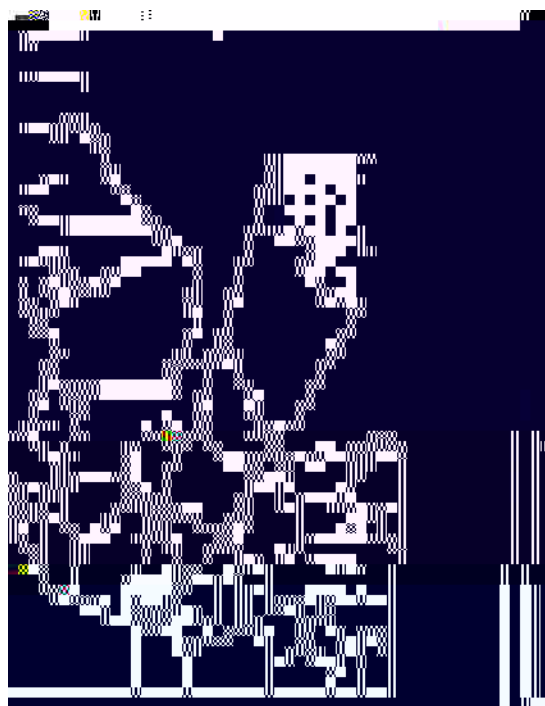


Gooding County Situation Analysis



Revised 2010

Gooding County Situation Analysis 1

Geographic Features

Gooding County is a sage brush desert, with mesas and canyons and volcanic rock scattered among farm ground. Rivers found within the county include The Big and Little Wood Rivers that join together to make the Malad River. The Malad River then joins the Snake River which borders the county to the south. There are also many canals and ditches which cross the county to provide irrigation water to livestock and farms including: the Northside Canal, the American Falls Irrigation district and Magic Water Irrigation district.

Climatic Characteristics

Gooding's mild climate compares favorably with the rest of the state. A four season environment, the water features a definite spring, summer, fall and winter. The average high temperature of the area is 88 degrees, average low temperature of 30 degrees and average precipitation of 9.78 inches. 33% of the precipitation usually falls in April through September. The growing season for most crops falls within this period. The average date for the first and last frost is September 22nd and May 3rd respectively. The growing season for Gooding County is an estimated 150 days. Microbursts of wind and weather are also found in the area. Microbursts can upset wheel lines, pivots, power lines, crops, and other structures in its path.

Historical records in 0 TDT/TIn also 0 Tw (g upset w) 0002 Tcrsts (P fo 004 County is an ewa

The first introduction of white men into the county was trappers in the Malad River Valley in the early 1800's. In this early time there was an abundance of fur bearing animals along the Snake and Malad Rivers.

It was however, the numerous springs, the agricultural lands of Hagerman Valley, and gold in the sands of the Snake River first attracted new people to remain in this region. Then farming settlements and stock ranches were developed in the late 1800's. In early 1860, the famous Ben Halladay stage ran through the county with a station at Uhrlab's crossing, and the horses were rested by in the Horse Haven. The stages ran through this area until mid 1880 as the Union Pacific main line came through Bliss in 1883. The Union Pacific railroad sided a rail and put a telegraph in the car and called the station Bliss. David R. Bliss, who the station was named after settled in the area in 1879 and began raising livestock. His ranch became the center of activity by 1883, as it was a rendezvous and headquarters place for miners and cowboys in the area.

Also in 1883, the Oregon Short Line Railway came first established in Gooding; then called Toponis as named by Chief Engineer E. B. Insdorfer of the Oregon Short Line. "Toponis" was a name originated from Shoshone Indian name meaning "Black Cherries." The name was changed to "Gooding" in honor of Frank Gooding, Governor of Idaho 1902-1909, as he used part of his ranch to layout and develop the town site. Much of the early development of Gooding County is credited to the ambitions and vision of Frank Gooding.

Gooding County can boast of its railroad, the Southern Railroad, that was incorporated for \$250,000 and made its first run December 12, 1908. The first run was made on a trip from Gooding to Wendell and on to Jerome. The train made daily runs from Gooding to Jerome for eight years before the opening of the Oregon Short Line and the Automobile finally eroded its business away. The rails were not removed for several years and were used by Charles Youngman his "Gallopig Goose," a Stanley Steamer, on the rails. Finally the rail beds were used to build a highway between Wendell and Gooding that now has been replaced by a newer, wider highway.

Gooding County in its beginning was part of what historians refer to as the "The Mother of Counties." Alturas County was established February 4, 1864, and included the counties now established as Blaine, Coeur d'Alene, Elmore, Gooding, Lincoln, Jerome, Minidoka, and greater parts of Cluster, Bingham, and Power. The name of Alturas came from the Spanish language, meaning "High" (probably referring to the mountainous areas). Elmore County was established in 1881, then Alturas County was ended by Supreme Court decision on June 3, 1891, with development of Blaine County on March 5, 1895, and Lincoln County on May 8, 1895. Lincoln County included Gooding, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Jerome Counties.

Idaho became a state in 1890 and the Cattle Act of 1894 opened up the area to a stampede of homesteaders eager to claim the land. Irrigated agriculture was first developed in areas along the Big Wood and Little Wood Rivers however the modern agricultural base resulted from the construction of large scale government irrigation projects. The Reclamation Act of 1902 provided the funding and coordination needed to build dams and large canal systems, most of which were completed in 1920.

In 1904-1907, there were three irrigation ditches from the Snake River: the North Central (Richfield and Dietrich) with a reservoir on the Big Wood River; the Northside tract of Hazelton-Eden with 30,000 acre, and south central irrigation extending to the Hagerman Valley, with Snake River diversion from the Milner Dam. With the completion of these irrigation systems, farming industry became more stabilized in the area, thus enhancing industry and farm growth.

By 1910, it became apparent the towns of Jero

one at Bliss. With these pits and subsidiary elements of electricity movement, Idaho Power Company employs 80 plus people to make its functions workable.

The growth of Gooding County has been aided by the Extension Service in 1919 A.N. Smith was appointed County Agent in that year. The tract was very new at that time and he was faced with the problem of producing enough feed to maintain livestock through the winter months. O.E. McConnell was then County Agent from 1923-1935 during which he did much work in getting better market activities by using wool, lamb, hog, and turkey pools. In these times hogs were a very important commodity as a variety of feeds were used to fatten them. Dairying was a very tough beginning as dairy stock was bought and sold as feed became available. When adequate irrigation water supplies were maintained and development of farming land was established did dairying become economically stable.

Over the years many sheep ranchers based their operations from Gooding County which brought a rich Basque culture to the area.

POPULATION AND LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Population

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2008
Total	8,645	11,874	11,633	14,155	14,295
Pop. Per square mile	11.9	16.3	15.9	19.4	19.6
	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-1999	2000-2008	
Population change %	37.4	(-3.1)	19.7%	(1.0%)	
		1980	1990	2000	
Percent Rural		75.2	75.8	74.6	
Percent Urban		24.8	24.2	25.4	

Age Distribution

	1980	1990	2000	2008
Median Age	32	34.7	35.1	35.8
Under 18 Years (%)	30.9	30.3	29.6	28.5
18-64 Years (%)	53.9	52.5	55	57.3
65 Years (%)	15.2	17.3	15.4	14.3

Race & Ethnicity	1990	2000	2008
White	10,886	12,399	13,874
Black	7	33	48
Am Indian	43	119	162
Asian	29	33	48
Pac Islander	2	8	
Hispanic	1021	2414	3,470
Total	11,633	14,155	14,461

Hispanic Origin (not same as race)	1980	1990	2000	2008
	6.8%	8.8%	17.1%	24.3%

County Population by Cities	2000	2005
Bliss	275	260
Gooding	3,384	3,320
Hagerman	656	838
Wendell	2,338	2,396
Balance of Gooding County	7,647	7,502
Total	14,155	14,461

Education Characteristics

	1980	1990	2000
Educational attainment of the population 25 years and older			
No High School Diploma	34%	27.5%	27.4% (15.3%)
High School Grad (& GED)	35.9%	32.3%	34.7%
Some College (no degree)	17.2%	27%	20.9%
Bachelor degree	11.2%	11.4%	8.5%
Graduate or Prof. degree	1.6%	1.9%	3.5% (21%)

High School Drop out rates for public school districts

	1998-99	2000-01	2001-02
Bliss	0.0	1.9	3.8
Gooding	5.3	8.1	5.5
Hagerman	6.5	.8	1.5
Wendell	5.8	6.7	5.1
ISDB	NA	0.0	NA

Student Teacher Ratio for public school districts

	1998-99	2000-01	2001-02
Bliss	10.9	9.9	9.9
Gooding	17.3	15.2	15.9
Hagerman	14	13.6	14.2
Wendell	17	15.3	15.9
ISDB	3.7	NA	2.3

Education Funding Level per ADA 2000-2001

School Dist	State Funds	Local & State Funds	All Funds
Bliss	\$6,804	\$7,562	\$9,178
Gooding	\$4,710	\$5,297	\$7,332
Hagerman	\$5,238	\$6,183	\$7,957
Wendell	\$5,005	\$5,768	\$11,344

Poverty Levels

	1979	1989	1999	2003
Persons living below pov.	17.8%	17%	13.8%	11.7%
Families living below pov.	13.4%	12.3%	11.6%	

Labor Force

Employment – Full & Part Time by Place of Work:

	1980	1990	2000	2008
Total employment	5,425	5,703	7,948	8,133
Annual Labor Force Unemployed	4.8%	4.2%	3.9%	3.4%
Females (16+) in Labor Force	45%	52.9%	51.9%	

Employment by Type

Wage & Salary Employment	3,746	3,984	5,763
Farm Proprietors	722	671	725
Non-Farm Proprietors	957	1,048	1,460

Employee Commute Time

Total 6,155 workers commute for an average commute time of 20.2 minutes

Percentage	Type of Commute
69%	Car, truck or van –alone
17.5%	Carpool
.16%	Public Transport
4.8%	Walk
1.6%	Other
6.8%	Work at home

Work destinations

70%	Gooding County
11%	Jerome County
11%	Twin Falls County
3%	Blaine County
2%	Lincoln County
.5%	Elmore County
2.5 %	Other

Employment by Industry

	1980	1990	2000	2007
Farm	1,410	1,538	2,078	1,806
Ag. Service, Forest, fish & Other	136	284	595	464
Manufacturing	460	255	613	824
Construction	271	256	440	585
Transport., comm., & Pub. Utlies	318	418	522	399
Wholesale Trade	302	187	201	168
Retail Trade	612	655	910	808
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	267	193	353	136
Services	746	1,004	1,106	1,143
Federal Civilian	54	71	67	
Federal Military	78	75	58	
State & Local Government	764	763	999	
Government (all)				1,180
Wage per job (all wage/salary payments by # of jobs)				
	<u>1994</u>	<u>2004</u>		

			\$22,483	\$24,196	
Labor Force Participation Rate	1980	1990	2000		
	60%	62%	61%		
Unemployment rate				2005	2006
				3.0%	2.4%
Self-employment rate	1980	1990	2000	2004	2008
	30.9%	30.2%	27.4%	27.7%	28.6%

FAMILY LIVING

Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Programs

The University of Idaho (UI) Gooding Extension Office doesn't have a Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) educator office. Even though, several FCS programs are available in the county and for county residents. These programs are delivered by FCS Extension Educators from neighboring counties like Jerome, Twin Falls, and Cassia counties. Some programs are presented locally and others require the audience to travel to nearby cities like Jerome, Twin Falls, Shoshone, etc.

As 2010, FCS programs are offered in four areas, those areas and available programs are:

Family Nutrition and Health: 4-H Cooking Camp, Cooking for One or Two, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, Extension Nutrition Program, Fit and Fall Proof, Got Calcium?, Healthy Eating-Healthy Aging, Healthy Eating with Diabetes, Meal Time in Less Time, Meals Made Easy with Diabetes Plate, My Pyramid, Osteoporosis: Prevention and Treatment-Your Bones Your Body, Read it Before you Eat it, Seafood at its Best, Senior Extension Nutrition Program, Steps to a New You, Strong Women-Stay Young and Strong Women-Strong Bones, The Healthy Diabetes Plate, The Healthy Diabetes Plate Physical Activity Program.

Food Safety: Food Preservation, Food Safety Advisor Program, Food Safety Advanced

YOUTH

University of Idaho Extension Youth Programs

The primary focus of 4-H and other Extension work with youth is to provide opportunities for the physical, mental, social and spiritual growth of young people in Gooding County. Our program is designed to involve adult and youth volunteers in helping our young people to learn about real life situations and skills by doing hands-on activities.

4-H is the largest extension program conducted within the county. 4-H is a practical education program of learning-by-doing for young people at the local county level. Anyone between the ages of 8 and 19 may become part of the program. 4-H members participate in informal, out-of-school experiences in citizenship, leadership, healthful living, homemaking, agriculture and related activities. The formal 4-H club is a group of young people both boys and girls organized and developed in our community under the guidance of local volunteer 4-H leaders. Local clubs hold regular meetings in which the officers conduct business, members give demonstrations related to their project area and participate in some type of recreational activity. Local clubs form the base upon which the entire 4-H program rests. District, state and national activities are also available to youth and volunteers who want to expand past the county level.

Gooding County has 70 different project areas available for 4-H participants in the county. Youngsters become involved in life skills and gain knowledge about agriculture, home economics and miscellaneous subject areas. Our major goal is to involve volunteers and youngsters in a way that will not only teach life long skills but to also develop a sense of self-worth and leadership. In 2009, 275 youth and 30 volunteer adult leaders were enrolled in organized clubs. Both traditional and short term projects and activities are supported. We have also shared 4-H curriculum and other youth programs with the Gooding After School Program, Gooding Elementary and High School, Wendell High School, North Valley Academy Charter School, Accelerated Learning Center Preschool, and the Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind. Gooding County 4-H has a strong livestock program. Our goal is to increase participation and completed projects in horse, non-animal projects and overnight camps.

GOODING 4-H STATISTICS

	1990	2000	2006	2009
Total Members	372 (each 2%)	385	1050	440
Members – Organized	240	292	336	275
Members – Other	177	93	714	165
Clubs – Organized	20	25	38	19
Clubs – Other	4	34	38	25
Leaders	73	49	53	30
Members under 9	(15)	64	291	185
9-11	264	0	0	0

Black	.20%	0%	.09%	0%
American Indian	.60%	.01%	.19%	0.09%
Hispanic	5%	2.34%	32%	23.18%
Asian	.20%	.01%	.0%	0
Curriculum Enrolments (projects)		417	1434	918

Other youth programs not related

LEADERSHIP

There are many leadership groups within the county, each have a very important role to the communities they serve. Many have volunteer boards and may or may not have a paid program coordinator. The groups include:

City Councils
County Commissioners
City and County Planning and Zoning
Mayors
Disaster Services Coordinator
Rural MV Economic Development Association
Wood River Resource Conservation & Development
Chamber of Commerce – Wendell, Bliss, Hagerman
MAC group (elected official gr

Gooding is also the home of the Walker Center which is a residential center for drug and alcohol rehabilitation. They serve a clientele of 400 to 500 persons per year. In addition, Gooding County has a SUWS rehabilitation program.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Soils

Most agricultural lands are dominated by well-drained, light colored, sandy loam soils which are moderately deep. Areas to the north are dominated by darker or slightly darker loamy and clay soils with steep to moderate slopes. The mountains and foothills. Some of the major non-farm land in Gooding County is extremely rough and remains in semi-desert growth. The dominant exposed rocks are sandstone and are visible throughout the county.

Precipitation and Climate

Gooding County has a semiarid climate characterized by a low precipitation of 9.26 inches a year and comparatively low humidity.

Growing Season:

Years of Record	-57
Median Last spring Freeze	-May 16
Median First Fall Freeze	-October 10
Median Length Days	-145
Median Annual Precipitation	-9.26
Lowest average daily minimum temperature	13.5 degrees in January
Highest average daily maximum temperature	90.8 degrees in July
Hottest Month – July	
Coldest month – January	
Driest month – August	
Wettest month - January	

Geology/Minerals

Gooding County lies within the Snake River Plain section of the Columbia Plateau Province where lavas are the dominant rock exposed. Lava flowed into the synclinal valley of the Snake River area starting during the late Tertiary through recent times as this trough slowly sank. There is an estimated accumulation of at least 2,000 feet of basalt overlaying older rocks in places in the Snake River Plain.

Rocks exposed in Gooding County range in age from early Tertiary when the Challis Volcanoes flowed over granites, gneiss and sedimentary rocks to present time when sediments are being deposited by streams, lakes and by the wind. The youngest rock mapped in Gooding County has been named McKinney basalt (Om) deposited during recent time from McKinney Butte eight miles northwest of Gooding. Most of the rock outcroppings in the county are of basaltic composition which tends to be dark brown to black in color. Older and lighter colored Challis (Tov) and Idavada (Tiv) silicic volcanics, however, outcrop in the northern part of the county.

In the late 1800's placer mining for gold was done along the Snake river. Since the 1930's no major gold mining has been done. Current mining includes gravel and road fill materials. Gems found in Gooding County include fire opal and petrified wood.

There is a large deposit of diatomaceous earth located on the upper portion of Clover Creek. This deposit covers 6,480 acres and has a thickness of 1,200 feet. At some places the deposit is exposed to the surface, while in other areas it is covered by 600 to 800 feet of overburden.

There is a large deposit of gravel in Hagerman Valley, however, deposits north of the valley are limited.

Water Resources

The Snake River borders the county on the south. The lower reaches of the Big and Little Wood Rivers enter Gooding County from the east and join together approximately four miles west of Gooding, forming the Malad River, which empties into the Snake River north of Hagerman. The other main drains include Clover Creek on the west side of Gooding County. Dry Creek is in the middle and Thorn Creek on the eastern side.

Approximately half of Gooding County lies in the Snake River Aquifer. This aquifer has a large volume of water which rises from springs along the Snake River Canyon from Blue Lakes to Bliss. The flow in Gooding County from the springs is approximately 5,588 cubic feet per second. The depth of the ground water varies from approximately 300 feet south east of Gooding to less than 100 south of Wendell. The average depth of the wells is about 200 to 320 feet, but they range from artesian to more than 600 feet.

The main source of irrigation water is from the Snake River. This water is diverted at the Milner dam. The American Falls Reservoir No. 2 Company has 400,000 acre feet of storage in the American Falls Reservoir. This is for 65,000 acres; 35,270 acres of which are in Gooding County, and about 2,000 acres have Big and Little Wood River water rights. The average storage, however, has been 444,000 acre feet. About 55-percent of the cropland in the area is irrigated with water supplied by the Northside and Milner-Gooding Canals. The remaining cropland is irrigated by water pumped from the Snake River Aquifer, which is also the source of water for domestic, municipal, and industrial use.

The North Side Canal company serves Gooding (The Wendell area) and Jerome Counties. Storage rights include Palisade, 16,000 acre feet; Jackson Lake, 312,000 acre feet; and American Falls, 397,470 acre feet. They have a fifteen second feet right on Big Wood River (1890). They have Snake River rights on filing of 300 CFS, (1900); 2,250 CFS, (1905); 350 CFS, (1908); 1,200 CFS, (1920); and 300 CFS, (1915).

Other lands are irrigated from:

1. Ground water (deep wells)
2. Pioneer Reservoir
3. Clover Creek
4. Bray Lake
5. Hagerman Springs

Reservoirs within the county are Pioneer, Bray Lake, Thorn Creek, Dog Creek, Clear Lakes, Upper and Lower Salmon, Patterson and Bliss Reservoirs.

Ground water is one of the most valuable sources on the Snake River Plain. The best ground water aquifers in this area have been coarse textured alluvium in the valleys of

large streams and from the Snake River valley. The younger basins are variable in nature but generally have a higher permeability in the vicinity of a fault zone and can be witnessed as a spring discharge at the ground surface from some fault zones in this area. Wells located at higher elevations usually must be drilled relatively deep and may require moderate to high pump lifts from the saturated zone which lies at an elevation of about 3,400 feet at Gooding for example. The lowest water table elevation in the county is about 2,600 feet above sea level at the Snake River at the west edge of the county.

Wildlife

Gooding County supports a variety of fish and wildlife, including resident mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and migratory species. A wide array of fish and wildlife are in the area because of the variety of wildlife habitat present. The foothills, deep rocky canyons, lava flows, bottomland and scattered areas of farmland and the associated soils precipitation, land uses and topography provide diverse habitat.

Big game animals within the county include the mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion and bear. Predators within the county are coyotes, red fox, bobcats, bear

throughout the year. Game fish species associated with the streams and creeks are rainbow trout, brown trout, brook trout, smallmouth bass, and large mouthed bass.

At present the recreational value of the wildlife resources of Gooding County are highly utilized both for consumptive and non consumptive uses. Game ranching and hunting clubs are beginning to prosper as an active agricultural enterprise in the county. Wildlife is therefore considered a valuable resource.

Recreation

Deep canyons, open deserts, and rolling hills provide year-round outdoor recreational opportunities for hunters, fishermen, watersports enthusiasts, picnickers, hikers, campers, sightseers, photographers, and students. Some natural areas that provide opportunities for outdoor activities are the Snake River; the Thousand Springs area, near the town of Hagerman; and "City of Rocks", north of Gooding. Other natural features in the area are the Malad and Shoshone Ice Caves, north of Shoshone.

Many urban recreational facilities are available. Gooding presently has two recreational districts, one each in Wendell and Gooding. Other recreational opportunities exist in the county that attracts considerable tourist interest. The Snake River area of Thousand Springs and Crystal Springs attract attention by their beauty and uniqueness. Both State and Federal fish hatcheries are located along the same area.

The 600 acre Malad State Park provides many visitors with a spectacular view of the area and specifically the Malad Gorge before it enters the Snake River. Other attractions include Big and Little city of Rocks to the north, Lava Caves, Lyle Lake and water skiing on the Snake River. Sportsmen from all over the area and particularly out of state are attracted to the abundance of fishing and hunting opportunities with pheasant hunting of particular interest.

AGRICULTURE

Land Use and Ownership:

Gooding County has a land area of 722 square miles represented by 467,712 acres.

Land ownership, in acres, is as follows;

Federal Land 237,503
 BLM – 237,129
 National Forests -0
 Other – 374
State Land 20,124
 Endowment Land – 17,119
 Fish & Game – 2,274
 Parks and Recreation – 731
Private Land 209,238
County Land 750
Municipal Land 97

Land Use (in acres):

Urban Land 1,300
Agricultural 126,900
Rangeland 246,200
Water 2,200
Barren Land 87,400

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

1990 2002 2007

Value of land and Buildings and Products	1987	1997	2002
Average Value Per Farm	\$270,800	495,833	795,709
Average Value Per Acre	846	1,567	2535
Average Value Per Farm of Product Sold	154,600	369,535	531,928

Gooding County Farm Products

PRODUCTS (CROP)	Planted	1990 Yield	Harvested	1997 Yield	2002 Harvest	Yield
Alfalfa Hay	30,000 A	5.61 ton	32344	5.5	28,079	5.01
Barley	4,400 A	96.5 bu	5,060	84.6	2,007	104.6
Dry Beans	5,600 A	19.9 cwt			885	24
Corn, Grain	4,200 A	134 bu	5,750	149	4,119	153.8
Corn, Silage	7,200 A	24.9 ton	18,783	28	31,413	28
Oats	1,000 A	87.7 bu	190	102.9	159	96
Pasture	37,500 A					
Potatoes	10,000 A	345 cwt			5590	406
Sugar Beets	3,400 A	23.3 ton			3268	24.8
Wheat, spring	5,000 A	82.9 bu	7402	96.7	954	73.9
Wheat, Winter	5,000 A	95.3 bu			2,179	95.9
Set Aside	6,809 A					
CRP	223 A					

Product (Livestock head)	1990	2002
Cattle & Calves		210,092
Beef Cattle (all)	92,000	
Beef Cows	17,000	15,174
Other Cattle	50,000	79,892
Dairy Cows (Milk)	22,000	115,026
Sheep (all)	22,000	18,052
Sheep (all)	8,2	8 22,000

Market value of all crop products sold:

<u>1990</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
\$29,211,000	35,090,000	\$51,369,000

Market value of all livestock products sold:

<u>1990</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
\$83,493,000	317,578,000	\$573,051,000

Total value of all products:

<u>1990</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
112,704.00	352,668,000	\$624,420,000

COMMERCE & INDUSTRY LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVENUES

REFERENCES

- 1) Gooding County situation Report 1983, Ed Koester and Mary Lou Ruby
- 2) Gooding County Comprehensive Plan 1985 Gooding County Commissioners
- 3) County Profiles of Idaho, Idaho Department of Commerce Boise, Idaho
- 4) National Agricultural Statistics Service <http://www.nass.usda.gov>
- 5) 1990 -91 Farm Production census Gooding County Crops Committee
- 6) 1990-91 4-H Youth in Action Report Gooding County Extension Office Staff
- 7) Soil Survey of Wood River Area, Idaho Gooding County and Parts of Blaine, Lincoln, and Minidoka Counties.