

## Idaho Facts

### Coldwell Banker Commercial Salt Lake City, Utah

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Idaho is comprised of 82,413 square miles. The state geography varies from high desert in the southern region to beautiful forests on rugged mountains in the north. In 1996, there were 15 persons per square mile. By 2006, that number had grown to 18. The nine counties that comprise the urban area of Idaho had 59% of the population and 99.7 persons per square mile. The other 35 counties make up the rural area of Idaho with 31% of the population and 6.3 persons per square mile.

From 2005 to 2006, the state's population grew 2.6% from 1,429,367 to 1,466,465, while the U.S. population grew by 1%. This growth ranked Idaho as the third fastest growing state in the country as measured by percent change, but ranked 39th by actual population numbers. The biggest growth years in Idaho occurred during the early 1990's when, due to a healthy economy in Idaho and economic downturns in other states, many people moved to Idaho looking for jobs. At that time the population was growing by about 3% per year. The current growth rate is 2.6%. As the economy in other states improved, the migration to Idaho slowed. From 1996 to 2006 the state's population grew 22%.

The 22% growth in Idaho's labor force over the past 10 years is similar to its growth in population. In the early 1900's the labor force increased not only because of new residents, but also because economic expansion during that time provided more opportunities for Idaho's working age population. The civilian labor force is a count of people 16 years of age and older who live in Idaho and are either working or looking for work. The growth in the number of non-farm jobs, a count of jobs and not people, had no growth in 2002 as a result of the economic recession. The number of jobs began to rebound in 2004. In 2006 over 27,000 jobs were added. The largest area of growth was construction which has added 6,900 jobs last year. The largest job loss was in the information sector due to the reclassification of a business from information to administrative service.

