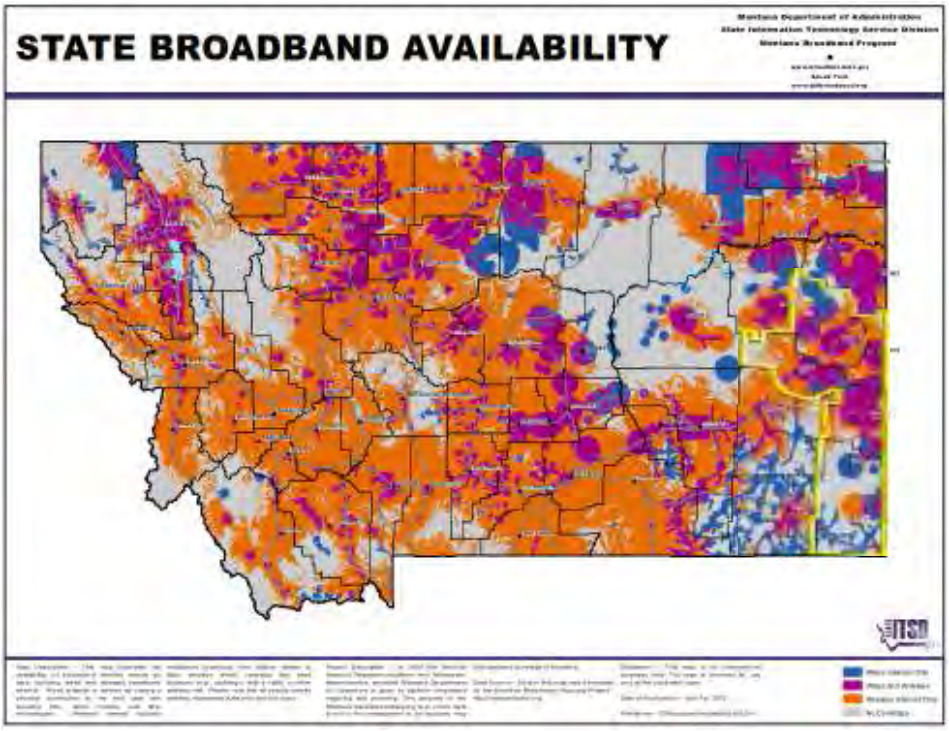
increasingly difficult to meet, and testing requirements are placing a strain on local governments. *See individual county sections for further information*.

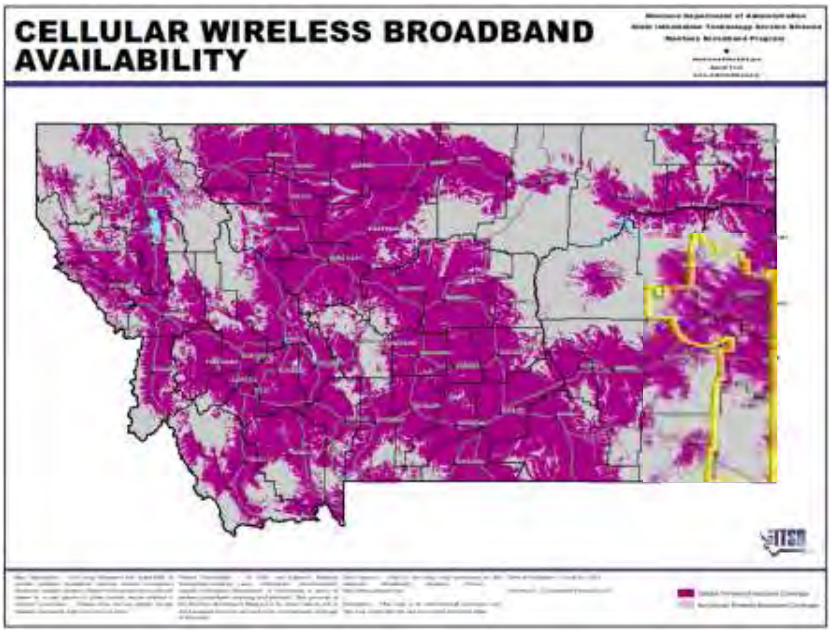
Solid Waste Sites - Currently, the district is served by the following Class II or better landfills: Glendive and Coral Creek (Baker). All facilities are currently in compliance with regulations governing landfills. The primary concern is extending the life of the landfill and diverting bulky items taking up space. All facilities support recycling efforts; however, the market and transportation are not conducive to a widespread recycling effort. Most recycling relies on efforts of volunteers to breakeven at best. Eastern Montana Industries (EMI), a regional non-profit headquartered in Miles City, Montana collects some recyclables for the region. EMI is working toward expanding its recycling efforts further into eastern Montana and is also searching for ways to expand the types of materials it can collect. In addition, growing activity in the region due to oil and gas development may put a greater strain on existing landfills, filling them at greater rates than previously anticipated. While fees are in place for collection of waste, the long term impacts of the additional dumping will need to be considered as activity increases.

Communications – District residents are provided telephone service by Mid-Rivers Communications, Inc. headquartered in Circle, Montana (McCone County), and CenturyLink (formerly Qwest) headquartered in Monroe, Louisiana. Cable television and internet services are also provided by these companies. Mid-Rivers has an extensive network of fiber optics throughout the EPEDC area, making DSL and high-quality telephone service possible.

Mid-Rivers Communications, Inc. serves the largest land mass telephone cooperative in the U.S. Area residents had access to the first interactive television service (ITV) for educational and other video conferencing uses in 1990—the first ITV network in Montana. Mid-Rivers continues to make improvements and is expanding its technology infrastructure in the region, including the installation of fiber for broadband, wireless and land line phone service, and cable television. For more information on broadband service within the State of Montana, please visit www.broadband.mt.gov.

Local radio stations are located in Baker and Glendive. Glendive also has a local television station (KXGN).





Energy Distribution Systems – Listed below are companies that provide electricity and natural gas to consumers in the District.

Name	Office
Goldenwest Electric Cooperative Inc.	Wibaux
Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric	Sidney
McCone Electric Cooperative Inc.	Circle
Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. (MDU)	Glendive
Southeast Electric Cooperative Inc.	Ekalaka
Tongue River Electric Cooperative	Ashland

There is one power plant (83.7 kilo-watts) located south of Glendive in the EPEDC area owned by MDU Resources Group, Inc.

Central Business Districts - Appearance is a factor that distinguishes one community from another. The appearance of the business district subliminally tells visitors and prospective entrepreneurs a great deal about the area and its attitudes. Local community organizations are in place to look after the best interests of their communities. Basic beautification methods are used throughout central business districts in the area. However, vacant and unkempt buildings are common. Commercial revitalization and stabilization is important in the area, and communities are now utilizing programs like the Montana Department of Commerce's "Main Street Program" to provide grant and technical assistance--Glendive and Terry are both affiliate members.

Currently, only Glendive's business district supports national franchise stores/eateries. However, the EPEDC region is a part of rural America where you can live and work in an environment that reflects all that is good about "small town life." Communities offer friendly neighbors, pristine air, beautiful sunsets, and great schools.

4. State of the Regional Economy

The well-being of rural America depends on the availability of good-paying jobs, access to critical services, strong communities, and a healthy natural environment. This section contains a narrative analysis of the region's strengths and potential constraints on its growth and development. The strengths and weaknesses were examined and are presented as seen by local residents and voiced at public meetings held throughout the district in preparation for this CEDS.

The Eastern Plains Economic Development region is based in agriculture, and it continues to be the backbone of the economy. Recent trends in commodity and cattle pricing have provided for a stable economic condition over the last few years.

The natural resources industry has bolted to the forefront of the region's economy over the past several months. Development of the Bakken Shale oil field in northeastern Montana and western North Dakota has erupted, putting the EPEDC region on the edge of an unprecedented oil boom. While this provides for great opportunities to revitalize many sectors of the economy, it also is putting strain on vital infrastructure and housing.

Tourism is also a vital industry in the region for local businesses and is dependent upon both outdoor recreation opportunities, such as hunting and fishing, as well as cultural assets like museums and scenic areas. Tourism activity had been on the upswing over the past few years, but the oil industry's demand for motel space has presented a challenge for travelers. As the supply of motel space increases to accommodate the demands of both the oil industry and local tourists, it will allow for both economic sectors to flourish in the region. New motels are proposed, or are currently being constructed, in Glendive and Baker.

Our recent history has shown a population decline and outmigration of youth. Increased natural resource development provides an opportunity for youth to remain in the region and secure high wage employment, an opportunity that was previously not present. Time will tell, but a reduction in outmigration, an increase in our youth population, and a decrease in the overall age of the region's population is essential as the economy moves forward. Opportunities for young families need to be developed, as we develop ways to care for those who are aging.

Infrastructure and housing are also key to the region's ability to take advantage of the natural resource development occurring. The existing infrastructure is in many cases undersized or at capacity and needs to be expanded to allow for growth. In addition, much of the housing stock in the region is aging and availability of housing is a significant issue. Development of infrastructure and housing are crucial to the sustainability of the region long term.

Constraints on Economic Growth

The problems listed here have been identified as pertinent to economic developers in both the private and public sectors (see County Profiles, *SWOT Analysis Summary*). Most of these constraints are beyond the ability of the

District to influence directly. They are listed here to emphasize hurdles that must be factored into any development strategy within the District so as to add some reality to possible development plans or scenarios.

1. Insufficient/aging infrastructure

The Eastern Plains EDC region has multiple issues with existing infrastructure. Water, wastewater, streets, roads, and public safety are all concerns.

Each municipality within the EPEDC region is unique, but in many instances existing infrastructure is aged enough to warrant replacement. For water, it may be distribution lines, need for additional wells, additional treatment capacity, fire protection or the lack of a municipal system altogether. For wastewater, treatment is a growing concern, and collection lines are also at issue. The amount of funding needed to upgrade and expand these facilities to meet existing and growing demand far exceeds the local capability for financing.

Streets and roads both in the counties and municipalities are of grave concern. Increased heavy traffic on county roads is causing significant damage in some areas. The municipalities struggle with street maintenance on a never-ending basis with the cost of improvements far exceeding the available budget. This often leads to year after year of patchwork repairs.

Public safety capacity is being stretched at this point due to the incoming development. The Dawson County jail is beyond capacity, calls are increasing, new employees are difficult to recruit, and in the case of fire and ambulance the assistance is mostly if not all volunteer. As those calls increase, burnout will become a major issue. Facilities are also outdated and inefficient or undersized.

The regions ability to plan for and provide infrastructure will be the number one determinate of each community's ability to capitalize on economic activity and sustain itself into the future.

2. Low population

Between 1990 and 2010, total population in the District declined by 8.8%. Within the past 10 years, the median age of the population aged 4.8 years from 43 to 47.8. The declining, aging population has depleted the available work force. This trend has a ripple effect as a lack of critical mass does not encourage adequate training for available workforce, nor does it provide opportunities for advancement necessary to encourage growth. Moreover, both federal and state funding sources often advertise grants and loans as specific opportunities for rural communities. These funding sources, while aimed at assisting areas under certain population levels, also make assumptions about the amount of match a community can provide to leverage other funds. Since the EPEDC region's population is more accurately defined as frontier, with six or fewer people per square mile resulting in a finite tax base from which to draw, it can be difficult—if not impossible—to meet even the smallest grant/loan match requirements. Consequently, this seemingly small distinction limits opportunities for funding even further.

The U.S. Census reports that the population over 65 years old within the EPEDC region is almost 7% higher than the Montana average. The State of Montana estimates that by 2025 a full 22.5% of the EPEDC region will be over 65. The long-term implications of the age shift will mean a dramatic change in the way that Montanans live, from employment and health care to housing and transportation.

3. Attitudes

Southeastern Montana is perceived as not being competitive in the job market. The perception, or reality, that infrastructure is lacking and wages are low, coupled with a long-term decline in population, has made it difficult for the region to reverse many of its negative trends.

The attitude of those living in the region is changing. Oil development has spurred renewed activity and brightened the overall economic outlook. Communities are updating or developing long range plans, looking at infrastructure upgrades, and encouraging development in a responsible manner.

While many of the current residents fear what may be coming due to severe oil development impacts in nearby North Dakota, that fear is offset by the hope that communities will see new housing, better job opportunities, an increase in the number of youth, and benefits for existing businesses.

In short, the prevailing attitude of pessimism is transforming into one of hope and excitement with a little bit of trepidation, because with growth comes change and change can be difficult.

4. Non-diversified economy

Southeastern Montana's economy has been based on the production of agriculture commodities for generations. Traditionally those products have included cattle, sheep, corn and wheat grains, and sugarbeets, a majority of which leave Montana for value-adding or export. As production methods became more efficient and farms expanded, young people left the District to find educational and employment opportunities elsewhere. In 1930 there were 3,544 family farms in the District, in 2007 there were 1,520—a loss of 57.1%.

With the reduction of labor in agricultural production and new efficiencies in business, job opportunities did not exist for those wishing to improve their station in life. Oil development has offered the region a chance to begin reversing that trend. New jobs are attracting younger workers and families and competition for employees in the area is growing, which will raise wages in all sectors.

Moreover, there has been a positive change recently in the attitudes of the agricultural community. Irrigated areas have increased with the use of sprinkler systems in on former dryland. Farmers are experimenting with beans, lentils, potatoes, onions, and oil seed crops. Ranchers who normally sold calves directly from their mother's side are beginning to experiment with retained ownership.

Oil and gas production in northeastern Montana and western North Dakota, pipeline development, and natural resource service industry businesses have begun to locate in the region. New motels are being proposed or built, new housing is starting to be developed, and infrastructure upgrades are in the works. While the oil industry has historically cycled through booms and busts, the current development is having an impact on the region and, at least for now, is beginning to provide some much needed economic diversity. As development continues, job growth, housing, and infrastructure improvements will continue. With those activities, sustainability becomes achievable.

The increased activity due to oil and gas and pipeline development has put the region "on the map" and has spurred investor interest. As oil and pipeline development occurs, the local tax base will increase allowing for local government to continue improvements and add to the vitality of the area's communities.

5. Investment capital

Investment capital is entering the region due to nearby oil development. Motels, new housing, and oil service industry businesses are starting to emerge. Although, local capital has been slow to enter the marketplace. Many of the local residents are skeptical of the "boom" having seen the effect on the local economy after the last "bust." Predictions regarding this development state that it will last much longer, and the lack of investment opportunity elsewhere in the nation has opened up the EPEDC region to investors and developers that previously had no interest.

As outside capital is invested and local residents begin to seize opportunities, more development will continue to occur. As the tax base increases, local governments will be able to do more to encourage development through infrastructure improvements and the cycle of decline may be broken.

Strengths/Assets of Southeastern Montana (see County Profiles, *SWOT Analysis Summary*)

1. Location

The EPEDC is located along the borders of three other states and is intersected by I-94, which runs straight into the center of our nation's most recent natural resource development. A primary route running north and south through Carter County is now paved and experiencing increased truck traffic as oil development increases production and the need to transport materials. Able to offer space and basic infrastructure, the EPEDC region is poised to grow with the proper planning and funding.

In addition, the EPEDC region is famous for its badlands, open skies, river access, unique fishing opportunities, and historical significance in the story of the "West." The District's proximity to a wealth of experiences and cultural resources is unprecedented, since the District sits within a day's drive of the Black Hills in South Dakota, Medora in North Dakota, Montana's largest metropolitan area, and Canada.

2. Communities

Strong rural communities are an asset of southeastern Montana. Basic community infrastructure—including medical facilities, schools, shops, and roads—creates a framework for further development. Communities can also claim relatively low crime rates, active volunteers, and family values with a common sense approach to life as sources of pride in the District.

3. Tourism

Tourism potential includes capitalizing on available hunting, recreation, dinosaur digs, working ranches, camping, historic sites along the Lewis and Clark Trail and the Dinosaur Trail, and special events. Marketing and branding efforts undertaken by Southeast Montana, the region's state defined tourism district, have improved the EPEDC's exposure to visitors. Localized community development and revitalization throughout the district has included neighborhood beautification, downtown improvements, and increased accessibility. Communities are discovering their niches in the tourism market. The Town of Terry recently completed a "heritage tourism action plan" that includes definitive goals and objectives for future projects related to marketing Terry as the Home of Evelyn Cameron. Moreover, communities are also beginning to embrace social media and technology as ways to attract a wide variety of tourists, from historians and birdwatchers to hikers and photographers.

4. Agriculture

An abundance of high quality raw agricultural products such as wheat, barley, corn, oil seed crops, beef cattle and sheep are assets that provide an opportunity for development in the District. A wealth of opportunities for value-added agriculture entrepreneurs exist.

5. Natural resources

Natural resource availability and development over the next several years will play the most significant role in the region's economy. The use of "fracking" technology has opened up oil development to the north and east, and industry leaders have yet to tap the full potential of the Bakken formation that extends into the EPEDC region. Natural resource extraction is already having impacts on the economy's service industry development, lodging, and housing market. In addition, the region has significant coal resources although no new development is proposed at this time. However, Otter Creek coal tracks to the south and west are slated for development in the next five years, which will also bring significant activity into the region.

Furthermore, the region is home to a portion of the Yellowstone River, great hunting and fishing, state parks, and beautiful scenery. Both the natural resources for outdoor enthusiasts and the natural resources for industry development represent regional strengths.

6. Environment

The region's unspoiled environment, clean air, and abundance of water, wind, sun, space, and wildlife are often touted as strengths.

Major Sectors of the Economy

Eastern Montana thrived during the 1970s and through the early 1980s as a result of increased oil activity. With the influx of population during this period, property values greatly increased. To accommodate the increased population, new homes, schools, and other facilities were built. These improvements were made by cities/towns and county governments during a period of high interest rates. Jobs were high paying and money was flowing into local economies. The attitude of people and local government was optimistic that the "boom" would go on forever. Unfortunately, the "bust" came in the early 1980s when oil prices dropped and oil companies left the area or went bankrupt. Local businesses struggled for survival and many closed their doors.

Until recently, there was little diversification of industry in the area. Jobs were lost and only a marginal amount of new employment was generated after the "bust" for more than 20 years. As a result, the area went into shock, local governments were overwhelmed with economic problems, few solutions, and no help. Unemployment figures steadily climbed from 198l and peeked in 1983 with some regions experiencing near double-digit unemployment rates. When unemployment benefits ran out, people had little choice but to leave the area, taking with them their expertise. Two generations of children were raised with the idea that education was fundamental to their success, only to realize that in order to find good paying jobs they would have to move elsewhere in search of opportunities.

After the mass exodus of the mid-1980s, unemployment levels decreased and have remained low compared to other areas for two primary reasons—1) youth leave the community to seek jobs and better wages elsewhere, and 2) the resident population simply ages out of the workforce.

However, the region is once again experiencing the same rapid growth seen in the oil boom of the 1970s. Predictions claim that this rise in natural resource extraction and distribution will continue well into the future. Sustainability is a critical component of all local planning discussions. Fear still looms, and actions taken during this current oil play will markedly shape the region's development and all subsequent outcomes. Montana Senator Max Baucus was recently quoted as saying, "The more we work together from the local level on up, the better we'll be able to support Montana energy jobs for the long haul. Economic growth in the Bakken region is full of opportunities and challenges – both of which require a thoughtful, targeted and urgent response."
"Addressing needs associated with the oil and gas boom in eastern Montana," *The Prairie Star*, April 25, 2012.

Regional Clusters

"The poor performance of the rural economy in the 1980's led economic development experts to search for new ways to stimulate local growth. One promising avenue for development was to encourage the location and expansion of business establishments that are linked by their interdependence as customer and supplier, or by their use of common local resources. Spatial concentrations of activity, or industry clusters, are associated with higher wages after accounting for worker characteristics and industry composition, [which] supports a cluster-based development strategy.... However, the benefits of higher wages are conditional on the success of the community in attracting and sustaining an industry cluster."

Gibbs, Robert M. and G. Andrew Bernat, Jr. "Rural Industry Clusters Raise Local Earnings." *Rural Development Perspectives*, Vol. 12, no. 3.

Example of a cluster

An industry cluster is defined as a group of establishments located within close geographic proximity of one another, which either share a common set of input needs, or rely on each other as supplier or customer.

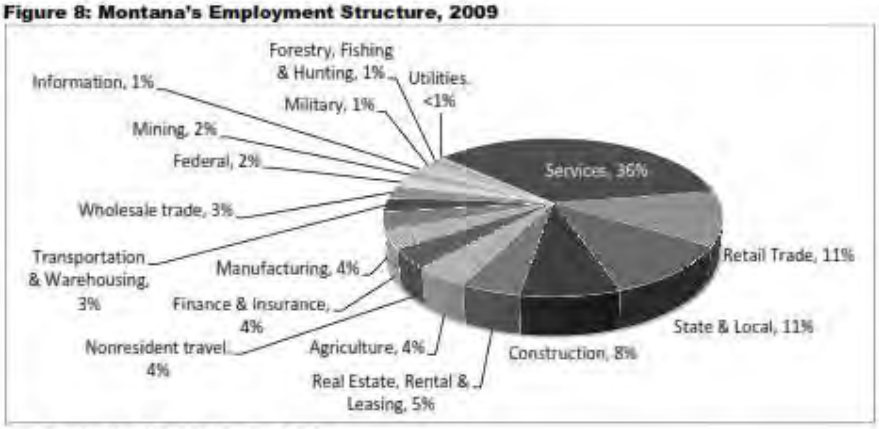
By identifying local industry trends through regional cluster analysis, the EPEDC hopes to provide a framework for local communities to stimulate local innovation, entrepreneurship, and development. Analysis helps distinguish which new businesses may find success through becoming part of a growing cluster, or may point out why certain clusters are declining.

Much like the other counties in eastern Montana, the EPEDC region's employment structure is markedly different from the state as a whole, since agriculture makes up 13.5% of the District's jobs as opposed to the state's 4%. Collectively private industries make up 71.4%; local, state, and federal government employed 15.1% of the civilian workforce in 2010 (**Table 25**, *page 66*).

The region's largest private industries include retail trade (8.9%), health care and social assistance (8.7%), other services (5.7%), and accommodation and food services (4.6%). However, of those four large regional employers, only health care has increased in the number of establishments as larger corporations increase their number of workers while smaller businesses consolidate or are lost due to lack of succession.

Data available to rural communities is limited due to disclosure regulations preventing the release of minimal data and various changes in federal and state data collection methods. The following tables, *found on pages 60-65*, illustrate each county's number of private industry and farm establishments, as well as the number of paid employees by industry, and whether or not those industries experienced growth or decline for the years 2005 and 2010. While there are a number of gaps, enough information is provided to give a general economic profile of each county's economic structure and cluster activity.

Figure 8: Montana's Employment Structure, 2009



Sources: ITRR; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis
Note: Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Table 7: Employment Structure in Montana, 2009[1]

Employment Sectors[2]	Number of Jobs[2]	% of Total
Services	233,118	35.8%
Retail Trade	72,918	11.2
State & Local	71,252	10.9
Construction	52,546	8.1
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	31,537	4.8
Agriculture	28,862	4.4
Nonresident travel	25,476	3.9
Finance & Insurance	24,477	3.8
Manufacturing	23,508	3.6
Transportation & Warehousing	18,046	2.8
Wholesale trade	17,329	2.7
Federal	13,421	2.1
Mining	10,964	1.7
Information	9,196	1.4
Military	8,204	1.3
Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	7,389	1.1
Utilities	3,183	0.5
Total	651,425	100.0%

Sources: ITRR; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis
[1]Nonresident travel employment is a 2009 figure, while the remainder of the employment sectors reflect 2008 U.S. BEA data.
[2]Includes both full-time and part-time jobs.

The Economic Review of the Travel Industry in Montana, 2010 Biennial Edition. ITRR.

Carter County Industry Clusters

Industry Code	Industry Code Description	Total Est. 2005	Total Est. 2010	Change in Establishments 2005-2010	Paid Employees 2005	Paid Employees 2010	Change in Employees 2005-2010
	Total Private Employment	**32**	**30**	**-2**	**697**	**866**	**169**
11----	Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Agriculture Support	----	2	----	D	D	----
21----	Mining	----	1	----	D	D	----
22----	Utilities	1	1	0	D	D	----
23----	Construction	5	5	0	33	D	-
31----	Manufacturing	1	n/a	----	L	12	+
42----	Wholesale Trade	----	1	----	D	D	----
44----	Retail Trade	5	4	-1	47	56	9
48----	Transportation and Warehousing	2	7	5	D	D	----
51----	Information	1	2	1	D	D	----
52----	Finance and Insurance	2	1	-1	D	D	----
53----	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1	n/a	----	D	61	+
54----	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4	3	-1	18	D	-
56----	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	2	1	-1	L	D	-
61----	Educational Services	n/a	3	----	L	10	+
62----	Health Care and Social Assistance	2	2	0	D	D	----
71----	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1	3	2	D	17	+
72----	Accommodation and Food Services	2	3	1	D	37	+
81----	Other Services (except Public Administration)	3	n/a	----	D	D	----
	Agriculture	**289***	**308***	**19***	**305**	**296**	**-9**

*Agricultural establishment data is based on Census of Agriculture for 2002 and 2007, not 2005 and 2010.
1/ The estimates of employment for 2001-2006 are based on the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The estimates for 2007 forward are based on the 2007 NAICS.
(L) Less than 10 jobs, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
(D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
www.bea.gov/reginonal/reis/action/cfm
http://censtats.census.gov
www.statsamerica.org

Increasing | **Decreasing** | **No change/Not enough data**

Major Clusters – Agriculture, Construction, Professional and Technical Services, Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, Accommodation and Food Services

Growing Clusters – Agriculture, Transportation and Warehousing, Arts and Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services, Educational Services

Declining Clusters – Retail Trade, Finance and Insurance, Professional and Technical Services, Administrative Support and Waste Management Services

Dawson County Industry Clusters

Industry Code	Industry Code Description	Total Est. 2005	Total Est. 2010	Change in Establishments 2005-2010	Paid Employees 2005	Paid Employees 2010	Change in Employees 2005-2010
	Total Private Employment	**305**	**309**	**5**	**4,039**	**4,106**	**67**
11----	Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Agriculture Support	----	3	----	D	D	----
21----	Mining	10	12	2	D	D	----
22----	Utilities	2	4	2	D	D	----
23----	Construction	26	25	-1	184	173	-11
31----	Manufacturing	4	6	2	46	66	20
42----	Wholesale Trade	20	23	3	219	235	16
44----	Retail Trade	51	47	-4	688	573	-115
48----	Transportation and Warehousing	17	23	6	D	D	----
51----	Information	10	8	-2	118	100	-18
52----	Finance and Insurance	20	20	0	154	191	37
53----	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	7	12	5	117	117	0
54----	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	16	21	5	D	135	+
56----	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	13	9	-4	150	D	-
61----	Educational Services	n/a	11	----	16	15	-
62----	Health Care and Social Assistance	26	34	8	660	745	85
71----	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	12	11	-1	119	125	6
72----	Accommodation and Food Services	31	27	-4	441	415	-26
81----	Other Services (except Public Administration)	39	34	-5	357	368	11
	Agriculture	**522***	**535***	**13***	**481**	**454**	-27

*Agricultural establishment data is based on Census of Agriculture for 2002 and 2007, not 2005 and 2010.
1/ The estimates of employment for 2001-2006 are based on the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The estimates for 2007 forward are based on the 2007 NAICS.
(L) Less than 10 jobs, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
(D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
www.bea.gov/reginonal/reis/action/cfm
http://censtats.census.gov
www.statsamerica.org

Increasing | **Decreasing** | **No change/Not enough data**

Major Clusters – Agriculture, Mining, Construction, Wholesale Trade, Finance and Insurance, Professional and Technical Services, Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, Arts and Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Other Services (except Public Administration)

Growing Clusters – Agriculture, Transportation and Warehousing, Mining, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Real Estate and Leasing, Professional and Technical Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Finance and Insurance

Declining Clusters – Construction, Retail Trade, Information, Administrative and Waste Management Services, Accommodation and Food Services

Fallon County Industry Clusters

Industry Code	Industry Code Description	Total Est. 2005	Total Est. 2010	Change in Establishments 2005-2010	Paid Employees 2005	Paid Employees 2010	Change in Employees 2005-2010
	Total Private Employment	**130**	**157**	**27**	**1,420**	**1,889**	**469**
11----	Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Agriculture Support	2	5	3	D	D	----
21----	Mining	11	18	7	D	398	+
22----	Utilities	1	2	1	D	D	----
23----	Construction	13	23	10	D	224	+
31----	Manufacturing	3	4	1	D	27	+
42----	Wholesale Trade	7	9	2	D	D	----
44----	Retail Trade	18	14	-4	175	213	38
48----	Transportation and Warehousing	13	21	8	123	189	66
51----	Information	3	4	1	26	22	-4
52----	Finance and Insurance	6	6	0	57	D	-
53----	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4	2	-2	22	D	-
54----	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	9	6	-3	D	51	+
56----	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	2	7	5	D	49	+
61----	Educational Services	n/a	5	----	L	10	+
62----	Health Care and Social Assistance	4	7	3	157	162	5
71----	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2	1	-1	D	D	----
72----	Accommodation and Food Services	15	13	-2	D	D	----
81----	Other Services (except Public Administration)	17	17	0	140	156	16
	Agriculture	**327***	**296***	**-31***	**302**	**285**	**-17**

*Agricultural establishment data is based on Census of Agriculture for 2002 and 2007, not 2005 and 2010.
1/ The estimates of employment for 2001-2006 are based on the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The estimates for 2007 forward are based on the 2007 NAICS.
(L) Less than 10 jobs, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
(D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
www.bea.gov/reginonal/reis/action/cfm
http://censtats.census.gov
www.statsamerica.org

Increasing | **Decreasing** | **No change/Not enough data**

Major Clusters – Agriculture, Mining, Construction, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Professional and Technical Services, Transportation and Warehousing, Accommodation and Food Services, Other Services (except Public Administration)

Growing Clusters –Mining, Construction, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, Information, Administrative and Waste Management Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Forestry and Agricultural Support, Educational Services

Declining Clusters – Agriculture, Accommodation and Food Services, Arts and Recreation, Real Estate and Leasing

Prairie County Industry Clusters

Industry Code	Industry Code Description	Total Est. 2005	Total Est. 2010	Change in Establishments 2005-2010	Paid Employees 2005	Paid Employees 2010	Change in Employees 2005-2010
	Total Private Employment	**33**	**36**	**3**	**278**	**374**	**96**
11----	Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Agriculture Support	----	3	----	D	D	----
21----	Mining	----	n/a	----	0	0	0
22----	Utilities	1	1	0	D	D	----
23----	Construction	6	6	0	D	D	----
31----	Manufacturing	1	1	0	D	D	----
42----	Wholesale Trade	1	3	2	D	D	----
44----	Retail Trade	7	3	-4	44	38	-6
48----	Transportation and Warehousing	----	2	----	14	16	2
51----	Information	2	3	1	D	L	+
52----	Finance and Insurance	3	2	-1	D	D	----
53----	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1	1	0	D	D	----
54----	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2	4	2	D	26	+
56----	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	----	n/a	----	L	19	+
61----	Educational Services	n/a	1	----	L	10	+
62----	Health Care and Social Assistance	1	1	0	L	L	----
71----	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	----	n/a	----	L	11	+
72----	Accommodation and Food Services	3	5	2	19	33	14
81----	Other Services (except Public Administration)	5	5	0	38	35	-3
	Agriculture	**162***	**173***	**11***	**176**	**169**	**-7**

*Agricultural establishment data is based on Census of Agriculture for 2002 and 2007, not 2005 and 2010.
1/ The estimates of employment for 2001-2006 are based on the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The estimates for 2007 forward are based on the 2007 NAICS.
(L) Less than 10 jobs, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
(D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
www.bea.gov/reginonal/reis/action/cfm
http://censtats.census.gov
www.statsamerica.org

Increasing **Decreasing** **No change/Not enough data**

Major Clusters – Agriculture, Construction, Retail Trade, Professional and Technical Services, Accommodation and Food Services, Other Services (except Public Administration)

Growing Clusters – Agriculture, Wholesale Trade, Information, Professional and Technical Services, Accommodation and Food Services, Educational Services

Declining Clusters –Retail Trade, Finance and Insurance

Wibaux County Industry Clusters

Industry Code	Industry Code Description	Total Est. 2005	Total Est. 2010	Change in Establishments 2005-2010	Paid Employees 2005	Paid Employees 2010	Change in Employees 2005-2010
	Total Private Employment	**27**	**33**	**6**	**329**	**512**	**183**
11----	Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Agriculture Support	----	1	----	D	D	----
21----	Mining	----	2	----	D	D	----
22----	Utilities	1	1	0	D	D	----
23----	Construction	3	4	1	D	D	----
31----	Manufacturing	----	n/a	----	L	12	+
42----	Wholesale Trade	----	1	----	D	D	----
44----	Retail Trade	4	3	-1	36	47	11
48----	Transportation and Warehousing	3	5	2	D	42	+
51----	Information	2	2	0	D	D	----
52----	Finance and Insurance	3	4	1	19	60	41
53----	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	----	n/a	----	17	61	44
54----	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4	3	-1	12	D	-
56----	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1	2	1	L	D	-
61----	Educational Services	n/a	1	----	0	0	0
62----	Health Care and Social Assistance	2	2	0	D	D	----
71----	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	----	2	----	L	D	-
72----	Accommodation and Food Services	4	4	0	25	D	-
81----	Other Services (except Public Administration)	----	n/a	----	38	40	2
	Agriculture	**215***	**208***	**-7***	**209**	**203**	**-6**

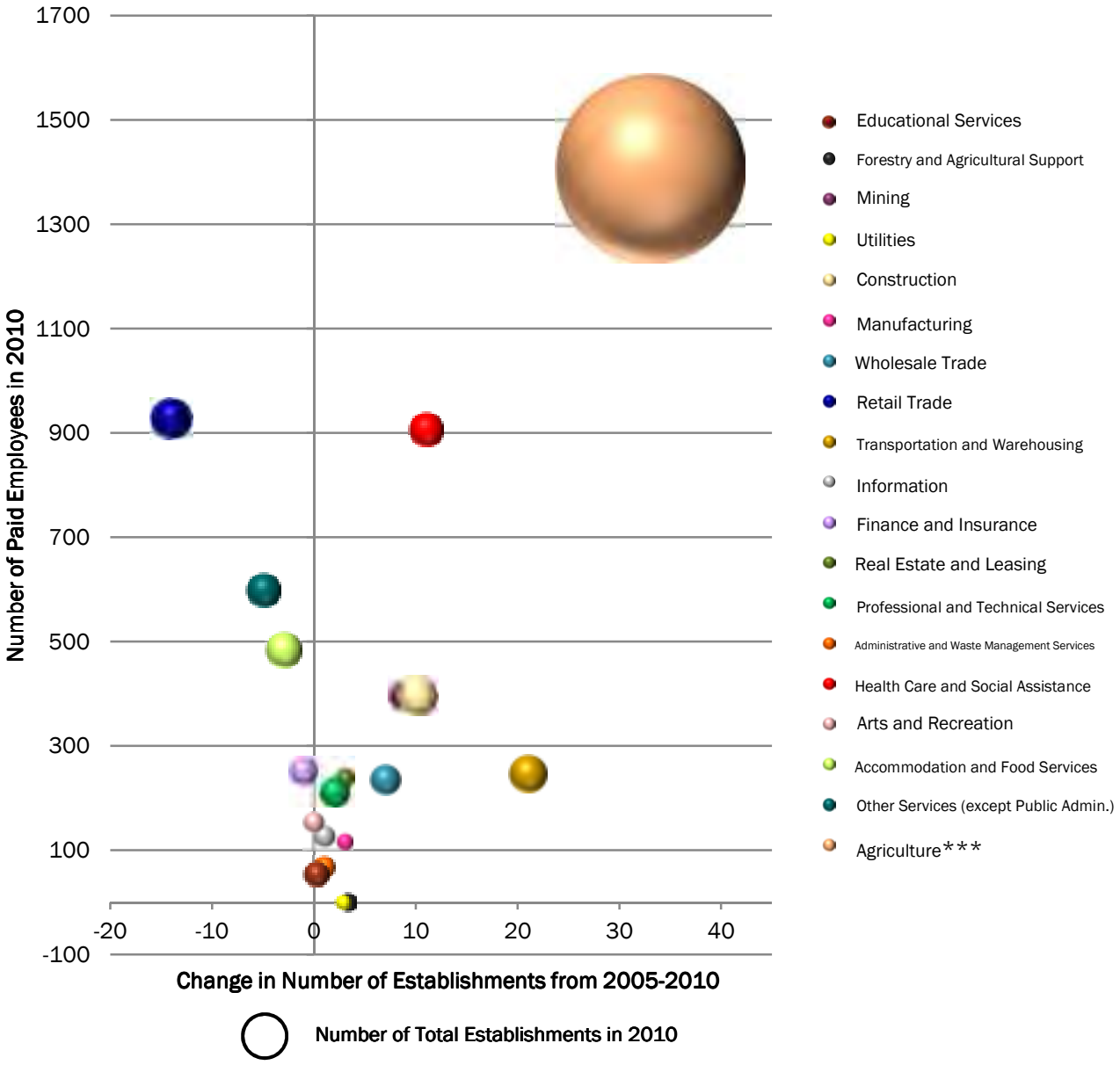
*Agricultural establishment data is based on Census of Agriculture for 2002 and 2007, not 2005 and 2010.
1/ The estimates of employment for 2001-2006 are based on the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The estimates for 2007 forward are based on the 2007 NAICS.
(L) Less than 10 jobs, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
(D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
www.bea.gov/reginonal/reis/action/cfm
http://censtats.census.gov
www.statsamerica.org

Increasing | **Decreasing** | **No change/Not enough data**

Major Clusters – Agriculture, Construction, Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, Finance and Insurance, Professional and Technical Services, Accommodation and Food Services

Growing Clusters – Construction, Transportation and Warehousing, Finance and Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing

Declining Clusters –Agriculture, Professional and Technical Services, Accommodation and Food Services



***Agricultural "Number of Establishment" data based on Census of Agriculture 2002 and 2007, not 2005 and 2010.

The District's current economic trend is decidedly more positive than it has been in previous years. The health care and social assistance industry is rising to meet the demands of a significant aged population. However, the industry will have to continue to grow rapidly in both the number of employees and the number of establishments to accommodate increasingly specialized geriatric needs as well as the incoming tide of workforce.

Although the decline in establishments for the remaining three largest private industries between 2005 and 2010 is less than ideal, it is somewhat to be expected since the region is not completely immune to national trends that support larger businesses able to hire more workers while relying on fewer facilities. The significant increase in the

number of industries and employees in construction, mining, and transportation and warehousing reflects recent oil and gas related activity. Those particular industries can only be expected to continue to grow as natural resource production and distribution expands. The growth of professional and technical services, wholesale trade, and real estate won't be far behind as the demand for land, goods, and services requires the local economy to meet heretofore unprecedented needs. As of 2010, the region had no cluster activity related to the management of companies or enterprises and, despite available resources, lags far behind in manufacturing.

Increasingly, area non-profits and community foundations are acting as launching pads for regional innovation and diversification. While farming and ranching will more than likely remain the primary economic sector in eastern Montana, climate, input costs, and commodity prices have a great deal of influence on the industry's profitability. In 2007, there were 1,520 farms in the EPEDC region and 5,315,807 acres allocated to farming, which accounted for 5.1% of the total farms and 8.7% of the total land in farms in Montana (agcensus.usda.gov). With 13.5% of the District's workforce devoted to agriculture, this cluster has the single largest influence on the rest of the region's economy; its success or failure will have the greatest long-term impact on the region's well-being as a whole. "While the on-farm price of products produced has not changed in 50 years…input costs have steadily risen. All input and products used in this region are shipped in, nothing is manufactured here including most of the food we eat," leading to food insecurity and costs to producers that far exceed those of consumers closer to larger markets and manufacturing centers (*Community GATE Feasibility Study*, November 2006).

In the interest of bridging more than one gap between producers, retail trade, and manufacturing, the Farm-to-Table Cooperative in Glendive has endeavored to create a local market for produce and goods made within a 150 radius. Encouraging value-added ag development and the region's entrepreneurs, Farm-to-Table operates a cooperatively owned local/health food store and supports a seasonal farmer's market in Glendive. They also own Western Trails Foods, a small manufacturing operation that is the region's only locally packaged and certified goods supplier, which distributes products throughout Montana and western North Dakota. New methods of producing a wider variety of commercial vegetable crops in high-tunnel gardens that can extend the growing season another 90 days, in addition to community garden plots that offer Glendive residents an economical way to grow their own foods, are providing more opportunities for economic diversification and are contributing to a sense of improved community health. The Farm-to-Table program hopes to facilitate the creation of a culinary arts program at Dawson Community College (training chefs to prepare cuisine using locally sustainable crops and livestock), a shared-use commercial kitchen for the certified production of other micro-manufactured goods, and a local foods restaurant and brewery (www.farmtotablecoop.com). All of which act as a model for further growth and development.

Potential impacts – After such an extended period of "economic drought," growth is welcomed. However, new and increased demands on the local workforce and infrastructure can, and are, causing a certain amount of strain. Public private partnerships are becoming more common as state agencies and local development organizations (LDOs) provide an ever-widening variety of services, from business assistance to grant writing. Counties, cities, and towns are also recognizing the importance of their role in fostering growth and providing the needed infrastructure to welcome improved economic opportunities.

As of June 13, 2012, members of the former Eastern Plains Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D) voted to approve amendments to the organization's structure that would support the creation of a new Eastern Montana Impact Coalition formed by Great Northern Development Corporation, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation, Richland Economic Development, and the EPEDC. The coalition will consist of representatives from each of the 16 counties in eastern Montana. The newly formed organization's mission is to work together to address impacts related to and opportunities associated with regional development, specifically—but not limited to—natural resource and energy development. By combining forces, local economic development groups will be better equipped to finance and manage regional planning, business expansion, and infrastructure improvements.

Class of workers – In 2010, the total employment for the region was 10,437. Not only did that number rise from 2005's 9,415 workers, but the 10.68% increase in employees was nearly triple the Montana state average of

3.36%. Proprietor employment comprised 36.4% of the workforce. Wage and salary employment made up 63.6% of the civilian workforce in the District (**Table 25**).

Table 25: Class of Workers

COUNTY	Carter		Dawson		Fallon		Prairie		Wibaux	
YEAR	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010
BY TYPE	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Wage and salary employment	354	344	3,972	4,001	1,346	1,585	359	357	304	354
Farm proprietors employment	241	246	394	389	255	237	126	128	184	177
Non-farm proprietors employment[1]	213	405	960	1,035	394	633	146	248	167	298
BY INDUSTRY	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Farm employment	305	296	481	454	302	285	176	169	209	203
Private employment	392	570	4,039	4,106	1,420	1,889	278	374	329	512
Government and government enterprises	111	129	806	865	273	281	177	190	117	114
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	**808**	**995**	**5,326**	**5,425**	**1,995**	**2,455**	**631**	**733**	**655**	**829**

[1] Excludes limited partners
www.bea.gov/reginonal/reis/action/cfm

Relationship of the Area's Economy to the Region and State

The Eastern Plains EDC region is primarily dependent upon three things: agriculture, natural resource development, and tourism. As these three things decline or flourish, so does the region's economy. This may differ significantly, as it does now, from the remainder of the state, but generally follows the path of eastern Montana as a whole.

Currently, natural resource development, primarily in the Bakken oil field, is driving the economy in eastern Montana. Business development is seeing a strong uptick, housing is being developed or proposed, and infrastructure improvements are being considered. This current "boom" is lowering unemployment, raising property values, and increasing wages. While this holds true throughout much of eastern Montana as a region, and certainly western North Dakota on the other side of the border, it does not hold true for all of Montana.

The economy in eastern Montana, which includes the EPEDC region, is seeing strong economic activity—unlike western Montana, where the recession hit especially hard and has been slow to recover. The activity in eastern Montana is having a significant impact on state revenues, but the economic activity from one side of the state to the other is much different. This is a reversal from past experience, when the state referred to economic activity as "in the boot" (west of Billings) or "out of the boot" (east of Billings). At that point, most economic development and the state's strongest local economies were "in the boot," now those roles seem to have reversed.

Agriculture is a statewide industry and upturns and downturns in commodity prices affect the state as a whole in much the same manner. For this industry, the EPEDC economy flows much the same as the remainder of the state.

While the EPEDC region does not experience the substantial tourist activity common to some other Montana areas, it is still a vital economic driver. The recent recession did not negatively impact tourism in the region.

Factors that Directly Affect Economic Performance

State and Local Laws

The State of Montana has no general sales or use tax. In addition, the State of Montana does not have a general business license. However, some businesses are required to register and be licensed by the state. The license requirement depends on the type of business entity. Nearly every state agency has some kind of license, fee, or permit.

A business should be able to obtain and renew most, if not all, of the licenses, fees, and permits required by state government from one centralized location. The Montana Department of Revenue provides assistance on licensing requirements. Their website, http://mt.gov/revenue, contains information on taxation, property tax incentives, and "one-stop" business licensing.

Local governments require property owners to obtain building permits for the construction of new buildings and/or the remodeling of existing buildings, including residential. In conjunction with construction and remodeling, construction of new or change of existing electrical service must be approved by state electrical inspectors.

Financial Resources

Dependable financial institutions are available to support new business development and job creation. Financial institutions range from independent banks to branches of larger systems in the state (**Table 26**). Most can provide capital for personal, agricultural, or business ventures. Although a large capital pool is present, availability of risk capital is scarce. Consequently, many projects require significant investment by private investors. The EPEDC has a revolving loan fund and, through agreements with regional partners, access to additional capital with which to leverage private and conventional funds. However, these funds are limited and generally in high demand.

TABLE 26: Public Financial Institutions

County	City	Name of Financial Institution
Carter	*Ekalaka*	Summit National Bank
Dawson	*Glendive*	Community 1st Bank
	Glendive	Heritage Bank
	Glendive	Stockman Bank of Montana
	Richey	Stockman Bank of Montana
Fallon	*Baker*	Bank of Baker
	Baker	Wells Fargo Bank
Prairie	*Terry*	Stockman Bank of Montana
Wibaux	*Wibaux*	Stockman Bank of Montana

***List does not include the region's various credit unions and/or other member-owned financial cooperatives

Transportation Costs

Transportation and distance to major market centers is a negative factor in attracting manufacturing and tourism to the area. The only way to get to many locations in the area is by vehicle—4-wheel drive vehicle necessary in some instances.

With the current cost of fuel, transportation costs are uncommonly high. In addition, the option to use public transportation is often not available. Public airline service in eastern Montana is subsidized under Essential Air Service legislation, and Amtrak service across northern Montana also receives federal assistance. Even with federal assistance, passenger costs are high, and schedules are limited for airline, bus, and train travel.

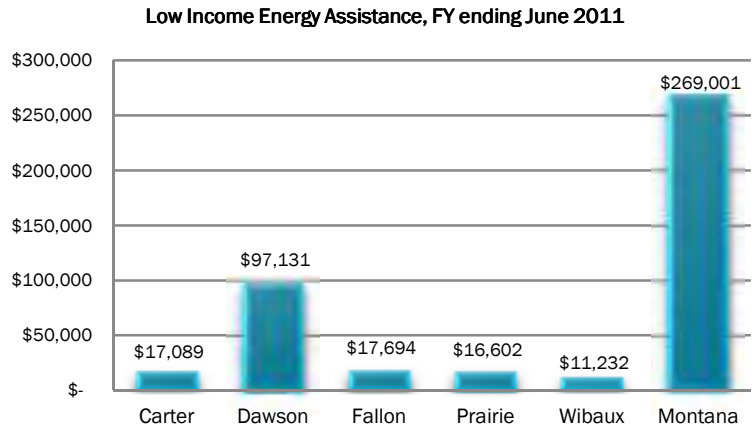
The distance to markets from the area also results in high transportation costs and is a constraint to economic development in the region. Freight trucking (including UPS, FedEx, etc.) provides better availability to area residents, but the continuing rise in fuel costs has affected shipping prices. In addition, the area is served mainly by trucking hubs outside the area. Infrastructure, the imbalance of inbound and outbound shipments, and the need to promote manufacturing to increase outbound shipments affects the availability of this industry.

Energy Costs

The Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) does not regulate the wholesale market price of natural gas. Natural gas prices are set in the national wholesale market, which was deregulated by the federal government in 1978. Prices are set regionally and nationally in this market. To keep costs as low as possible, natural gas companies buy natural gas from suppliers under varying contract terms. This purchasing arrangement stabilizes the price of gas for the duration of the contracts. The PSC does regulate the transmission and distribution of the gas commodity but not the price of the commodity itself. In the past, Montana enjoyed some of the lowest natural gas prices in the nation. The 1997 Montana Legislature enacted the Electric Utility Industry Restructuring and Customer Choice Act.

Montana-Dakota Utilities (MDU) is the largest supplier of electricity in the region. Other electrical suppliers serving customers in the area are electric cooperative companies—Southeast Electric Cooperative in Ekalaka, Lower Yellowstone REA in Sidney, Tongue River Electric Cooperative Inc. in Ashland, and Goldenwest Electric Cooperative in Wibaux.

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) assists eligible Montana residents and families with their heating and cooling costs. LIHEAP is Federally funded through the Department of Health and Human Services. The Federal government establishes funding levels annually. In order to qualify for this benefit program, you must be a resident of the State of Montana, you must need financial assistance for home energy costs and meet income guidelines (http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/programsservices/publicassistanceprograms.shtml). The EPEDC region received $159,748 in assistance for the fiscal year ending June 2011, which helped 541 recipients for an average rate of $295.28 per person compared to the remainder of recipients throughout Montana who received an average of $264.61 per person (Montana Department of Health and Human Services, Statistical Report FY 2011).



Montana Department of Health and Human Services, Statistical Report FY 2011

Business, Personal, and Property Taxes

Business – Montana does have a corporation license tax. It is a franchise tax levied on corporations for the privilege of doing business in Montana. The rate of the tax is 6.75% and is calculated on net income earned in Montana. Corporations making a "water's edge" election are required to pay tax at a rate of 7%.

Corporations whose only activity in Montana consists of making sales, and do not own or rent real estate or tangible personal property, and whose annual gross volume of sales made in Montana does not exceed $100,000, may elect to pay a tax of ½ of 1% of gross sales.

There is a minimum corporation tax of $50. However, if a corporation has no property, payroll, or sales in Montana during the tax period, it is excluded from the minimum payment. All Montana corporations must file a tax return even if they are excluded from the minimum payment.

Corporations electing to file as a subchapter S Corporation for federal income tax purposes must also file as an "S-Corp" for Montana corporation license tax purposes. The income of the S-Corp will then flow through to the individual shareholders' personal tax return and tax would be paid at the individual level.

Corporations conducting business that is taxable both within and without the state (multi-state corporations) are required to allocate income to Montana based on an equally-weighted, three-factor apportionment formula, where sales, property, and payroll are the three factors.

Montana provides tax incentives classified under the corporation license tax, including but not limited to, alternative energy producers credit, research and development firms tax exemption, recycling credit, new/expanded industry credit, mineral exploration incentive credit, investment tax credit, and energy conservation credit.

Historically, Montana has relied on its store of natural resource wealth as a primary source of tax revenue. So significant is this source of revenue, that it has been likened to the "third leg" of Montana's tax stool, supplementing individual income and property tax as the three major sources of revenue in the state. Generally, natural resource taxes may be categorized as either severance/license taxes, or some form of ad valorem taxes.

The Montana Department of Revenue also is responsible for billing and collecting the state per capita fee for livestock. Per capita livestock fees partially fund the Montana Department of Livestock's mission to prevent, control and eradicate animal diseases; prevent the transmission of animal diseases to humans; and protect livestock industries from theft and predatory animals.

Personal Tax - Montana residents are taxed on all income, regardless of source, except that income which is statutorily exempted from taxation. Part-year residents and nonresidents are taxed on all Montana source income that is derived from or connected to Montana sources. Additionally, part-year residents are taxed on all non-Montana source income generated during or attributable to the period of the tax year in which they resided in Montana.

Montana's individual income tax was enacted in 1933 and continues to this day to be the largest source of state tax revenue. The state's income tax is viewed as a "progressive" tax system because of the distribution of the tax burden and because income is taxed according to a graduate rate structure with rates ranging from 1% to 6.9% of taxable income.

Taxable income is derived from gross income by making certain adjustments and taking a variety of allowable deductions and exclusions. This tax generally applies to the net income of Montana residents and nonresidents.

Property Tax - Local taxing jurisdictions are funded by tax revenues from real property. A greater majority of all property taxes fund the school systems by a local permissive levy and State mandated equalization levy, while the remaining property taxes fund local government. Property tax is used by local governments to raise much of the revenues to provide services within their jurisdictions.

The tax rate on real property is based on true market value as determined by the Montana Department of Revenue. The Department of Revenue has the ability to use three recognized approaches to value—Cost, Income, and Comparable Sales. This allows a more accurate appraised value on all types of property. All property, except agricultural land, has an assessed value equal to its market value as determined by the Department of Revenue.

Agricultural land is valued on its productive capacity. The rate of tax on the various classes of property and the establishment of the actual classes is a function of the legislature. There are currently twelve classes of property. Local governments determine the mill levy requirements for each taxing jurisdiction. These mill levy requirements include state mills. Using those mill levy determinations, Department of Revenue staff calculates the property tax liability for each property including special district fees and charges. The actual property tax is a function of the taxable value of the property and the total mill levy. Taxable value is determined by applying a property class percentage to the assessed value. The taxable value is multiplied by the mill levy resulting in the tax due. The mill levy and property classes may change annually.

There are some exemptions and incentives classified under property tax. Property tax incentives generally fall into three categories—property tax abatements, property tax exemptions, and suspension/cancellation of delinquent property taxes.

- **Property tax abatements** result in a reduction in the taxable value of the property. This is accomplished by directly reducing the taxable value of property or by applying a reduced tax rate to the property's assessed value.

- **Property tax exemptions** exclude part or all of the property value from taxation.

- **Suspension/cancellation of delinquent property taxes** may be offered to facilitate the purchase and/or continued operation of a business. There are local and state options for property tax abatements. Property tax exemptions are identified in Montana State Code 15-6-201 to 15-6-225 or are allowable to disabled veterans or by local options. If approved by the local governing body, delinquent property taxes on commercial property may be suspended to facilitate the purchase and continued operation of a business utilizing the commercial property.

Inheritance Tax – Montana's inheritance tax was repealed by the passage of I-115 in November 2000. As a result, the inheritance tax will not apply to bequests made on or after January 1, 2001. Additionally, consent to transfer stocks, bonds, or insurance proceeds is only required for deaths occurring before that date.

Estate Tax – Montana's estate tax is equal to the maximum credit allowed against the federal estate tax. The Economic Growth and Tax Reconciliation Act (EGTRRA) of 2001 reduced the amount of state death tax credit that may be taken against the federal estate tax. The EGTRRA reduced the credit by 25 % for deaths occurring in 2002, 50% for deaths in 2003, 75% for deaths in 2004, and 100% percent for deaths occurring in 2005 and thereafter. Therefore, there is not Montana estate tax due for deaths occurring in 2005 and thereafter. For more information on estate planning, please see Montana State University Extension Services' Estate Planning Publications (http://www.montana.edu/estateplanning).

Mill Values

In conjunction with property values, total mills levied in the five counties in fiscal year 2010 ranged from 110.93 in Fallon County to 419 in Carter County, and mill values ranged from $76.03 to $22,419.62 (**Table 27**, *page 72*).

TABLE 27: Mill Values

	2010 Mill Value	General Fund Mills Levied	Total Mills Levied	General Funds Appropriated	Total Funds Appropriated
Carter County	6,749.49	35	200.68	1,099,600	5,193,924
Ekalaka	190.25	242	419	124,300	217,300
Dawson County	16,539.07	50	191.14	2,876,902	8,361,249
Glendive	4,336.86	188.64	243.13	2,559,642	2,909,225
Richey	125.31	135	135	51,100	51,100
Fallon County	22,419.62	49.89	141.02	6,386,814	17,716,104
Baker	1,304.17	265.1	275.3	1,434,210	1,467,711
Plevna	76.03	110.93	110.93	75,130	75,130
Prairie County	3,490.16	9.16	209.36	508,989	1,920,293
Terry	372.56	226.68	226.68	278,917	278,917
Wibaux County	3,481.91	9.8	132.45	2,157,109	4,772,924
Wibaux	319.16	100.25	159	312,350	349,250

MSU Extension Center Local Government Profile Table for FY 2010

Bonding Capacity

Local governments have the option of using bonding as a means to fund projects. **Table 28** indicates the level of bonding capacity for each county. Taxable valuations within the area remained fairly stable after land prices rapidly escalated in the late 1970s. Recent reappraisals and development have caused property values to rise.

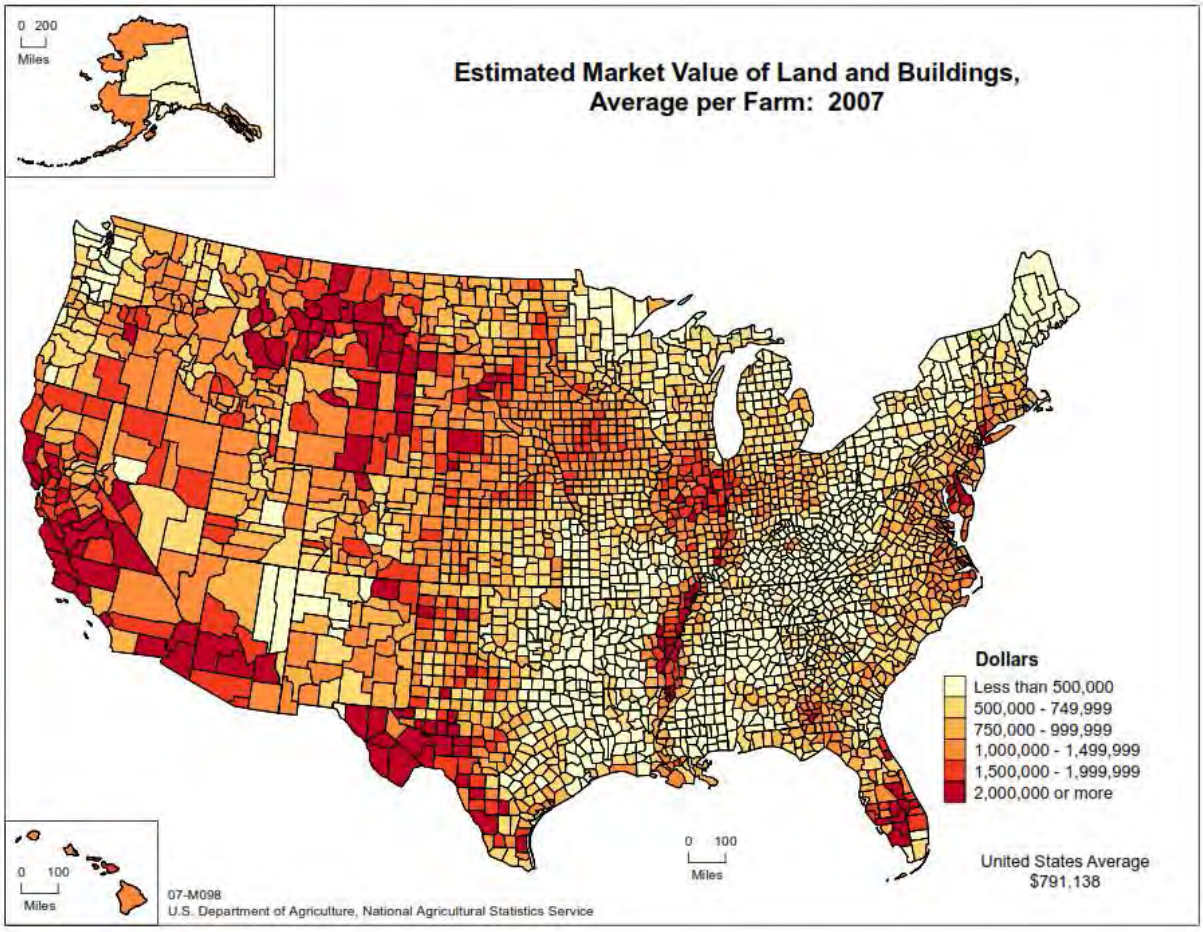
TABLE 28: Assessed and Taxable Valuation

	2009 Taxable	2010 Taxable	FY 2010 Debt Limit*	FY 2011 Mill Value
Carter	6,749,491	8,560,070	4,638,818	8,560.07
Dawson	16,539,073	17,349,578	11,220,486	17,349.58
Fallon	22,419,617	25,658,134	10,098,412	25,658.13
Prairie	3,490,158	3,502,353	2,610,055	3,502.35
Wibaux	3,499,978	3,699,863	2,355,999	3,699.86

*2.5% of Taxable Market Value MCA 7-7-2101

On October 1, 2001, the Montana Code Annotated 7-7-2101 and 7-7-4201 came into effect with an updated formula for limiting the bonded indebtedness of counties and municipalities. The limit is based on assessed value of taxable property instead of taxable valuation. The new law pertains to total bond indebtedness. Exceptions to this limitation are made "for the purpose of constructing a sewer system, procuring a water supply, or constructing or acquiring a water system for a city or town that owns and controls the water supply and water system and devotes the revenue from the water supply and water system to the payment of the debt."

The estimated market value of land and buildings per farm for both Prairie and Carter Counties was among the highest in the nation according to the 2007 Census of Agriculture. The region as a whole kept pace with the United States average.



2007 Census of Agriculture

Other Factors that Indirectly Affect Economic Performance

Housing - For human beings to survive, they must have food, water, clothing, and shelter. Adequate housing is also necessary for a community's survival and growth. A community cannot grow without available housing for workers and, if the housing conditions are poor, attracting development may be a problem. Each community should have a housing plan which contains the following: (1) a needs assessment, (2) data including population and demographic profiles, (3) inventory and condition with market trends, (4) a housing profile defining housing problems and needs, and (5) the community's goals and strategies.

Occupancy level for homes in the region is around 80.9% (**Table 15**, *page 30*). Most unoccupied homes need repair or are uninhabitable. The median value of owner occupied housing units ranges from $60,000 to $100,300, compared to the state average of $173, 300. This has made eastern Montana attractive to some western Montana and out-of-state residents looking for a lower cost of living and/or reliable seasonal lodging. Nearly every community in eastern Montana is experiencing a shortage of affordable and adequate housing.

Health Services - Rural health care is a growing concern in eastern Montana as the resident population ages. Geriatric services and transitional facilities are needed throughout the District. Moreover, as medical facilities north of the EPEDC region attempt to cope with the increased need for services as a result of development in the oil industry, more patients are seeking care in the EPEDC area. Air ambulances are used to transport critical patients to major medical facilities.

Low Income and Aged Population Services - Numerous social services are available to low income and elderly populations via the public and private sectors. Ten Human Resource Development Councils (HRDCs) across the state help connect low-income, elderly, minority, and disabled Montanans with programs aimed at alleviating poverty and providing educational and training opportunities. Action for Eastern Montana in Glendive provides assistance through Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) programs. These programs include weatherization, fuel assistance, rental assistance, housing counseling, as well as employment and training programs.

Schools and Education Facilities - Schools found in the EPEDC region are detailed below by county.

Carter County: Hawks Home Elementary (Hammond School and Hawks Home School) Hammond, Montana
Ekalaka Elementary, Ekalaka, Montana
Alzada Elementary, Alzada, Montana
Carter County High School, Ekalaka, Montana
Dawson County: Glendive Elementary, Glendive, Montana
Dawson High School, Glendive, Montana
Bloomfield Elementary, Bloomfield, Montana
Lindsay Elementary, Lindsay, Montana
Richey Elementary, Richey, Montana
Richey High School, Richey, Montana
Deer Creek Elementary, Glendive, Montana
Dawson Community College, Glendive, Montana
Fallon County: Baker K-12 Schools, Baker, Montana
Plevna K-12 Schools, Plevna, Montana
Prairie: Terry K-12 Schools, Terry, Montana
Wibaux: Wibaux K-12 Schools, Wibaux, Montana

Public school enrollment in eastern Montana has decreased significantly since 1980. This situation frequently generates an emotional response regarding school funding issues. School budgets rarely keep up with inflation due to rising personnel costs, operations and maintenance, and insurance. New housing developments should take school capacity and infrastructure into account as they are approved. Counties require higher mill levies due to losses in taxable valuation.

Public Safety/Fire Protection and Emergency Services - The rural areas of the EPEDC area receive fire protection from fire districts and volunteer fire departments. Each department is funded through county and city property tax assessments. Each rural district and volunteer fire department has localized needs for equipment and facilities. Ambulance services are located in nearly every community with predominantly volunteer emergency medical technicians providing emergency care. Rural addressing was updated to assist with fire and medical services.

Recreation and Cultural Facilities - Tourism and recreation bring much needed revenue into the area. Montana's reputation as "the last best place" is a major drawing card for persons interested in scenery, historical sites, wildlife or recreation. People from around the world also come to eastern Montana to experience the way of life. Increased visitation improves employment opportunities for the summer and hunting seasons. No hard statistics are available to indicate the number of employees attributed strictly to tourism, as most are categorized in the retail and service sectors.

Montana has yielded some of the world's most significant dinosaur discoveries. Makoshika State Park and Makoshika Dinosaur Museum in Glendive and Carter County Museum in Ekalaka are part of the Montana Dinosaur Trail (www.mtdinotrail.org).

Montanans have the luxury to vacation in the same state where they live and work. The District provides a variety of cultural and recreational opportunities. Eastern Montana attracts more individuals each year, and most residents are willing to accommodate the growing interest. Individual recreational activities include fishing, hunting, boating, hiking, tennis, bowling, skating, horseback riding, bird watching, golfing, biking, rifle and trap shooting, and fossil digs. Community activities include school affiliated/local sporting events, rodeos, and county fairs.

Rivers and streams typically support a fair amount of recreational fishing. The Intake Diversion Dam 17 miles north of Glendive is famous for paddlefishing and the production of *Yellowstone Caviar*. Glendive is considered the "Paddlefish Capital of the World" and draws over 3,000 anglers annually to this short stretch of the Yellowstone River. The paddlefish season usually runs from May 15th to June 30th each year.

Big game species of deer and upland birds attract hunters from across the nation.

State parks in the District include Makoshika State Park near Glendive and Medicine Rocks State Park near Ekalaka. Makoshika is Montana's largest state park, consisting of 11,531 acres of spectacular badlands, fossils, and wildlife. Pine and juniper studded badland formations house the fossil remains of such dinosaurs as tyrannosaurus and triceratops. Medicine Rocks State Park was a place of "big medicine," where Indian hunting parties conjured up magical spirits. Weathering has given the soft sandstone rock formations a "Swiss cheese" appearance, providing a unique landscape filled with great meaning and serenity. Custer National Forest is also located in the southern part of the District in Carter County.

The region contains paleontological sites, archaeological sites, as well as historical sites, trails, and structures, which are significant cultural resources as well as potential tourist attractions. The various sites cover a wide array of past activities, including prehistory, tribal history, missionary work, historic battlefields, mining, homesteading, early settlements, transportation, and agricultural practices. Every EPEDC county supports a museum depicting historical, cultural, and archaeological artifacts from the area.

External Trends and Forces

Phil Davies, senior writer for the *fedgazette*, sums up current trends and forces in an excerpt from the paper's April 2012 issue:

"Rapid oil and gas development in the 'oil patch' of western North Dakota and northeastern Montana has created a huge demand for workers—not just in the oilfields, but also in a range of non-oil industries. But, so far, the supply of labor—from within and outside the region—has responded slowly to demand. In recent years, job openings have soared and unemployment has dropped to very low levels—below 3 percent in a number of counties.

The Bakken oil play is drawing job seekers from other Ninth District states and the rest of the country, but they're not coming in sufficient numbers to keep up with continued job growth. There are several obstacles to the flow of labor into the oil patch, among them low unemployment in eastern North Dakota, the area's frigid winters and—most important—a scarcity of housing.

The region faces an awkward period of adjustment, but labor conditions are likely to loosen within a few years as rising wages and improved living conditions for migrants increase the workforce."

While actual oil drilling and gas development has not hit the EPEDC region as it has northeastern Montana and western North Dakota, the impact of the development in those areas and the possibility of development in the EPEDC region has caused a surge in activity. The EPEDC region is located adjacent to development in Richland County and abuts the western North Dakota border making it a prime area to catch the overflow from other areas. Housing has become a primary issue in the region with oil workers, able to pay higher rents than existing tenants, filling many available units. As demand and development occurs, the strain on infrastructure is becoming a major issue as well. After decades of population decline, the region is experiencing growth it was not prepared for. Therefore, housing and infrastructure will be at the forefront of all economic development discussions.

Currently, development of the Bakken is putting a strain on local government's ability to maintain and improve infrastructure. Housing is not adequate to meet demand and, because no definitive drilling has occurred in the District, tax revenues designed to offset impacts are not meeting the region's growing needs. In the instance of Fallon County, where gas development remained relatively stable after the mid-1980s, tax revenue is adequate to handle some of the new impacts. That is not the case in the other four counties. This "flaw" needs to be

addressed in some manner by the state legislature to offer municipalities and counties, who do not receive oil or gas tax revenues but are experiencing impacts, a way to finance improvements and allow development to occur.

Other factors that could significantly impact the region include the potential listing of sage grouse as an endangered species and environmental concerns regarding "fracking" related to oil and gas extraction. The listing of the sage grouse would impact the region's oil and gas development, as well as its core industry—agriculture. These birds often nest in prime grazing areas and, if protected, would significantly hinder agriculture production. Fracking (the method or technology oil companies utilize to access the Bakken formation in manner that is economical and productive) is controversial. The Environmental Protection Agency's interpretation of the methods, materials used, and environmental impacts could shut production down.

Recent activity has spurred unprecedented interest and activity in the region. It presents a unique opportunity to bring other industries into the region. New pipeline development will increase the local tax base and allow for local governments to make improvements that will strengthen the region's economic sustainability. New housing developments and infrastructure improvements will also contribute to overall stability. The State of Montana, specifically the legislature, will play a vital role in the success of the EPEDC region as it attempts to capitalize on current trends. If tax revenues are available to compensate impacted areas, the EPEDC region would be in a position to make the most of economic growth. If tax revenues are spread throughout the state and not centered on impacted areas, the EPEDC region will face a great challenge to develop properly.

5. Economic Development Partners and Resources

Many counties and local communities throughout southeastern Montana established economic development organizations to identify opportunities, develop infrastructure plans, retain businesses, and facilitate the recruitment of new businesses. Examples include county planners, chambers of commerce, and local economic development organizations (LDOs). Dawson Economic Development Council, Southeastern Montana Area Revitalization Team (SMART)/Eastern Montana Economic Development Authority, Prairie County Economic Development Council, Carter County Chamber of Commerce, Glendive Chamber of Commerce, Prairie County Chamber of Commerce, and Wibaux County Chamber of Commerce are active in planning and economic development activities.

Dawson County Economic Development
808 N. Merrill
Glendive, MT 59330
406-377-7792
dawsonedc@midrivers.com
www.dawsonedc.com

SMART
and
Eastern Montana Economic Development Authority
PO Box 53
Baker, MT 59313
406-778-2020
smartdev@midrivers.com

The EPEDC has also developed close working relationships with other regional and statewide economic development entities to expand and develop opportunities. These entities include:

Southeastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC) which provides Small Business Development Center (SBDC) services throughout the EPEDC region and loan management services for the EPEDC's revolving loan fund via memorandums of understanding (MOU). SEMDC is a partner in the Eastern Montana Brownfield Coalition, and the Eastern Montana Impact Coalition. SEMDC is based in Colstrip, MT and is also a designated Economic Development District and Certified Regional Development Corporation serving Custer, Treasure, Powder River, and Rosebud Counties.

6200 Main Street, P.O. Box 1935
Colstrip, MT 59323
www.semdc.org

Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC) is a partner with EPEDC in the Eastern Montana Brownfield Coalition and the Eastern Montana Impact Coalition. GNDC is headquartered in Wolf Point, MT and serves Daniels, Garfield, McCone, Roosevelt, Sheridan, and Valley Counties as an Economic Development District and Certified Regional Development Corporation.

www.gndc.org

Richland Economic Development (RED) is a partner in the Eastern Montana Impact Coalition. Richland Economic Development is headquartered in Sidney, MT and serves Richland County.

1060 South Central Ave
Sidney, MT 59270

The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) is a statewide association of economic development practitioners providing education, leadership, and coordination to all its members. The EPEDC is a member and the EPEDC Executive Director currently serves on the Board of Directors as Vice-President of the organization.

118 E. Seventh St., Suite 2A
Anaconda, MT 59711

In addition to working with the above named local development organizations, chambers of commerce, and other regional/state organizations, the EPEDC's designation as a Certified Regional Development Corporation by the Montana Department of Commerce and an Economic Development District by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration permit the EPEDC to access funding to operate the organization and provide services in the region related to community and economic development. The Montana Department of Commerce Certified Regional Development Corporation program and the Economic Development Administration are critical partners to the EPEDC and its ability to provide services in the region.

Other critical state and federal agencies, offices, and resources exist to assist the regions counties and communities, which include but are not limited to:

Federal: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Rural Development, Department of Health and Human Services, Indian Health Service, Department of Housing and Urban Development, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Commerce, Small Business Administration, Economic Development Administration, Offices of the Montana Congressional Delegation.

State: Department of Commerce, Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks, Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, Department of Transportation, State Historic Preservation Office, Montana Community Development Corporation, Human Resource Development Council, Department of Labor and Industry, Department of State Lands, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Office of Public Instruction, Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, and the Montana University System.

County: Montana State University Cooperative Extension Service, County Health Department, Planning Department, Human Services Commission, and Sanitation Department.

Some specific Montana Department of Commerce Resources available:

Business Resource Division (BRD) Program Descriptions

A. Regional Development Bureau

1) Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Program (CDBG-ED)
HUD Funding – State Allocation – Approx. 1.6 million.
- Create or retain jobs – low and moderate income benefit (51%).
- Loans for working capital, equipment purchases, renovations (up to $25,000 per job).
- 5% interest.
- Grants for job training or infrastructure improvements owned by local government
  - (up to $25,000 per job for infrastructure or up to $5,000 for job training).
- Planning grant assistance (up to $25,000).
- Open cycle.
- Local government applicants.
- 1:1 match.

2) Big Sky Trust Fund Program (BSTF)
State allocation funding (2005 legislature), MCA Title 90, Chapter 1, Part 2.
Category I – ED projects (75% of funds).
- Create net new jobs with higher pay.
- Wage restrictions - excluding benefits.
- Open cycle application.
- Local government and Tribal applicants.
- Up to $5,000 per job assisted ($7,500 per job in high poverty counties).
- 1:1 match.
- Must be basic sector company.

Category II – Planning grants (25% of funds).
- Any economic development planning activity.
- Open cycle application.
- CRDC and Tribal applicants.
- Average award is up to $25,000.
- No match required, encouraged to provide match.

3) Primary Sector Workforce Training Grant Program
State funded – OTO - $1 million 2011 and 2012.
$5,000 per each new FTE, and $2,500 per each part-time position.
- Businesses are applicants.
- Primary sector businesses only, and
  - Value added business,
  - Have significant positive economic impact to region,
  - Be a new business that provides a product or service to the state,
  - Provide a service or function that is essential to the locality or state, or
  - Be a for-profit or non-profit hospital or medical center.
- Match 1:3.
- Wage requirements – includes benefits.

4) Montana Distressed Wood Products Industry Recovery and Stabilization Program (WPIRS)

EDA WPIRS

Loans for ED.
Businesses apply.
Match 2:1.
$20,000 per job.
Standard loan terms.
4% interest.
May not use funds for acquiring an equity position in a business; subsidize interest payments on an existing loan; provide equity contribution under other Federal loan programs; enable a borrower to acquire an interest in a business through stock purchase or assets; provide investment in interest bearing accounts, CD's, or other; refinance of existing debt.
No admin.

State WPIRS

Loans for ED.
Businesses apply.
Match 1:1.
$20,000 per job.
Standard loan terms.
No less than 4% interest.
No admin.

5) Montana State Small Business Credit Initiative (MT SSBCI) Program

Funded from U.S. Department of Treasury (Small Business Jobs Act).
Awarded $12.6 million for loan participation (BOI).
Must show 10:1 match.
Loans made through CDFIs.

6) Indian Country Economic Development (ICED)

State funded – 2005 Legislature - (OTO).
Funding for each of the 8 Tribal governments.
Maximum $70,000 a year to each Tribe.
For economic development projects, training, or planning activities.
1:1 match.
Up to $3,500 in admin.

B. Trade and International Relations Bureau

1) Made in Montana Program

Includes Made in Montana, Grown in Montana, and Native American Made in Montana Programs.

Free program.
Companies must produce products in Montana.
Benefits include product labels, advertising, product directory, sponsorship at marketplace, trade show assistance.

2) Export Montana Program

Technical assistance for exporting businesses.
Montana International Marketing Assistance Grants.

Grants for attendance at international wholesale exhibitions/shows.
Grants for foreign language translation services and production.
Market research and other services through U.S. Commercial Service.

C. Small Business Development Center

1) Montana Technology Innovation Partnership (MTIP)
   - Free service to small technology based businesses.
   - Assistance for SBIR and STTR proposals.
   - Assist businesses in securing seed capital for R&C.
   - Identify and guide businesses to development resources.

2) Entrepreneur Montana Program
   - Technical assistance and business planning courses to entrepreneurs.

3) Montana Indian Equity Fund
   - Grants for Native American businesses.
   - Funds only for enrolled member of Montana's federally recognized tribes and the Little Shell.
   - 1:1 match.
   - Each tribe gets 2 grants of $7,000.
   - Can be used to purchase of land, building, equipment; purchase of assets; and use of working capital.

D. Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology

1) Montana Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer Program (SBIR/STTR) Matching Funds Program (MSMFP)
   - Grants funds to companies that have been awarded federal SBIR/STTR grants.
   - Phase I – feasibility research.
   - Phase II – Expand and develop results from Phase I.
   - Awards will not exceed $30,000.

2) Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology
   - State funded (1999 Legislature).
   - Funding for research and commercialization projects to be conducted at R&C centers in Montana.
   - Funding varies from legislative session to session.
   - 1:4 match.
   - Awards range from $20,000 to $500,000.

E. State Tribal Economic Development Commission (STEDC)

- Created by the 1999 Legislature.
- Commission assesses needs and priorities of Montana Tribes.

F. Census and Economic Information Center (CEIC)

- State Census Office.
- Provides economic data.
- Provides GIS services.

B. County Profiles

The CEDs planning process analyzes local conditions and trends, identifies problems and opportunities, sets goals, objectives and strategies, and coordinates activities to implement them. Planning for community, economic, and rural development is a continuing process in response to changing wants and needs.

In order to assess the various communities in our region and develop a thorough comprehensive plan, the EPEDC performed five separate SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analyses with local residents from each county represented on the CEDS committee. The EPEDC also organized five additional open community meetings.

These ten meetings produced a variety of interesting feedback on the current state of the region's communities and counties, as well as project ideas to include in this planning document.

The following county sections, *pages 83-153*, take a comprehensive look at the identity of each county, its challenges, services, and potential for growth.

Below is a tabled summary of the SWOT Analysis results collected during the five CEDS committee member meetings as they pertain to the five areas of **Economy, Housing, Infrastructure, Natural Resources, and Tourism** addressed by the EPEDC's scope of work. *A more specific bulleted list of results arranged by county can be found in Appendix C.*

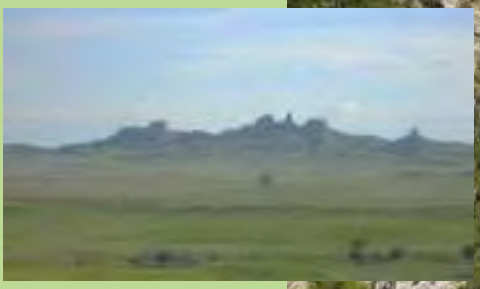
SWOT ANAYLSIS SUMMARY

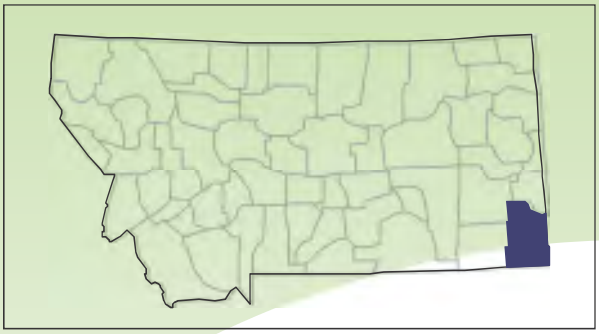
STRENGTHS				
Economy	**Housing**	**Infrastructure**	**Natural Resources**	**Tourism**
Agricultural base		Basic community infrastructure is in place	Open space	Friendly people
Improved tax base, due to natural resource development		Education system	Good water	Quality of life
Affordable place to live		Transportation access—roads, airports, rail service	Current mining—gravel, bentonite, etc.	Proximity to a variety of attractions
Few local regulations		Medical facilities	Hunting and fishing	Historical and cultural assets
Location			Badlands and parks	
Low unemployment				
Volunteerism				
Inter-local cooperation				

WEAKNESSES				
Economy	**Housing**	**Infrastructure**	**Natural Resources**	**Tourism**
Lack of diversity	Lack of workforce housing	Lack of mass transit	Prevalence of public lands	Lack of entertainment
Low population	Deteriorating housing stock	Expensive road maintenance		Lack of tourist-related infrastructure
Reduced tax base for towns/cities	Blight	Inconsistent cell and broadband service		
Floodplain	Lack of transitional housing/assisted living facilities	Aging municipal infrastructure		
Aging population				
Limited financial resources				
Lack of broad community involvement/apathy				
Chronically unemployed				
Lack of trade workers and general contractors				

OPPORTUNITIES				
Economy	**Housing**	**Infrastructure**	**Natural Resources**	**Tourism**
Educate local residents and newcomers about community strengths	Develop housing of all types	Refurbish county/town/city buildings and infrastructure	Develop, produce, and distribute natural resources	Advertise historic assets and outdoor recreation opportunities
Expand educational opportunities	Assist with growth planning and zoning development	Improve broadband service	Encourage pipeline development	Involve youth
Promote value-added ag	Attract private investment	Coordinate road improvements with oil and gas development companies		
Encourage diversity and small business start-ups				

THREATS				
Economy	**Housing**	**Infrastructure**	**Natural Resources**	**Tourism**
State and federal regulations	Increased blight	Capacity/failure	Environmental risks	Lack of infrastructure
Increased cost of living impact on current residents	Overdevelopment		Public land restrictions	
Boom to bust			Health and safety risks	
Perceptions/fears				
Lack of development due to property ownership				
Loss of agricultural base				
Crime				
Lack of succession planning				





1. CARTER COUNTY

Carter County is a predominately agricultural based county in the far southeast corner of Montana bordering the states of South Dakota to the east and Wyoming to the south. The county is 3,348.29 square miles in size with over 1.1 million acres of grazing land.

The agricultural base consists of over 300 farms and ranches, averaging over 5,500 acres each. Over 80% of the land is pasture leading to livestock sales of over $34 million in 2007, and over 15% is cropland which produced nearly $8.5 million in sales in 2007 (www.revenue.mt.gov). Agriculture is, by far, Carter County's largest economic sector.

Custer National Forest extends into Carter County, and Medicine Rocks State Park is located within its borders. Both offer strong tourist attractions for outdoor enthusiasts.

Carter County has one incorporated municipality, Ekalaka, and several very small unincorporated communities including Alzada, Ridge, Boyes, Hammond, Mill Iron, and Capitol. Ekalaka serves as the county seat and has a population of 332.

The population in Carter County has been steadily declining over the past 40 years from 1,956 persons in 1970 to 1,160 persons in 2010, which equates to a loss of 796 residents. Over the past decade alone, Carter County has experienced a 14.7% drop in population.

However, the completion of Highway 323, recent pipeline activity, and an increase in regional oil and gas development is having a direct impact on Carter County. The Bison Pipeline was recently completed, creating a significant rise in the county's taxable valuation, and other pipelines are slated for completion in the near future. In addition, oil and gas activity is spurring a reversal of previous economic and social trends.

Municipal Services

The Town of Ekalaka is the only community providing municipal services. The Town operates a three-cell lagoon wastewater treatment and collection system. The remainder of the county utilizes individual septic systems. Ekalaka also has a municipal water system with 209 hookups and a bulk water station to serve outside residents utilizing cisterns. All other drinking water is supplied via individual wells. The Town also provides a container site for solid waste disposal, which is then hauled to the Fallon County landfill approximately 36 miles to the north. No other disposal sites or garbage pickups are available in Carter County. Alzada residents haul solid waste to Belle Fourche, South Dakota. Currently, no general recycling services are offered in the county, with the exception of metal recycling offered by the Town of Ekalaka.

The Carter County Schools employs 17 full time equivalent teachers and educates 73 elementary students and 39 high school students (2011). The high school is located in Ekalaka, as is one elementary and a junior high school. Other rural elementary schools include Alzada Elementary, Hammond School, and Hawks Home School. Students located near the South Dakota border usually attend high school in South Dakota , while those near Powder River County generally attend Broadus High School. The remainder attend Carter County High School. The area's declining population threatens to close these smaller schools.

Utilities

Southeast Electric and Tongue River Electric Cooperatives are the main electricity providers in Carter County. Propane is the only gas available in the county.

Basic television service is provided by Mid-Rivers Cable or satellite. Ekalaka and the Ridgeway area are provided telephone service by Mid-Rivers Telephone Cooperative, the Tie Creek area is served by West River Cooperative, and the Powderville, Hammond, and Alzada areas are served by Range Telephone Cooperative.

Transportation

Carter County is served by three highways. Highway 7 from Baker to the north, Highway 323 from South Dakota to the east and south, and Highway 212 from Alzada to Broadus in Powder River County. A small airport is available to the east of town for minor aircraft. The airport was recently paved, and a reload base was installed to assist

slurry planes in obtaining fire retardant. An electronic weather station was also purchased. The closest rail is 36 miles to the north in Fallon County. Many miles of unpaved county roads dissect the rural landscape to provide local access.

Health, Medical, and Emergency Services

Carter County has one licensed nursing home/critical access facility located in Ekalaka. Dahl Memorial a county facility and is a licensed nursing home with 23 beds. Their critical access unit has eight licensed beds. Dahl Memorial also serves as a rural health clinic staffed by a physician's assistant; it has an elderly day care program, where persons may stay up to seven days and nights. The facility can also provide basic prescriptions for up to three day's usage.

Ambulance service in the Ekalaka area is county/hospital owned. The EMTs are volunteers; 9-1-1 dispatch is operated out of Baker, Montana. Ambulance service to the region is also provided out of Broadus and Belle Fourche to rural areas located near those communities.

Both Alzada and Ekalaka have volunteer fire departments. Alzada has 8-10 volunteers, while Ekalaka maintains an average of 15.

Housing Stock and Characteristics

The number of housing units in 2010 was 810, down 16 units from its peak in 1990. Approximately 595 are single family, and 192 are mobile homes according to 2000 Census data. The remainder are multi-family or other units.

The real median value of owner occupied housing in Carter County in 2010 was $68,290. A lack of demand and an aging housing stock can account for a value that ranks 54th lowest out of 56 Montana counties. Additional data shows that 34.3% of Carter County's housing units were vacant in 2010. Since October 2002, the Town of Ekalaka utilized grant funding to rehabilitate 33 homes, as well as demolish 54 vacant structures ("Local rehabilitation/Demolition successful," *Ekalaka Eagle*, 4/24/09).

Natural Resource and Environmental Issues

Carter County is one of the few Montana counties with bentonite mining. Bentonite mining provides employment and tax revenue but has not maintained a high degree of stability in recent years. The county also has several small sand and gravel pits located throughout the county.

Water resources in the county include wells that range in depth from 2 feet to 1,673 feet. There are over 1,250 wells currently located in the county.

The county has some timber resources which are typically exported to either South Dakota or Wyoming for milling.

Oil and gas pipelines have already been constructed through Carter County; more are slated for completion. While these pipelines do not represent a long term employment opportunity, they do generally enhance the county's taxable valuation.

A chief local concern is the potential for sage grouse to be listed as an endangered species. Area residents fear that listing the sage grouse will inhibit farming and ranching activity—their economic backbone.

Current Trends

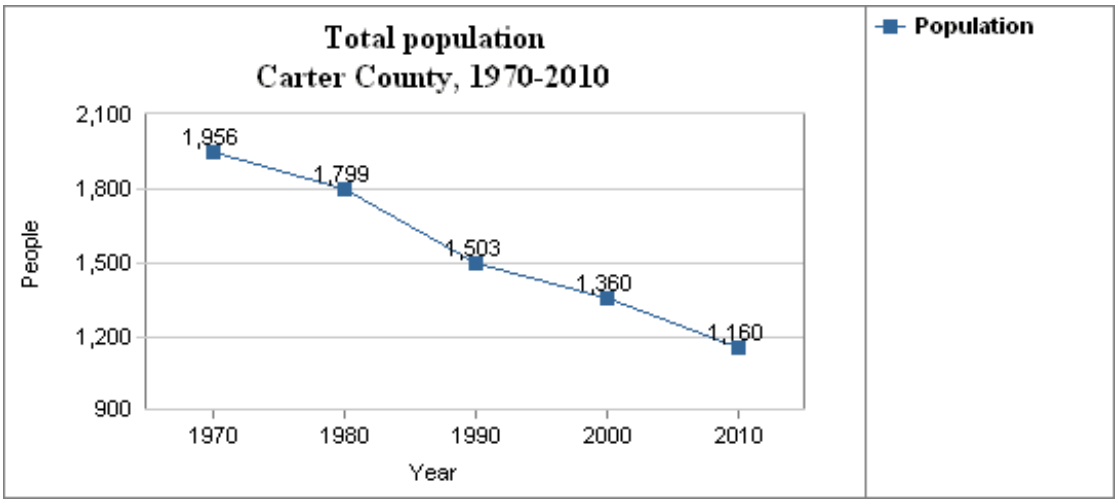
Oil and gas activity in the region has spurred new life into the community. Although no statistics are available as yet to prove a local uptick exists, activity is beginning to impact the county. In addition, Highway 323 has not been completed for a significant enough length of time to adequately assess the effects of an increase in traffic flow. It is believed that the current population trend will reverse and begin to positively reflect on the housing market and local economy.

Highlights for Carter County:

Total population change (2000 - 2010)	-14.7%
Total population (2010)	1,160
Poverty rate (2010)	19%
Number of jobs (2009)	831
Annual average wage per job (2010)	$26,113
Unemployment rate (February 2012)	4.3%
Median age of population (2010)	50.2

http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30011

CARTER COUNTY POPULATION



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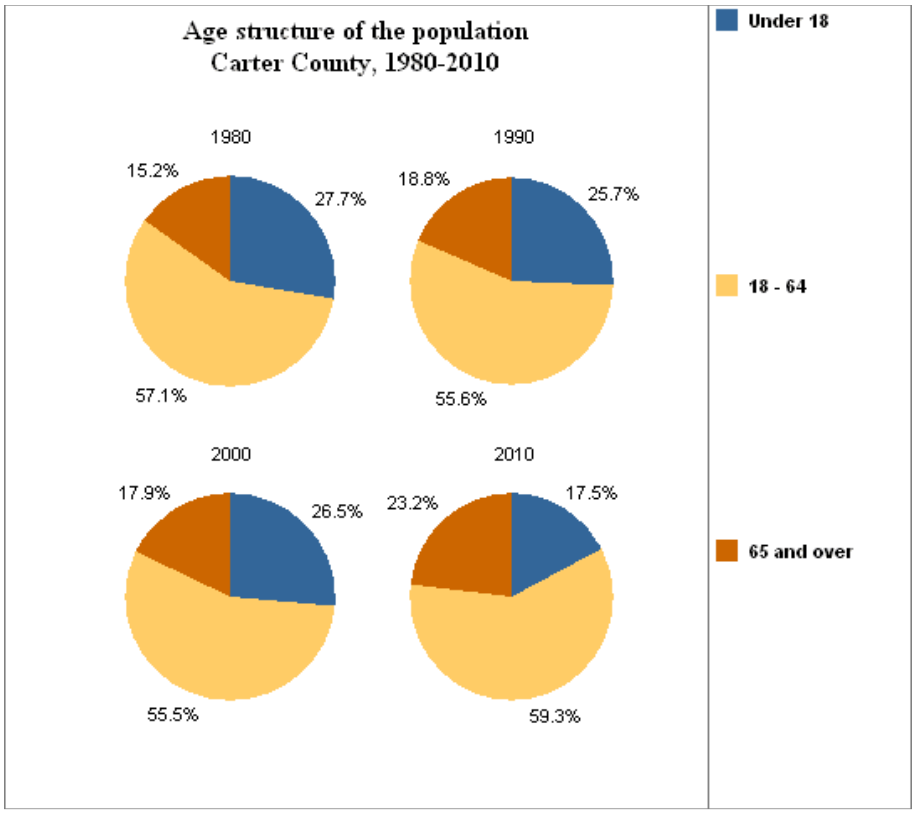
- Lost 796 residents since 1970.
- Estimate for 2011 is 1,152, a further decline of .7%, compared to a .9% increase in Montana as a whole.



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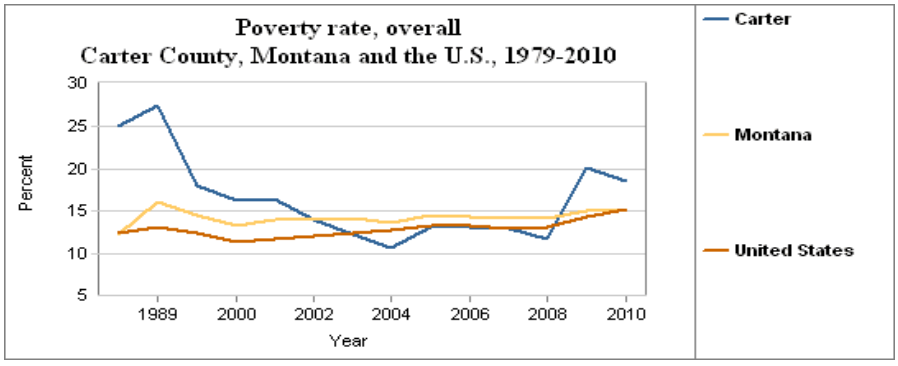
- 17.5 percent of the population was under 18 in 2010, compared to 22.6 percent in Montana
- 59.3 percent of the population was 18 to 64 years old in 2010, compared to 62.6 percent in Montana
- 23.2 percent of the population was 65 or older in 2010, compared to 14.8 percent in Montana

CARTER COUNTY POVERTY AND INCOME



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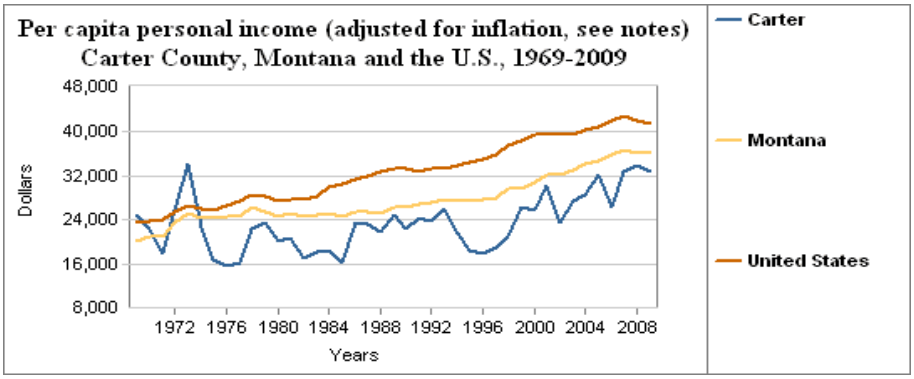
Among Carter County residents, the overall poverty rate . . .

- was 18.6 percent in 2010, 18.1 percent in 1999, and 27.4 percent in 1989.
- was 18.6 percent compared to 15.2 percent in Montana in 2010.
- ranked 17th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.



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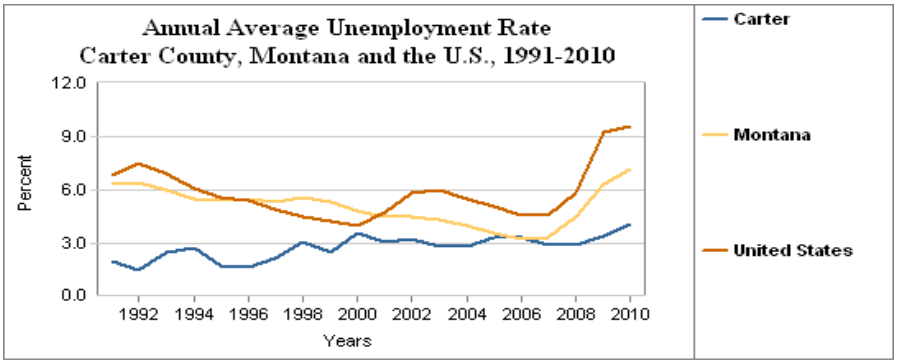
Carter County's per capita income, adjusted for inflation…

- was $32,840 in 2009, compared to $36,517 in Montana;
- increased 73.8 percent between 1995 and 2005 compared to 26.8 percent in Montana;
- increased 10.5 percent since 1969 when it was $24,860;
- decreased 9.8 percent in the 1970s, increased 10.9 percent in the 1980s, and increased 14.4 percent in the 1990s;
- ranked 34th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2009.

CARTER COUNTY ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS TRENDS



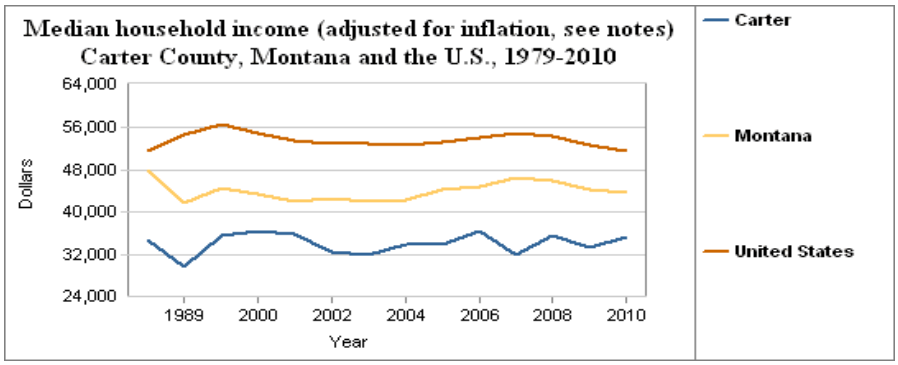
***People are counted as **unemployed** if they are at least 16 years old, are without a job and available for work, and have recently made specific efforts to find employment. The **unemployment rate** is the number of unemployed as a percent of the entire labor force.

http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30011&IndicatorID=14

Carter County's **monthly unemployment rate** was 4.3 percent in February 2012. This compares to 6.9 percent in Montana as a whole.

Carter County's **average annual unemployment rate** in 2010 . . .

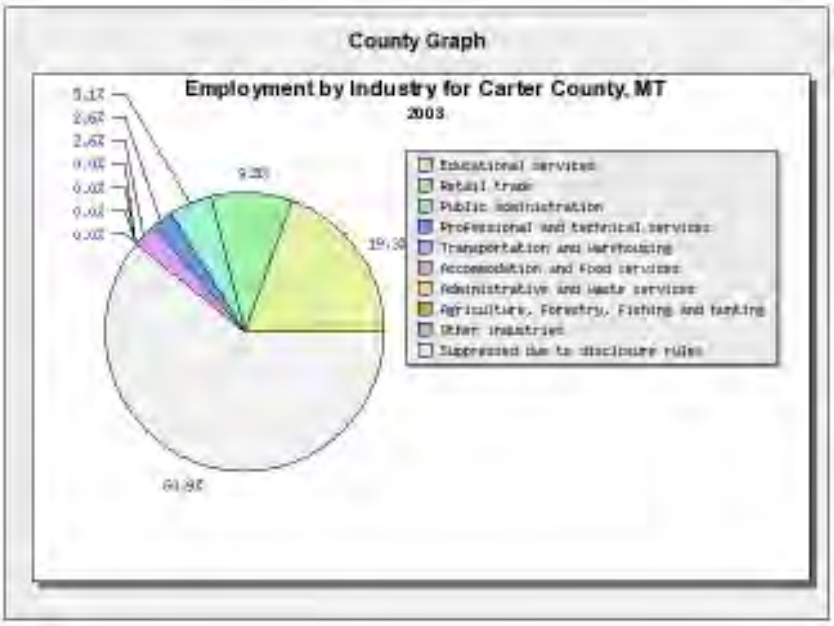
- was 4.1 percent compared to 7.2 for Montana
- was greater than the previous year's rate of 3.4 percent.
- ranked 50th – from highest to lowest – out of Montana's 56 counties.



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30011&IndicatorID=9

In Carter County median household income (adjusted for inflation) . . .

- was $35,321 in 2010, $35,527 in 1999, and $29,855 in 1989;
- ranked 45th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.



http://economictoolbox.geog.psu.edu/employment.php?region_id=1&sfips=30&cfips=30011&rurality_flag=0&sfips1=00&cfips1=00000&return_page=snapshot.php

Table 1: Carter County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

Industry	Employment 2001 Level	Employment 2001 Share[1]	Employment 2009 Level	Employment 2009 Share[1]	Actual Growth Percent	Actual Growth Net	Standardized Growth[2] Percent	Standardized Growth[2] Net	Standardized Employment[3] 2009
Farm	362	41.3	299	36.0	-17.40	-63	-13.99	-51	311
Retail Trade	41	4.7	43	5.2	4.88	2	-3.04	-1	40
Federal, Civilian	22	2.5	20	2.4	-9.09	-2	5.50	1	23
Unreported	451	51.5	469	56.4	3.99	18	6.46	29	480
TOTAL	876	100.0	831	100.0	-5.14	-45	-2.46	-22	854

[1] Share: The percentage share of total employment by industry.

[2] Standardized Growth: at the same rate as its counterpart at the national level.ad each industry grown .

[3] Standardized Employment, 2009: The 2009 level of employment in each industry had it grown at the same rate as its counterparts at the national level since 2001.

- By clicking on the symbol associated with each industry category you will wil be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%.

- Over 2001-2009 a net total of -45 jobs were trimmed from the Carter County economy, amounting to a decline of -5.14%.

Table 2: Shift-Share Components of Carter County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

Industry	National Growth[1] Percent	National Growth[1] Net	Industry Mix[2] Percent	Industry Mix[2] Net	Region Shift[3] Percent	Region Shift[3] Net
Farm	5.01	18	-19.00	-69	-3.42	-12
Retail Trade	5.01	2	-8.05	-3	7.92	3
Federal, Civilian	5.01	1	0.48	0	-14.59	-3
Unreported	5.01	23	1.44	6	-2.46	-11
TOTAL	5.01	44	-7.47	-65	-2.68	-23

[1] National Growth: The change in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry had it grown at the national growth rate of all industries combined.

[2] Industry Mix: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry (additional to the national growth effect) due to the industry growing faster (or slower) nationally than the rate of all industries combined.

[3] Regional Shift: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment for a specific industry beyond the national growth and industry mix effects resulting from the industry growing faster (or slower) than the same industry nationally.

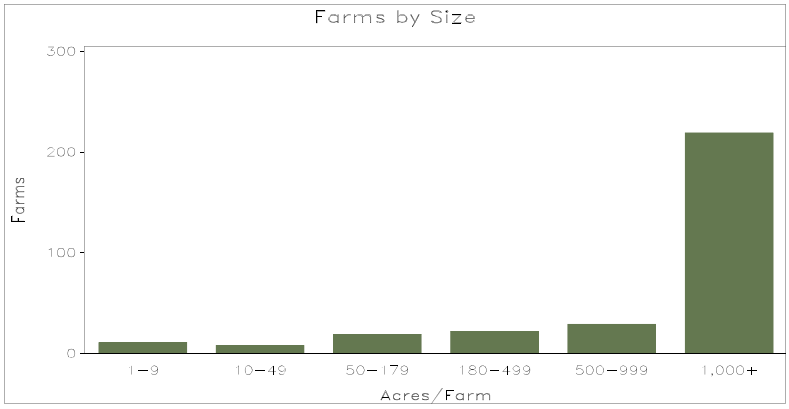
- By clicking on the symbol associated with each industry category you will wil be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

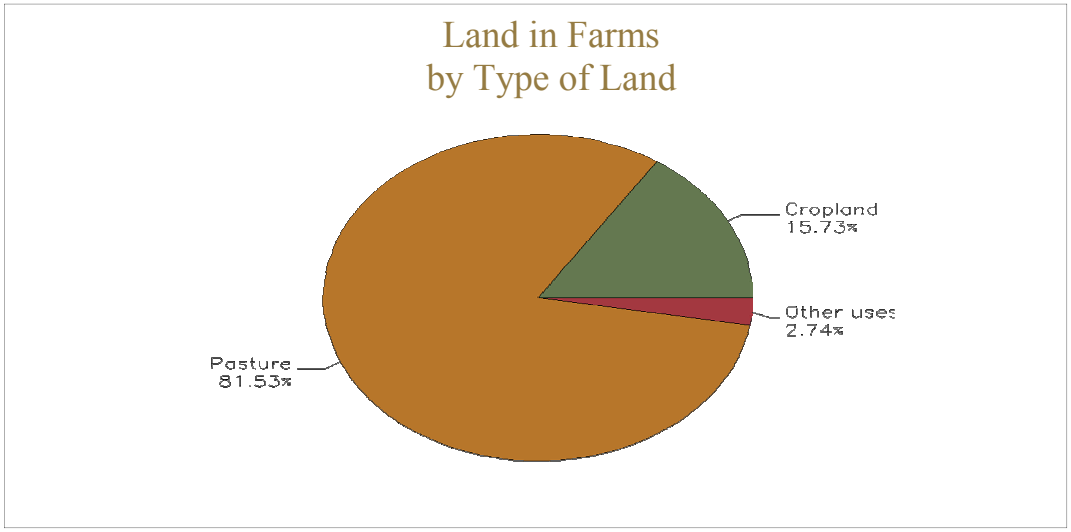
Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%.

- Carter County's employment change over 2001-2009 of -5.14% trailed the 5.01% growth of employment nationally by -10.15%. Accounting for this difference was an industry mix inclined toward industries that experienced slower growth, coupled with the fact that a large share of local industries underperformed their counterparts nationally.

http://montana.reaproject.org/reap-report.php

CARTER COUNTY	2007	2002	% change
Number of Farms	308	289	+7
Land in Farms	1,698,363 acres	1,666,922 acres	+2
Average Size of Farm	5,514 acres	5,768 acres	-4
Market Value of Products Sold	$42,812,000	$30,432,000	+41
Crop Sales *$8,497,000* *(20 percent)*			
Livestock Sales *$34,315,000* *(80 percent)*			
Average Per Farm	$139,001	$105,302	+32
Government Payments	$1,766,000	$1,954,000	-10
Average Per Farm Receiving Payments	$9,599	$12,292	-22





FARM Economic Characteristics	Quantity	FARM Operator Characteristics	Quantity
Farms by value of sales:		**Principal operators by primary occupation:**	
Less than $1,000	47	Farming	223
$1,000 to $2,499	9	Other	85
$2,500 to $4,999	6		
$5,000 to $9,999	13	**Principal operators by sex:**	
$10,000 to $19,999	24	Male	267
$20,000 to $24,999	8	Female	41
$25,000 to $39,999	21		
$40,000 to $49,999	8	**Average age of principal operator (years)**	57.1
$50,000 to $99,999	39		
$100,000 to $249,999	88	**All operators by race[2]:**	
$250,000 to $499,999	32	American Indian or Alaska Native	2
$500,000 or more	13	Asian	2
		Black or African American	-
Total farm production expenses ($1,000)	32,175	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	-
Average per farm ($)	104,465	White	548
		More than one race	1
Net cash farm income of operation ($1,000)	14,162		
Average per farm ($)	45,981	**All operators of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino Origin[2]**	8

2007 Census of Agriculture, www.agcensus.usda.gov

CARTER COUNTY EDUCATION

School Level	Total All Types	Regular school	Special education school	Vocational school	Private/alternative school
Total all levels	**5**	5	0	0	0
Elementary	**1**	1	0	0	0
Middle	**1**	1	0	0	0
High	**1**	1	0	0	0
Any other configuration	**2**	2	0	0	0

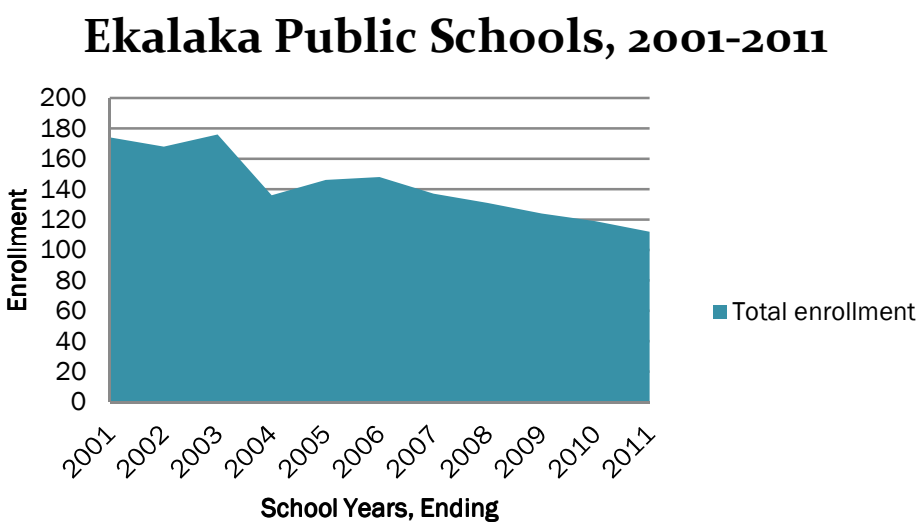
Alzada Elementary*
District No. 56
236 Spring Street
Alzada, MT 59311

Ekalaka Public Schools
District No. 15
111 W Speelmon St.
Ekalaka, MT 59324

* 2 students (2011)

Hawks Home Elementary***
District No. 1
11 Talcott Lane
Hammond, MT 59332

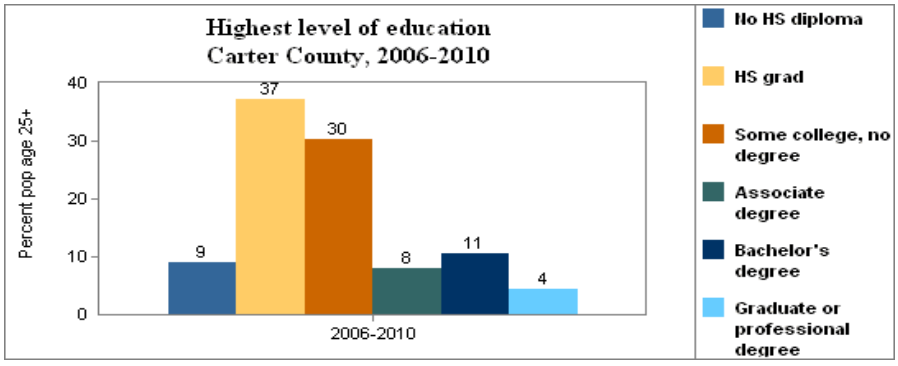
*** includes both the Hammond School and Hawks Home School with a combined enrollment of 8 students (2011)



- Between the years ending 2001-2011, Ekalaka Public Schools reported 4 dropouts.

In Carter County between 2006-2010 . . .

- 9 percent of the population 25 years and older had no high school diploma, compared to 9 percent in Montana
- 15 percent of the population 25 years and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 28 percent in Montana



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30011&IndicatorID=100038

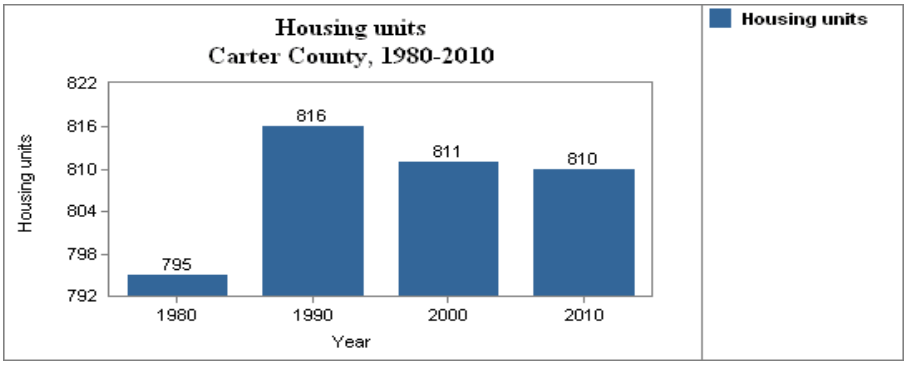
CARTER COUNTY HOUSING

In Carter County . . .

- the number of housing units increased by 2.6 percent from 1980 to 1990; decreased by 0.6 percent from 1990 to 2000; and decreased by 0.1 from 2000 to 2010.

- in 2010, 49.1 percent of all housing units were owner occupied, 16.5 percent were occupied by renters, and 34.3 percent were vacant.

- the percent change in number of housing units from 2000-2010 ranked 43rd - from highest to lowest- out of the 56 counties.



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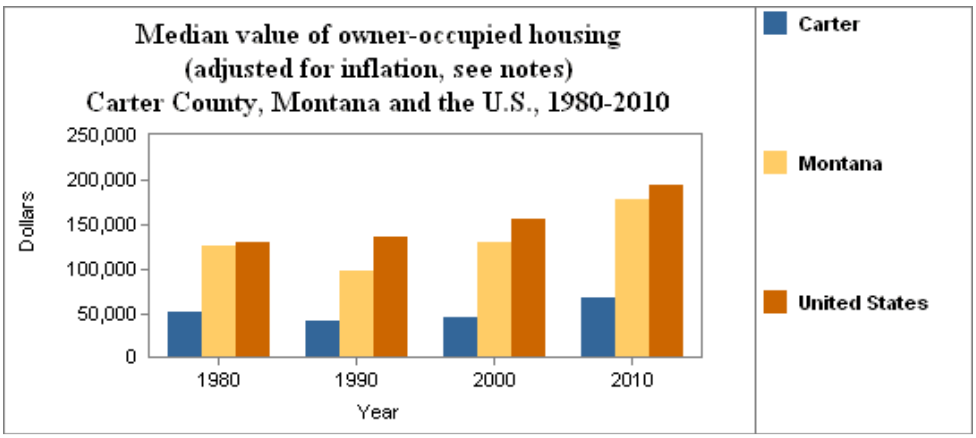
The real median value of owner occupied housing in Carter County from 2006-2010. . .

- was $68,290 compared to $178,770 in Montana
- increased by 35.2 percent from 1980 to 2006-2010.
- ranked 54th - from highest to lowest - out of 56 counties.



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Of the 811 housing units in Carter County in 2000 . . .

- 595 were single family units, an increase of 5 percent from 1990 when there were 569;

- 24 were 2 or more unit structures, an increase of 60 percent from 1990 when there were 15;

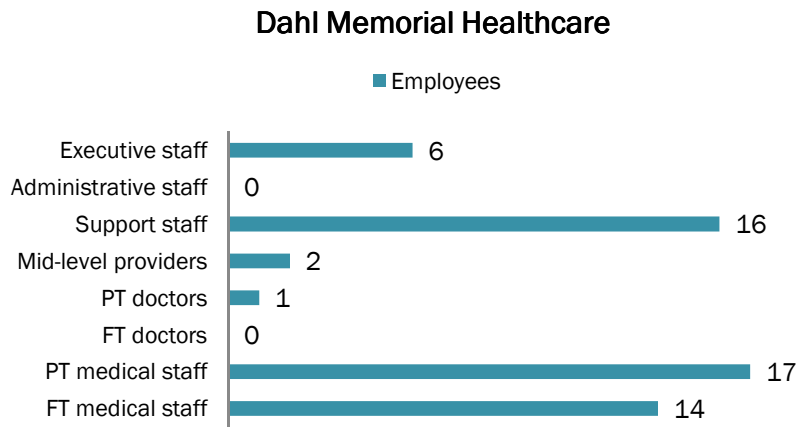
- 192 were mobile homes, a decrease of 21 percent from 1990 when there were 232.

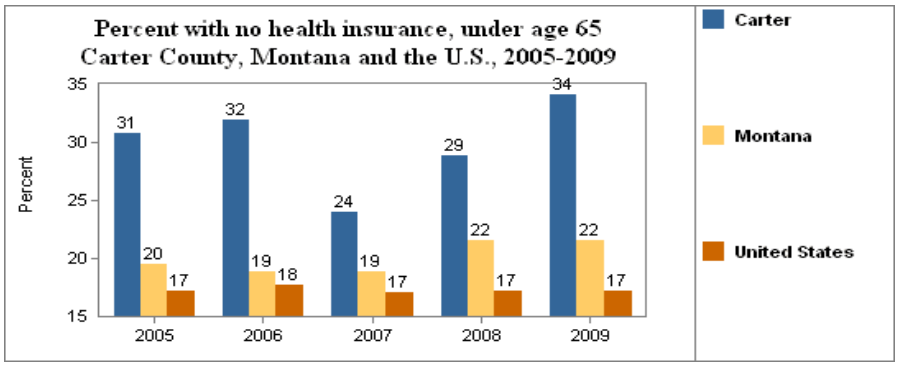
1990 and 2000: US Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, http://factfinder2.census.gov

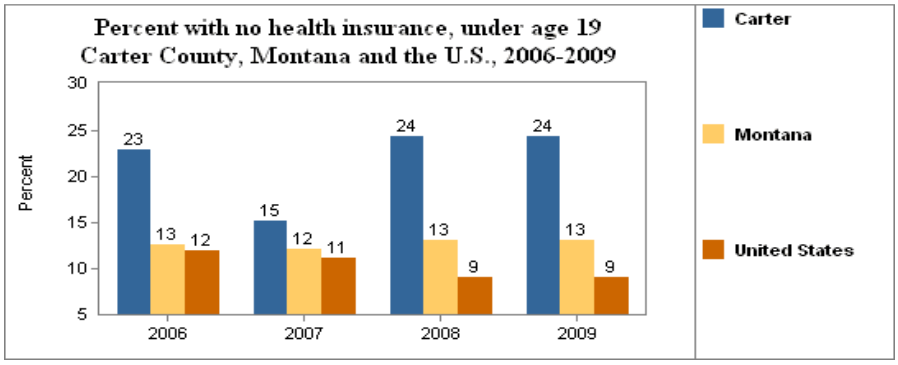
CARTER COUNTY HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Medical facilities available in Carter County:

Dahl Memorial Healthcare Association, Inc.
215 Sandy Street
Ekalaka, MT 59324



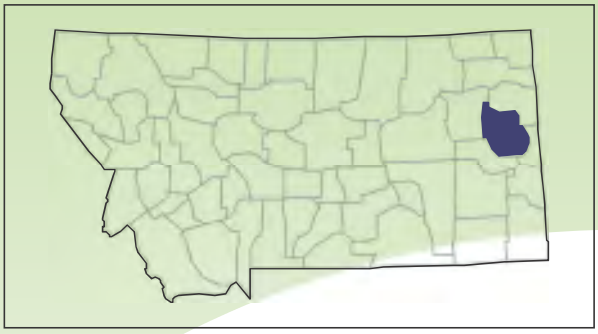




http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30011&IndicatorID=100013

In 2009,

- 34 percent of the population under age 65, or 315 people, had no health insurance coverage compared to 22 percent in all of Montana;
- the percent under age 65 without health insurance ranked 2nd - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties;
- 24.3 percent of children under the age of 19, or 46 children, had no health insurance coverage compared to 13.0 percent of all children in Montana;
- the percent of children without health coverage ranked 3rd - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties.



2. DAWSON COUNTY

Dawson County encompasses approximately 2,381 square miles. The topography ranges from grasslands to badlands, and includes the Yellowstone River Valley. Dawson County is also home to Makoshika State Park.

Much of the rolling hills and grasslands have been developed for dry land crops. The rougher areas are primarily managed for grazing and livestock production, while the areas near the Yellowstone River contain some irrigated farmland. Altogether, the county contains nearly 1.4 million acres of farmland. Agriculture maintains a prominent position in the economy, along with service industries and retail trades. The oil and gas industry is gaining strength again due to improved technology and further development of the Bakken field. This recent activity is providing a significant boost to the local economy and presents both opportunities and impacts that will have to be mitigated.

The county has seen the loss of 2,280 residents since 1970 according to U.S. Census data but a rapid turnaround of that trend is being experienced due to oil and gas activity in the region. This sudden economic turn is placing strain on local infrastructure, housing, and other services.

Municipal Services

Public water systems providing potable water and fire protection have been developed in the City of Glendive, West Glendive, and the Town of Richey. Except for small systems constructed to serve trailer courts and campgrounds, individual wells are the rural source of water.

The City of Glendive utilizes water from the Yellowstone River via an intake system routed into the water treatment facility for distribution to approximately 2,100 users within the city limits. The system has over 30 miles of water mains.

The Town of Richey is served via two wells which are approximately 1,225 feet in depth. The capacity of each well is approximately 80 gpm and is distributed via 4, 6, and 8 inch diameter pipe.

The City of Glendive, West Glendive, and the Town of Richey provide public wastewater treatment. The City of Glendive and West Glendive treatment systems may be combined into a single treatment facility in the near future.

Currently, the City of Glendive collects sewage via a gravity fed system with lift stations located throughout the city. The current treatment system is a three cell facultative lagoon with recirculation capability. This system has proven inadequate for meeting discharge requirements, and the city is considering the construction of a mechanical treatment facility.

The West Glendive sewer system has been strained due to growth in that area. The system serves some residents of Glendive and those in the West Glendive urbanized area. The two cell lagoon system is not adequate, and the county is negotiating with the city for connection to the treatment facility when constructed. This would require piping be brought from West Glendive across the Yellowstone River for connection. The collection system in West Glendive also has infiltration and outflow issues.

The Town of Richey utilizes two lagoons and a collection system of 6 and 8 inch diameter pipe and an outfall line of 10 inch diameter pipe.

The Glendive Solid Waste Facility is licensed to operate a solid waste landfill in Dawson County. The service area includes the City of Glendive, West Glendive area, and the communities of Richey, Terry, and a limited amount from McCone County and Circle. The Public Works Department is responsible for collection of solid waste in the City of Glendive.

Schools

The school system in Dawson County includes Washington Middle School, Jefferson Elementary, Lincoln Elementary, and Dawson County High School, which are located in the greater Glendive area. The Town of Richey has an elementary school and high school. The unincorporated communities of Bloomfield, Lindsay, and Deer Creek also all have elementary school facilities available.

The Glendive schools house 1,250 students and employ 97 full-time certified teachers. Richey High School has 27 students, and Richey Elementary has 47 students in K-8. Richey schools employ 14 full-time certified teachers and 7 classified staff.

Dawson Community College is a public junior college established in 1940. The campus houses residence halls, all staff offices, laboratories, student center, gymnasium, classrooms, bookstore, community room, and library.

Utilities

Montana-Dakota Utilities provides natural gas and electricity to a majority of Dawson County; McCone Electric Cooperative and Lower Yellowstone REA provide electricity to some residents in the northern part of the county. Tongue River Electric Cooperative is also available to provide service to residents in southern Dawson County. Mid-Rivers Communications furnishes the county with cable, cellular, and internet services. National satellite and cellular providers also offer select services within the area.

Transportation

The Dawson County road system includes Interstate 94 which provides a strong east/west transportation route to and from Dawson County and State Highway 200 across the north central part of the county through Richey. This route also passes through the Town of Circle where it connects to Montana 13 leading to the City of Wolf Point. Montana 16 leads north to the City of Sidney. The other state highway is S254. Each of these state highways provides critical access to I-94.

The county roads inventory includes 1100 miles serving a very rural population. The county maintains and staffs three shops for maintenance of this extensive road system which grids the county. Most of the roads maintained by Dawson County are gravel surfaced.

The County maintains an urban transportation district which provides transit to the general public. The service runs Monday through Friday from 7:30 to 5:00 and residents can have door to door service with 24 hours' notice.

The east/west main line of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad crosses the county along the route of I-94. In addition to the mainline, Burlington Northern branch lines include the Sidney, Redwater, and Richey lines. No passenger rail is available.

Dawson County currently has two airports, one located NW of Glendive and a small airfield next to the Town of Richey. The Dawson Community Airport is a modern commuter airport with some passenger service. It has two paved runways and navigation aids and fueling services. Airport management has a 24-hour phone and can handle user needs. The Richey airstrip is 3,000 feet and unpaved. It is used by private airplanes.

Health, Medical, and Emergency Services

The Glendive Fire Department provides fire protection for the City of Glendive. It includes 4 full time firefighters with 16 paid per call volunteers. The county ambulance service is operated by the Fire Department with 14 paid per call volunteer EMT's. The primary response area for the Glendive Fire Department is 3.5 miles but does have mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments.

Dawson County has 37 volunteer firefighters, 21 from the Glendive area, and 17 more from the Richey area. There are satellite locations with equipment strategically placed throughout the county.

The Glendive Medical Center provides a wide range of medical services to the region. They include, but are not limited to, the following: 24-hour emergency service, acute patient care, cardiac rehabilitation, chemotherapy, hospice, intensive care, labor recovery, home care, long-term care, orthopedics, physical therapy, radiology, pharmacy, medical surgery.

The Dawson County Health Department provides HIV education and services, blood pressure and cholesterol screening, a breast and cervical health program, family planning, home health, school nurse, environmental health,

immunization, maternal child health, tobacco use prevention, partnership to strengthen families, well child clinics, and Women Infant and Children (WIC).

Dawson County also has a senior citizens center open to any resident and their guests who are 55 years or older.

Housing Stock and Characteristics

Dawson County had 3,214 single family housing units in 2000 a decrease of only 1% from 1990. However, multiple unit structures saw a drastic decline from 604 two-unit structures in 1990 to 421 in 2000. Mobile homes and other types of dwelling units also saw drop-offs during that time period.

The average median value of owner occupied housing in Dawson County was $103,466 from 2006-2010, which was an 11.7 percent decline over 20 years. This trend of lost units and lost property value serves as a reminder of the impacts the oil and gas industry decline had on the county in the 1980s. Oil and gas activity in the region has revitalized, and the need for additional/new housing is strengthening the market and greatly impacting the need for rental units.

Natural Resource and Environmental Issues

Dawson County lies in an agricultural region with a diverse range of topography and climatic conditions typical of the northern Great Plains. Precipitation averages 12 to 14 inches annually with about 28" of snowfall in the Yellowstone Valley and slightly more in the uplands. The variation in precipitation, and change in geology and landforms has a dramatic effect on vegetation, soils, water resources and wildlife.

Until recently, the lack of any new large scale basic industries has limited growth and its impacts on the environment. With increased activity in the oil and gas industry, it will be important to promote growth while protecting water resources. The county has potential for oil, gas, coal, and wind energy development. Agricultural resource development will continue to be a major influence on land use and water resource management.

Current Trends

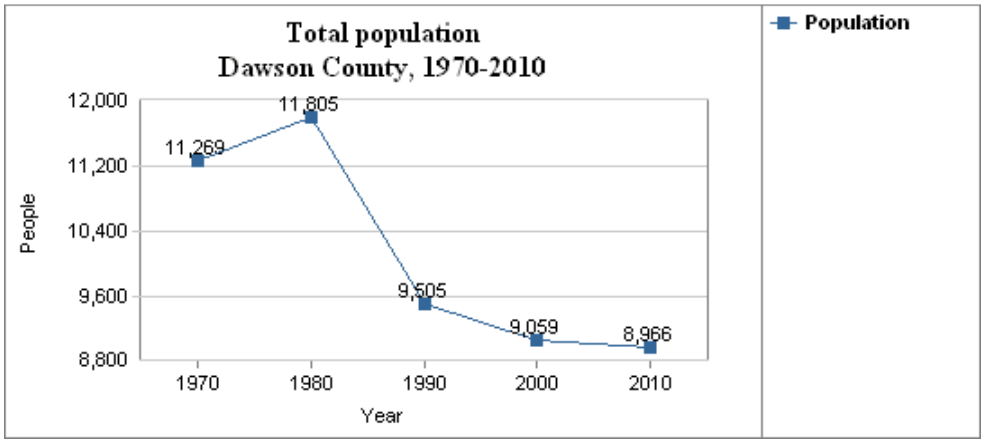
The current trend in Dawson County can be described as on the edge of booming, driven by the oil and gas development in the Bakken region of northeastern Montana and northwestern North Dakota. While drilling has not become prevalent in Dawson County, the impacts of the development are being felt. Management of public infrastructure, emergency services, development of housing, and business development will all be critical elements to this energy industry growth. The general consensus is that this development is in fact long- term, but the impacts are coming swiftly.

Highlights for Dawson County:

Total population change (2000 - 2010)	-1%
Total population (2010)	8,966
Poverty rate (2010)	12%
Number of jobs (2009)	5,504
Annual average wage per job (2010)	$35,549
Unemployment rate (February 2012)	3.6%
Median age of population (2010)	50.2

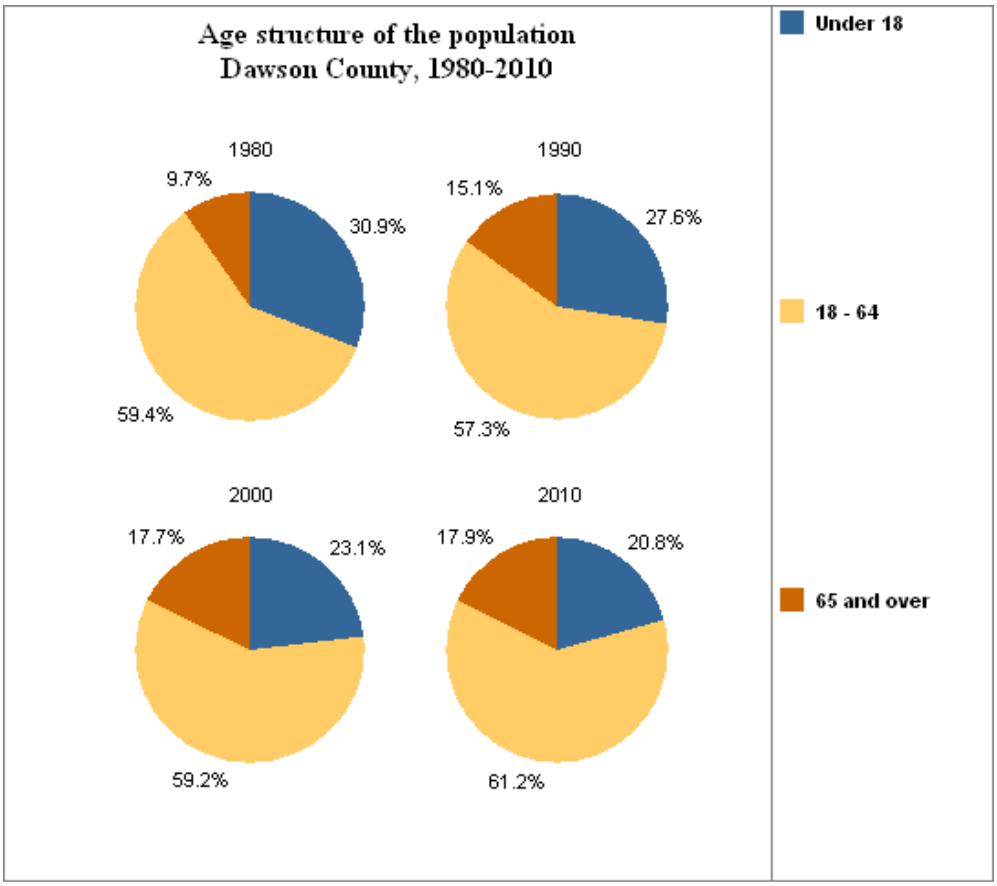
http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30021

DAWSON COUNTY POPULATION



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30021&IndicatorID=1

- Lost 2,280 residents since 1970.
- Estimate for 2011 is 8,989, an increase of .3%, compared to a .9% increase in Montana as a whole.



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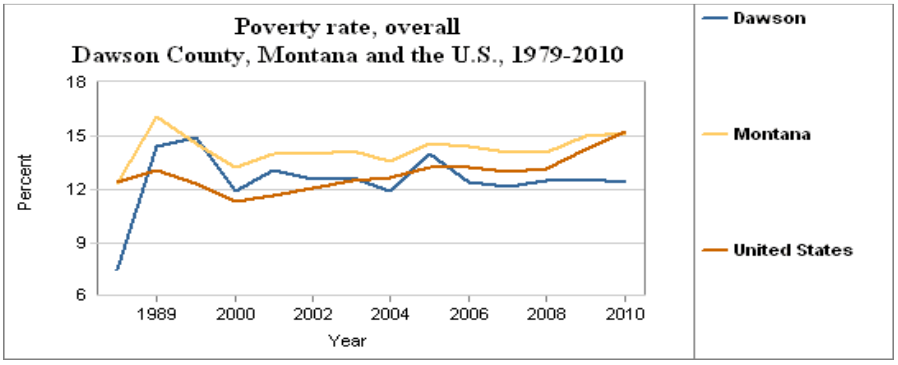
- 20.8 percent of the population was under 18 in 2010, compared to 22.6 percent in Montana
- 61.2 percent of the population was 18 to 64 years old in 2010, compared to 62.6 percent in Montana
- 17.9 percent of the population was 65 or older in 2010, compared to 14.8 percent in Montana

DAWSON COUNTY POVERTY AND INCOME



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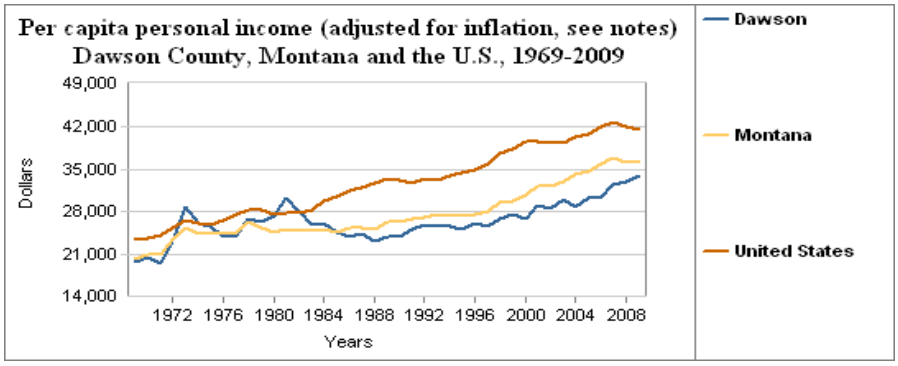
Among Dawson County residents, the overall poverty rate . . .

- was 12.4 percent in 2010, 14.9 percent in 1999, and 14.4 percent in 1989.
- was 12.4 percent compared to 15.2 percent in Montana in 2010.
- ranked 45th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.

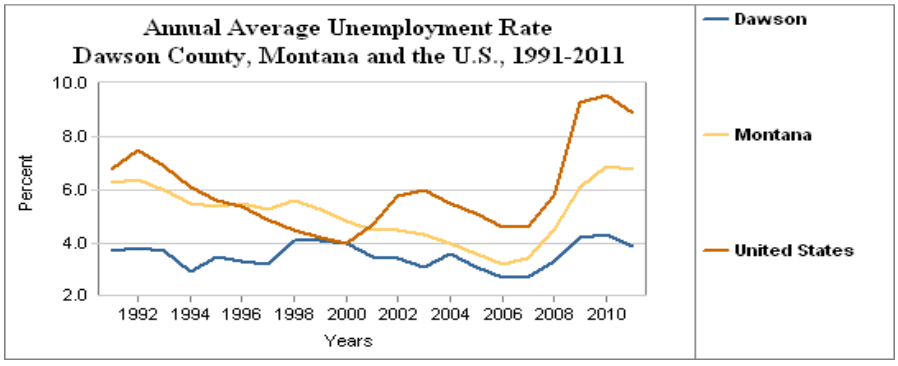


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30021&IndicatorID=7

Dawson County's per capita income, adjusted for inflation…

- was $33,885 in 2009, compared to $36,517 in Montana;
- increased 20.7 percent between 1995 and 2005 compared to 26.8 percent in Montana;
- increased 50.8 percent since 1969 when it was $19,846;
- increased 33.3 percent in the 1970s, decreased 12.6 percent in the 1980s, and increased 12.4 percent in the 1990s;
- ranked 30th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2009.

DAWSON COUNTY ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS TRENDS



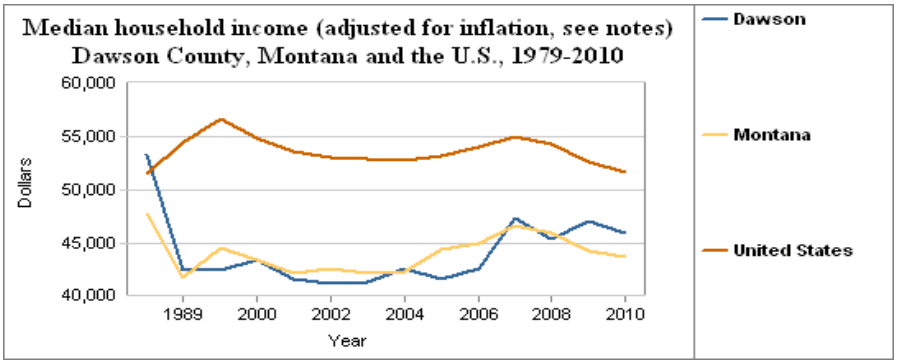
***People are counted as **unemployed** if they are at least 16 years old, are without a job and available for work, and have recently made specific efforts to find employment. The **unemployment rate** is the number of unemployed as a percent of the entire labor force.

http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30021&IndicatorID=14

Dawson County's **monthly unemployment rate** was 3.6 percent in February, 2012. This compares to 6.9 percent in Montana as a whole.

Dawson County's **average annual unemployment rate** in 2011 . . .

- was 3.9 percent compared to 6.8 for Montana
- was less than the previous year's rate of 4.3 percent.
- ranked 49th – from highest to lowest – out of Montana's 56 counties.



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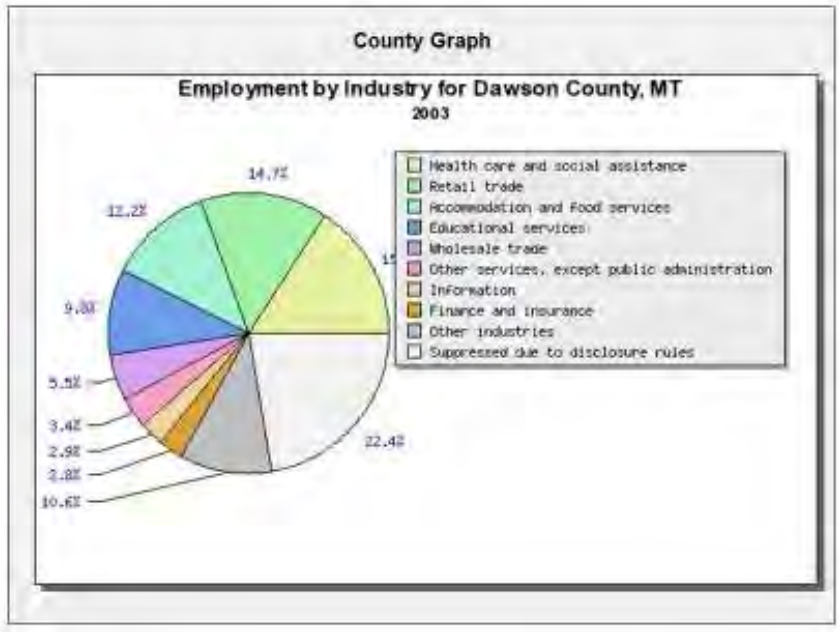
In Dawson County median household income (adjusted for inflation) . . .

- was $45,954 in 2010, $42,386 in 1999, and $42,474 in 1989;
- ranked 9th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.



http://economictoolbox.geog.psu.edu/employment.php?region_id=1&sfips=30&cfips=30021&rurality_flag=0&sfips1=00&cfips1=00000&return_page=snapshot.php

Table 1: Dawson County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

Industry	Employment 2001 Level	Employment 2001 Share[1]	Employment 2009 Level	Employment 2009 Share[1]	Actual Growth Percent	Actual Growth Net	Standardized Growth[2] Percent	Standardized Growth[2] Net	Standardized Employment[3] 2009
Farm	574	10.6	458	8.3	-20.21	-116	-13.99	-80	494
Construction	161	3.0	176	3.2	9.32	15	-3.19	-5	156
Manufacturing	55	1.0	54	1.0	-1.82	-1	-26.72	-15	40
Wholesale Trade	180	3.3	232	4.2	28.89	52	-1.12	-2	178
Retail Trade	674	12.5	618	11.2	-8.31	-56	-3.04	-20	654
Information	136	2.5	112	2.0	-17.65	-24	-17.01	-23	113
Finance & Insurance	190	3.5	196	3.6	3.16	6	20.84	40	230
Real Estate, Rent, & Leasing	99	1.8	117	2.1	18.18	18	35.81	35	134
Health Care & Social Asst.	594	11.0	757	13.8	27.44	163	23.18	138	732
Accom. & Food Services	418	7.7	411	7.5	-1.67	-7	11.08	46	464
Other Services	338	6.3	373	6.8	10.35	35	8.80	30	368
Federal, Civilian	39	0.7	32	0.6	-17.95	-7	5.50	2	41
Federal Military	48	0.9	43	0.8	-10.42	-5	1.01	0	48
State Government	258	4.8	179	3.3	-30.62	-79	4.89	13	271
Local Government	620	11.5	598	10.9	-3.55	-22	8.12	50	670
Unreported	1,010	18.7	1,148	20.9	13.66	138	11.87	120	1,130
TOTAL	5,394	100.0	5,504	100.0	2.04	110	6.10	329	5,723

[1] Share: The percentage share of total employment by industry.

[2] Standardized Growth: at the same rate as its counterpart at the national level as each industry grown.

[3] Standardized Employment, 2009: The 2009 level of employment in each industry had it grown at the same rate as its counterparts at the national level since 2001.

- By clicking on the symbol associated with each industry category you will will be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%.

- Over 2001-2009 a net total of 110 jobs were added to the Dawson County economy, amounting to an increase of 2.04%.

Table 2: Shift-Share Components of Dawson County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

Industry	National Growth[1] Percent	National Growth[1] Net	Industry Mix[2] Percent	Industry Mix[2] Net	Region Shift[3] Percent	Region Shift[3] Net
Farm	5.01	29	-19.00	-109	-6.22	-36
Construction	5.01	8	-8.20	-13	12.50	20
Manufacturing	5.01	3	-31.74	-17	24.91	14
Wholesale Trade	5.01	9	-6.13	-11	30.09	54
Retail Trade	5.01	34	-8.05	-54	-5.27	-36
Information	5.01	7	-22.02	-30	-0.64	-1
Finance & Insurance	5.01	10	15.82	30	-17.68	-34
Real Estate, Rent, & Leasing	5.01	5	30.80	30	-17.63	-17
Health Care & Social Asst.	5.01	30	18.17	108	4.26	25
Accom. & Food Services	5.01	21	6.07	25	-12.76	-53
Other Services	5.01	17	3.89	13	1.45	5
Federal, Civilian	5.01	2	0.48	0	-23.45	-9
Federal Military	5.01	2	-4.00	-2	-11.43	-5
State Government	5.01	13	-0.12	-0	-35.51	-92
Local Government	5.01	31	3.10	19	-11.66	-72
Unreported	5.01	51	6.88	69	1.79	18
TOTAL	5.01	270	1.08	58	-4.06	-218

[1] National Growth: The change in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry had it grown at the national growth rate of all industries combined.

[2] Industry Mix: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry (additional to the national growth effect) due to the industry growing faster (or slower) nationally than the rate of all industries combined.

[3] Regional Shift: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment for a specific industry beyond the national growth and industry mix effects resulting from the industry growing faster (or slower) than the same industry nationally.

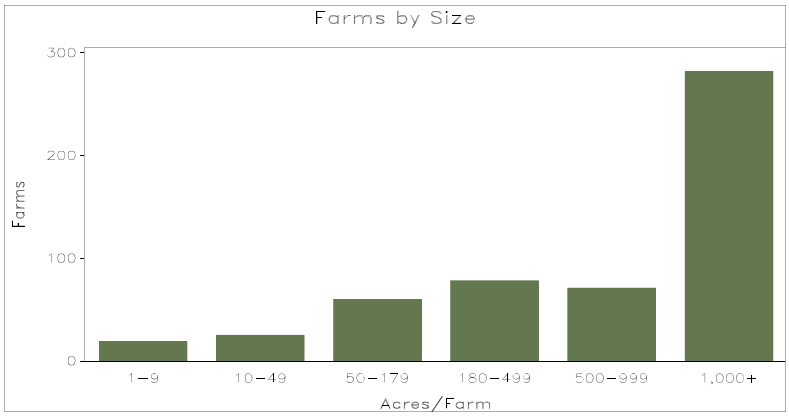
- By clicking on the symbol associated with each industry category you will will be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

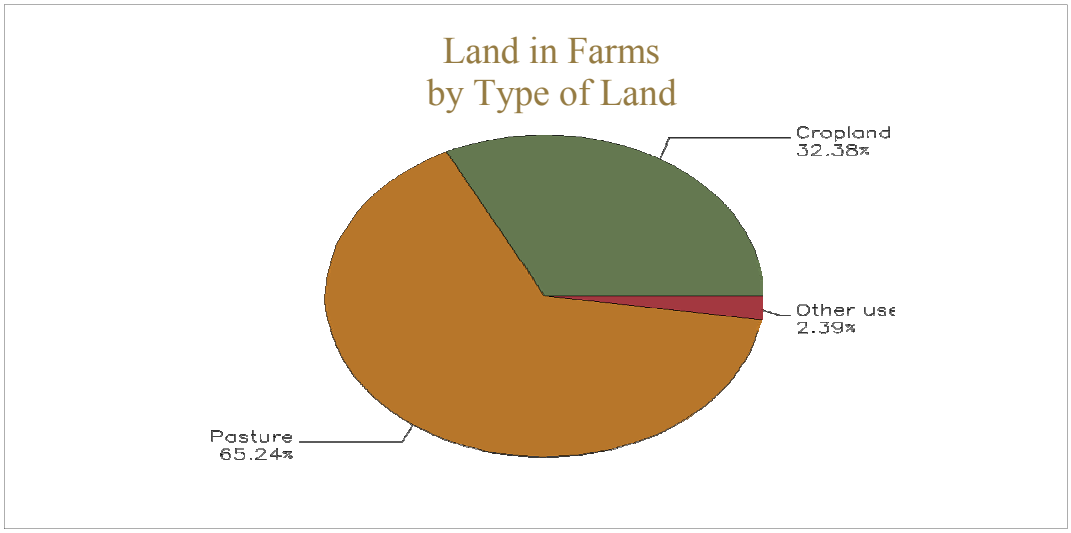
Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%.

- Dawson County's employment growth over 2001-2009 of 2.04% trailed the 5.01% growth of employment nationally by -2.97%. Accounting for this difference was an industry mix inclined toward industries that experienced faster growth, coupled with the fact that a large share of local industries underperformed their counterparts nationally.

http://montana.reaproject.org/reap-report.php

DAWSON COUNTY	2007	2002	% change
Number of Farms	535	522	+2
Land in Farms	1,378,564 acres	1,410,885 acres	-2
Average Size of Farm	2,577 acres	2,703 acres	-5
Market Value of Products Sold	$56,622,000	$36,147,000	+57
Crop Sales $31,735,000 (56 percent)			
Livestock Sales $24,887,000 (44 percent)			
Average Per Farm	$105,835	$69,247	+53
Government Payments	$6,290,000	$5,496,000	+14
Average Per Farm Receiving Payments	$15,964	$16,117	-1





FARM Economic Characteristics	Quantity	FARM Operator Characteristics	Quantity
Farms by value of sales:		**Principal operators by primary occupation:**	
Less than $1,000	136	Farming	321
$1,000 to $2,499	18	Other	214
$2,500 to $4,999	20		
$5,000 to $9,999	18	**Principal operators by sex:**	
$10,000 to $19,999	39	Male	479
$20,000 to $24,999	12	Female	56
$25,000 to $39,999	43		
$40,000 to $49,999	13	**Average age of principal operator (years)**	57.2
$50,000 to $99,999	69		
$100,000 to $249,999	82	**All operators by race[2]:**	
$250,000 to $499,999	62	American Indian or Alaska Native	3
$500,000 or more	23	Asian	-
		Black or African American	-
Total farm production expenses ($1,000)	45,851	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	-
Average per farm ($)	85,703	White	840
		More than one race	4
Net cash farm income of operation ($1,000)	19,701		
Average per farm ($)	36,824	**All operators of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino Origin[2]**	-

2007 Census of Agriculture, www.agcensus.usda.gov

DAWSON COUNTY EDUCATION

School Level	Total All Types	Regular school	Special education school	Vocational school	Private/alternative school
Total all levels	**11**	10	0	0	1
Elementary	**3**	3	0	0	0
Middle	**2**	2	0	0	0
High	**2**	2	0	0	0
Any other configuration	**4**	3	0	0	1

Bloomfield Elementary
District No. 30
2285 Fas 470
Bloomfield, MT 59315

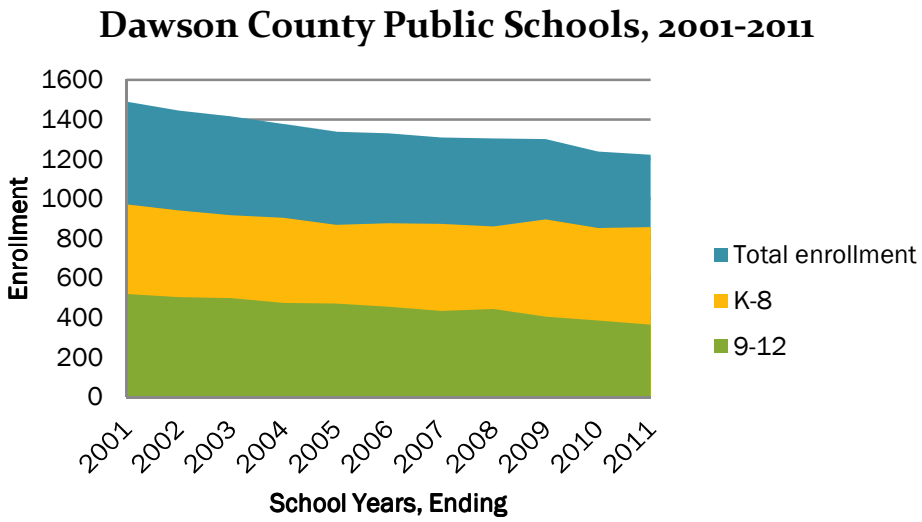
Deer Creek Elementary
District No. 3
12 Road 564
Glendive, MT 59330

Glendive Public Schools
District No. 1
900 N Merrill Ave.
Glendive, MT 59330

Lindsay Elementary
District No. 367
Main Street
Lindsay, MT 59339

Richey Public Schools
District No. 78J
202 Royal Ave.
Richey, MT 59259

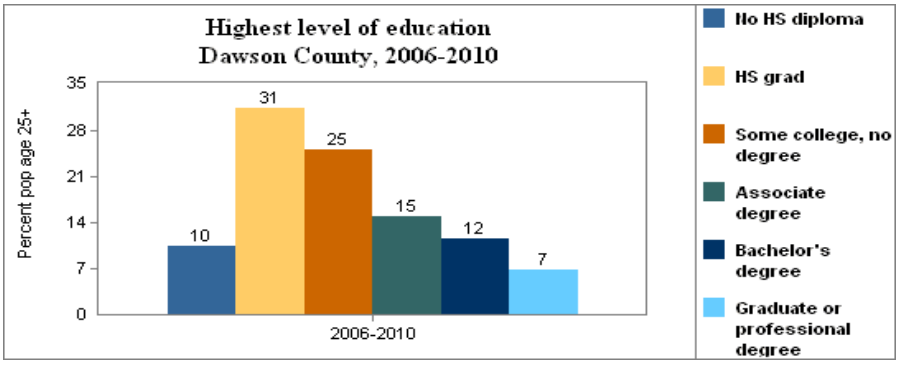
Valley View SDA School (K-8)
264 Hwy 200 S
Glendive, MT 59330
*Regular enrollment, less than 10 students



- Between the years ending 2001-2011, Dawson County Public Schools reported 136 dropouts.

In Dawson County between 2006-2010 . . .

- 10 percent of the population 25 years and older had no high school diploma, compared to 9 percent in Montana
- 18 percent of the population 25 years and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 28 percent in Montana



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30021&IndicatorID=100038

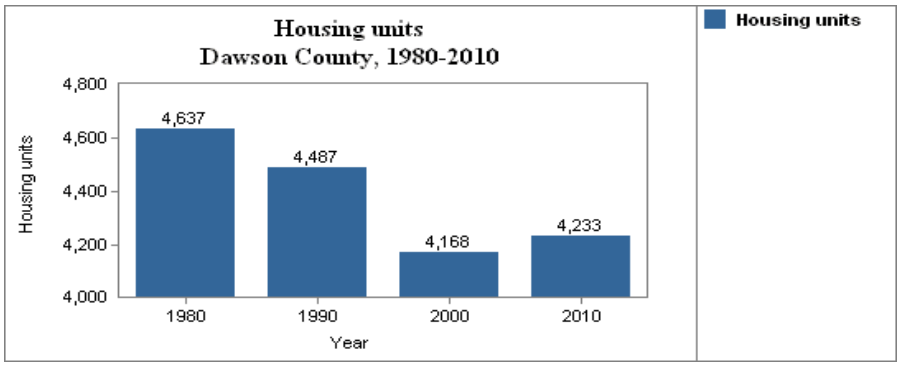
DAWSON COUNTY HOUSING

In Dawson County . . .

- the number of housing units decreased by 3.2 percent from 1980 to 1990; decreased by 7.1 percent from 1990 to 2000; and increased by 1.6 from 2000 to 2010.

- in 2010, 62.8 percent of all housing units were owner occupied, 25.8 percent were occupied by renters, and 11.4 percent were vacant.

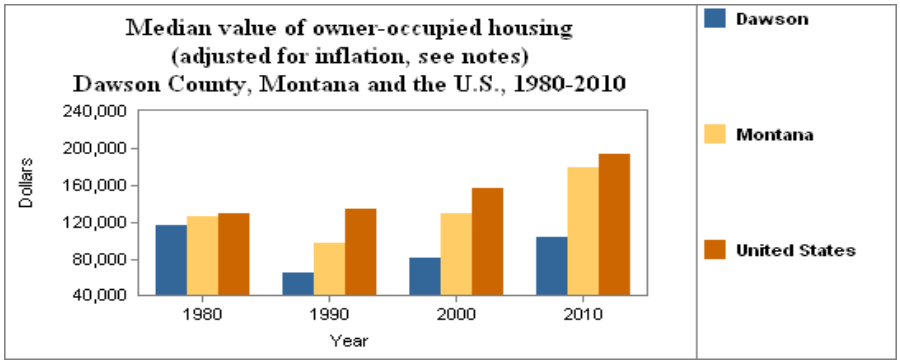
- the percent change in number of housing units from 2000-2010 ranked 36th - from highest to lowest- out of the 56 counties.



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30021&IndicatorID=18

The real median value of owner occupied housing in Dawson County from 2006-2010. . .

- was $103,466 compared to $178,770 in Montana
- decreased by 11.7 percent from 1980 to 2006-2010.
- ranked 33rd - from highest to lowest - out of 56 counties.



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Of the 4,168 housing units in Dawson County in 2000 . . .

- 3,214 were single family units, a decrease of 1 percent from 1990 when there were 3,237;

- 421 were 2 or more unit structures, a decrease of 30 percent from 1990 when there were 604;

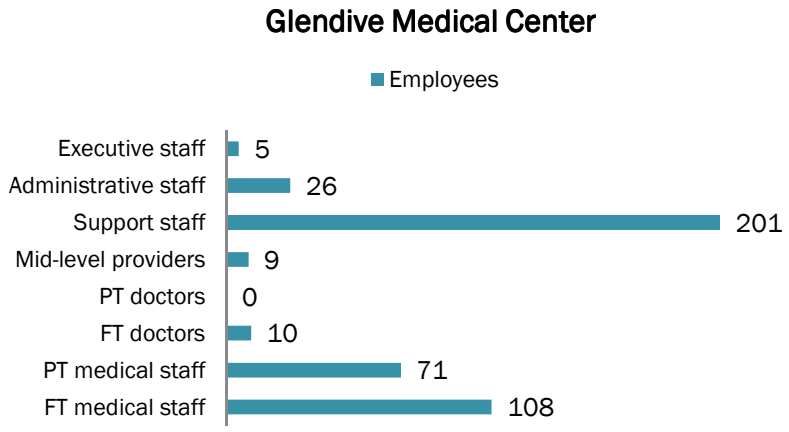
- 533 were mobile homes, a decrease of 17 percent from 1990 when there were 646.

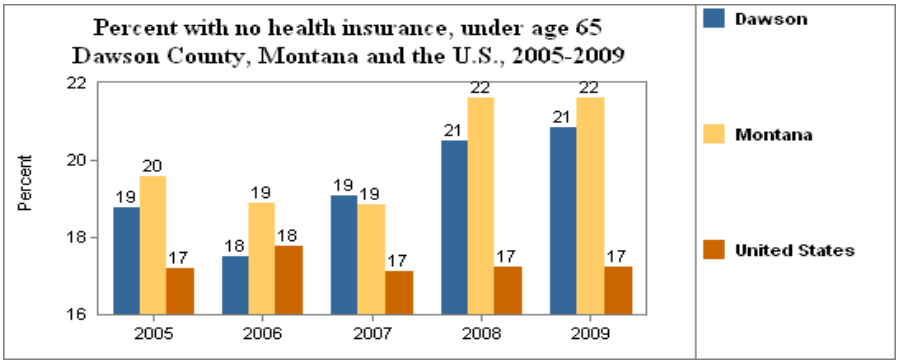
1990 and 2000: US Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, http://factfinder2.census.gov

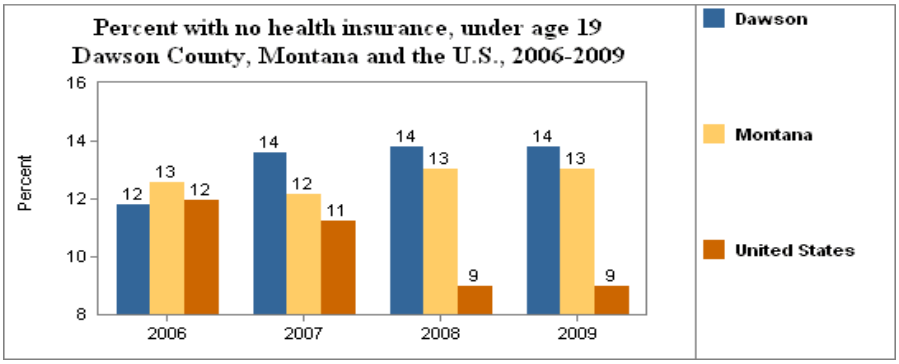
DAWSON COUNTY HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Medical facilities available in Dawson County:

Glendive Medical Center
202 Prospect Drive
Glendive, MT 59330



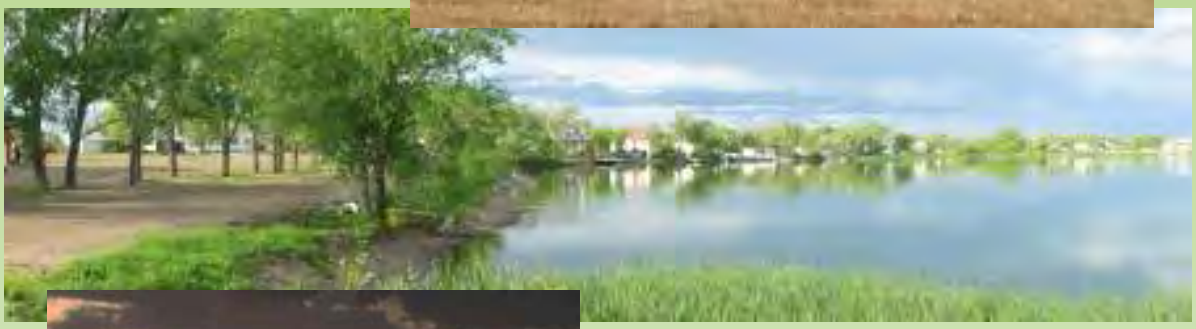


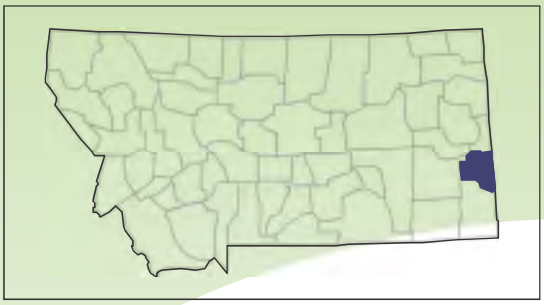


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30021&IndicatorID=100013

In Dawson County in 2009,

- 21 percent of the population under age 65, or 1,427 people, had no health insurance coverage compared to 22 percent in all of Montana;
- the percent under age 65 without health insurance ranked 45th - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties;
- 13.8 percent of children under the age of 19, or 259 children, had no health insurance coverage compared to 13.0 percent of all children in Montana;
- the percent of children without health coverage ranked 44th - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties.





3. FALLON COUNTY

Fallon County began as a homestead community fully dependent upon agriculture until natural gas was discovered north of Baker in 1912. The natural gas discovery diversified the economy and allowed for business development outside of agriculture. According to the Montana Department of Revenue (www.revenue.mt.gov), 630,715 grazing acres and 147,275 acres of tillable land accounts for an assessed value of nearly $61 million compared to $144 million in assessed value for utilities. The introduction of gas and oil development to Fallon County resulted in significant impacts on the economy. It is now an essential industry.

Fallon County is located in southeastern Montana to the north of Carter County, west of Custer and Prairie Counties, and south of Wibaux County. Its eastern border is shared with North and South Dakota state lines. Baker is the largest municipality with a population of 1,741, and Plevna is Fallon County's only other incorporated community with a population of 162. The county covers 1,623 square miles with the majority of industrial activity in or near Baker.

The city's airport, railways, highways, industrial areas, and Baker Lake have helped shape Baker. The city has followed a residential growth plan since the early 1970's. The city has a downtown area intersected by U.S. Highway 12 and U.S. Highway 7. An industrial area has emerged with newly constructed water and sewer service to the north of Baker.

Fallon County's economy has been relatively well off compared to the rest of the region. Unemployment rates were at 2.0% in February of 2012, compared to 6.9% in Montana. The county ranked 6th in terms of median household income for the state in 2010.

Municipal Services

The City of Baker is served by a municipal water and sewer system. The water source is comprised of five wells with average depths of 250 feet. The sewer system is a three cell lagoon treatment facility to the west of the city. The City of Baker also provides water to and treatment of the Fallon County/N. Baker Water and Sewer District water and wastewater system. A second water and sewer district exists to the east of the city that serves the Stanhope Subdivision; the district is only provided with city water service.

The Town of Plevna is also served by municipal water and sewer. The lagoon system is on the south edge of town, and the water system is comprised of three wells. However, only two of those wells are suitable at this time. In addition, the system's water storage capacity is only 10,000 gallons. No fire hydrants exist in town, and the water mains are significantly undersized. The Town is working to address all these issues.

Schools

Fallon County is served by two school districts. District 12 serves the greater Baker area and District 55 serves Plevna and western Fallon County. District 12 includes two elementary schools and a high school.

The schools in Baker house over 400 students, with 38 teachers, 32 support staff, and 4 administrators. The schools in Plevna house 79 students in their elementary, middle school, and high school combined. The school is supported by 15 teachers, 10 support staff, and 1 administrator.

Utilities

Fallon County is served by Mid-Rivers Communications for local cellular, television, telephone, and broadband services. Other cellular providers offer service to the region, but Mid-Rivers is the preferred local provider based in Circle, Montana.

Electrical and gas providers include Montana-Dakota Utilities, Southeast Electric Cooperative, and in the far northern part of the county Goldenwest Electric Cooperative.

Transportation

Fallon County is served by two state highways. Highway 12 runs east and west, and Highway 7 runs north and south. These two highways intersect in Baker at a four way stop. These are the two major routes to and from Fallon County.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad operates the old Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific line through both Plevna and Baker. The rail line connects with the major east/west route at Terry, MT and continues eastward through North and South Dakota. The rail is used for freight transport with no passenger service currently available.

Fallon County has a small airport located just outside of Baker. The airport has a 5,900 foot asphalt runway, currently undergoing improvements, with a concrete ramp area. Fuel and maintenance services are available, and it is equipped with a 24 hour Unicom and Non-Directional Beacon. The airport is maintained for all weather usage with published instrument approach procedures.

Fallon County provides public transportation. The service is provided free of charge to all residents within the county. Buses have wheelchair lifts and are located in Baker and Plevna.

Health, Medical, and Emergency Services

Fallon County has two volunteer fire departments with fire houses located in Baker and Plevna, which serve both city and rural areas. Baker has 28 volunteer firefighters with pumpers, wildland units, tankers, and a light rescue truck. Plevna is served by 24 volunteers with a pumper, two tankers, a command vehicle, and several wildland trucks. The wildland units are placed strategically throughout the county with landowners to speed response time. Fallon County's ambulance staff is also comprised of volunteers.

The county has a Department of Emergency Services (DES) with a coordinator responsible for ensuring proper response in the event of a disaster. Fallon County also has the Dispatch Center located in Baker, which is staffed 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and covers not only Fallon County, but Carter, Prairie, and Wibaux Counties as well. Fallon County operates using a volunteer ambulance staff.

The Fallon County Medical Complex contains a clinic, critical access hospital, nursing home, attached senior apartments, and one separate rented residence for travelling nursing staff. Services at the clinic and hospital include acute care/hospital care, 24-hour emergency room care, out-patient surgery, a skilled nursing home, swing bed/long-term care, home health services, and Life Line. The hospital has 10 beds, and long-term care (swing and nursing home) provides another 30 beds. Two full-time physicians and two full-time physician's assistants, along with visiting specialists for surgery, radiology, urology, podiatry, and OB/GYN, provide patient care. The complex, via staff or the visiting specialists, provides minor surgery, CT scans, MRI, ultra-sound, radiology, mammography, chemotherapy, a laboratory, cardiac rehabilitation, physical and speech therapy, respite care, social services, and dietetic counseling. Telemedicine provides ongoing education, physician consults, counseling, and technology updates. The complex also leases space to a dentist, an optometrist, a chiropractor, and hearing specialists.

Housing Stock and Characteristics

Fallon County, like much of eastern Montana, is dotted with farm houses serving rural farming and ranching families. The area east, west, and south of Baker Lake in the City of Baker is primarily residential. In addition, the Town of Plevna is primarily residential with few businesses.

In 2010, 61.4% of all housing units were owner-occupied, 22.5% were occupied by renters, and 16.1% were vacant. The number of vacant units has declined since 2010 due to increased oil and gas activity in the region, although no hard data is available to define housing needs at this point. The average median value of Fallon County homes 2006-2010 was $89,437 compared to $178,770 in Montana. This is primarily due to aging housing stock. New housing units have recently emerged in the Baker area, indicating a reversal of this trend to a certain extent.

Natural Resource and Environmental Issues

The countryside is filled with numerous small coulees and breaks. Elevations vary from 2,500 feet to 3,551 feet in relation to sea level. Major drainage runs to the northwest which is part of the larger Yellowstone River Drainage. The balance runs northeast to the Little Missouri Drainage. The county has three perennial streams—Little Beaver Creek, Sandstone Creek, and O'Fallon Creek.

Fallon County is located on the oil and gas formation known as the Williston Basin, which was discovered in 1953. The development of oil and gas has become a critical element of the local economy. Fallon County is a major contributor in the production of minerals and the extraction industry, namely petroleum, natural gas, and associated gases.

Both Lower Baker Lake and Sandstone Lake provide excellent fishing and picnicking areas with fireplaces and windbreaks at each table site. Both lakes are popular ice fishing areas in the winter months.

The threats to oil and gas production by environmental groups and the listing of sage grouse on the Endangered Species List represent a great concern to the region.

Current Trends

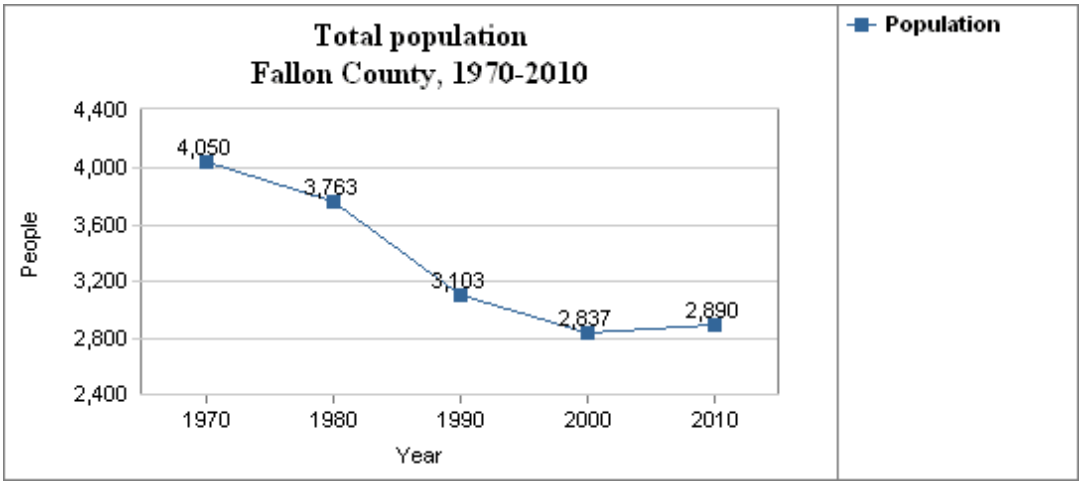
Oil and gas activity in the region has increased exponentially in North Dakota, just across the county's eastern border, and to the north in Montana. The increased activity has spurred pipeline development, increased traffic, and a general sense that the economy is going to swing upward at a steep rate over the next several years. The county is currently updating its Growth Policy which will include Plevna and Baker. Both communities are working toward implementing infrastructure upgrades and discussions have been held with state and federal agencies regarding impending growth and impact mitigation. Baker and Fallon County stand to benefit from further oil and gas development.

Highlights for Fallon County:

Total population change (2000 - 2010)	1.9%
Total population (2010)	2,890
Poverty rate (2010)	10%
Number of jobs (2009)	2,199
Annual average wage per job (2010)	$48,674
Unemployment rate (February 2012)	2%
Median age of population (2009)	42.9

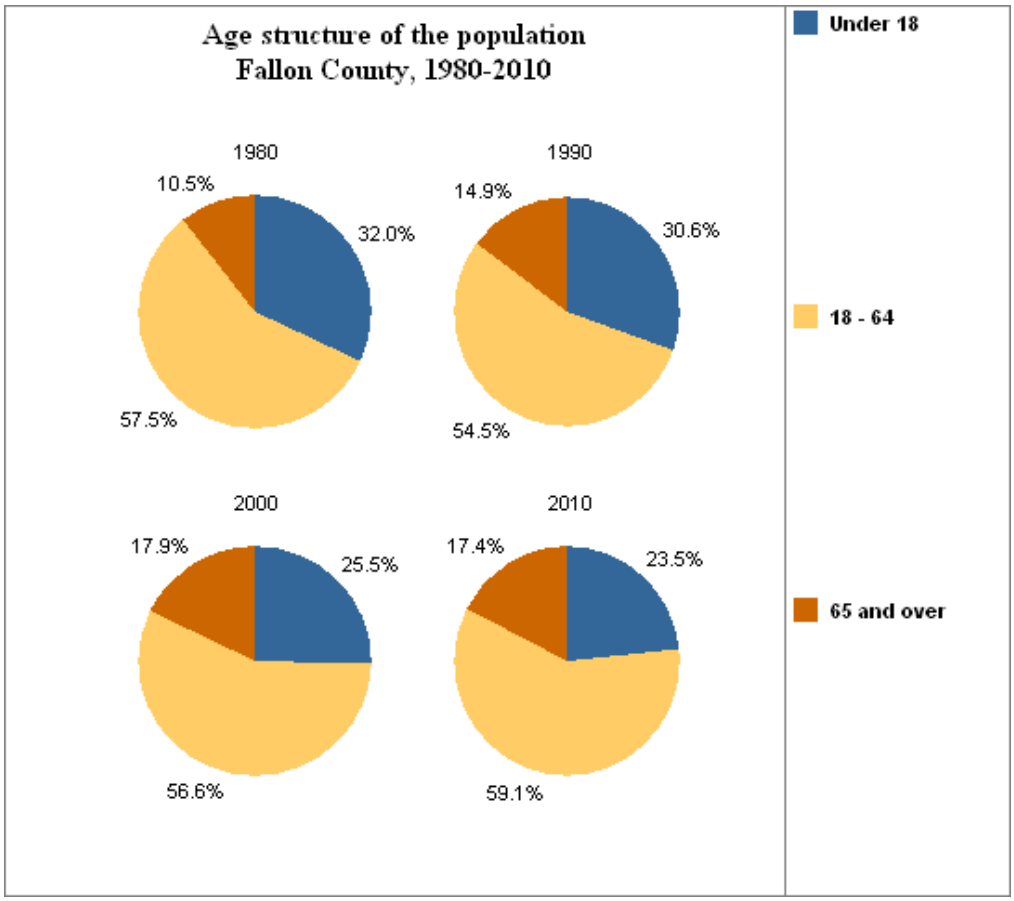
http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30025

FALLON COUNTY POPULATION



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30025&IndicatorID=1

- Lost 1,094 residents since 1970.
- Estimate for 2011 is 2,956, an increase of 2.3%, compared to a .9% increase in Montana as a whole.



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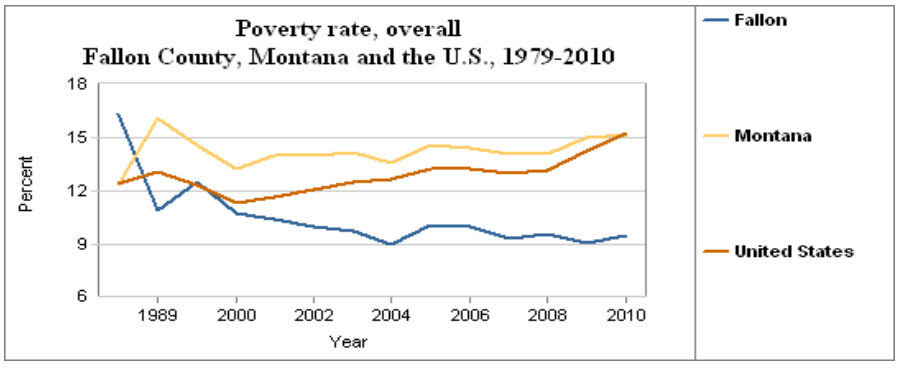
- 23.5 percent of the population was under 18 in 2010, compared to 22.6 percent in Montana
- 59.1 percent of the population was 18 to 64 years old in 2010, compared to 62.6 percent in Montana
- 17.4 percent of the population was 65 or older in 2010, compared to 14.8 percent in Montana

FALLON COUNTY POVERTY AND INCOME



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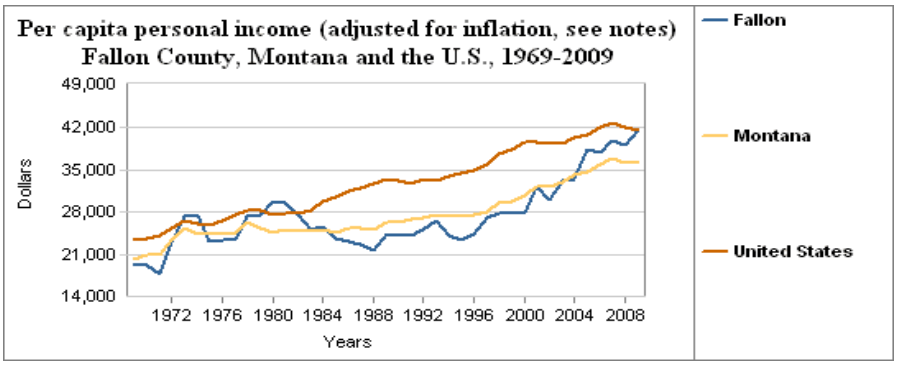
Among Fallon County residents, the overall poverty rate . . .

- was 9.5 percent in 2010, 12.5 percent in 1999, and 10.9 percent in 1989.
- was 9.5 percent compared to 15.2 percent in Montana in 2010.
- ranked 56th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.

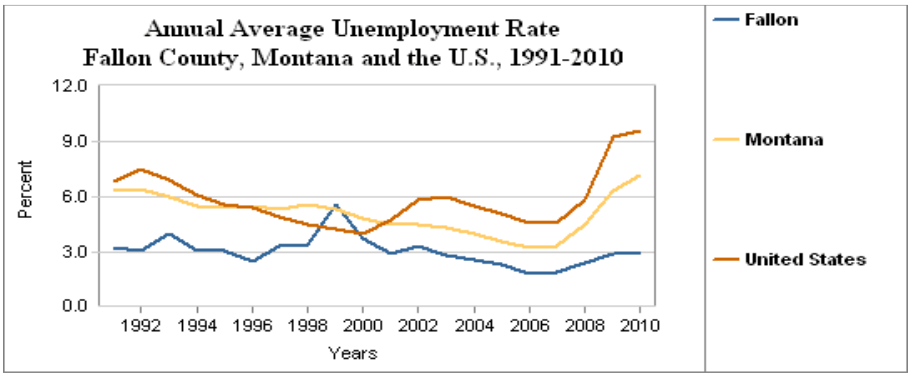


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30025&IndicatorID=7

Fallon County's per capita income, adjusted for inflation…

- was $41,451 in 2009, compared to $36,517 in Montana;
- increased 64.1 percent between 1995 and 2005 compared to 26.8 percent in Montana;
- increased 70.8 percent since 1969 when it was $19,399;
- increased 54.8 percent in the 1970s, decreased 19.2 percent in the 1980s, and increased 15.2 percent in the 1990s;
- ranked 4th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2009.

FALLON COUNTY ECONOMIC AND BUISNESS TRENDS



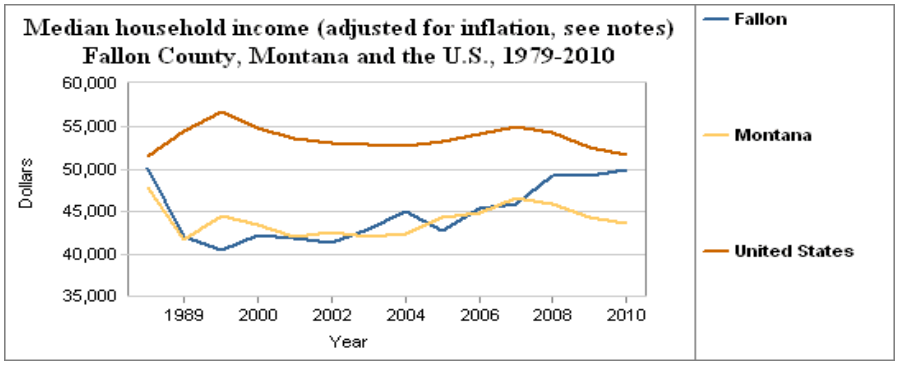
***People are counted as **unemployed** if they are at least 16 years old, are without a job and available for work, and have recently made specific efforts to find employment. The **unemployment rate** is the number of unemployed as a percent of the entire labor force.

http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30025&IndicatorID=14

Fallon County's **monthly unemployment rate** was 2.0 percent in February, 2012. This compares to 6.9 percent in Montana as a whole.

Fallon County's **average annual unemployment rate** in 2010 . . .

- was 2.9 percent compared to 7.2 for Montana
- was the same as the previous year's rate of 2.9 percent.
- ranked 56th – from highest to lowest – out of Montana's 56 counties.



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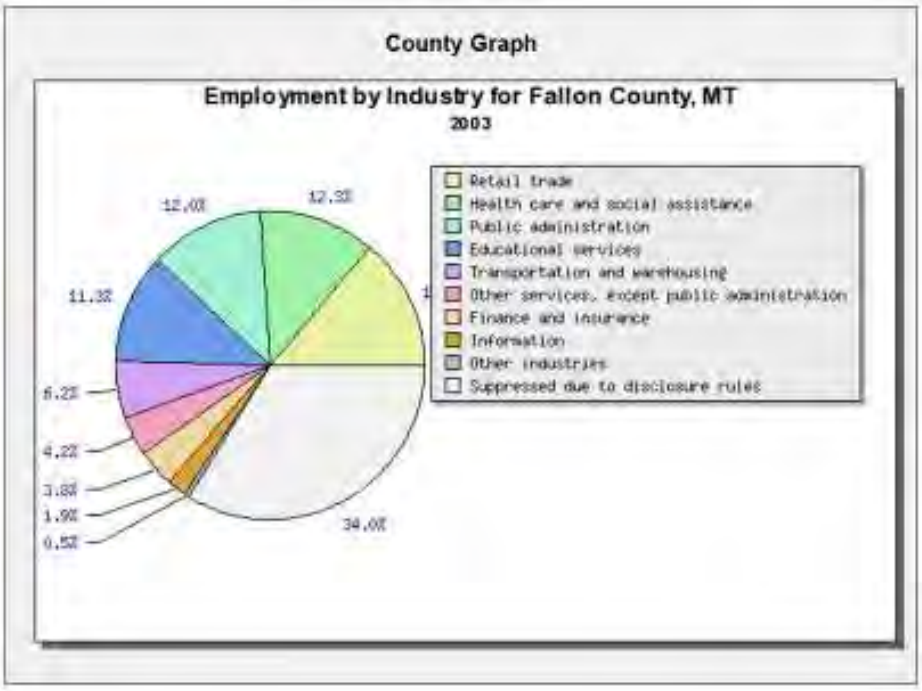
In Fallon County median household income (adjusted for inflation) . . .

- was $49,873 in 2010, $40,430 in 1999, and $42,016 in 1989;
- ranked 6th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.



http://economictoolbox.geog.psu.edu/employment.php?region_id=1&sfips=30&cfips=30025&rurality_flag=0&sfips1=00&cfips1=00000&return_page=snapshot.php

Table 1: Fallon County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

Industry	Employment 2001 Level	Employment 2001 Share[1]	Employment 2009 Level	Employment 2009 Share[1]	Actual Growth Percent	Actual Growth Net	Standardized Growth[2] Percent	Standardized Growth[2] Net	Standardized Employment[3] 2009
Farm	368	20.0	288	13.1	-21.74	-80	-13.99	-51	317
Mining	114	6.2	369	16.8	223.68	255	68.46	78	192
Construction	138	7.5	211	9.6	52.90	73	-3.19	-4	134
Manufacturing	22	1.2	21	1.0	-4.55	-1	-26.72	-6	16
Retail Trade	182	9.9	172	7.8	-5.49	-10	-3.04	-6	176
Trans. & Warehousing	105	5.8	181	8.2	70.76	75	0.39	0	105
Information	29	1.6	23	1.0	-20.69	-6	-17.01	-5	24
Health Care & Social Asst.	153	8.3	169	7.7	10.46	16	23.18	35	188
Other Services	116	6.3	132	6.0	13.79	16	8.90	10	126
Federal, Civilian	17	0.9	13	0.6	-23.53	-4	5.50	1	18
Federal Military	15	0.8	14	0.6	-6.67	-1	1.01	0	15
Unreported	583	31.6	806	27.6	3.95	23	12.45	73	656
TOTAL	1,843	100.0	2,199	100.0	19.32	356	6.82	126	1,969

[1] Share: The percentage share of total employment by industry.

[2] Standardized Growth: at the same rate as its counterpart at the national level ad each industry grown.

[3] Standardized Employment, 2009: The 2009 level of employment in each industry had it grown at the same rate as its counterparts at the national level since 2001.

? - By clicking on the ? symbol associated with each industry category you will wil be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%.

- Over 2001-2009 a net total of 356 jobs were added to the Fallon County economy, amounting to an increase of 19.32%.

Table 2: Shift-Share Components of Fallon County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

Industry	National Growth[1] Percent	National Growth[1] Net	Industry Mix[2] Percent	Industry Mix[2] Net	Region Shift[3] Percent	Region Shift[3] Net
Farm	5.01	18	-19.00	-70	-7.75	-29
Mining	5.01	6	63.45	72	155.22	177
Construction	5.01	7	-8.20	-11	58.08	77
Manufacturing	5.01	1	-31.74	-7	22.18	5
Retail Trade	5.01	9	-8.05	-15	-2.46	-4
Trans. & Warehousing	5.01	5	-4.03	-5	70.37	75
Information	5.01	1	-22.02	-6	-3.68	-1
Health Care & Social Asst.	5.01	8	18.17	28	-12.72	-19
Other Services	5.01	6	3.89	5	4.89	6
Federal, Civilian	5.01	1	0.48	0	-29.03	-5
Federal Military	5.01	1	-4.00	-1	-7.66	-1
Unreported	5.01	29	7.44	43	-8.51	-50
TOTAL	5.01	92	1.81	33	12.49	230

[1] National Growth: The change in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry had it grown at the national growth rate of all industries combined.

[2] Industry Mix: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry (additional to the national growth effect) due to the industry growing faster (or slower) nationally than the rate of all industries combined.

[3] Regional Shift: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment for a specific industry beyond the national growth and industry mix effects resulting from the industry growing faster (or slower) than the same industry nationally.

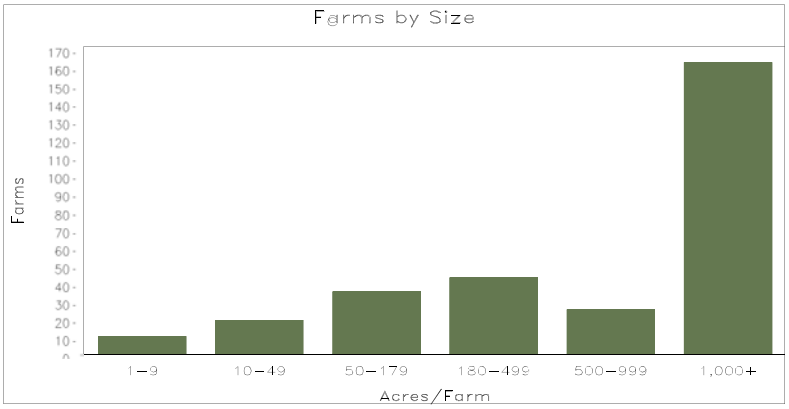
? - By clicking on the ? symbol associated with each industry category you will wil be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

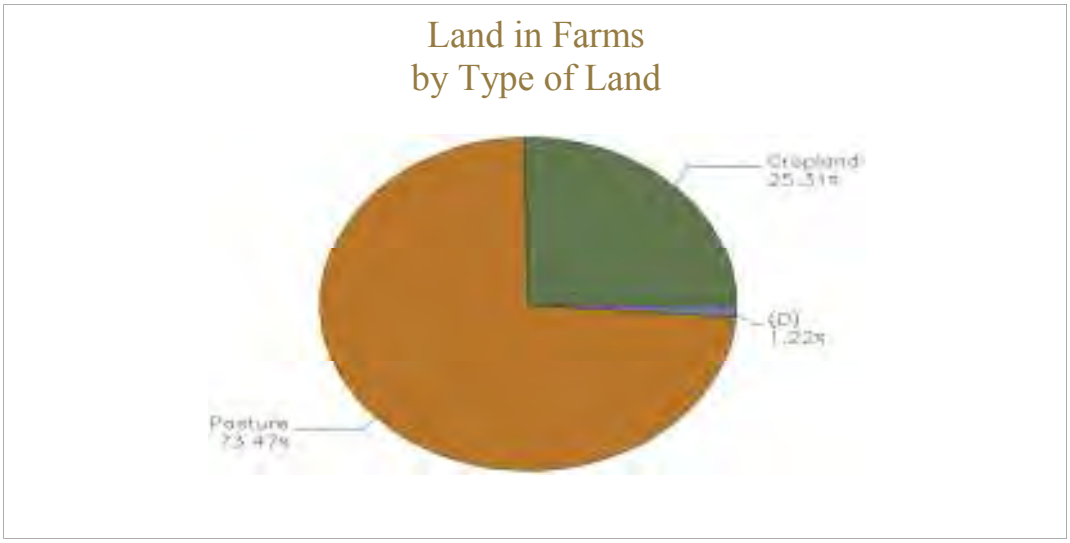
Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%.

- Fallon County's employment growth over 2001-2009 of 19.32% surpassed the 5.01% growth of employment nationally by 14.30%. Accounting for this difference was an industry mix inclined toward industries that experienced faster growth, coupled with the fact that a large share of local industries outperformed their counterparts nationally.

http://montana.reaproject.org/reap-report.php

FALLON COUNTY	2007	2002	% change
Number of Farms	296	327	-9
Land in Farms	978,818 acres	932,211 acres	+5
Average Size of Farm	3,307 acres	2,851 acres	+16
Market Value of Products Sold	$35,938,000	$22,439,000	+60
Crop Sales $6,981,000 (19 percent)			
Livestock Sales $28,957,000 (81 percent)			
Average Per Farm	$121,412	$68,622	+77
Government Payments	$2,548,000	$2,677,000	-5
Average Per Farm Receiving Payments	$11,964	$12,687	-6





FARM Economic Characteristics	Quantity	FARM Operator Characteristics	Quantity
Farms by value of sales:		**Principal operators by primary occupation:**	
Less than $1,000	71	Farming	163
$1,000 to $2,499	10	Other	133
$2,500 to $4,999	13		
$5,000 to $9,999	12	**Principal operators by sex:**	
$10,000 to $19,999	27	Male	253
$20,000 to $24,999	6	Female	43
$25,000 to $39,999	18		
$40,000 to $49,999	7	**Average age of principal operator (years)**	58.7
$50,000 to $99,999	33		
$100,000 to $249,999	67	**All operators by race[2]:**	
$250,000 to $499,999	20	American Indian or Alaska Native	1
$500,000 or more	12	Asian	-
		Black or African American	-
Total farm production expenses ($1,000)	28,423	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	-
Average per farm ($)	96,024	White	451
		More than one race	-
Net cash farm income of operation ($1,000)	11,601		
Average per farm ($)	39,194	**All operators of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino Origin[2]**	7

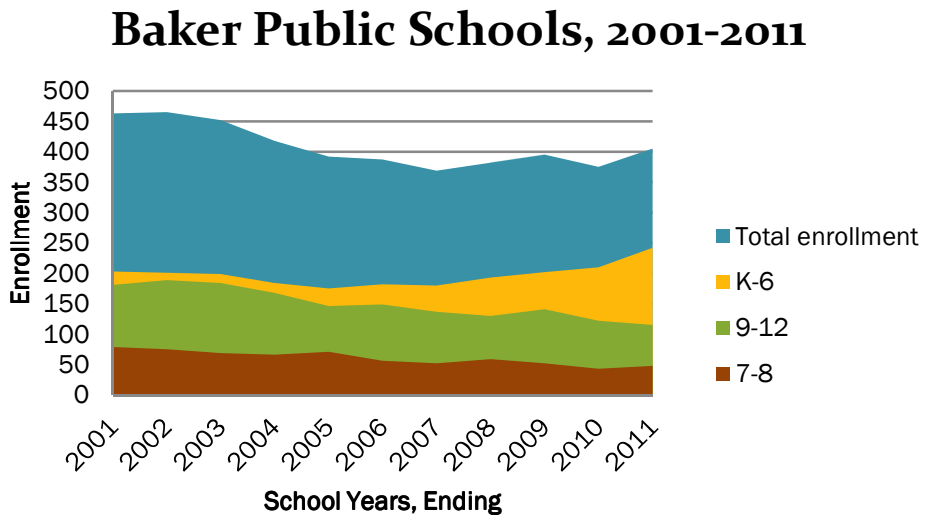
2007 Census of Agriculture, www.agcensus.usda.gov

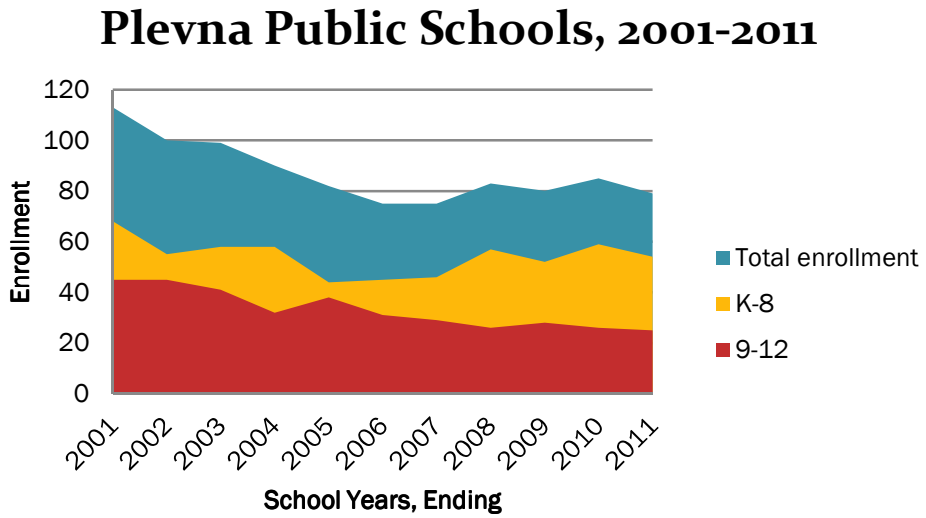
FALLON COUNTY EDUCATION

School Level	Total All Types	Regular school	Special education school	Vocational school	Private/alternative school
Total all levels	**7**	7	0	0	0
Elementary	**3**	3	0	0	0
Middle	**2**	2	0	0	0
High	**2**	2	0	0	0
Any other configuration	**0**	0	0	0	0

Baker K-12 Schools
District No. 12
1015 S 3rd W
Baker, MT 59313

Plevna K-12 Schools
District No. 55
327 N Main St.
Plevna, MT 59344

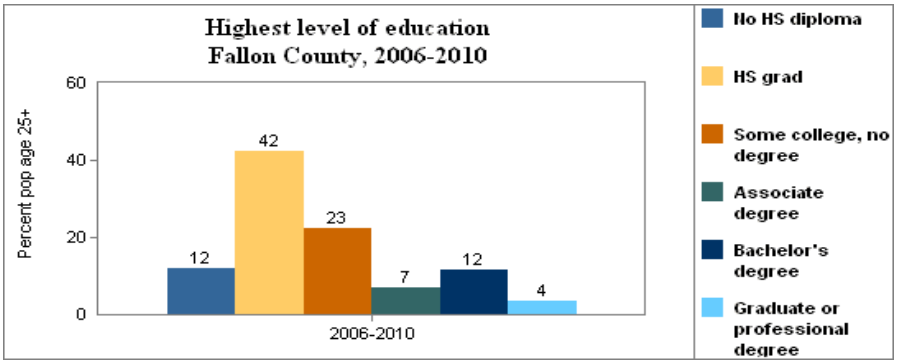




- Between the years ending 2001-2011, Baker K-12 Schools reported 16 dropouts; Plevna K-12 Schools reported 2 dropouts.

In Fallon County between 2006-2010 . . .

- 12 percent of the population 25 years and older had no high school diploma, compared to 9 percent in Montana
- 16 percent of the population 25 years and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 28 percent in Montana

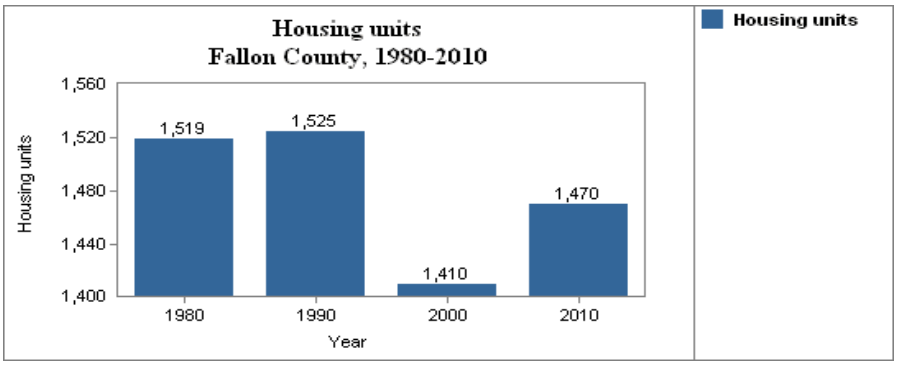


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30025&IndicatorID=100038

FALLON COUNTY HOUSING

In Fallon County . . .

- the number of housing units increased by 0.4 percent from 1980 to 1990; decreased by 7.5 percent from 1990 to 2000; and increased by 4.3 from 2000 to 2010.
- in 2010, 61.4 percent of all housing units were owner occupied, 22.5 percent were occupied by renters, and 16.1 percent were vacant.
- the percent change in number of housing units from 2000-2010 ranked 27th - from highest to lowest- out of the 56 counties.



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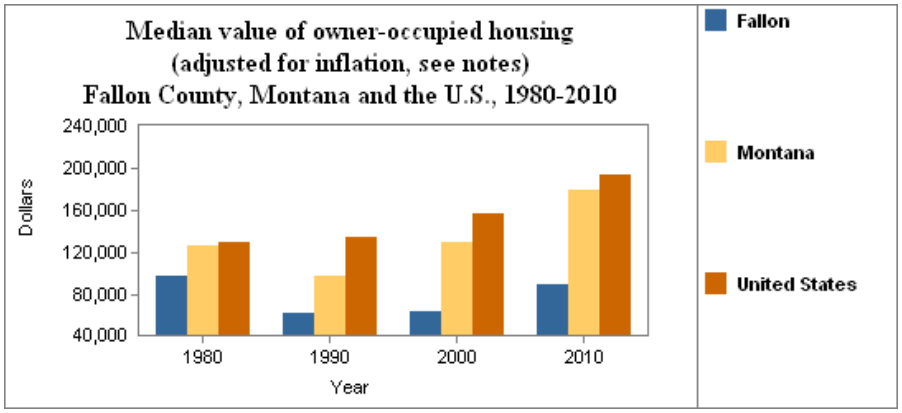
The real median value of owner occupied housing in Fallon County from 2006-2010. . .

- was $89,437 compared to $178,770 in Montana
- decreased by 8.0 percent from 1980 to 2006-2010.
- ranked 40th - from highest to lowest - out of 56 counties.



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Of the 1,410 housing units in Fallon County in 2000 . . .

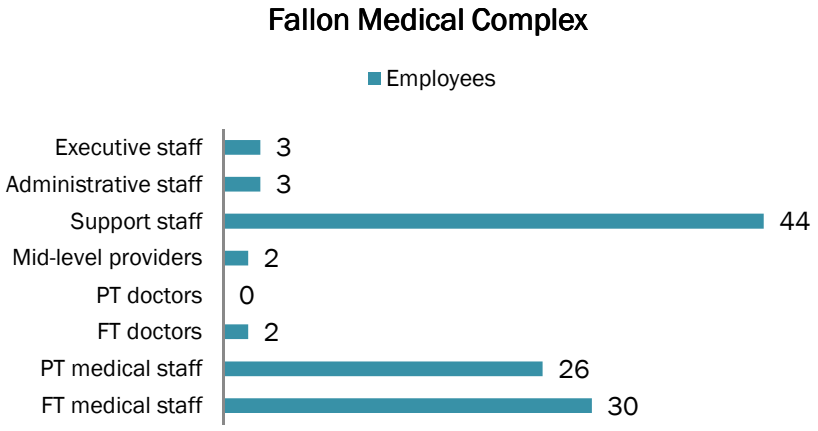
- 1,032 were single family units, a decrease of 8 percent from 1990 when there were 1,120;
- 102 were in 2 or more unit structures, an decrease of 24 percent from 1990 when there were 134;
- 276 were mobile homes, an increase of 2 percent from 1990 when there were 271.

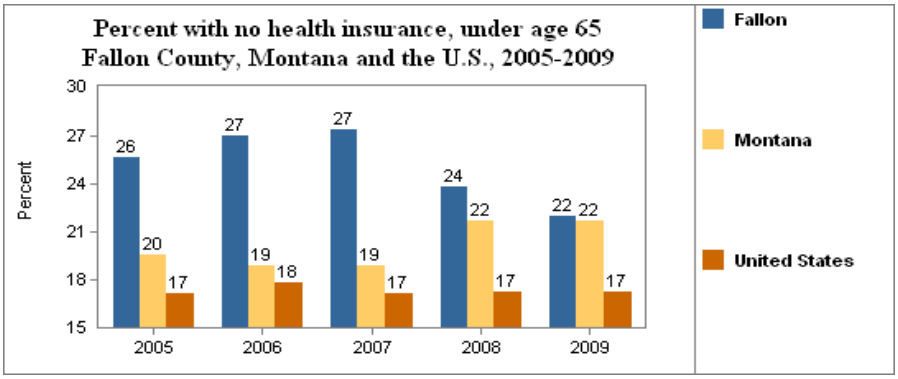
1990 and 2000: US Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, http://factfinder2.census.gov

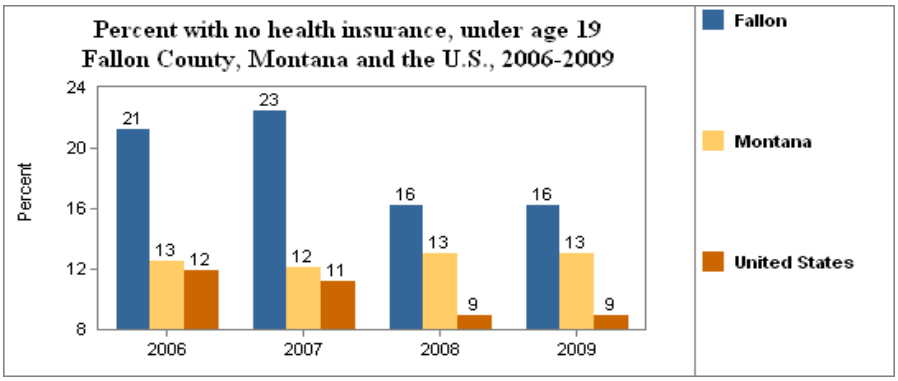
FALLON COUNTY HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Medical facilities available in Fallon County:

Fallon Medical Complex
202 S 4th St. W
Baker, MT 59313



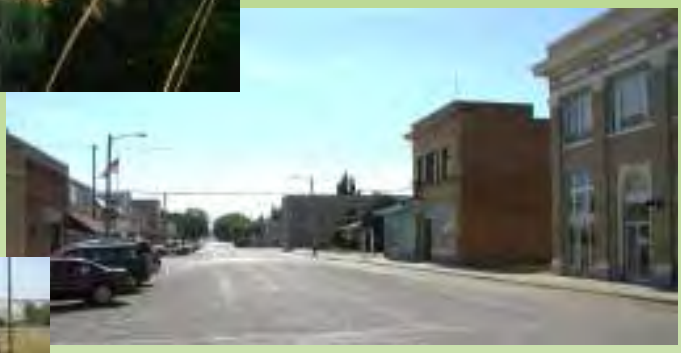


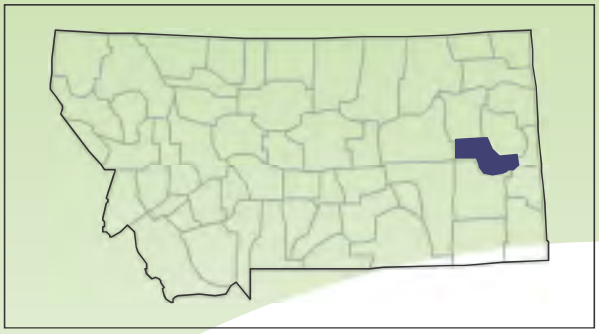


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30025&IndicatorID=100013

In 2009,

- 22 percent of the population under age 65, or 484 people, had no health insurance coverage compared to 22 percent in all of Montana;
- the percent under age 65 without health insurance ranked 43rd - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties;
- 16.2 percent of children under the age of 19, or 111 children, had no health insurance coverage compared to 13.0 percent of all children in Montana;
- the percent of children without health coverage ranked 27th - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties.





4. PRAIRIE COUNTY

Prairie County covers over a million acres of land and is primarily an agricultural-based community. The county's terrain is made up of benchlands, valleys, and coulees with some very rugged badland areas. Elevations in Prairie County range from 2,100 to 3,260 feet. It is bordered by six other Montana counties. The Yellowstone River runs the width of the county from southwest to northeast and is a vital source of both ground and surface water for the residents of Prairie County.

Surrounded by rugged buttes along the south bank of the Yellowstone River, the Town of Terry serves as the county seat and is the county's only incorporated municipality. A small rural community of 605 people, Terry is situated between Miles City and Glendive along I-94 at the junction of Hwy 253 and Old Highway 10. Officially named the "Home of the Evelyn Cameron Gallery" by the State of Montana, Terry has also received national recognition for its designation as a Preserve America Community. There are two other small unincorporated communities in the county, Fallon and Mildred.

The population in Prairie County has been steadily declining since the drought of the 1930s. However, oil and energy development in the region is spreading and may spur economic and population growth in Prairie County as well.

Municipal Services

Water in Prairie County is obtained from individually owned and operated groundwater wells, ranging from shallow dug wells along the creek valleys to deep drilled wells in the upland areas. The deep wells are highly mineralized. The Town of Terry and the community of Fallon provide municipal sewer service to their residents. The Town operates on a two-cell lagoon wastewater system, while Fallon operates on a one-cell lagoon system. The remainder of the county utilizes individual septic systems and drainage fields. There are no solid waste facilities in Prairie County, although the Town owns a class three landfill that only accepts compost and tree branches. The Town of Terry collects and transports waste to the City of Glendive Landfill.

Schools

The school system in Prairie County is centered in Terry and provides education for students from all areas of the county. The Terry Pubic Schools campus includes buildings for K-3, 4-6, and 7-12 grades. The school system employs 17 full-time teachers and three support staff and educates 141 students (2011).

Utilities

Montana-Dakota Utilities provides electricity and natural gas to Terry and parts of Prairie County along the pipeline. They provide only electricity to Fallon. Tongue River Electric provides electricity to a majority of the rural residents of Prairie County. McCone Electric provides power to the northern part of the county. Most of the rural residents without natural gas rely on propane tanks and fuel oil. Mid-Rivers provides telecommunication services.

Transportation

Prairie County is served by three main means of transportation. Interstate 94 is the primary road system crossing the county in an east-west direction. Old Highway 10 runs adjacent to I-94; Highway 253/BLM Back Country Byway provides access to Terry from the north and joins Highway 200 at Brockway in McCone County. Highway 340 connects the towns of Terry, Mildred, and Fallon. Burlington Northern Railroad crosses Prairie County in an east-west direction along the south side of the Yellowstone River. A Burlington Northern branch line runs south from Mildred to Baker in Fallon County. Prairie County also has a public airstrip located one mile south of Terry. The airport runway is hard-surfaced and approximately 4,300 long. There is a lighted runway and tie-downs are available; it is classified as a general aviation airport with an average of 67 aircraft operations per month.

Health, Medical and Emergency Services

Prairie County employs one full-time health nurse. The nurse offers vaccinations, blood pressure checks, health education, does in-home visits and assessments, and fills medications. One CNA works 20 hours per week through the health department. The county also operates a Meals on Wheels and senior citizen congregate meal program, and a Homemaker performs light housekeeping for qualified residents 60 years and older. The Prairie County Health Center and Clinic has a Physician's Assistant available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and offers full

service emergency room, laboratory, and x-ray assistance. The Prairie County Critical Access Hospital maintains a total of 22 beds that can be used for acute, skilled and long-term care.

The Prairie County Ambulance Service is staffed by volunteers and has two dedicated ambulances.

The county has four fire departments—Prairie County Rural Fire Department, Terry Volunteer Fire Department, Cabin Creek Fire District, and Fallon Fire District. All are staffed by volunteers. Prairie County has mutual aid agreements with all surrounding counties, the City of Glendive, and the City of Miles City.

Housing Stock and Characteristics

The number of housing units in Prairie County has decreased 16.7 percent from 808 in 1980 to 673 in 2010. Although the median value of owner occupied housing has increased 27.9 percent since 1980 to $71,591 , Prairie County's average median value 2006-2010 still ranked 50th out of 56 counties in the state.

The current housing stock is aging rapidly. It consists of mostly single family homes whose numbers dwindled from 586 units in1990 to 570 in 2000. The decrease and aging of housing stock, coupled with a substantial elderly population, leaves an unfilled gap in housing needed for new workers and senior citizens. The sharp upswing in natural resource development has begun to affect the county's housing prices, effectively preventing many young families from relocating to the area.

Natural Resources and Environmental Issues

The Prairie County Conservation District has one of the largest held water reservations in the area. There is 68,678 acre feet of water reserved from the Yellowstone River and 483 acre feet of water reserved from the Powder River for future irrigation projects. Buffalo Rapids Irrigation District #2 manages water for most of Prairie County and eastern Custer County.

Groundwater is categorized into three major hydrologic units from a shallow unit, within 200 feet of the land surface which is the most utilized, to the Fox Hills-Lower Hell Creek aquifer.

The county contains the Terry Badlands Wilderness Study Area.

There is potential for both wind energy and oil production development within the county. Approximately 55% of the mineral resources in Prairie County are owned by the BLM. Burlington Resources (railroad) owns another 6-8% of subsurface mineral rights.

The county is well-known for abundant wildlife.

Current Trends

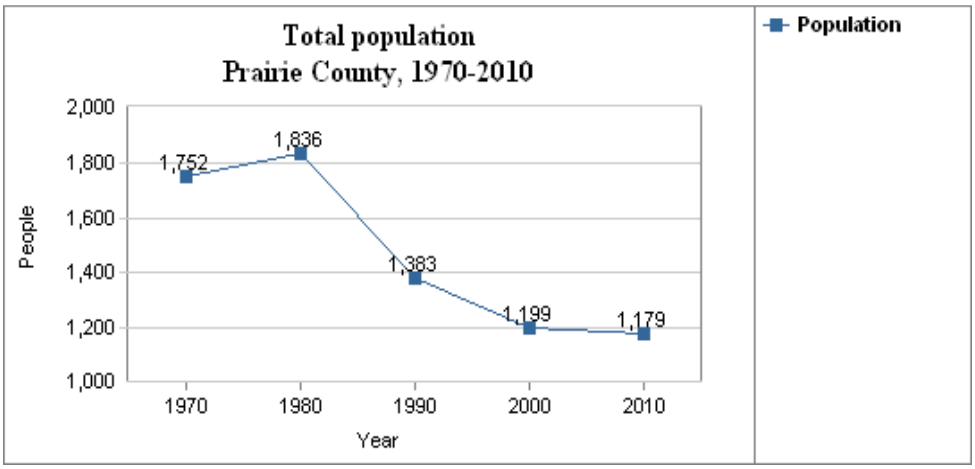
Thus far, Prairie County has followed national trends pertaining to aging populations with a rising median age of residents. Yet with oil and gas activity in eastern Montana and western North Dakota projected to continue well into the future, Prairie County is an a prime location to reap the benefits of regional growth.

Highlights for Prairie County:

Total population change (2000 - 2010)	-1.7%
Total population (2010)	1,179
Poverty rate (2010)	16%
Number of jobs (2009)	648
Annual average wage per job (2009)	$29,433
Unemployment rate (February 2012)	6.1%
Median age of population (2010)	53.6

http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30079

PRAIRIE COUNTY POPULATION



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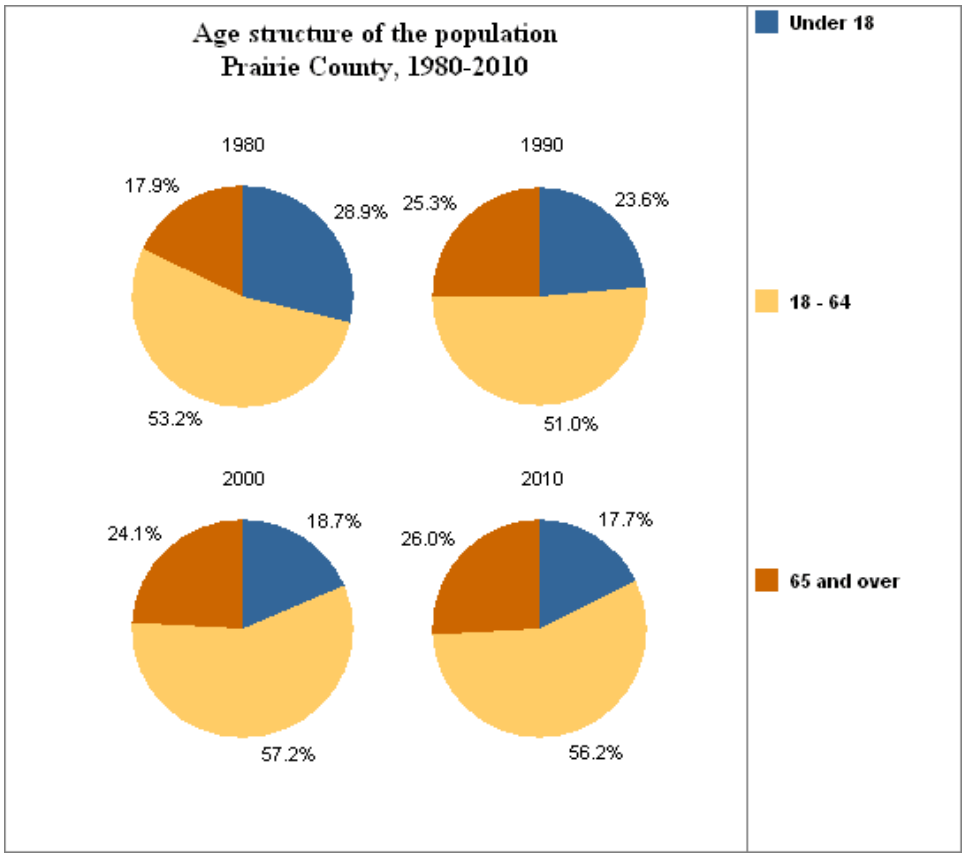
- Lost 593 residents since 1970.
- Estimate for 2011 is 1,159, a decrease of 1.7%, compared to a .9% increase in Montana as a whole.



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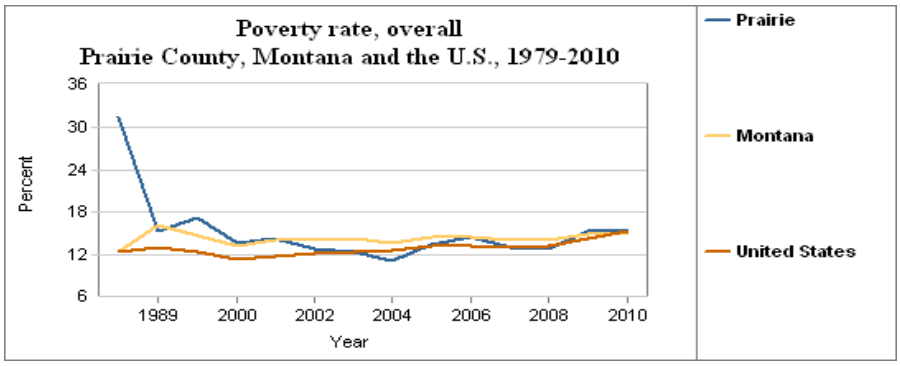
In Prairie County . . .

- 17.7 percent of the population was under 18 in 2010, compared to 22.6 percent in Montana
- 56.2 percent of the population was 18 to 64 years old in 2010, compared to 62.6 percent in Montana
- 26.0 percent of the population was 65 or older in 2010, compared to 14.8 percent in Montana

PRAIRIE COUNTY POVERTY AND INCOME



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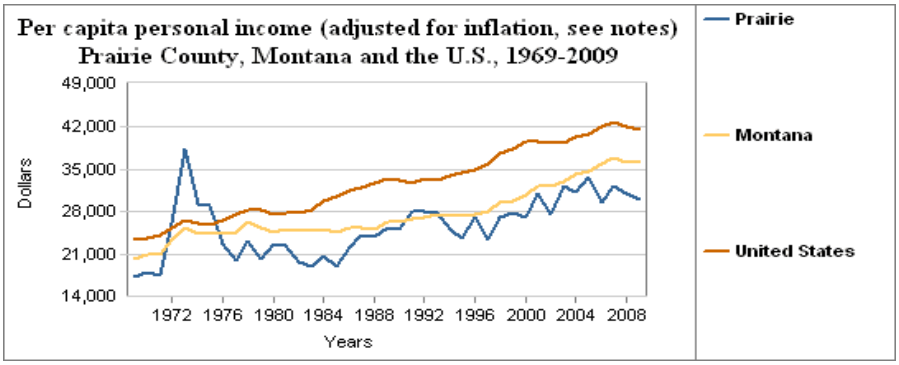
Among Prairie County residents, the overall poverty rate . . .

- was 15.6 percent in 2010, 17.2 percent in 1999, and 15.3 percent in 1989.
- was 15.6 percent compared to 15.2 percent in Montana in 2010.
- ranked 30th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.

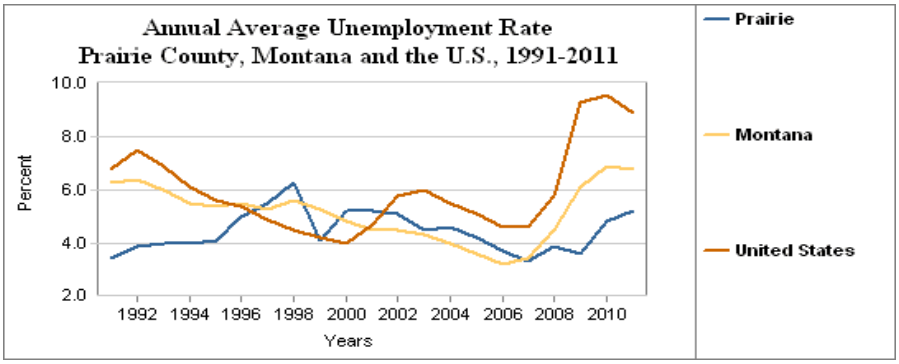


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30079&IndicatorID=7

Prairie County's per capita income, adjusted for inflation…

- was $30,120 in 2009, compared to $36,517 in Montana;
- increased 42.5 percent between 1995 and 2005 compared to 26.8 percent in Montana;
- increased 84.5 percent since 1969 when it was $17,425;
- increased 24.6 percent in the 1970s, increased 11.0 percent in the 1980s, and increased 8.1 percent in the 1990s;
- ranked 41st - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2009.

PRAIRIE COUNTY ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS TRENDS



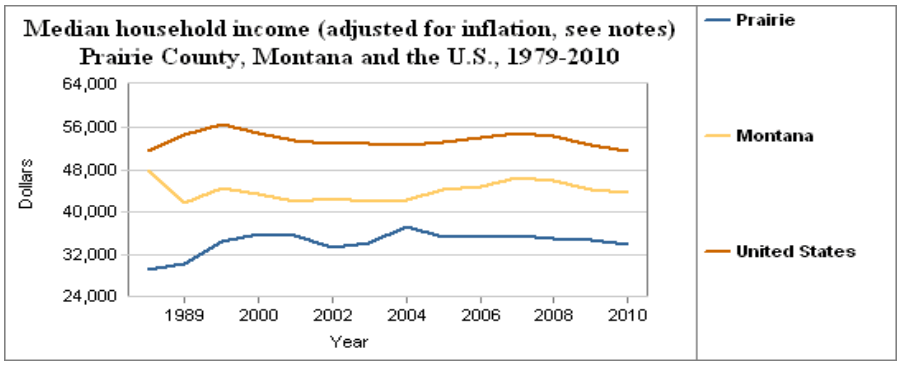
***People are counted as **unemployed** if they are at least 16 years old, are without a job and available for work, and have recently made specific efforts to find employment. The **unemployment rate** is the number of unemployed as a percent of the entire labor force.

http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30079&IndicatorID=14

Prairie County's **monthly unemployment rate** was 6.1 percent in February, 2012. This compares to 6.9 percent in Montana as a whole.

Prairie County's **average annual unemployment rate** in 2011 . . .

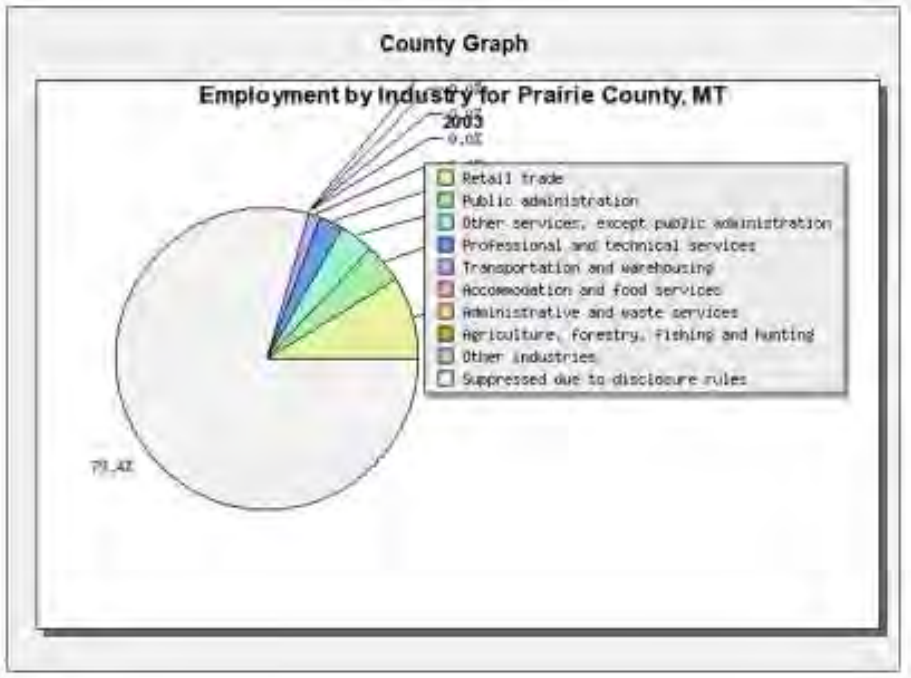
- was 5.2 percent compared to 6.8 for Montana
- was greater than the previous year's rate of 4.8 percent.
- ranked 38th – from highest to lowest – out of Montana's 56 counties.



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30079&IndicatorID=9

In Prairie County median household income (adjusted for inflation) . . .

- was $34,003 in 2010, $34,363 in 1999, and $30,283 in 1989;
- ranked 49th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.



http://economictoolbox.geog.psu.edu/employment.php?region_id=1&sfips=30&cfips=30079&rurality_flag=0&sfips1=00&cfips1=00000&return_page=snapshot.php

Table 1: Prairie County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

	Employment						Standardized		
	2001		2009		Actual Growth		Growth[2]		Employment[3]
Industry	Level	Share[1]	Level	Share[1]	Percent	Net	Percent	Net	2009
Farm	205	32.1	171	26.4	-16.59	-34	-13.99	-29	176
Retail Trade	44	6.9	34	5.2	-22.73	-10	-3.04	-1	43
Prof. & Tech. Services	20	3.1	29	4.5	45.00	9	15.15	3	23
Federal, Civilian	16	2.5	35	5.4	118.75	19	5.50	1	17
Unreported	354	55.4	379	58.5	7.06	25	5.77	20	374
TOTAL	639	100.0	648	100.0	1.41	9	-0.89	-6	633

[1] Share: The percentage share of total employment by industry.

[2] Standardized Growth: at the same rate as its counterpart at the national level.ad each industry grown .

[3] Standardized Employment, 2009: The 2009 level of employment in each industry had it grown at the same rate as its counterparts at the national level since 2001.

- By clicking on the symbol associated with each industry category you will wil be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%.

- Over 2001-2009 a net total of 9 jobs were added to the Prairie County economy, amounting to an increase of 1.41%.

Table 2: Shift-Share Components of Prairie County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

	National Growth[1]		Industry Mix[2]		Region Shift[3]	
Industry	Percent	Net	Percent	Net	Percent	Net
Farm	5.01	10	-19.00	-39	-2.60	-5
Retail Trade	5.01	2	-8.05	-4	-19.69	-9
Prof. & Tech. Services	5.01	1	10.13	2	29.85	6
Federal, Civilian	5.01	1	0.48	0	113.25	18
Unreported	5.01	18	0.76	3	1.29	5
TOTAL	5.01	32	-5.90	-38	2.29	15

[1] National Growth: The change in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry had it grown at the national growth rate of all industries combined.

[2] Industry Mix: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry (additional to the national growth effect) due to the industry growing faster (or slower) nationally than the rate of all industries combined.

[3] Regional Shift: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment for a specific industry beyond the national growth and industry mix effects resulting from the industry growing faster (or slower) than the same industry nationally.

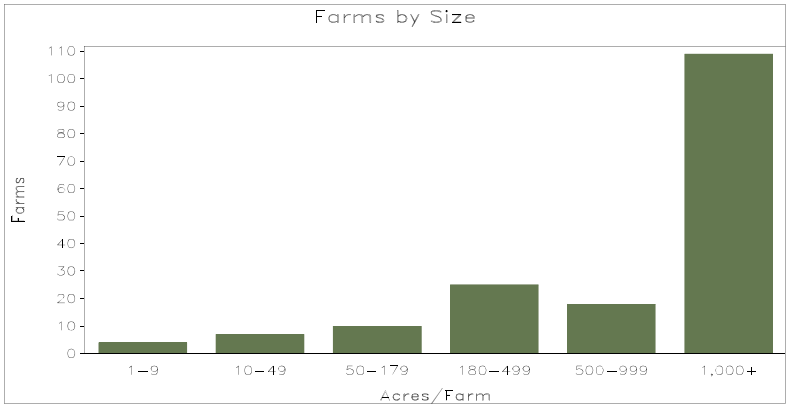
- By clicking on the symbol associated with each industry category you will wil be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

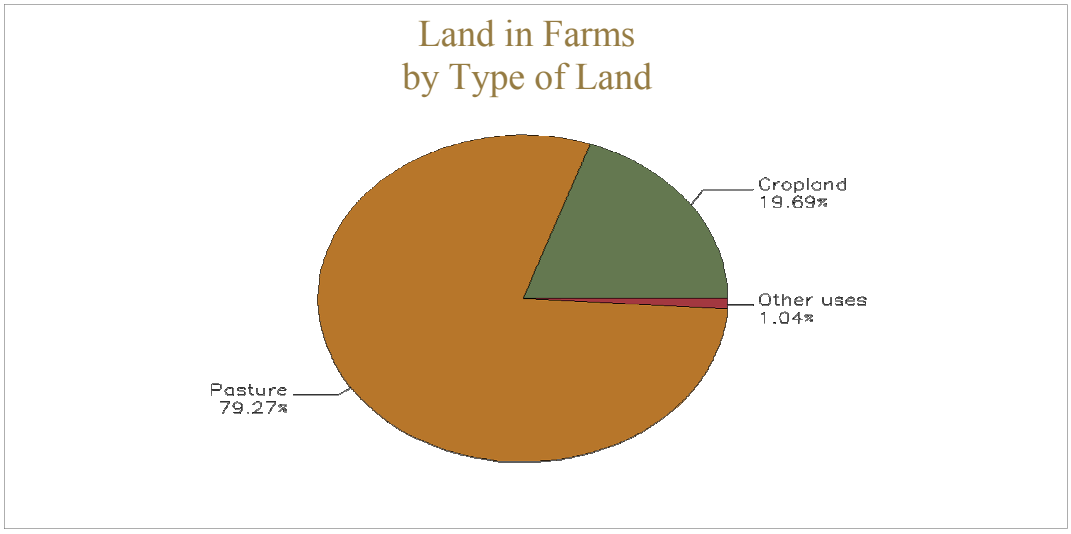
Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%.

- Prairie County's employment growth over 2001-2009 of 1.41% trailed the 5.01% growth of employment nationally by -3.61%. Accounting for this difference was an industry mix inclined toward industries that experienced slower growth, coupled with the fact that a large share of local industries outperformed their counterparts nationally.

http://montana.reaproject.org/reap-report.php

PRAIRIE COUNTY	2007	2002	% change
Number of Farms	173	162	+7
Land in Farms	767,508 acres	619,684 acres	+24
Average Size of Farm	4,436 acres	3,825 acres	+16
Market Value of Products Sold	$24,355,000	$18,549,000	+31
Crop Sales *$7,951,000* *(33 percent)*			
Livestock Sales *$16,404,000* *(67 percent)*			
Average Per Farm	$140,778	$114,498	+23
Government Payments	$2,200,000	$1,890,000	+16
Average Per Farm Receiving Payments	$16,178	$15,617	+4





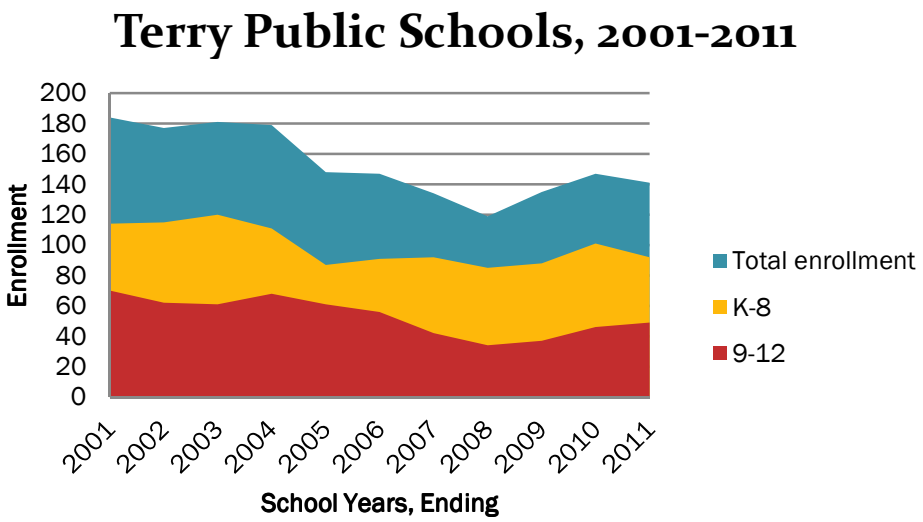
FARM Economic Characteristics	Quantity	FARM Operator Characteristics	Quantity
Farms by value of sales:		**Principal operators by primary occupation:**	
Less than $1,000	36	Farming	117
$1,000 to $2,499	4	Other	56
$2,500 to $4,999	2		
$5,000 to $9,999	5	**Principal operators by sex:**	
$10,000 to $19,999	9	Male	152
$20,000 to $24,999	3	Female	21
$25,000 to $39,999	10		
$40,000 to $49,999	2	**Average age of principal operator (years)**	57.2
$50,000 to $99,999	29		
$100,000 to $249,999	39	**All operators by race[2]:**	
$250,000 to $499,999	22	American Indian or Alaska Native	-
$500,000 or more	12	Asian	-
		Black or African American	-
Total farm production expenses ($1,000)	18,586	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	-
Average per farm ($)	107,434	White	289
		More than one race	2
Net cash farm income of operation ($1,000)	9,633		
Average per farm ($)	55,682	**All operators of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino Origin[2]**	4

2007 Census of Agriculture, www.agcensus.usda.gov

PRAIRIE COUNTY EDUCATION

School Level	Total All Types	Regular school	Special education school	Vocational school	Private/alternative school
Total all levels	**3**	3	0	0	0
Elementary	**1**	1	0	0	0
Middle	**1**	1	0	0	0
High	**1**	1	0	0	0
Any other configuration	**0**	0	0	0	0

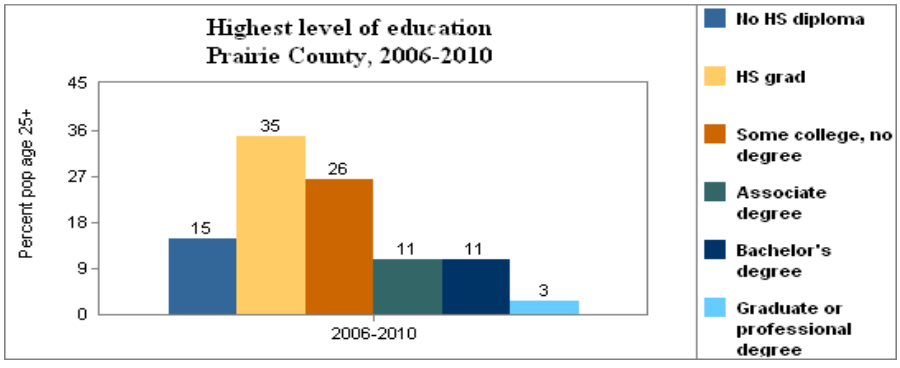
Terry K-12 Schools
District No. 5
215 E Park
Terry, MT 59349



- Between the years ending 2001-2011, Terry K-12 Schools reported 5 dropouts.

In Prairie County between 2006-2010 . . .

- 15 percent of the population 25 years and older had no high school diploma, compared to 9 percent in Montana
- 13 percent of the population 25 years and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 28 percent in Montana

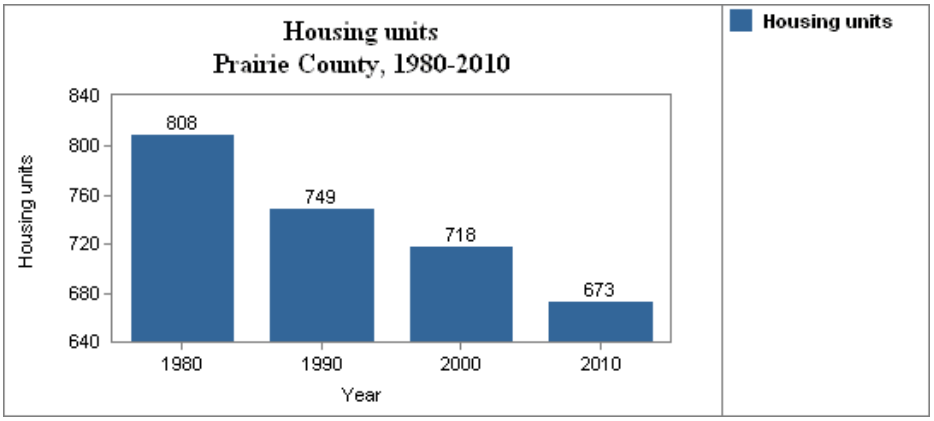


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30079&IndicatorID=100038

PRAIRIE COUNTY HOUSING

In Prairie County . . .

- the number of housing units decreased by 7.3 percent from 1980 to 1990; decreased by 4.1 percent from 1990 to 2000; and decreased by 6.3 from 2000 to 2010.
- in 2010, 65.1 percent of all housing units were owner occupied, 16.8 percent were occupied by renters, and 18.1 percent were vacant.
- the percent change in number of housing units from 2000-2010 ranked 52nd - from highest to lowest- out of the 56 counties.



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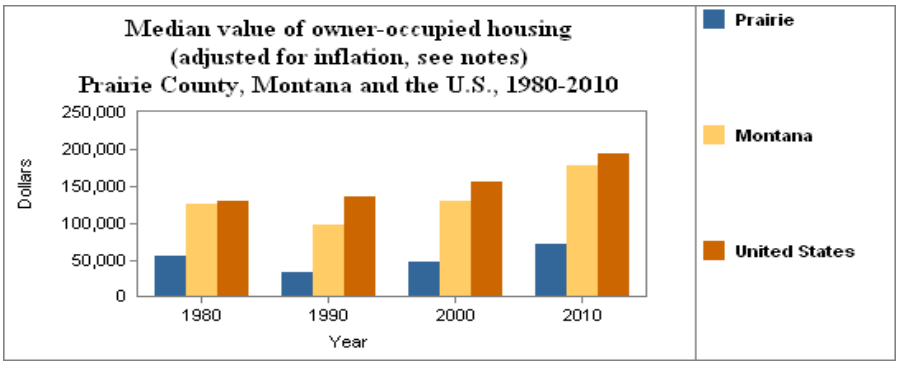
The real median value of owner occupied housing in Prairie County from 2006-2010. . .

- was $71,591 compared to $178,770 in Montana
- increased by 27.9 percent from 1980 to 2006-2010.
- ranked 50th - from highest to lowest - out of 56 counties.



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30079&IndicatorID=19

Of the 718 housing units in Prairie County in 2000 . . .

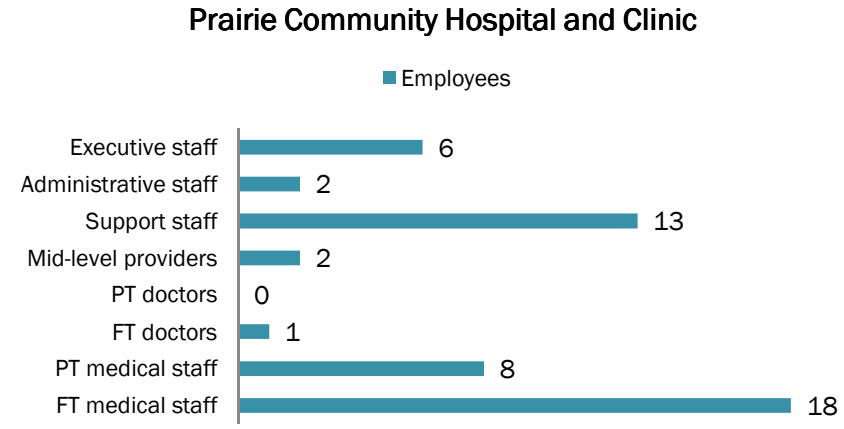
- 570 were single family units, a decrease of 27 percent from 1990 when there were 586;
- 44 were 2 or more unit structures, an increase of 13 percent from 1990 when there were39;
- 104 were mobile homes, a decrease of 16 percent from 1990 when there were 124.

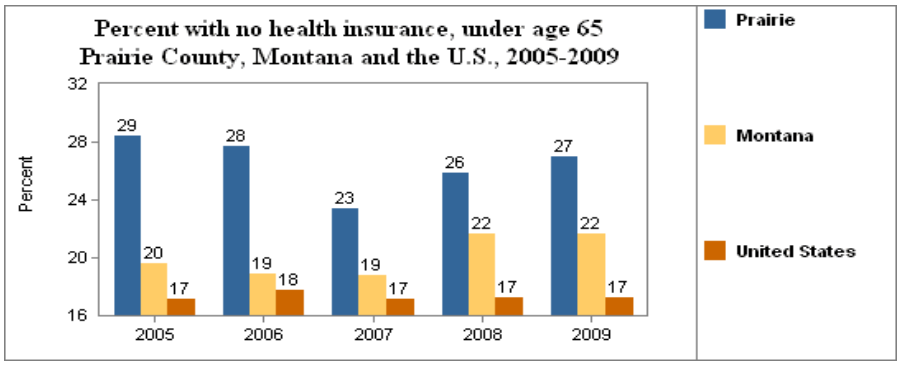
1990 and 2000: US Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, http://factfinder2.census.gov

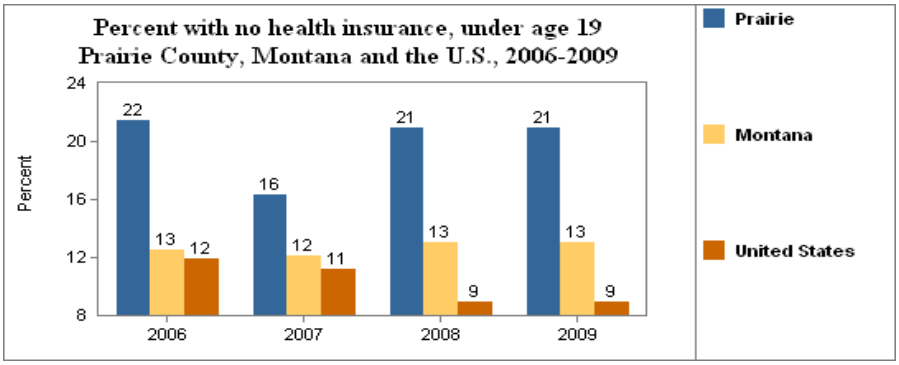
PRAIRIE COUNTY HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Medical facilities available in Prairie County:

Prairie Community Hospital and Clinic
312 S Adams Ave.
Terry, MT 59349



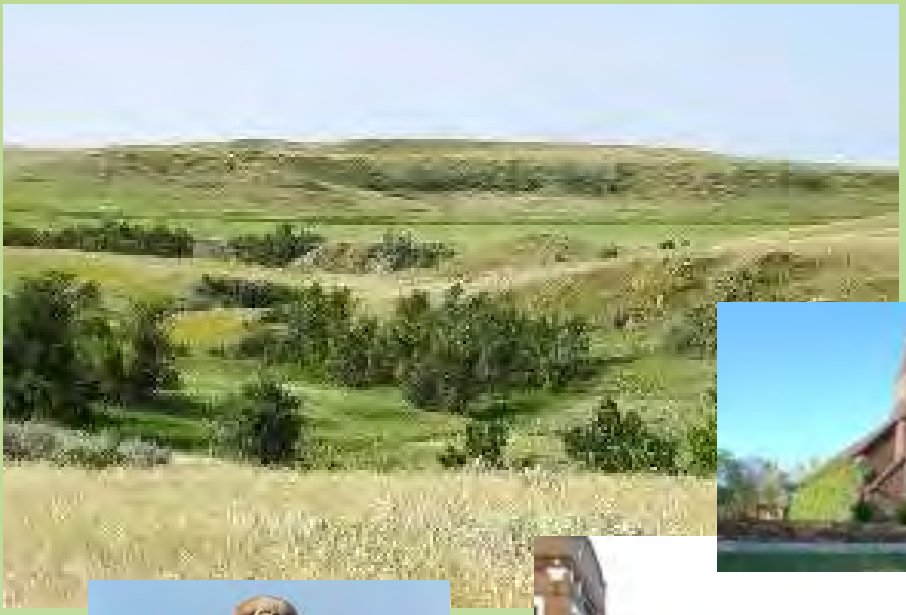


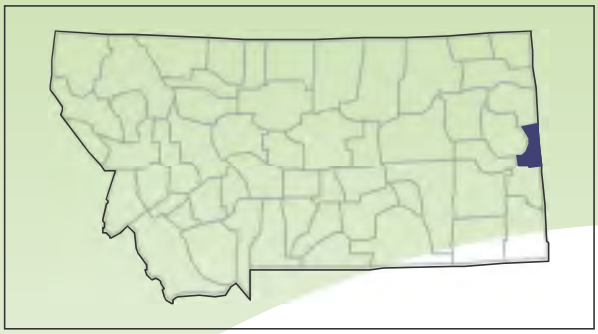


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30079&IndicatorID=100013

In Prairie County in 2009,

- 27 percent of the population under age 65, or 218 people, had no health insurance coverage compared to 22 percent in all of Montana;
- the percent under age 65 without health insurance ranked 20th - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties;
- 21.0 percent of children under the age of 19, or 37 children, had no health insurance coverage compared to 13.0 percent of all children in Montana;
- the percent of children without health coverage ranked 9th - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties.





5. WIBAUX COUNTY

Wibaux County was created in 1914 and was named after Pierre Wibaux a late 19th century cattle baron; both the county and the Town of Wibaux are rich in historic assets. The county covers 890 square miles and is home to one incorporated community, Wibaux. Wibaux County is located on the Montana-North Dakota state line and is also bordered to the north by Richland County, Dawson County and Prairie County to the west, and Fallon County to the south.

The primary economic sector for Wibaux County is agriculture. According to the Montana Department of Revenue in 2010 the county had over 400,000 acres of grazing acres and nearly 100,000 of non-irrigated tillable land (www.revenue.mt.gov). A majority of the county's farms are multi-generational family farms.

According to U.S. Census data, the county has seen a decline in population in every decade since 1920 with the exception of the 1980 census, which coincides with a strong increase in natural resource extraction in the region, very similar to what is occurring currently. The most recent census data shows a decreasing in population of 4.6% over the last decade, but that data does not reflect the oil and gas development over the last two years which is having a significant impact on the region. In 2010, the average wage per job was $26,623, and the unemployment rate in 2012 was 3.3%.

Municipal Services

The Town of Wibaux is the only incorporated municipality within the county. The Town provides public water and sewage collection and treatment to its residents. The Town's water supply relies on two wells, and sewage treatment is provided via an aerated lagoon. Garbage is collected locally and hauled to the Fallon County Landfill outside of Baker.

Utilities

Goldenwest Electric Cooperative, Inc. provides electrical services; Montana-Dakota Utilities provides both natural gas and electricity to the county. Mid-Rivers Communications is the local provider of broadband/internet, telephone, and cable television services. Larger national companies also provide some service in the area.

Schools

Wibaux County is home to one high school, one junior high, and one elementary school located in the Town of Wibaux. The enrollment is approximately 140 students, and the facilities operate with 16 staff.

Transportation

Wibaux County is served by I-94, which crosses the county west to east from Montana into North Dakota. The county is also served by Montana Highway 7 which leads south to Baker. Montana Highway 261, referred to as "the Lost Highway" runs north between Wibaux and Sidney. Burlington Northern Santa Fe railway also has a main track running east-west that follows I-94 and crosses through the Town of Wibaux. The rail line is used for freight transport with no passenger service currently available.

Health, Medical and Emergency Services

The Wibaux County Nursing Home and Clinic provide the only medical services in the county. The nursing home contains 40 certified beds and a staff of approximately 40 FTE's including professional care staff, in cooperation with Glendive Medical Center and Fallon Medical Complex. The nursing home also provides adult daycare and has been rated as a five star facility by U.S. News and World Report (www.usnews.com/nursinghomes). It accepts both Medicare and Medicaid, as well as private pay, and is a county owned facility.

The Wibaux County Nursing Home complex also houses a clinic for non-emergency care. The county employs one full-time and one part-time health nurse.

The Wibaux County Fire Department is operated by 25 volunteers. The county has ten volunteer EMTs. Those in need of emergency services are transported to Baker, Glendive, or Beach, ND. Wibaux County has mutual aid agreements with surrounding counties in Montana and western North Dakota.

Housing Stock and Characteristics

The number of housing units in Wibaux County has decreased from 680 in 1980 to 538 in 2010. The current housing stock is aging and the median value of owner occupied housing has decreased 9.7 percent since 1980, making it the lowest median value in the state.

Housing stock primarily consists of single family units. The decrease and aging of housing stock, coupled with low unemployment, leaves an unfilled gap in housing availability for new workers. The sharp upswing in natural resource development is putting a serious strain on the housing market and rental unit costs. In a recent Needs Assessment Survey completed for the Town of Wibaux in March 2012, 8 out of 20 respondents reported that their rent had increased, over 64% of homeowners stated that their homes needed repairs, and the two greatest concerns identified as needing the most attention were “availability of homes to purchase” and “availability of rental housing.”

Natural Resource and Environmental Issues

Wibaux County has the Lamesteer Reservoir and several creeks that feed into the Yellowstone Drainage system. The county is home to mostly agricultural land but also has natural resource extraction potential for oil, gas, and coal. The development of oil and gas resources in nearby North Dakota and to the north in Richland County are bound to be further developed in Wibaux County. This development, while generally encouraged and desired, will put a strain on existing resources and infrastructure.

Wibaux County has become a prime route for oil and gas pipelines. The development of these pipelines will have a short term impact on the region while construction occurs, but the increased tax base will assist with other infrastructure and resource issues as they become more prevalent. The county would like to move forward and grow while maintaining as much of its heritage as possible.

Current Trends

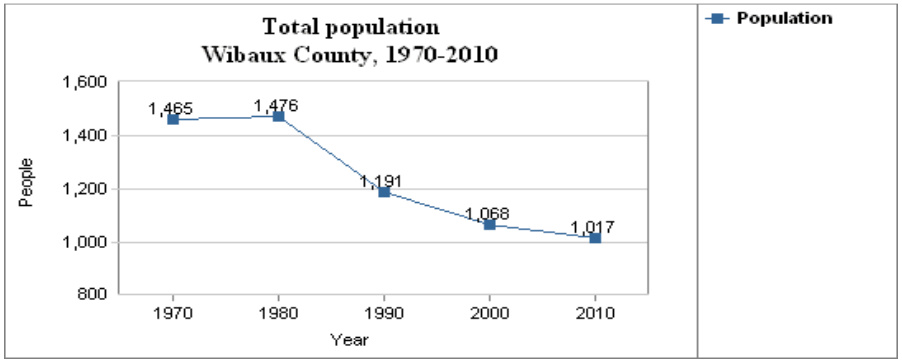
Here again, oil, gas, and pipeline development are at the forefront. The activity presents both an opportunity and the potential for added stress on local citizens, infrastructure, and resources. Traffic, water, wastewater, rural roads, increase in demand for emergency services, and other issues must be addressed as the county tries to capitalize on the potential for long term sustainable growth.

Highlights for Wibaux County:

Total population change (2000 - 2010)	-4.6%
Total population (2010)	1,017
Poverty rate (2010)	13%
Number of jobs (2009)	694
Annual average wage per job (2010)	$26,623
Unemployment rate (February 2012)	3.3%
Median age of population (2010)	49

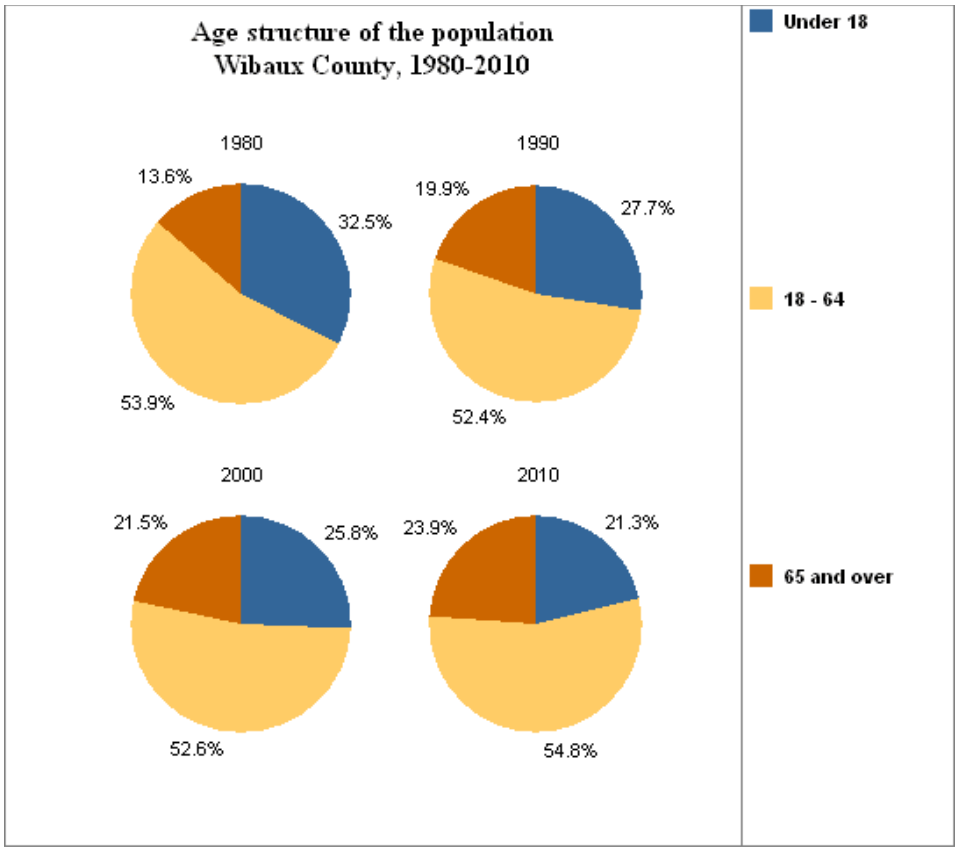
http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30109

WIBAUX COUNTY POPULATION



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30109&IndicatorID=1

- Lost 480 residents since 1970.
- Estimate for 2011 is 985, a decrease of 3.1%, compared to a .9% increase in Montana as a whole.



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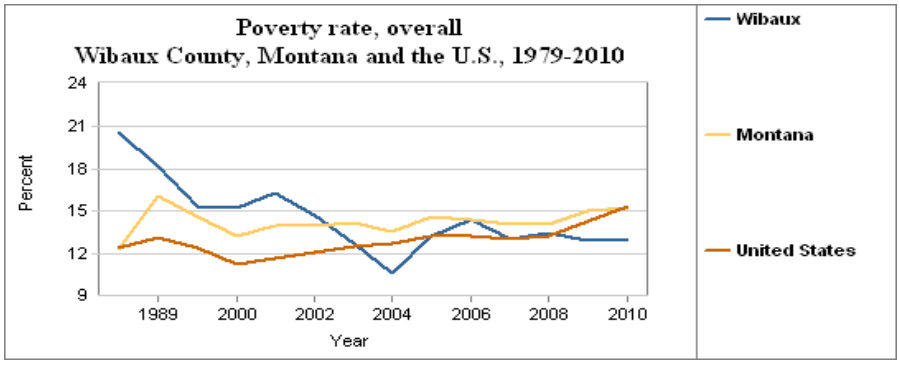
In Wibaux County . . .

- 21.3 percent of the population was under 18 in 2010, compared to 22.6 percent in Montana
- 54.8 percent of the population was 18 to 64 years old in 2010, compared to 62.6 percent in Montana
- 23.9 percent of the population was 65 or older in 2010, compared to 14.8 percent in Montana

WIBAUX COUNTY POVERTY AND INCOME



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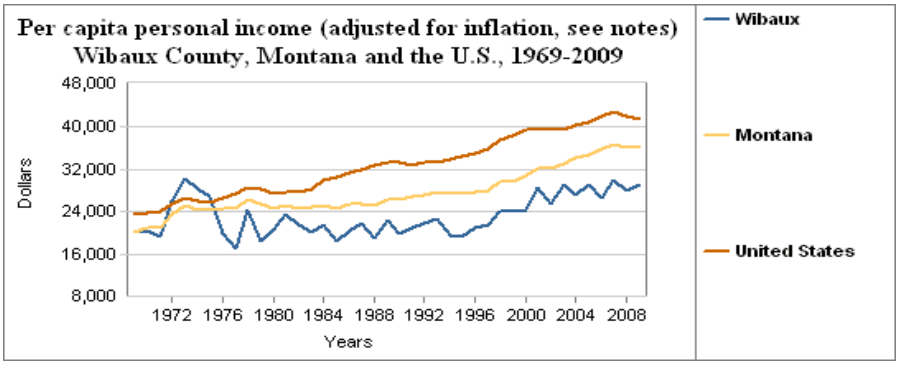
Among Wibaux County residents, the overall poverty rate . . .

- was 12.9 percent in 2010, 15.3 percent in 1999, and 18.2 percent in 1989.
- was 12.9 percent compared to 15.2 percent in Montana in 2010.
- ranked 43rd - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.

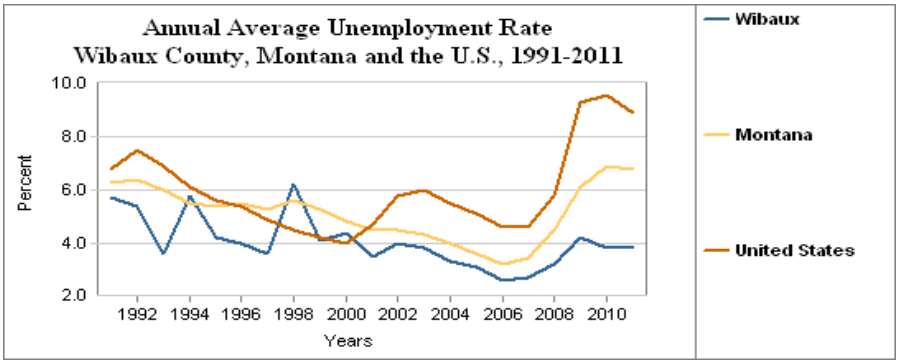


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30109&IndicatorID=7

Wibaux County's per capita income, adjusted for inflation…

- was $29,248 in 2009, compared to $36,517 in Montana;
- increased 51.2 percent between 1995 and 2005 compared to 26.8 percent in Montana;
- increased 45.1 percent since 1969 when it was $20,146;
- increased 1.0 percent in the 1970s, decreased 4.0 percent in the 1980s, and increased 21.8 percent in the 1990s;
- ranked 46th - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2009.

WIBAUX COUNTY ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS TRENDS



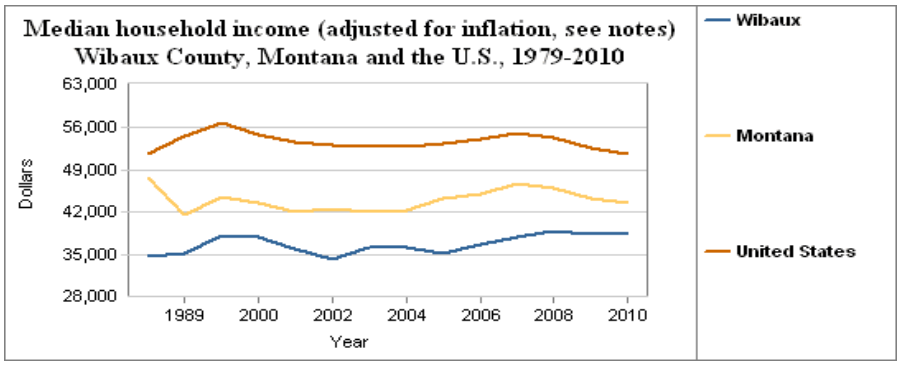
***People are counted as **unemployed** if they are at least 16 years old, are without a job and available for work, and have recently made specific efforts to find employment. The **unemployment rate** is the number of unemployed as a percent of the entire labor force.

http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30109&IndicatorID=14

Wibaux County's **monthly unemployment rate** was 3.3 percent in February, 2012. This compares to 6.9 percent in Montana as a whole.

Wibaux County's **average annual unemployment rate** in 2011 . . .

- was 3.8 percent compared to 6.8 for Montana
- was the same as the previous year's rate of 3.8 percent.
- ranked 51st – from highest to lowest – out of Montana's 56 counties.



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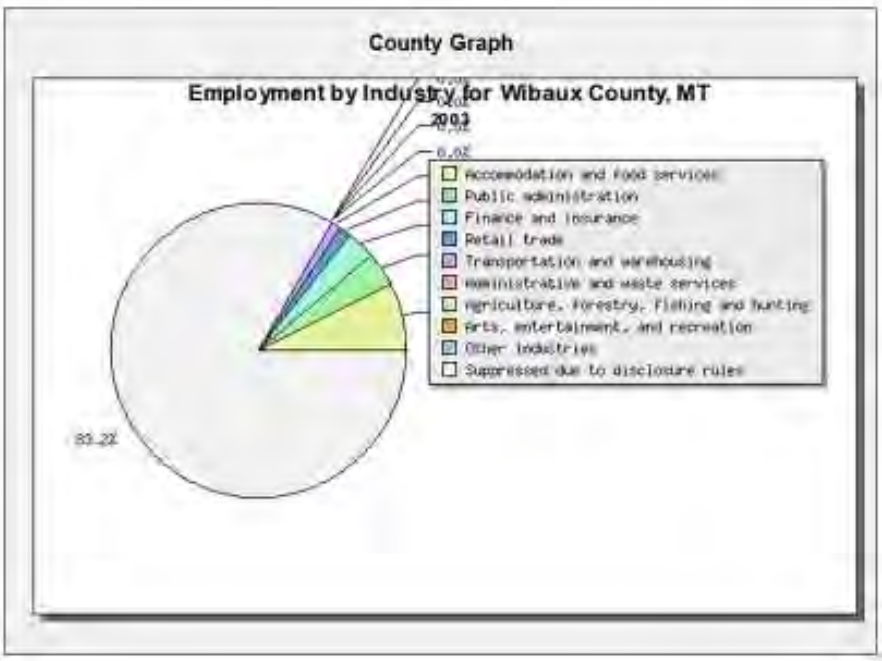
In Wibaux County median household income (adjusted for inflation) . . .

- was $38,692 in 2010, $38,107 in 1999, and $35,147 in 1989;
- ranked 31st - from highest to lowest - out of the 56 counties in 2010.



http://economictoolbox.geog.psu.edu/employment.php?region_id=1&sfips=30&cfips=30109&rurality_flag=0&sfips1=00&cfips1=00000&return_page=snapshot.php

Table 1: Wibaux County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

Industry	Employment 2001 Level	Employment 2001 Share[1]	Employment 2009 Level	Employment 2009 Share[1]	Actual Growth Percent	Actual Growth Net	Standardized Growth[2] Percent	Standardized Growth[2] Net	Standardized Employment[3] 2009
Farm	237	35.3	206	29.7	-13.08	-31	-13.99	-33	204
Finance & Insurance	18	2.7	25	3.6	38.89	7	20.84	4	22
Real Estate, Rent. & Leasing	16	2.4	17	2.4	6.25	1	35.81	6	22
Accom. & Food Services	34	5.1	50	7.2	47.06	16	11.08	4	38
Other Services	33	4.9	33	4.8	0.00	0	8.90	3	36
Federal, Civilian	13	1.9	13	1.9	0.00	0	5.50	1	14
Unreported	321	47.8	350	50.4	9.03	29	2.34	8	329
TOTAL	672	100.0	694	100.0	3.27	22	-1.30	-9	663

[1] Share: The percentage share of total employment by industry.

[2] Standardized Growth: at the same rate as its counterpart at the national level as each industry grown.

[3] Standardized Employment, 2009: The 2009 level of employment in each industry had it grown at the same rate as its counterparts at the national level since 2001.

? - By clicking on the ? symbol associated with each industry category you will will be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%

- Over 2001-2009 a net total of 22 jobs were added to the Wibaux County economy, amounting to an increase of 3.27%.

Table 2: Shift-Share Components of Wibaux County Employment Growth, 2001 - 2009

Industry	National Growth[1] Percent	National Growth[1] Net	Industry Mix[2] Percent	Industry Mix[2] Net	Region Shift[3] Percent	Region Shift[3] Net
? Farm	5.01	12	-19.00	-45	0.91	2
? Finance & Insurance	5.01	1	15.82	3	18.05	3
? Real Estate, Rent. & Leasing	5.01	1	30.80	5	-29.56	-5
? Accom. & Food Services	5.01	2	6.07	2	35.97	12
? Other Services	5.01	2	3.89	1	-8.90	-3
? Federal, Civilian	5.01	1	0.48	0	-5.50	-1
? Unreported	5.01	16	-2.68	-9	6.70	21
TOTAL	5.01	34	-6.31	-42	4.57	31

[1] National Growth: The change in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry had it grown at the national growth rate of all industries combined.

[2] Industry Mix: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment that would have occurred for a specific industry (additional to the national growth effect) due to the industry growing faster (or slower) nationally than the rate of all industries combined.

[3] Regional Shift: The additional gain (or loss) in local employment for a specific industry beyond the national growth and industry mix effects resulting from the industry growing faster (or slower) than the same industry nationally.

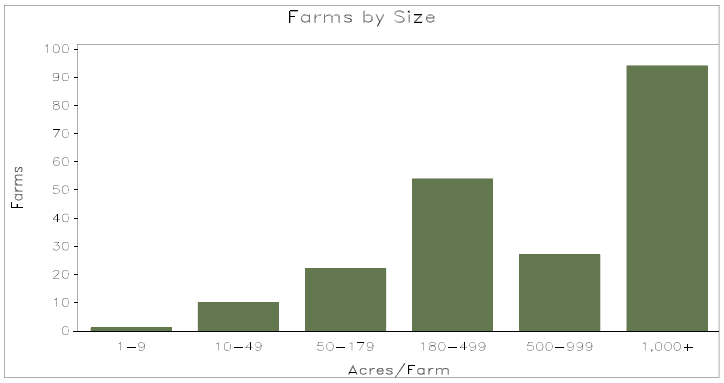
? - By clicking on the ? symbol associated with each industry category you will wil be linked to its corresponding definition as posted on the BEA web site.

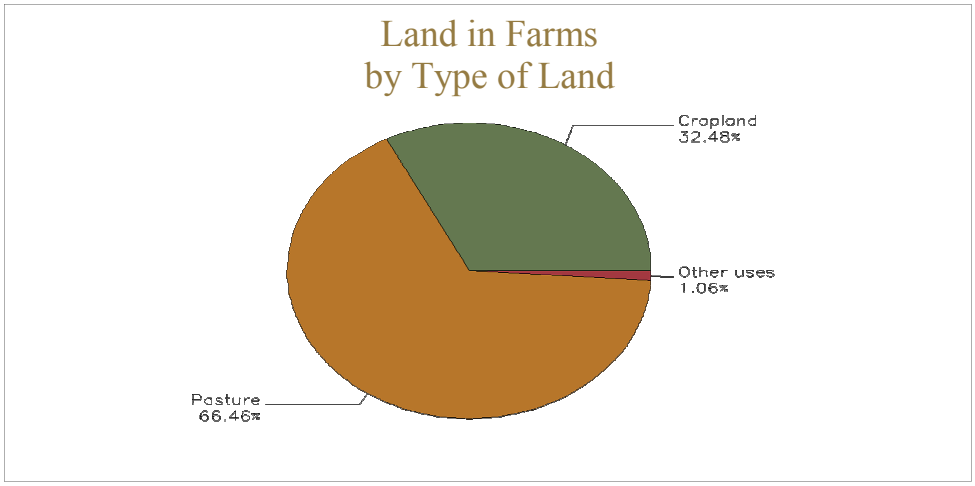
Note: Percent growth figures may not add due to rounding by a factor of ± 0.01%.

- Wibaux County's employment growth over 2001-2009 of 3.27% trailed the 5.01% growth of employment nationally by -1.74%. Accounting for this difference was an industry mix inclined toward industries that experienced slower growth, coupled with the fact that a large share of local industries outperformed their counterparts nationally.

http://montana.reaproject.org/reap-report.php

WIBAUX COUNTY	2007	2002	% change
Number of Farms	208	215	-3
Land in Farms	492,554 acres	535,786 acres	-8
Average Size of Farm	2,368 acres	2,492 acres	-5
Market Value of Products Sold	$18,624,000	$12,361,000	+51
Crop Sales $9,775,000 (52 percent)			
Livestock Sales $8,849,000 (48 percent)			
Average Per Farm	$89,538	$57,493	+56
Government Payments	$2,246,000	$1,931,000	+16
Average Per Farm Receiving Payments	$12,909	$11,494	+12





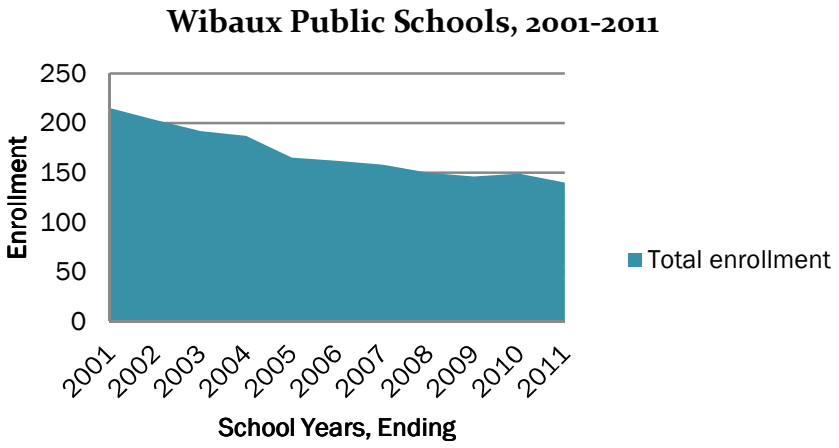
FARM Economic Characteristics	Quantity	FARM Operator Characteristics	Quantity
Farms by value of sales:		**Principal operators by primary occupation:**	
Less than $1,000	61	Farming	130
$1,000 to $2,499	1	Other	78
$2,500 to $4,999	6		
$5,000 to $9,999	11	**Principal operators by sex:**	
$10,000 to $19,999	19	Male	175
$20,000 to $24,999	7	Female	33
$25,000 to $39,999	13		
$40,000 to $49,999	13	**Average age of principal operator (years)**	57.8
$50,000 to $99,999	23		
$100,000 to $249,999	34	**All operators by race[2]:**	
$250,000 to $499,999	12	American Indian or Alaska Native	-
$500,000 or more	7	Asian	1
		Black or African American	-
Total farm production expenses ($1,000)	14,787	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	-
Average per farm ($)	71,090	White	303
		More than one race	2
Net cash farm income of operation ($1,000)	6,859		
Average per farm ($)	32,975	**All operators of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino Origin[2]**	-

2007 Census of Agriculture, www.agcensus.usda.gov

WIBAUX COUNTY EDUCATION

School Level	Total All Types	Regular school	Special education school	Vocational school	Private/alternative school
Total all levels	**3**	3	0	0	0
Elementary	**1**	1	0	0	0
Middle	**1**	1	0	0	0
High	**1**	1	0	0	0
Any other configuration	**0**	0	0	0	0

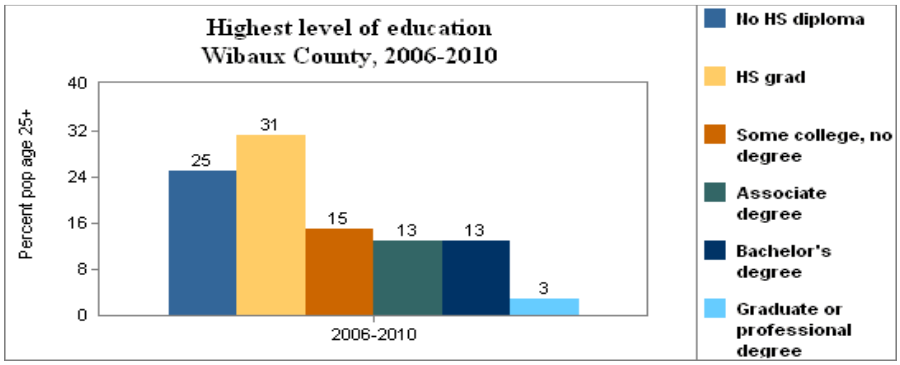
Wibaux K-12 Schools
District No. 6
121 F Street N
Wibaux, MT 59353



- Between the years ending 2001-2011, Wibaux K-12 Schools reported 0 dropouts.

In Wibaux County between 2006-2010 . . .

- 25 percent of the population 25 years and older had no high school diploma, compared to 9 percent in Montana
- 16 percent of the population 25 years and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 28 percent in Montana

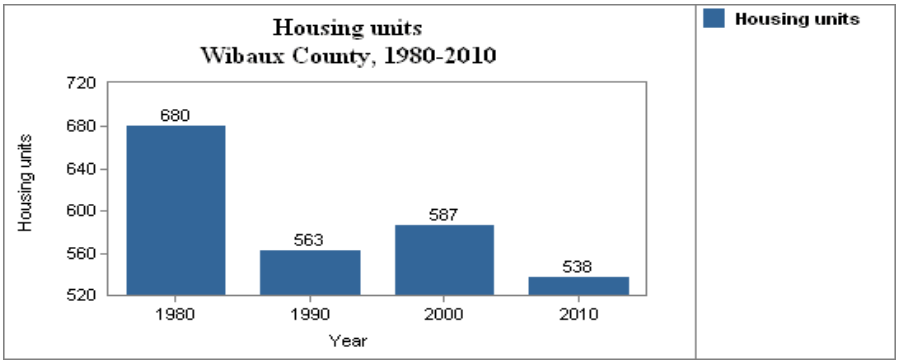


http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30109&IndicatorID=100038

WIBAUX COUNTY HOUSING

In Wibaux County . . .

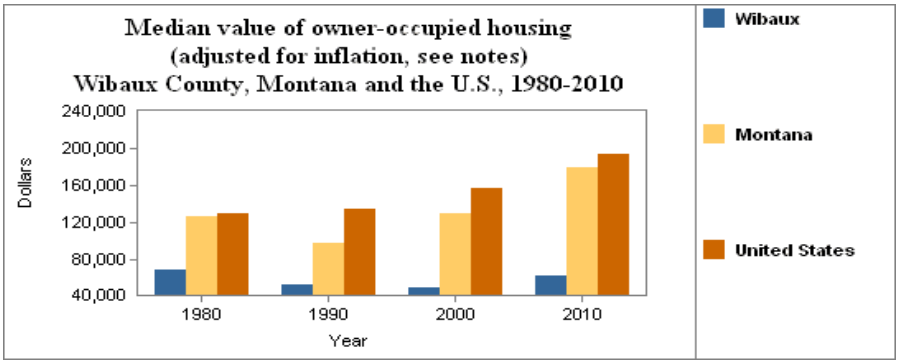
- the number of housing units decreased by 17.2 percent from 1980 to 1990; increased by 4.3 percent from 1990 to 2000; and decreased by 8.3 from 2000 to 2010.
- in 2010, 61.3 percent of all housing units were owner occupied, 23.6 percent were occupied by renters, and 15.1 percent were vacant.
- the percent change in number of housing units from 2000-2010 ranked 55th - from highest to lowest- out of the 56 counties.



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30109&IndicatorID=18

The real median value of owner occupied housing in Wibaux County from 2006-2010. . .

- was $61,894 compared to $178,770 in Montana
- decreased by 9.7 percent from 1980 to 2006-2010.
- ranked 56th - from highest to lowest - out of 56 counties.



http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30109&IndicatorID=19

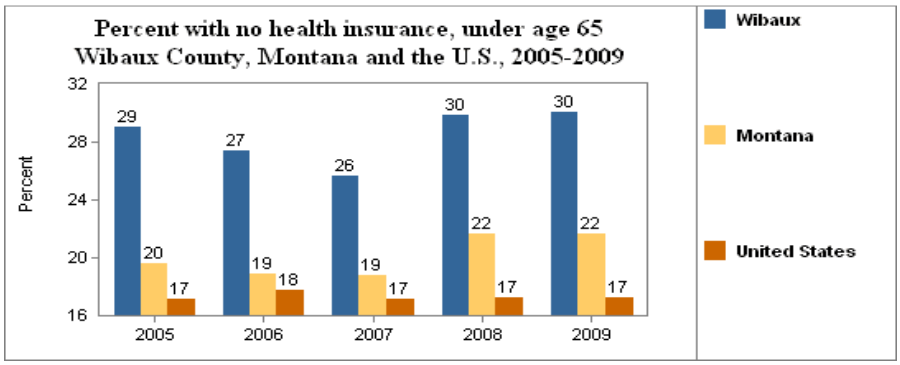
Of the 587 housing units in Wibaux County in 2000 . . .

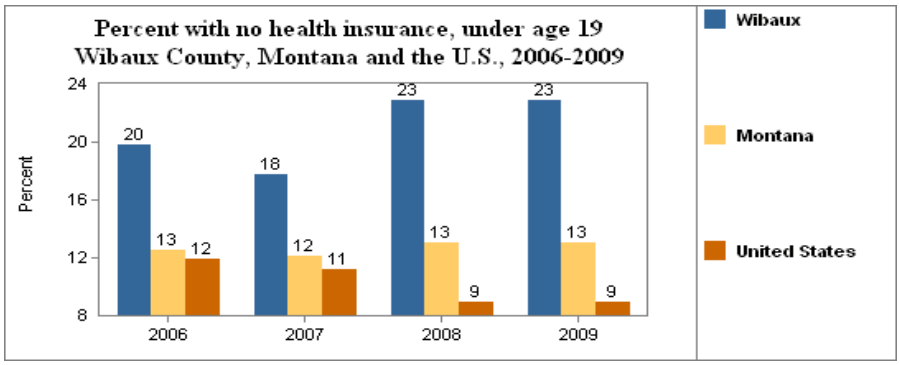
- 420 were single family units, an increase of 14 percent from 1990 when there were 369;
- 69 were 2 or more unit structures, an increase of 30 percent from 1990 when there were 53;
- 98 were mobile homes, a decrease of 30 percent from 1990 when there were 141.

1990 and 2000: US Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, http://factfinder2.census.gov

WIBAUX COUNTY HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

*The Wibaux County Clinic, within the Wibaux County Nursing Home facility, offers non-emergency care. Service providers for the clinic travel from Glendive Medical Center or the Fallon Medical Complex. The county itself employs one full-time and one part-time health nurse.





http://www.indicatorsnorthwest.org/DrawRegion.aspx?RegionID=30109&IndicatorID=100013

In Wibaux County in 2009,

- 30 percent of the population under age 65, or 199 people, had no health insurance coverage compared to 22 percent in all of Montana;
- the percent under age 65 without health insurance ranked 6th - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties;
- 22.9 percent of children under the age of 19, or 43 children, had no health insurance coverage compared to 13.0 percent of all children in Montana;
- the percent of children without health coverage ranked 5th - from highest to lowest - out of Montana's 56 counties.

Vision ("Where do we want to be?")

Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives

VISION

Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPEDC) envisions a strong coalition of communities and counties with diversified industries supporting thriving commercial centers, all the while maintaining a traditional, rural, high quality lifestyle. The mission of the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation is to maintain, diversify, and improve economic conditions by fostering cooperation and communication between public and private entities in Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie, and Wibaux Counties.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The EPEDC's regional goals and objectives are designed to be flexible enough to evolve and reflect new directions and opportunities as they are identified. Regional goals were categorized under the following categories: **Economy, Housing, Infrastructure, Natural Resources, and Tourism**.

Services that the EPEDC will provide in support of the vision, mission, goals, and objectives include:

- Provide services of the Montana Department of Commerce designated Certified Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) for the five-county area
- Provide educational and information opportunities and efforts on economic and community development
- Provide access to revolving loan funds for the members of the Eastern Plains EDC
- Provide financial and technical assistance to businesses, individuals, and communities in the service area from the Small Business Development Center
- Provide grant writing and grant administrative services to businesses, individuals, and communities in the service area
- Coordinate and collaborate with other regional and local development organizations
- Support local, State, and Federal programs and policies that benefit the Eastern Plains EDC region

Economy

Goal I: Manage economic growth and attain diversity in the five-county region through job retention and new job creation, thus creating an economic environment conducive for investment, capital formation, and capital access

Objective A: *Diversify, stabilize, and strengthen the regional economy with business retention, development, and expansion*

Strategies:

1) Assist the region with all aspects related to industrial development

2) Seek public and private partnerships for entrepreneurs, small and mid-sized businesses, and manufacturers with the Montana Cooperative Development Center, Montana Manufacturing Extension Center, Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, United States Department of Agriculture, and the Economic Development Administration for technical assistance, financing, and legal counseling

3) Explore and create partnership(s) with any private/public sector group(s) if it would help minimize duplication of time, effort, and money

4) Improve communication among the different regional governments and economic development groups

5) Improve the ability and capacity of the Eastern Plains EDC to acquire information and funding resources for regional business, community, and public leaders that will help create new jobs and generate private investments

6) Market Southeastern Montana Development Corporation's Small Business Development Center (SBDC), providing free and confidential business counseling, and existing Revolving Loan Funds as effective tools for business development, retention, and expansion. If the opportunity arises and is viable, pursue the creation of an EPEDC Small Business Development Center.

7) Assist Counties and communities with planning necessary to ensure the successful implementation of any proposed developments

8) Assist with coordination and cooperation between industrial developers and communities/counties

9) Develop a succession planning model for regional business owners and agricultural producers

10) Work to promote, develop, and retain agriculture and agriculture related businesses in the region

Housing

Goal II: Encourage the development of housing for various needs and incomes

Objective A: *Evaluate and assist with development of elderly and assisted-living facilities in the region*

Strategies

1) Generate a stable and consistent financing model to use in the evaluation and implementation of any proposed assisted-living project in the region

2) Assist with development of affordable transitional housing

3) Encourage development that ensures the region's elderly are not displaced due to unmanaged growth

Objective B: *Assist small communities develop affordable and available housing opportunities for the region's workforce*

Strategies:

1) Encourage enhancement of existing housing in communities

2) Encourage destruction and cleanup of unlivable housing in communities to provide lots for new housing development

3) Encourage family housing development

4) Create effective partnerships with regional organizations that are currently active in the housing sector

5) Help locate and secure funding for housing projects

6) Encourage responsible and sustainable housing development through the development of planning documents, regulations, and ordinances

Infrastructure

Goal III: Assist with identifying financing options for the development of both private and public sector infrastructure projects to support potential economic growth and maintain quality of life throughout the region

Objective A: *Assist public sector entities with the maintenance, replacement, or construction of basic infrastructure needs and evaluate potential development impacts*

Strategies:

1) Assist the region with financing evaluation and options--including grants and/or low-interest loans from Federal, state, local, corporate/ private foundations--to maintain, replace, and upgrade basic health and safety quality-of-life items like water, wastewater, storm water, street, highway, bridges, and landfills in the region

2) Help the region address the need for city/county planners

3) Assist counties and municipalities address handicapped access issues to public facilities

4) Help counties address rural county road improvements

5) Promote improved broadband service throughout the region

6) Assist municipalities address the need for paved streets, public restroom and pools, and underground sprinkler systems for schools and parks

7) Address health care issues by helping public facilities identify and fund needed improvements

8) Assist counties and communities with the development of essential planning documents

9) Assist the counties and communities communicate issues related to regulations that impact development, local services, and community well-being

Objective B: *Assist private sector entities address infrastructure maintenance, replacement, or construction of basic infrastructure needs*

1) Address health care issues by helping private facilities identify and fund needed improvements

2) Assist with community/senior center needs

3) Support community leadership and develop funding resources to assist with improvements and maintenance, via programs such as Montana Main Street

Natural Resources

Goal IV: Advocate and assist in the evaluation, creation, and implementation of responsible natural resource development

Objective A: *Evaluate and promote value-added energy and natural resource business opportunities throughout the region*

Strategies:

1) Promote energy development within the region

2) Promote cooperation and alliances for development of all energy sources—oil, gas, coal, wind, ethanol, geothermal, etc.

3) Preserve and promote existing natural resource production and use, such as gravel, bentonite, scoria, etc.

4) Work with local extension service representatives, universities and colleges, MT Department of Natural Resources, and local conservation and grazing districts to advocate responsible natural resource development and promote value-added agricultural products

5) Assist with water improvements—bodies of water, waterways, water supplies, etc.

Tourism

Goal V: Strengthen, promote, and encourage unification among communities in the region to work together to promote area tourism

Objective A: *Develop partnerships with federal, state, county, and local governments and agencies to promote and maintain recreational opportunities*

Strategies:

1) Promote and support all parks within the Eastern Plains EDC region—Makoshika State Park, Medicine Rocks State Park, Custer National Forest, etc.

2) Support local chambers of commerce and the Southeast MT Tourism region in their endeavors to improve tourist traffic to eastern MT

3) Pursue funding to aid with downtown community planning and beautification

4) Support and pursue activities that promote the Eastern Plains EDC region's proximity to other regional attractions—Black Hills/Sturgis/Mount Rushmore, Medora, Billings, etc.

Objective B: *Promote partnerships to develop and maintain local recreational opportunities*

1) Promote area museums and heritage centers

2) Promote hunting and fishing opportunities, especially for local recreationists

3) Assist with tourist accessibility to sites of interest, such as the Stone Church in Wibaux

4) Assist with the promotion and preservation of historic districts

5) Promote more tourist lodging facilities in the region

6) Promote improvement of recreational water facilities and access

7) Capitalize on the Terry Badlands

8) Capitalize on recreational possibilities (river access and hiking trails) along the Yellowstone River and on public lands

Setting Priorities

Public meetings were held in each of the five counties—in Ekalaka for Carter County on April 23, 2012; in Baker for Fallon County on April 23, 2012; in Glendive for Dawson County on April 25, 2012; in Wibaux for Wibaux County on April 30, 2012; and in Terry for Prairie County on April 30, 2012.

Based on the goals and objectives set by the CEDS committee, EPEDC staff organized economic development project priorities identified in the five public meetings within the proceeding **"Action Plan"** section, *beginning on page 160*.

Action Plan ("How do we get there?")

A. Prioritization of Projects and Activities

Economy					
Goal I: Manage economic growth and attain diversity in the five-county region through job retention and new job creation, thus creating an economic environment conducive for investment, capital formation, and capital access					
Project	**Regional Impact** 1 = All counties 2 = More than one county 3 = One county	**Priority** H = High M = Medium L = Low	**Lead Agency**	**Partners**	**Jobs Created/ Timeline** S = Set date O = Ongoing
Objective A: *Diversify, stabilize, and strengthen the regional economy with business retention, development, and expansion*					
Business expansion and retention	1	H	SBDC	SEMDC, EPEDC, GNDC, local development organizations, BEAR	(25) O
Regional oil and gas related business development	1	H	Private sector	EPEDC, SBDC, SEMDC, RED, GNDC, local development organizations, towns/cities, counties	(50) O
Dawson County Farm-to-Table/ commercial kitchen	2	H	Community GATE	MSU Extension Service, EPEDC, USDA, MT Department of Agriculture	(5) O
Industrial development	1	H	Towns/cities and counties	Private sector, EPEDC, MT DOC, local development organizations	(50) O
RLF development	1	H	EPEDC	SEMDC, GNDC, RED, USDA, EDA, MT DOC	(20) O
Regional planning	1	H	EPEDC	EDA, SEMDC, RED, GNDC, MT DOC	O
New business start-ups	1	H	Private sector	SBDC, EPEDC, SEMDC, local development organizations	(20) O
Business succession planning	1	M	EPEDC	MSU Extension Service	O
Baker commercial development	3	H	Private sector	Private developer, EPEDC, Fallon County, SMART	S/2015

Housing					
Goal II: Encourage the development of housing for various needs and incomes					
Project	**Regional Impact** 1 = All counties 2 = More than one county 3 = One county	**Priority** H = High M = Medium L = Low	**Lead Agency**	**Partners**	**Jobs Created/ Timeline** S = Set date O = Ongoing
Objective A: *Evaluate and assist with development of elderly and assisted-living facilities in the region*					
Senior citizen/transitional housing	1	M	EPEDC	Private sector, towns/cities, county, MBOH, MT DOC, USDA/RD	(3) O
Assisted living facilities	2	M	EPEDC	Private sector, towns/cities, county, MBOH, MT DOC, USDA/RD	(5) O
Objective B: *Assist small communities develop affordable and available housing opportunities for the region's workforce*					
Carter County housing shortage	3	H	EPEDC	Private sector, towns, county, MBOH, MT DOC, USDA/RD	O
Dawson County housing shortage	3	H	EPEDC	Private sector, towns/city, county, MBOH, MT DOC, USDA/RD	O
Fallon County housing shortage	3	H	EPEDC	Private sector, town/city, county, MBOH, MT DOC, USDA/RD	O
Prairie County housing shortage	3	H	EPEDC	Private sector, town, county, MBOH, MT DOC, USDA/RD	O
Wibaux County housing shortage	3	H	EPEDC	Private sector, town, county, MBOH, MT DOC, USDA/RD	O
Housing rehabilitation	2	M	Towns/cities and counties	Action for Eastern MT, private sector, towns/cities, counties, MBOH, MT DOC, USDA/RD	O
Plevna Public Schools	3	H	EPEDC	EPEDC, Plevna Public Schools, SMART, BSTF	S/2015

Infrastructure					
Goal III: Assist with identifying financing options for the development of both private and public sector infrastructure projects to support potential economic growth and maintain quality of life throughout the region					
Project	**Regional Impact** 1 = All counties 2 = More than one county 3 = One county	**Priority** H = High M = Medium L = Low	**Lead Agency**	**Partners**	**Jobs Created/ Timeline** S = Set date O = Ongoing
Objective A: *Assist public sector entities with the maintenance, replacement, or construction of basic infrastructure needs and evaluate potential development impacts*					
Regional planner	1	H	EPEDC	EDA, SEMDC, GNDC, MT DOC, cities/towns, counties	(1) O
Rural county road improvement	1	H	Counties	MT DOT, EPEDC, private sector	(5) O
Terry street paving	3	M	Town	County, EPEDC, MT DOT, private sector	O
Ekalaka streets and sidewalks	3	M	Town	County, EPEDC, MT DOT, private sector	O
Terry sewer	3	H	Town	EPEDC, TSEP, DNRC	S/2015
Dawson and Wibaux County floodplain mitigation and/or levee	2	M	Town/city and counties	ACOE, EPEDC	O
Fallon County (Stanhope) water and Sewer District	3	H	FCWSD	EPEDC, county, TSEP, DNRC	S/2016
Glendive/Dawson County sewer and water	3	H	City/county	EPEDC, MT DOC, ACOE, DEQ, SRF, DNRC, TSEP	S/2015
Dawson County Judicial Center	3	H	County	DCEDC, MT Dept. of Corrections, EPEDC	S/2015
Plevna water system	3	H	Town/county	EPEDC, DEQ, MT DOC, DNRC, SRF	S/2015
Emergency services	1	H	Counties	EPEDC, Homeland Security/DES	O
Carter County Clinic	3	M	County	EPEDC, USDA/RD	S/2016
County equipment upgrades	1	H	Counties	EPEDC, USDA/RD	O
Carter County/Ekalaka fire hall	3	M	Town/county	EPEDC	S/2015
Baker water and sewer	3	H	City/county	EPEDC	O
Glendive/Dawson County Growth Policy	3	H	Town/county	EPEDC, MT DOC	S/2014
Ekalaka water, sewer, and solid waste/recycling	3	H	Town/county	EPEDC, DEQ, MT DOC, ACOE, SRF, DNRC	O
Fallon County bypass	3	H	County	EPEDC, private sector, MT DOT	S/2016
Terry water	3	H	Town	County, EPEDC, MT DOC, USDA/RD, ACOE, DNRC	O
Town/city/county land planning and regulations	1	H	Towns/cities/counties	EPEDC, MT DOC, DEQ local development organizations	O

Project	Regional Impact 1 = All counties 2 = More than one county 3 = One county	Priority H = High M = Medium L = Low	Lead Agency	Partners	Jobs Created/ Timeline S = Set date O = Ongoing
Prairie County Hospital expansion	3	M	Prairie County Hospital Board	Town, county, EPEDC, MBOI, USDA/RD, private sector	(4) S/2016
Wibaux off-street parking	3	H	Town/county	EPEDC, MT DOC, MT DOT, private sector	0
Wibaux traffic signage	3	H	Town/county	EPEDC, MT DOT	S/2014
Objective B: *Assist private sector entities address infrastructure maintenance, replacement, or construction of basic infrastructure needs*					
Brownfield assessment and redevelopment	1	H	Eastern MT Brownfield Coalition	EPEDC, SEMDC, GNDC, private sector, chambers of commerce, local development organizations	S/2015
Handicapped accessibility	1	M	Towns/counties	EPEDC, MT DOC, private sector, local development organizations	0
Infrastructure extensions to new and existing development	2	H	Towns/counties	EPEDC, private sector, ACOE, MT DOC, local development organizations	0

Natural Resources					
Goal IV: Advocate and assist in the evaluation, creation, and implementation of responsible natural resource development					
Project	**Regional Impact** 1 = All counties 2 = More than one county 3 = One county	**Priority** H = High M = Medium L = Low	**Lead Agency**	**Partners**	**Jobs Created/ Timeline** S = Set date O = Ongoing
Objective A: *Evaluate and promote value-added energy and natural resource business opportunities throughout the region*					
Value-added agriculture promotion	1	H	MSU Extension Service	EPEDC, USDA, Community GATE, counties	(10) 0
Alternative energy source promotion	1	M	Counties	EPEDC, local co-ops, private sector	0
Resource development and/or distribution	1	H	Counties	EPEDC, towns/cities, private sector, local development organizations	0
Baker Lake overflow control and enhancement	3	H	Fallon County	EPEDC, FWP, EPA, ACOE, city	S/2016
Alzada deep well (water access)	3	H	Private sector	EPEDC, USDA/RD, DNRC	S/2016
Current mining and asset promotion/protection	1	H	Counties	EPEDC, DEQ	0
Recreational opportunity preservation	1	M	Counties	EPEDC, FWP, BLM	0

Tourism					
Goal V: Strengthen, promote, and encourage unification among communities in the region to work together to promote area tourism					
Project	**Regional Impact** 1 = All counties 2 = More than one county 3 = One county	**Priority** H = High M = Medium L = Low	**Lead Agency**	**Partners**	**Jobs Created/ Timeline** S = Set date O = Ongoing
Objective A: *Develop partnerships with federal, state, county, and local governments and agencies to promote and maintain recreational opportunities*					
Makoshika State Park	3	M	FWP	EPEDC, DCEDC, MT DOC	O
Dinosaur Trail	2	M	MT DOC	EPEDC, local development organizations	O
"Wild West" tourism regional study	1	H	Beartooth	Chambers of commerce, local development organizations, EPEDC, EDA, SEMDC, GNDC	S/2012
Medicine Rocks State Park	3	M	FWP	Counties, EPEDC, MT DOC	O
Town of Terry Main Street programs	3	H	Town/chamber/ Prairie County	Local development organizations, EPEDC, MT DOC	S/2013
Objective B: *Promote partnerships to develop and maintain local recreational opportunities*					
Evelyn Cameron Heritage Center	3	H	ECH	EPEDC, MT DOC, PPL, private sector, Southeast MT Tourism	(2) S/2015
Glendive walking trails	3	M	City/county	EPEDC, DCEDC, private sector, MT DOT	S/2015
Baker Lake facilities and access	3	H	City/county	EPA, EPEDC, FWP	O
Terry Badlands	3	H	PCEDC	MT Wilderness Association, EPEDC, private sector, county	O
Yellowstone River access and hiking trails in Dawson and Prairie Counties	2	M	Counties	DCEDC, PCEDC, private sector, BLM, FWP, EPEDC	O
Prairie County Museum upgrades	3	H	Prairie County	Museum board, EPEDC, MT DOC	S/2015
Fallon County shooting range	3	M	Fallon County	Private sector, NRA, EPEDC	S/2015
Wibaux museum expansion and recreation area	3	M	Wibaux County	Museum board, EPEDC, MT DOC	S/2015
Carter County museum upgrades	3	M	Carter County	Museum board, EPEDC, MT DOC	S/2016

Evaluation ("How are we doing?")

Our organizational performance is continually evaluated by the numerous state and federal agencies that have entrusted our District with performance responsibilities relative to the proper management of their specific programs. These evaluations include, but are not limited to, financial audits, regularly scheduled reporting obligations, and frequent communication with the respective agencies. As a matter of course, the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors is responsible for evaluating and reporting CEDS "Action Plan" progress. The Board will continue to comply with all EDA reporting requirements.

Our District's effectiveness is also evaluated on an ongoing basis by our Board of Directors and CEDS committee via staff communication on the progress of current projects. Project updates occur through such means as our Board of Director's meetings, personal contacts, meetings of member entities, EPEDC's newsletters, as well as the EDA Annual Report and CEDS update.

The status of activities and progress on objectives, including achievement of goals, will be reviewed at each quarterly Board of Director's meeting. A "Project Evaluation" chart, updated by EPEDC staff for each Board meeting, corresponds specifically to projects in progress and outlines the project's title, its CEDS category, financial partners, funding levels, and anticipated date of completion. A chart detailing "Completed Projects" to date is also provided. While activity will be ongoing, the evaluation of progress will be done at the Board of Director's meetings.

Performance Measures

Performance measures will be tied directly to the long-term economic development goals as previously identified in this document. The following criteria will be used to measure our performance as an Economic Development District (EDD).

The level and frequency of participation by government, business, and community leaders in projects, including Board and CEDS committee meetings.
The level at which we comply with all EDA Planning and Technical Assistance grant award and administrative conditions.
The level and frequency to which District staff interacts with communities in the region to provide assistance towards identified infrastructure deficiencies.
The level at which we meet the criteria established by the Montanan Department of Commerce's Certified Regional Development Corporation Program.
Number of jobs created or retained per project.
The amount and types of funding leveraged per project.

Appendices

Appendix A:
Certified Regional Development Corporation Regions (map)

Appendix B:
Condition of Structures for regional municipalities

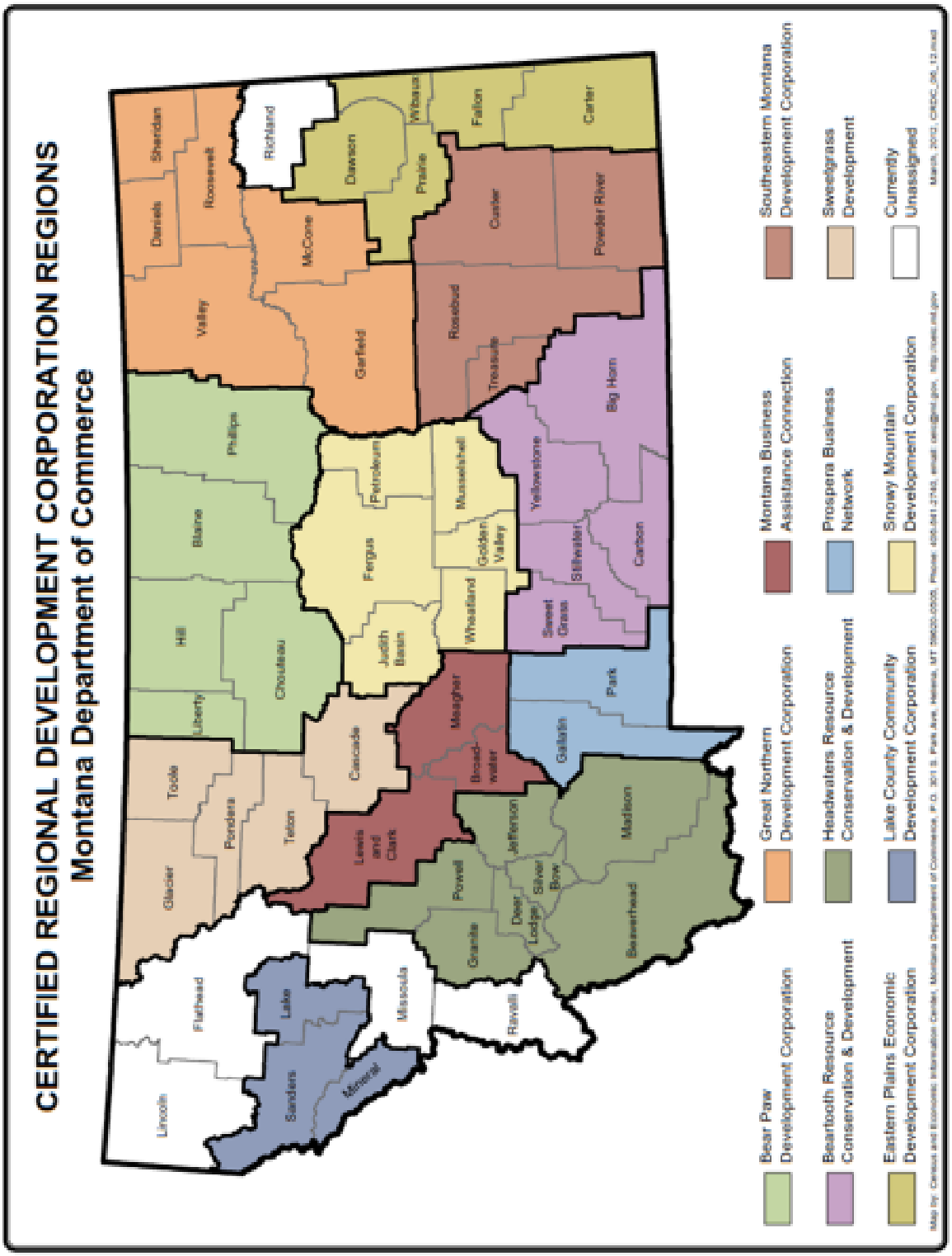
Appendix C:
Bulleted SWOT notes

Appendix D:
Master List of Acronyms and Terms

Appendix E:
Disaster and Economic Recovery and Resiliency Strategy

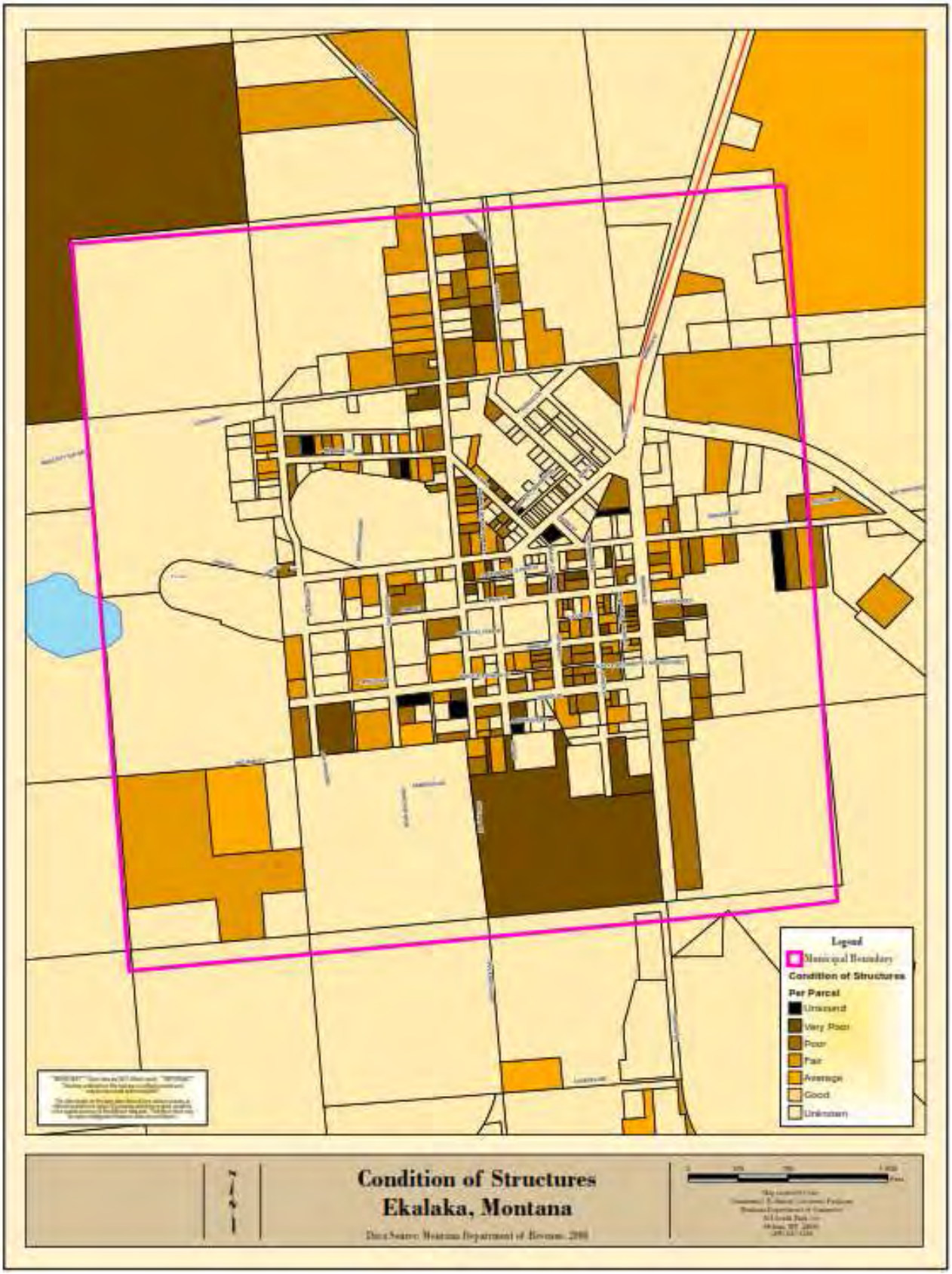
Appendix A

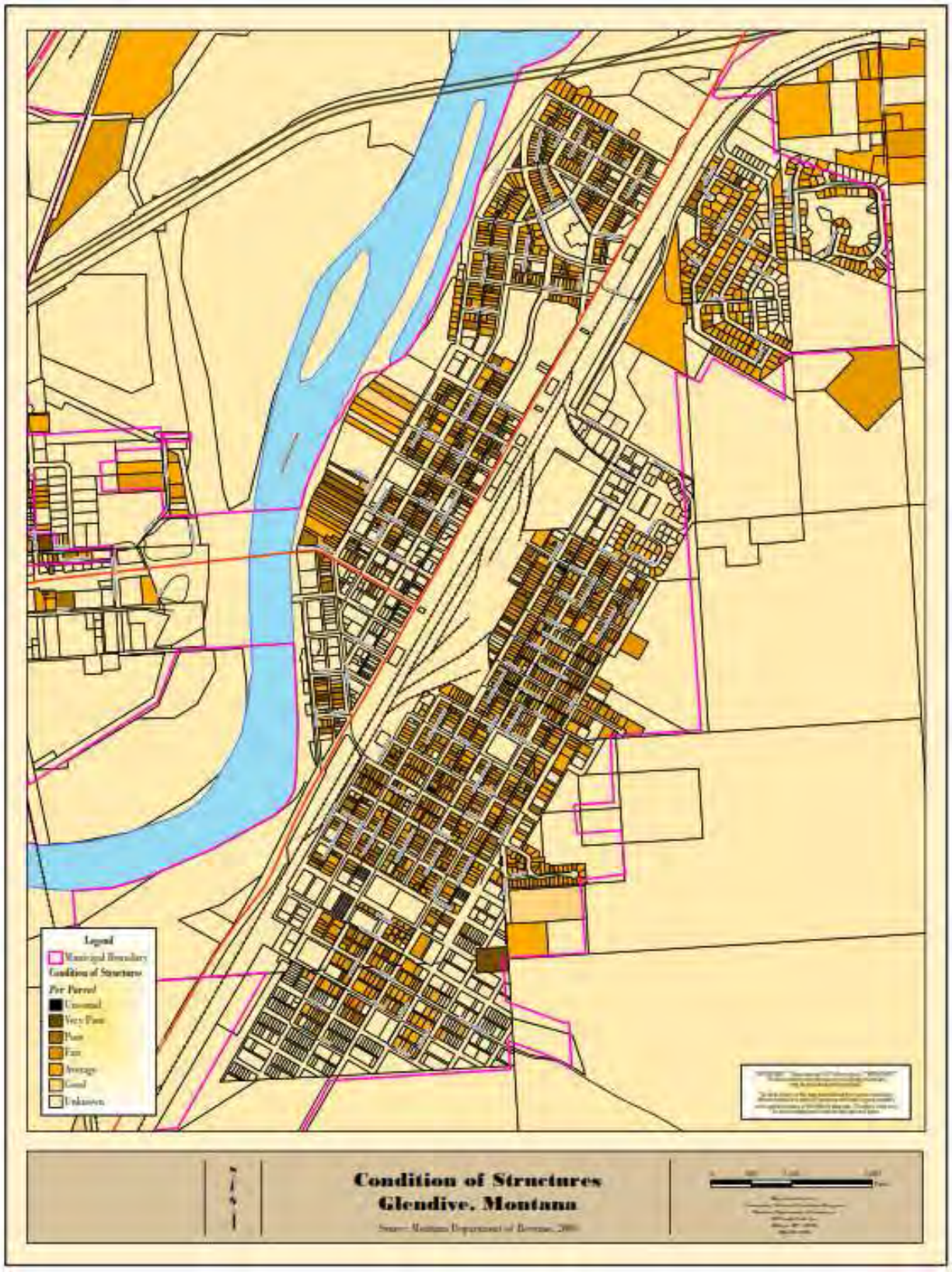
March 2012

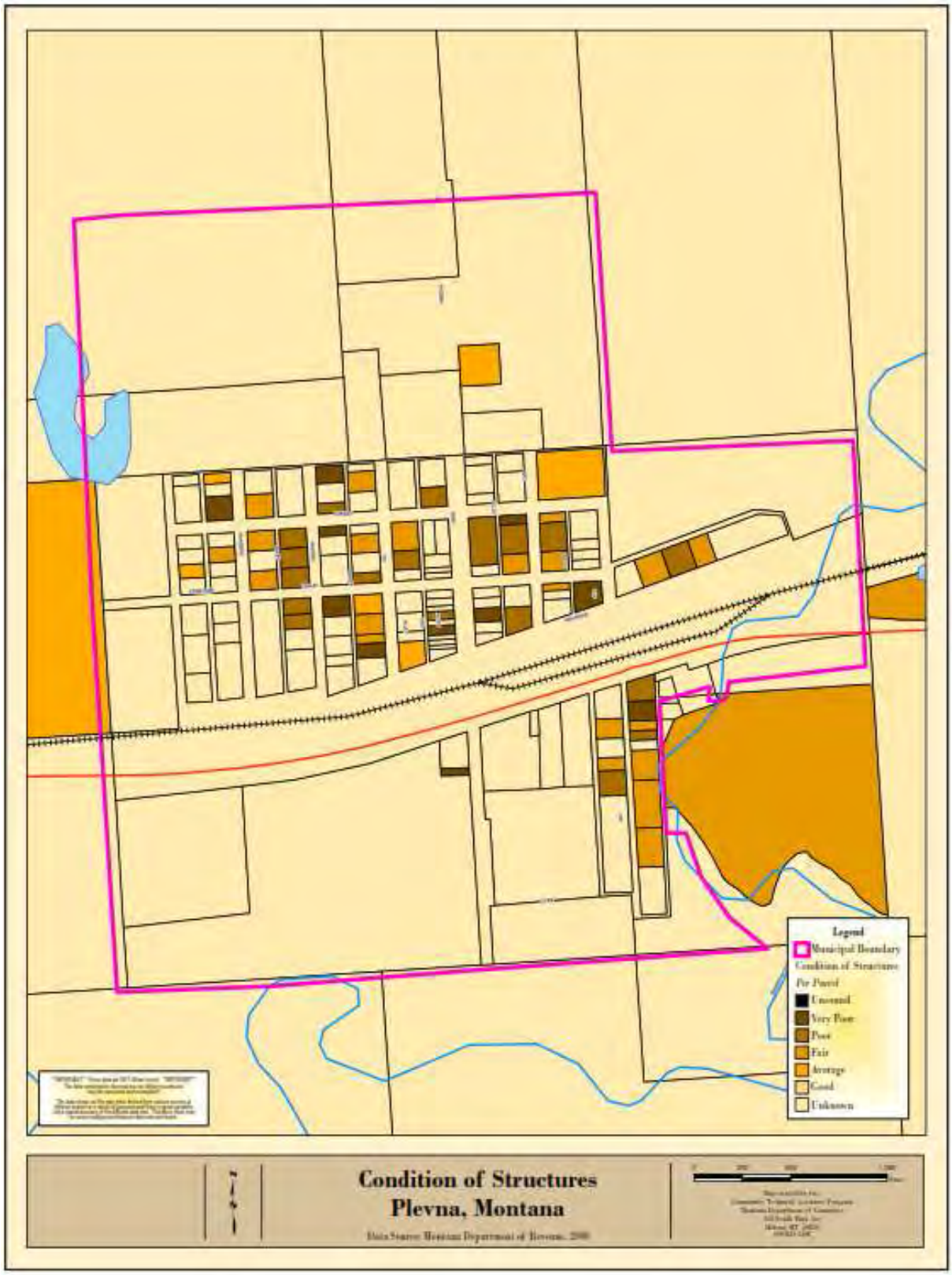


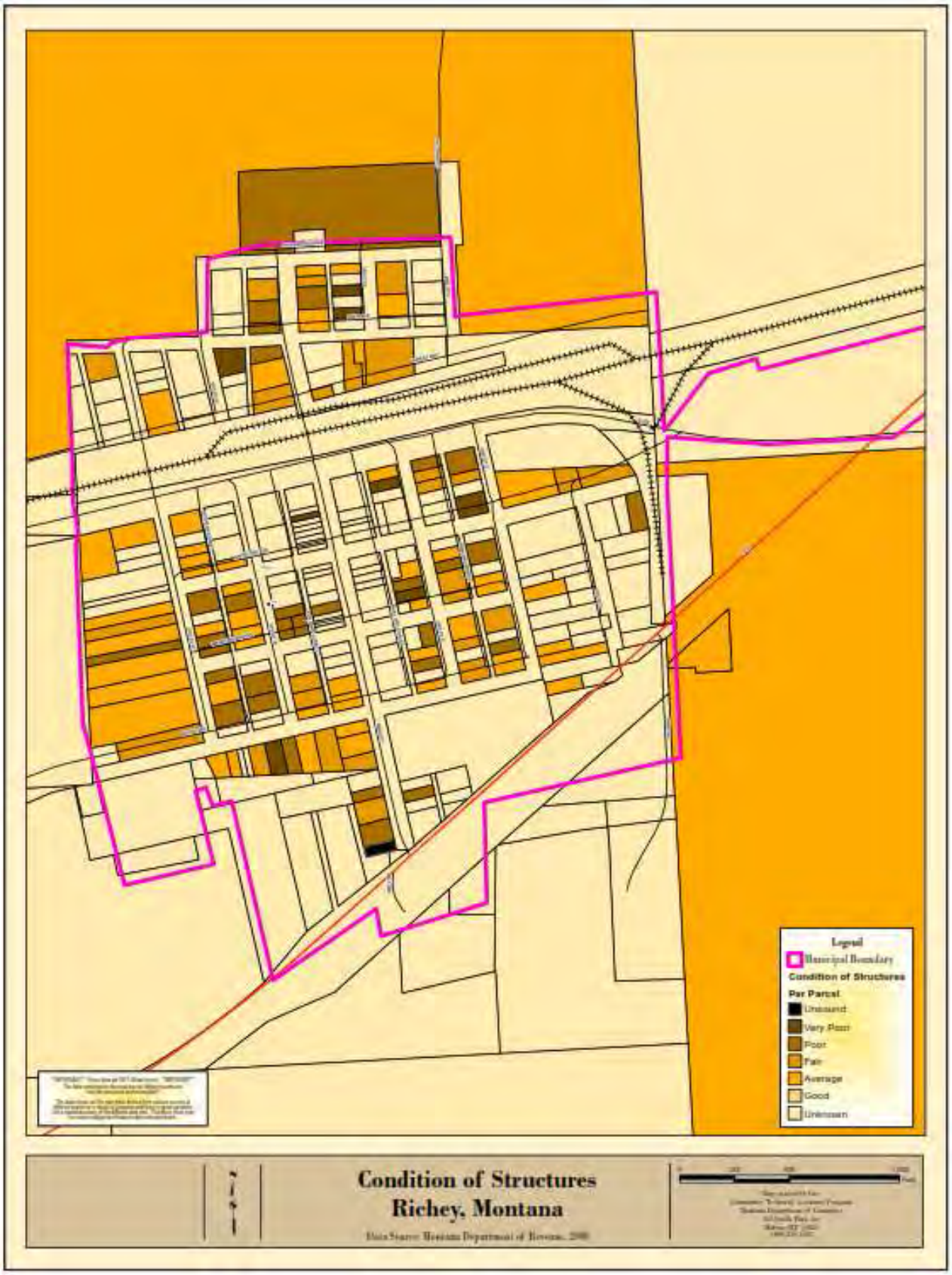
Appendix B

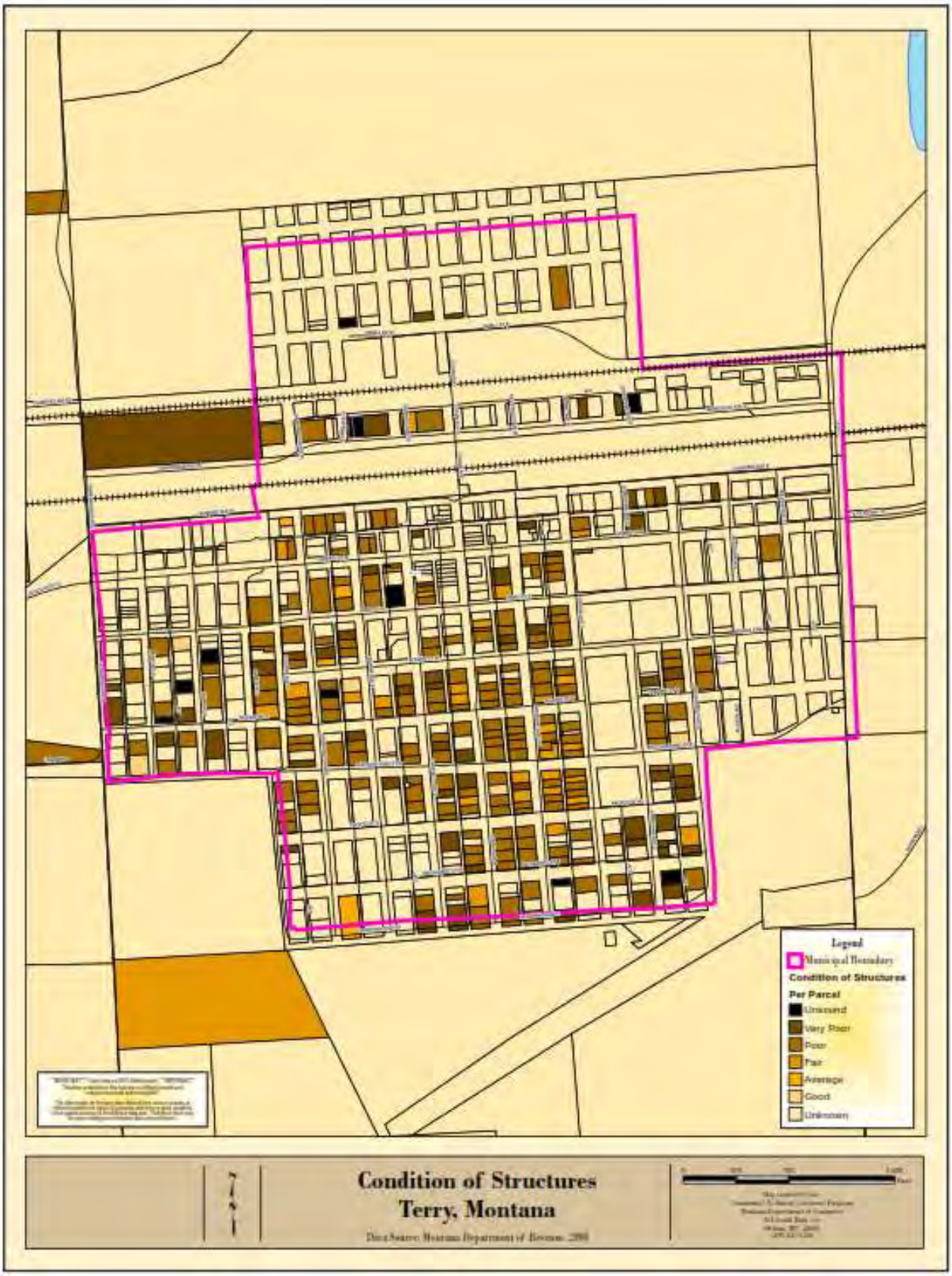

Legend
Municipal Boundary
Condition of Structures
Per Parcel
Unsound
Very Poor
Poor
Fair
Average
Good
Unknown
Condition of Structures
Baker, Montana

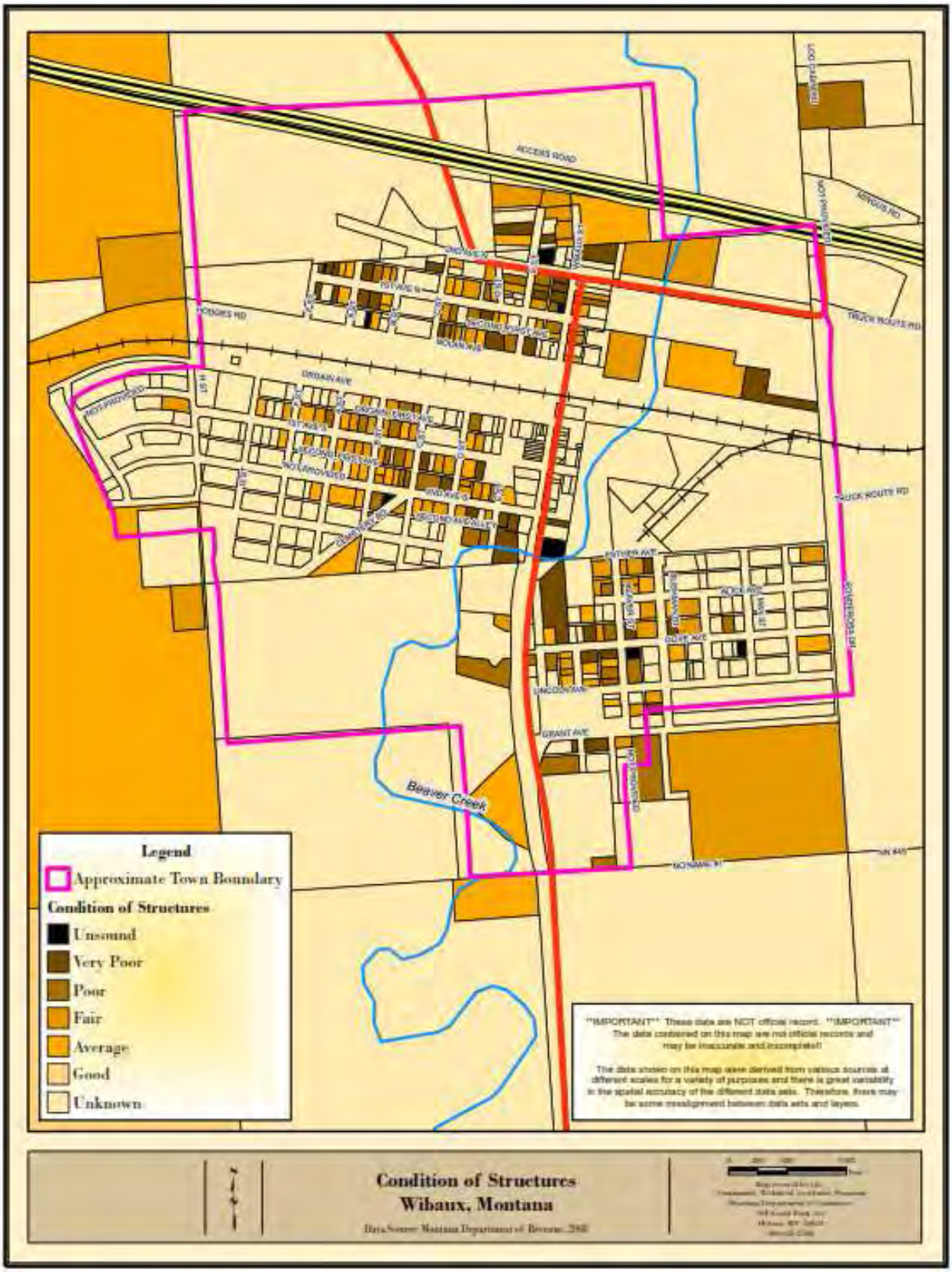

Legend
Municipal Boundary
Condition of Structures
Per Parcel
Unsound
Very Poor
Poor
Fair
Average
Good
Unknown
Condition of Structures
Ekalaka, Montana


Legend
Municipal Boundary
Condition of Structures
Per Parcel
Unsound
Very Poor
Poor
Fair
Average
Good
Unknown
Condition of Structures
Glendive, Montana


Legend
Municipal Boundary
Condition of Structures
Per Parcel
Unsound
Very Poor
Poor
Fair
Average
Good
Unknown
Condition of Structures
Plevna, Montana


Legend
Municipal Boundary
Condition of Structures
Per Parcel
Unsound
Very Poor
Poor
Fair
Average
Good
Unknown
Condition of Structures
Richey, Montana


Legend
Municipal Boundary
Condition of Structures
Per Parcel
Unassess
Very Poor
Poor
Fair
Average
Good
Unknown
Condition of Structures
Terry, Montana


ACCESS ROAD
HOBBES RD
TRUCK ROUTE RD
Beaver Creek
Legend
Approximate Town Boundary
Condition of Structures
Unsound
Very Poor
Poor
Fair
Average
Good
Unknown
"IMPORTANT" These data are NOT official record. "IMPORTANT"
The data contained on this map are not official records and
may be inaccurate and incomplete!!
The data shown on this map were derived from various sources at
different scales for a variety of purposes and there is great variability
in the spatial accuracy of the different data sets. Therefore, there may
be some misalignment between data sets and layers.
Condition of Structures
Wibaux, Montana

Appendix C

Carter County CEDS
SWOT Meeting
10.3.2011

Strengths

- Agriculture base
- Beautiful open spaces "last best place"
- Basic infrastructure in place—clinic/schools/ Hwy 323/airport/nursing home/post office
- People—willing to help, friendly, do a lot with a little
- Improved tax base—resource development, pipelines, bentonite
- Ready for tourism—museum, hunting, Hwy 323, Custer Country, CC Camp, Medicine Rocks
- Affordable place to live
- Few local regulations
- Quality of life—low crime, peaceful
- Natural resources—both transmission and development potential
- Good water

Weaknesses

- Employment opportunities—competition elsewhere, low pay, lack of diversity
- Lack of businesses—trades, retail—need to travel to shop
- Lack of housing, low quality—need some of all types
- Low/declining population
- Transportation options
- Roads—maintenance difficult/expensive
- Smaller ranches/farms being consolidated, inheritance taxes, cost of operations
- Entertainment for youth or adults
- Tax base—town
- Large acreage of federal/state lands
- Cell service

Opportunities

- Develop tourism opportunities
- Educate on "why we live here"—promotional packet for new employees, those interested in living here
- Develop housing—however we have to
- Refurbish and/or build new county/town "building" infrastructure—EMT/fire hall/town hall/library/museum/clinic/senior center/swimming pool, etc.
- Take better care of our teachers and nurses—housing/wages

Threats

- Regulations=$=no resource development
- Lack of housing—can't grow
- Lack of economic diversity
- Perception of what it is like to live in Carter County
- Holding on to property—out of state, seasonal owners
- Improve broadband

Dawson County CEDS
SWOT Meeting
10.4.2011

Strengths

- Transportation infrastructure—I-94/airport/railroad
- Ready to grow/develop
- Strong local government
- Broadband—in Glendive
- Natural resources
- Education system
- Medical facilities
- Leveraging resources
- Several community meetings places
- Hunting, fishing, Makoshika, etc.
- Location—I-94, near oil and gas development
- Companies positioned for growth in region

Weaknesses

- Floodplain
- Aging and/or inadequate infrastructure + expansion
- Rural broadband
- Community meeting centers need upgrades
- Housing—single family, rentals, temporary, affordable, elderly
- Employees for lower paying jobs
- Scattered—business locations, zoning, etc.
- Lacking national political clout
- Plan it, then do it=results (lacking to date)
- Lack of broad community involvement
- Limited financial resources
- Development expertise
- Dilapidated/underused buildings/blight
- Rail spur access
- Outgrowing some services/lack of competition—need some additional services and products
- River “splits” the community
- “Chronically unemployed”
- Communication of what rules and plans are

Opportunities

- Natural resource development
- Utilize oil and gas company resources/philanthropy
- Use the oil and gas companies to develop new infrastructure
- Develop new housing stock—all kinds
- Expand educational opportunities (oil, school to work)
- Develop businesses related to oil (service, manufacturing)
- Prepare for “after”—planning
- Value added agriculture—diversify, self-sufficiency

- Attract workers from “patch” to live here
- Encourage, but also coordinate pipelines
- Push for economic diversification
- Always keep sustainability in mind
- Keep the public informed

Threats

- Regulations/unfunded mandates—federal
- Bust?
- Too many state/local restrictions
- Fear of change—new people, new businesses
- Local “buy in”
- Their [outsider’s] perception of “us”
- Displacement of locals
- Health and safety
- Crime/terrorism
- Growing too fast, planning
- Loss of ag

Fallon County CEDS
SWOT Meeting
10.3.2011

Strengths

- Existing transportation
- Strong local economy—agriculture, oil, gas
- Low unemployment
- Plevna
- School system
- Tax base to support local economies/people—roads, services, etc.
- Strong medical and emergency care
- Local reinvestment/volunteerism/resources/neighbors helping neighbors
- Local expertise—SMART/EPEDC
- Recreation opportunities
- Strong main street
- Quality of life
- Senior services
- Open space/clean environment
- Connectivity

Weaknesses

- Housing stock
- Lack of economic diversity
- Blight/apathy
- Aging municipal infrastructure
- Isolation
- Business outmigration form very small communities (Plevna)
- Public transportation—air, train, bus
- Lack of entertainment
- No truck route
- Rail crossing
- Lack of job applicants
- City/county collaboration
- Mail delivery—P.O. Box only
- Ordinance enforcements—dogs, etc.
- Shortage of lots for development
- Age of business buildings
- Vacant housing not being used, nor is it available
- Rural connectivity
- Volunteer burnout

Opportunities

- Develop housing—any and all types, any and all means
- Improve aged infrastructure—expand (use all resources available, lobby for impact relief)
- Community involvement—don't forget the youth
- Expand education opportunities—trades, adult education, continued education, distance learning

- Utilize local experts for business training/certifications, etc.
- Improve city/county relations and/or consolidate
- Encourage development around oil and gas development
- Expand local development offices capacity
- Improve broadband
- Develop annexation plan, other planning
- Support SMART
- Enforce ordinances
- Coordinate shuttle buses?
- Develop renewable resources

Threats

- Over development
- Regulations
- City/county relations
- Tax revenue taken away
- Not making decisions/taking chances
- Health and safety
- Oil and gas brings the workers—what brings the family?
- Outmigration of youth
- Bust, from any factor

Prairie County CEDS
SWOT Meeting
10.4.2011

Strengths

- Cameron works/culture/heritage (museum, gallery, ECH Inc.)
- Scenic, badlands, Calypso Trail
- Location (I-94, Back Country Byway)
- Medical facilities
- Hunting, fishing, hiking
- School system
- Strong agricultural community
- Strong infrastructure
- Strong debt/asset ratio of residents
- Strong inter-local cooperation
- Active chamber of commerce
- Safe community
- Public lands
- Park/pool/public restrooms
- Airport

Weaknesses

- Housing, lack of elderly (assisted living), family, affordable; seasonal use
- Limited opportunities for youth to stay—succession
- Aging population
- Public lands—limits diversity, tax base
- Blight
- Rural connectivity—broadband
- Lack of municipal water
- City streets
- Tax base—ag only, no diversity

Opportunities

- Expand medical services—technology, capacity, etc.
- Encourage oil and gas, as well as pipeline development
- Diversify the economy
- Continue current tourism pursuits
- Encourage home based business
- Expand ag—brand name marketing (value added)
- Keep “true” multiple-use of public lands
- Invest, encourage, push for housing development
- Improve Prairie Benefits—identify its role, funding
- Improve infrastructure
- Expand County’s role in community

Threats

- Oil and gas—scary, hard to quantify impacts/prepare for zoning
- Lack of youth—aging population
- Transference of businesses—succession, taxes
- Unfunded mandates/regulations
- Uncertainty in health care
- Social Security/Medicare/Medicaid
- Change in tax policy—state/federal taking $
- Public lands restrictions

Wibaux County CEDS
SWOT Meeting
10.4.2011

Strengths

- Location I-94 (tourism), near oil and gas development
- Strong local support, volunteers, etc.
- School system (room for growth, good teacher/student ratio)
- Medical facilities
- Low cost of living
- Tax base
- Strong restaurants and grocery
- Starting to grow
- Trucking "base"
- Historic district/downtown
- Visitor center
- Low crime
- Outdoor recreation—hunting, fishing, etc.
- Open spaces
- Area attractions—dinosaurs, cultural, heritage, museum

Weaknesses

- Housing/rehab existing housing—lack of rentals, elderly transition, single family dwellings—?'s on long-term need
- Outflow of local $
- Floodplain 40% of town
- Infrastructure—aged, not where it needs to be, inadequate for high growth
- Aging population
- Resistance to change
- Small school enrollment
- Blight
- Lack of diversity for good paying jobs
- Dependent on ag and oil and gas
- Lacking promotion of community
- Nursing home—lack of use, building needs work, length of stay down
- Lacking trade and general contractors
- Motels

Opportunities

- Facilitate/encourage all types of housing development—rehab (CDBG), local project (4-plex), incentives?
- Small business start-ups (support services)
- Diversify—other jobs not oil, gas, and ag dependent
- Campground—who owns? can we develop?
- Benefit from natural resource development—jobs, tax base, development, etc.
- Attract the family
- Pave Hwy 261 to Sidney
- "Put them where we want them"

- Encourage pipelines, with safety first
- City/county collaboration
- Ask oil and gas companies to help

Threats

- Regulations
- Changes in federal/state programs and $
- Cost of living to locals—residents and business owners
- Quality of life downgraded
- Environmental risks
- Health and safety risks
- Infrastructure capacity/failure
- Who/what our neighbors are going to be—zoning? planning?
- Increased blight
- Bust

Appendix D

Master List of Acronyms and Terms

BEA – Bureau of Economic Analysis
BEAR – Business Expansion and Retention
BFE – base flood elevation
BLM – Bureau of Land Management
BNSF – Burlington Northern Santa Fe
BRD – Business Resources Department
CECRA – Comprehensive Environmental Cleanup and Responsibility Act
CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
CLF – civilian labor force
CRDC – Certified Regional Development Corporation
CTAP – Community Technical Assistance Program (administered by the MT Department of Commerce)
CTP – Cooperative Technical Partnership Program
DCC – Dawson Community College
DCEDC – Dawson County Economic Development Council
DEQ – Department of Environmental Quality
DNRC – Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
EDA – Economic Development Administration
EDD – Economic Development District
EMBC – Eastern Montana Brownfield Coalition
EMI – Eastern Montana Industries
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
EPEDC – Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation
FFPA – Farmland Protection Policy Act
FTE – full-time employee
FWP – Fish Wildlife and Parks
GNDC – Great Northern Development Corporation
HRDC – Human Resource Development Council
ITRR – Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research
ITV – interactive television
LDOs – local development organizations
MACO – Montana Association of Counties
MEDA – Montana Economic Developers Association
MCA – Montana Code Annotated
MDU – Montana-Dakota Utilities
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
NACO – National Association of Counties
NFIP – National Flood Insurance Program
NPL – National Priorities List (as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)
NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service
OMB – Office of Management and Budget
PCEDC – Prairie County Economic Development Council
PTE – part-time employee
PWS – public water systems
RC&D – Resource Conservation & Development
RED – Richland Economic Development
SBDC – Small Business Development Center
SEMDC – Southeastern Montana Economic Development Corporation
SHPO – State Historic Preservation Office
SMART – Southeastern Montana Area Revitalization Team
SRF – State Revolving Fund
SWAP – Source Water Assessment Program
WRP – Wetlands Reserve Program
WQA – Water Quality Act
WSA – Wilderness Study Area

Appendix E

Disaster and Economic Recovery and Resiliency Strategy

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 10-3-103 defines the following:

(3) "Disaster" means the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural or artificial cause, including tornadoes, windstorms, snowstorms, wind-driven water, high water, floods, wave action, earthquakes, landslides, mudslides, volcanic action, fires, explosions, air or water contamination requiring emergency action to avert danger or damage, blight, droughts, infestations, riots, sabotage, hostile military or paramilitary action, disruption of state services, accidents involving radiation byproducts or other hazardous materials, outbreak of disease, bioterrorism, or incidents involving weapons of mass destruction.

(7) "Emergency" means the imminent threat of a disaster causing immediate peril to life or property that timely action can avert or minimize.

In the event of a disaster, the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPEDC), in conjunction with its regional partners, is prepared to facilitate planning and recovery efforts as outlined in the following strategy document. However, this brief strategy is in no way intended to undermine or replace existing federal, state, or local disaster plans. This document simply establishes the District's role in both pre- and post-disaster planning and recovery.

Phase I: Pre-disaster Preparedness

The EPEDC supports and encourages its communities to:

- Engage in pre-disaster recovery and mitigation planning
- Regularly assess the community's risks and vulnerabilities
- Inventory and organize the community's recovery resources
- Engage in business continuity planning
- Ensure resources are available for the elderly and those with special needs
- Identify shelters
- Identify recovery partners, as well as the type of assistance and resources they can provide
- Establish a timeline for recovery activities (immediate, short-term, intermediate, and long-term)
- Develop and disseminate a community evacuation plan
- Establish a communication chain
- Engage the community's residents in the planning and recovery process

Regional Risks and Vulnerabilities

The EPEDC region is vulnerable to a wide variety of disasters including, but not limited to, fires, flooding, chemical/biological warfare, dam failure, drought and extreme heat, freeze events and extreme cold, earthquakes, hazardous materials, landslides, nuclear attack, tornadoes, vector-borne diseases, volcanic fallout, violence, and terrorism.

Recovery and Mitigation: EPEDC Regional Challenges
Small population dispersed over a large area
Lack of comprehensive services
Isolation/lack of access
Limited options for transmitting information
Possibility for widespread interruption of services
High percentage of stationary, at-risk population (elderly)
Lack of economic diversity, loss of "one" may mean loss of "all"
Limited transit options
Limited incomes
Few liquid assets, significant amount of money tied up in land and equipment
Vulnerable infrastructure, including historic sites and structures
Heavy reliance on imported materials and food

Recovery and Mitigation Planning

Without being prepared for the complexity of redevelopment in a compressed timeframe following a major disaster, local officials may struggle with recovery decisions and miss opportunities for public participation in reshaping the community's future. To become more disaster-resilient, local governments should plan for what must happen after rescue and recovery operations are completed in order to return the community to normal or perhaps rebuild an even better community. Through a Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP or Plan), local governments can collaboratively create a long-term recovery and redevelopment strategy in pursuit of a sustainable community. Plans identify policies, operational strategies, as well as roles and responsibilities for implementation that will guide decisions affecting long-term recovery and redevelopment of the community after a disaster. They emphasize seizing opportunities for hazard mitigation and community improvement consistent with the goals of local and regional comprehensive plans, with full participation from the area's citizens.

There are three principal benefits to having a well-developed Plan:

1) Faster and More Efficient Recovery

Without a comprehensive, long-term recovery plan, ad hoc efforts in the aftermath of a significant disaster will delay the return of community stability. Creating a process to make smart post-disaster decisions and prepare for long-term recovery requirements enables a community to do more than react, prompting post-disaster action rather than time-consuming debate. By identifying appropriate planning mechanisms, financial assistance, and agency roles and responsibilities beforehand, a community begins the road to recovery more quickly. Being able to show efficient and effective use of taxpayer dollars after a disaster is incredibly important for the public's perception of the recovery.

2) Opportunity to Build Back Better

A disaster, while tragic, can also create opportunities to fix past mistakes or leap forward with plans for community improvements. In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, local officials are under significant pressure to restore the community to its pre-disaster condition. Without a guiding vision, short-term decisions may inadvertently restrict long-term, sustainable redevelopment and overlook opportunities to surpass the status quo. A Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan strengthens the recovery process, and communities benefit from assessing their risk levels and crafting a long-term redevelopment plan under "blue skies." Local officials and the public can thoughtfully analyze and debate issues, linking redevelopment goals with other important community plans. Careful thought and planning achieves a more sustainable and resilient outcome than decisions made under emergency circumstances, compromised budgets, and political pressures.

3) Local Control Over Recovery

Developing a PDRP provides local government officials, residents, and businesses the opportunity to determine long-term redevelopment goals and develop policies and procedures that will guide redevelopment before well-intended outside agencies and non-government organizations rush to aid the community. While outside resources

are needed and welcomed in a major or catastrophic disaster, a locally developed Plan will best channel those resources to effectively meet the community's specific needs and goals. A Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan will show outside agencies and donors that the community is prepared to play an active role in the recovery process and promote its capabilities to wisely use donated and loaned resources. There will always be rules and, occasionally, strings attached to external sources of funding, but a community that has researched the allowable uses of federal and state assistance can better work within their boundaries in an effort to fund projects that further local and regional redevelopment goals.

CAN A DISASTER PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE YOUR COMMUNITY'S VISION?

The EPEDC's communities participated in the region's comprehensive planning process. PDRPs can identify disaster scenarios in which opportunities may be present to advance already-stated visions for these communities in a compressed timeframe.

Opportunities to Consider During Post-Disaster Redevelopment

- Disaster-resilient land use patterns
- Hazard mitigation construction techniques
- Energy-efficient buildings
- Healthy community design
- Affordable or workforce housing
- Alternative transportation networks
- Environmental preservation and habitat restoration
- Sustainable industry recruitment

Tornadoes, wildfires, floods, and other disasters do not confine themselves to jurisdictional boundaries. Displaced residents, compromised infrastructure, changes in economic conditions, hazardous materials contamination, and degradation of sensitive environments are some of the impacts that can affect an entire region after a major disaster. When recovery is slow, neighboring communities also experience these impacts for an extended period of time.

A PDRP is designed to be used in any disaster, regardless of type, as long as the damage will require long-term redevelopment efforts. It is an all-hazards plan addressing disasters identified in each county's Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) and each community's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). As an economic development organization serving Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie, and Wibaux Counties, the EPEDC will respond accordingly, utilizing the resources and information outlined in the region's CEDS document. Therefore, counties are encouraged to incorporate PDRP strategies into their disaster planning documents.

Disaster Phases and Redevelopment

Disaster management is typically viewed as a cycle with overlapping phases: 1) pre-disaster mitigation and emergency management preparedness; 2) emergency response; 3) short-term recovery; and 4) long-term recovery and redevelopment.

Pre-Disaster Phase – Mitigation and recovery planning occurs during the pre-disaster phase (unless a community is struck by a disaster before planning is complete). Once a mitigation and recovery plan is adopted, preparatory activities should be implemented on an on-going basis during normal operations, which are sometimes referred to as "blue skies." Plans should be tested prior to a disaster event, so that all stakeholders with a post-disaster implementation role are familiar with their responsibilities.

Emergency Response Phase –Emergency response activities are specifically addressed in a municipality's EOP and include immediate actions to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs. This is the shortest phase of the cycle, lasting only a few days in minor disaster conditions.

Short-Term Recovery Phase – The role of any plan during the short-term recovery phase is to begin organizing for long-term redevelopment activities and guiding short-term recovery decisions that may have long-term implications (e.g., placement of temporary housing or debris sites). Short-term recovery operations are addressed in EOPs, but a recovery plan can provide direction for transitioning to long-term redevelopment during this phase. The short-

term recovery phase begins as the emergency response phase is winding down and will continue until critical services are restored. The duration of the short-term recovery phase depends on the severity of the disaster and the level of community preparedness.

Long-Term Recovery and Redevelopment Phase – A recovery plan is used most during this phase. Long-term recovery and redevelopment includes efforts to reconstruct and enhance the built environment, as well as recover the economy, environment, and social systems. This phase begins as short-term recovery activities are accomplished and can last from a couple years for a minor disaster to five or more years for a major or catastrophic disaster.

Interaction with Other Plans

The objective of this "Disaster and Economic Recovery and Resiliency Strategy" is to guide the redevelopment decision-making process following a disaster in a manner consistent with local comprehensive plans (especially Future Land Use maps, where applicable), Local Mitigation Strategies, Emergency Operation Plans, and other relevant plans or codes, such as land development regulations. Each of these plans, and potentially others, has pre-existing policies or procedures that affect post-disaster redevelopment. For instance, local comprehensive plans include many policies that determine where and to what extent redevelopment can occur. Ultimately, the EPEDC will help its counties and communities access the information and resources necessary for making post-disaster redevelopment decisions.

EPEDC Region: Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) Contact Information

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John Pisk - Prairie County
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Frank Datta - Wibaux County
P.O. Box 336
Wibaux, MT 59353
406-796-2218

Phase II: Post-disaster Planning and Implementation

Disaster Assessment

In the days and weeks following a disaster, the EPEDC will be available to assist counties and communities:

- Assess the nature and magnitude of the disaster
- Assess the impact on both local and regional economies (business, industry sectors, labor market, etc.)
- Assess the impact on transportation and public infrastructure
- Assess the impact on housing, schools, and health care facilities

Develop and/or Implement Recovery Timeline

Based on the results of the disaster assessment, the EPEDC will help regional partners and community leaders move forward with:

- Listing and prioritizing recovery activities to be performed
- Identifying resources (federal, state, local, and private sector) needed for each activity
- Determining the level and type of assistance needed
- Identifying roles and responsibilities
- Determining the timeframe for each recovery activity (immediate, short-term, intermediate, or long-term)
- Establishing recovery benchmarks

Implementing the Recovery Plan (long-term recovery)

In order to accomplish recovery activities quantified as part of long-term recovery, the EPEDC is capable of:

- Identifying business, economic, and entrepreneurial rebuild initiatives
- Identifying and utilizing workforce initiatives to employ workers and rebuild the local economy

- Applying for funds from federal, state, and local programs
- Developing management plans to ensure the most effective use of funds

Prioritizing Areas to Focus Redevelopment

Limited time, funds, and materials are going to make simultaneous redevelopment of all damaged areas difficult. Communities may want to encourage redevelopment in areas that correspond to their vision for the future and those less vulnerable to disasters by prioritizing and incentivizing development in these areas. The best way to build resiliency to disasters is to direct future development to safe locations, while minimizing or mitigating highly vulnerable types of development in hazardous areas. After a disaster, targeted sustainable redevelopment areas can provide immediate opportunities for redevelopment since they will have sustained less damage and can be prioritized for infrastructure restoration and expedited permitting. Allowing for rapid redevelopment in safe areas intended for increased future development will minimize vulnerable redevelopment and/or allow time to plan the sustainable reconstruction of areas severely impacted by the disaster. Designated priority recovery and redevelopment areas can also be used to locate temporary post-disaster facilities more efficiently that are consistent with future land uses.

Historic Preservation and Restoration

The loss of historic resources due to a disaster can have a major impact on the community. Some losses may be unavoidable, but others could occur accidently during recovery operations if procedures are not in place to watch for these concerns. Historic structures are particularly vulnerable to damage due to their age, and repair of these structures must meet certain requirements to maintain their character and historic designation. There may also be funding opportunities before or after a disaster for implementing mitigation measures to prevent further damage to historic resources. Engaging state and local historic preservation organizations in the planning and implementation process can ensure that the unique considerations involved with preserving and restoring historic structures and archeological sites are included in a community's recovery plan.

Reducing Disaster Vulnerability through Land Use and Development Regulations

The best practice for post-disaster redevelopment is to restrict rebuilding in hazardous locations and require mitigation where vulnerable redevelopment cannot be precluded. While this plan of action would ensure optimal community resiliency to disasters, it may be very difficult to achieve and may not be a good choice for the first action to be tackled when implementing any recovery plan. However, with careful consideration of the legal implications concerning property rights and extensive public outreach, there are many regulatory tools for increasing disaster resiliency that may be a possibility for the region, especially if pursued during the post-disaster "window of opportunity" for future reductions in disaster vulnerability. Potential regulatory methods could include reduced intensity or density of use, special permit requirements, increased setbacks from hazard sources (e.g., a waterway or building, etc.), hazard-specific site design requirements, and/or increased structural mitigation requirements. These methods could be implemented through policies instituting lower damage thresholds requiring nonconforming uses/structures to meet current standards (in certain zones or throughout the jurisdiction), zoning overlay districts, post-disaster specific land development codes, and/or special assessment districts to fund mitigation projects that benefit more than one property.

ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT

The ability of a local economy to rebound after a disaster dictates the success of the community's long-term recovery. The return of jobs, tourism, capital investments, and other indicators of economic health are dependent upon housing recovery, infrastructure restoration, environmental restoration, and social service provision. The involvement of the private sector in the post-disaster planning process is imperative for determining the priorities and actions that will be beneficial to restoring the local economy. Consideration must be given to the different obstacles that could potentially hinder economic recovery, such as those that small businesses will face, decisions large employers will have to make about whether to relocate, opportunities for sustainable diversification of the economic base, and job training and workforce recruitment needed to meet altered market conditions after a major disaster.

Resumption and Retention of Major Employers

Rapid resumption of existing major employers is key to a community's economic recovery after a disaster, especially as employment provides a reason for most residents to return and rebuild quickly. Typically, the major employers in the region are already going to have business continuity plans and will not need the basic disaster preparedness education necessary for smaller businesses. These companies are often able to work with local governments as partners in planning for post-disaster redevelopment and provide insight as to what government assistance they will need to ensure rapid resumption. Major employers may also have the means to assist in actions to support workforce retention if included in the planning process. While large company recovery assistance will vary, typically businesses located in hazardous areas or older structures may need assistance to reopen or relocate, temporarily or permanently, within the area.

If businesses do not feel a sense of connection to the community or fear that recovery will not be successful, there is a chance that they will relocate their company elsewhere after a disaster. This is especially the case for corporate headquarters and industries that are not location-dependent or whose location choice is tied to quality of life factors. Mitigation and recovery plans provide the private sector with confidence in the community's ability to continue providing the market environment necessary for conducting business. Some factors that may aid the retention of major employers include a high level of communication before and after a disaster about post-disaster redevelopment goals and expectations and/or incentives to ensure retention, if necessary.

Small Business Assistance

A "small business" is often perceived as a family-owned business that provides services solely to the local community. Small businesses comprise the majority of businesses in the EPEDC region. Small businesses are more likely than large businesses to either never reopen after a major disaster or fail shortly after reopening. Several factors may be involved in these failures, including the extent of damage to a community, timing of reopening, and lack of financial reserves.

Short periods without cash flow can be damaging, and small businesses often find restrictions and loan arrangements overwhelming. The region's SBDC Director will be on-hand to help guide businesses through the redevelopment process. The EPEDC also has access to a certain RLF funds that may be available to businesses during post-disaster redevelopment. *A complete list of economic development partners and resources can be found on pages 76-80 of the CEDS document*. Loans are typically based on the pre-event business and tax returns of the firm and require extensive collateralization. Post-disaster market changes, however, may mean the company isn't able to do as well as it did pre-disaster, and the loan, even at below-market interest rates, sometimes becomes a burden to the long-term survivability of the business.

Workforce Retention

While trying to retain existing businesses, efforts must also address retaining the workforce that supports those businesses. Actions such as ensuring that schools reopen and childcare is available, allowing temporary on-site housing for employees, and communication of a community's post-disaster plan can assist in getting employees back to jobs as soon as the businesses have reopened.

After a disaster, the market for certain businesses may decrease or be eliminated due to financial troubles or customer demand changes. However, other industries may provide employment opportunities, such as the construction industry, which will boom temporarily due to rebuilding needs. Workforce training programs are important to provide residents with appropriate skill sets to fill newly available positions due to recovery efforts and to adjust workforce skills to other industries that may take a more permanent hold in the community due to post-disaster business recruitment efforts. Providing locals with first preference for temporary recovery work is important for keeping workers from moving out of the area.

Physical Economic Redevelopment Projects

In some circumstances, opportunities may arise after a disaster to move forward with planned physical economic development projects or to create new projects that take advantage of post-disaster funding, available land, or public will. Economic development projects that are disaster-resilient and fill a need in the community after a

disaster should be a priority for post-disaster funding. In addition, the community can prioritize projects that incorporate energy efficiency and other "green" building design considerations. Business districts can be prime locations to focus post-disaster redevelopment projects since these districts offer financial tools or incentives, such as tax increment financing, reductions on impact fees, and state tax incentives. Economic leaders can also consider ways to expand these business districts and leverage funding that would be available through disaster programs from several federal agencies, including the Community Development Block Grant program and Economic Development Administration disaster assistance program.

Opportunities to Sustainably Restore Economic Vitality

Retaining existing businesses is the first priority after a disaster; however, post-disaster redevelopment may also present an opportunity for businesses to assess their long-term applicability in the local market and take advantage of any changes in demographics or business incentives that may occur due to disaster impacts and an influx in outside funding to the area. For instance, a business that was already struggling before the disaster may need to rethink its business plan and use the disaster as an entrepreneurial impetus unless it happens to be engaged in one of the few economic activities that benefit from a disaster, such as the development industry. Inevitably, some large and small businesses that bear the brunt of significant damage or indirect losses are going to fail or choose to relocate after a major disaster. This can affect the unemployment rate of the county if new businesses do not replace those that relocate. Ideally, a community would have a diverse spectrum of businesses so that if one industry sector is severely impacted by a disaster, the majority of the workforce will not be affected. Unfortunately, the EPEDC region struggles with a lack of economic diversity, which means that in the event of a disaster the loss of one business could mean the loss off all the local benefits provided by that employer/industry. Efforts to diversify the local economy with industries that are less vulnerable to disasters should be integrated into ongoing economic development activities. Industries targeted for attraction and incentive programs after a disaster should be those that will provide a more disaster-resilient and sustainable economy for the community and are appropriate for the post-disaster circumstances.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

Restoration of infrastructure and critical public facilities after a disaster is a prerequisite for recovery – one that is addressed in local government and private utility and infrastructure companies' emergency response and short-term recovery plans. There are long-term redevelopment considerations for infrastructure restoration, however, that must be weighed in conjunction with land use, environment, housing, and economic redevelopment issues. Taking advantage of opportunities to upgrade, mitigate, or even relocate infrastructure or public facilities after a disaster is critical. Advanced planning allows a community to make deliberate decisions about redevelopment that it may otherwise have had less opportunity to do during the post-disaster rush to rebuild. Decisions about infrastructure reconstruction will influence private redevelopment decisions, and using disaster repairs as an opportunity to include hazard mitigation allows a local government to lead by example.

There are many agencies, jurisdictions, and stakeholders involved in providing infrastructure, public facilities, and utility services. Before and after a disaster, these private and public entities need to establish communication and coordination procedures to ensure that long-term recovery and redevelopment occurs in an efficient and organized manner. Each agency or company should have its own recovery plan; however, if any opportunities for directing redevelopment are to be pursued then coordination and communication are critical.

Types of Infrastructure and Public Facilities to Address in Post-disaster Redevelopment Planning

A community's infrastructure is made up of a number of different systems and structures, each of which should be considered carefully:

- *Transportation systems* – The repair of roads, bridges, railroads, airports, and public transit is essential to establishing normal operations within a community. The repair of these and other types of infrastructure is often necessary for other redevelopment efforts to take place. Post-disaster redevelopment can be used as an opportunity to modify, improve, and add to existing transportation networks. Incorporating hazard mitigation into the repair and reconstruction of transportation facilities can ensure that when disaster strikes again, the infrastructure is better able to handle the impacts.

- *Potable water, sewer, and stormwater systems* – Damage to potable water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure can weaken a community's ability to recover. Like with other infrastructure, the community can take the opportunity to include hazard mitigation or other improvements during repairs. In cases of severe damage to infrastructure in highly hazardous locations, relocation could be considered. These opportunities may be missed if pre-planning is not conducted.
- *Power, natural gas, and telecommunications* – Recovery from a disaster cannot begin until major utilities, especially electricity, are restored.
- *Public facilities* – Rebuilding after a disaster provides an opportunity to mitigate future hazard impacts and build back a more resilient community. Public facilities, such as schools, libraries, and government offices must be rebuilt to current building codes. However, above-code hazard mitigation may also be a good investment, and post-disaster funding sources may allow these expenditures. Some public facilities in highly hazardous areas could potentially be targeted for relocation during pre-disaster planning.
- *Parks and recreation facilities* – While parks and recreation facilities are typically not a priority for recovery, they are important for regaining quality of life as part of long-term redevelopment. Park properties also are often used in staging recovery efforts, such as temporary vegetative debris storage.

Financing Infrastructure and Public Facilities Repair

When a community starts to make decisions about which structures to relocate after a disaster or which mitigation projects it should invest in pre-disaster, they should consider funding availability. Knowing where to prioritize spending requires some basic knowledge of what is covered under insurance policies, which projects will be eligible for federal reimbursement through the Public Assistance Program, which projects can be funded through grant programs, and what financial reserves can be targeted for grant matching funds or local investment. When a community begins to address its infrastructure issues as part of the initial planning process or as a pre-disaster implementation action, it can launch an assessment of county or municipal insurance policies to determine which facilities are covered and for what extent of damage. They can then use this assessment to make decisions about increasing coverage or financing repairs to uninsured structures. They can also determine whether mitigation enhancements would be covered under current policies and Public Assistance or whether additional funding would be needed.

Public Assistance: Improved and Alternate Projects

Occasionally an Applicant may determine that improvements should be made while restoring a damaged facility; or even that the public would not be best served by restoring a damaged facility or its function at all. FEMA refers to these projects respectively as improved and alternate. All requests for these projects must be approved prior to construction.

Possible Alternate Projects

- Repair or expansion of other public facilities;
- Construction of new public facilities;
- Purchase of capital equipment; and
- Funding of hazard mitigation measures in the area affected by the disaster.

Possible Improved Projects

- Relocation of public facilities;
- Using improved materials;
- Expanding capacity, and
- Rebuilding to higher codes and standards

Conclusion

In the event of a disaster, the EPEDC is committed to:

- Providing local officials, business leaders, and other community partners with access to regional demographic, economic, and hazard vulnerability data

- Developing technical expertise and economic analysis tools for conducting initial disaster assessments and long-term economic impact analysis
- Establishing collaborative relationships with local government officials and non-government organizations that may provide data, funding, technical expertise, and other resources essential to intermediate and long-term economic recovery following a disaster event
- Offering grant writing expertise and technical assistance to regional and local entities, both for pre-disaster resiliency initiatives as well as post-disaster recovery efforts
- Establishing familiarity with traditional economic and community recovery funding sources, including resources for business development assistance programs, such as EDA's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) programs as well as private, nonprofit, and philanthropic resources
- Providing technical support to impacted businesses
- Encouraging concepts and principles of economic resiliency strategies into the existing planning and development plans and activities within the region
- Leveraging assets
- Offering a neutral forum to convene diverse stakeholders and facilitate discussion and planning initiatives around the issues of economic resiliency preparedness and recovery

For additional information on this CEDS document, the EPEDC, or regional updates please visit:

www.epedc.com

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