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Churchill County, Nevada

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Coordinates: 39.90°N 118.34°W

Churchill County is a county in the western U.S. state of Nevada. As of the 2020 census, the population was 25,516.[1] Its county seat is Fallon. Named for Mexican–American War hero brevet Brigadier General Sylvester Churchill, the county was formed in 1861. Churchill County comprises the Fallon, NV Micropolitan Statistical Area. It is in northwestern Nevada. Churchill County is noteworthy in that it owns and operates the local telephone carrier, Churchill County Communications.[2]

History [edit]

Churchill County was established in 1861, and was named for Fort Churchill (which is now in Lyon County), which was named for General Sylvester Churchill, a Mexican–American War hero who was Inspector General of the U.S. Army in 1861. Churchill County was not organized until 1864, and its first county seat was Bucklands (which is now in Lyon County). In 1864 the county seat was moved to La Plata,[3] in 1868 it was moved to Stillwater; and in 1904 it was settled in its present position, Fallon. In the 18th century there were several attempts to eliminate Churchill County because of its small population, but Assemblyman Lemuel Allen stopped it on all occasions including convincing the Governor to veto an 1875 bill after it had been passed by both houses.

Railroads [edit]

The Eagle Salt Works Railroad ran for 3.5 miles (21.7 km), primarily on the original Central Pacific grade from Luvia (2 miles (3.2 km) east of Fernley) to Eagle Salt Works.

The Central Pacific portion of the nation's first transcontinental railroad ran through Churchill County, although a portion of the original route has been shifted for a new route south of Wadsworth in favor of Fernley. The Central Pacific later became the Southern Pacific Railroad which was merged into Union Pacific in 1996.

Geography [edit]

The terrain of Churchill County consists of rugged mountainous ridges, dotted with lakes and ponds.[4] The county's east and west sides are higher than the intermediate valley; its highest point around the county periphery is a ridge on the lower east boundary line, at 9,380' (2859m) ASL.[5] The county has an area of 5,024 square miles (13,010 km²), of which 4,930 square miles (12,800 km²) is land and 94 square miles (240 km²) (1.9%) is water.[6] The county's highest point is Desatoya Peak at 9,977' (3041m), while the most topographically prominent peak is Mount Augusta, at 9,970' (3039m) ASL.

Major highways [edit]

- Interstate 11 (Future)
- Interstate 80
- U.S. Route 50
- U.S. Route 50 Alternate
- U.S. Route 95
- U.S. Route 95 Alternate
- State Route 115
- State Route 116
- State Route 117
- State Route 118
- State Route 119
- State Route 120
- State Route 121
- State Route 361
- State Route 715
- State Route 718
- State Route 720
- State Route 722
- State Route 723
- State Route 726
- State Route 839

Adjacent counties [edit]

- Lyon County – west
- Washoe County – northwest
- Pershing County – north
- Lander County – east
- Nye County – southeast
- Mineral County – south

Protected areas [edit]

- Fallon National Wildlife Refuge
- Humboldt State Wildlife Management Area
- Lahontan State Game Refuge
- Lahontan State Recreation Area (partial)
- Sand Mountain Recreation Area
- Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge

[8]

Lakes and reservoirs [edit]

- Big Water[9]
- Carson Lake[7]
- Cattail Lake[8]
- Division Lake[8]
- Dog Head Pond[10]
- Dry Lake[11]
- Dutch Bill Lake[12]
- East Alkali Lake Number One[13]
- East Alkali Lake Number Two[14]
- Foxtail Lake[15]
- Goose Lake[16]
- Humboldt Lake (partial)[17]
- Lahontan Reservoir[18]
- Little Soda Lake[19]
- North Nutgrass Lake[20]
- Pintail Bay[21]
- Schecker Reservoir[22]
- Soda Lake[23]
- Stillwater Point Reservoir[24]
- Swan Check[25]
- Swan Lake[26]
- Tule Lake[27]
- West Nutgrass[28]
- Willow Lake[29]

[3]

Demographics [edit]

2000 census [edit]

As of the 2000 United States Census,[30] the county had 23,982 people, 8,912 households, and 6,461 families. The population density was 5 people per square mile (2/km²). There were 9,732 housing units at an average density of 2 per square mile (1/km²).

The county's racial makeup was 84.2% White, 1.6% Black or African American, 4.8% Native American, 2.7% Asian, 0.2% Pacific Islander, 3.2% from other races, and 3.3% from two or more races. 8.7% of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race.

There were 8,912 households, of which 37.2% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 57.7% were married couples living together, 10.4% had a female householder with no husband present, and 27.5% were non-families. 22.0% of all households were made up of individuals, and 8.5% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.64 and the average family size was 3.09.

28.0% of the county's population was under age 18, 8.1% was from age 18 to 24, 28.7% was from age 25 to 44, 22.3% was from age 45 to 64, and 11.9% was age 65 or older. The median age was 35 years. For every 100 females there were 100.6 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 99.1 males.

The country's median household income was $40,808 and the median family income was $46,624. Males had a median income of $36,478 versus $25,000 for females. The county's per capita income was $19,264. About 6.2% of families and 8.7% of the population were below the poverty line, including 10.8% of those under age 18 and 7.0% of those age 65 or over.

2010 census [edit]

As of the 2010 United States Census, the county had 24,877 people, 9,671 households, and 6,631 families.[36] The population density was 5.0 inhabitants per square mile (1.9/km²). There were 10,826 housing units at an average density of 2.2 per square mile (0.85/km²).[37]

The county's racial makeup was 82.0% white, 4.5% American Indian, 2.7% Asian, 1.6% black or African American, 0.2% Pacific islander, 4.8% from other races, and 4.2% from two or more races. Those of Hispanic or Latino origin made up 12.1% of the population.[38] In terms of ancestry, 19.2% were English, 18.8% were German, 13.6% were Irish, 6.5% were Italian, and 5.9% were American.[39]

Of the 9,671 households, 33.2% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 52.0% were married couples living together, 11.3% had a female householder with no husband present, 31.4% were non-families, and 25.2% of all households were made up of individuals. The average household size was 2.53 and the average family size was 3.01. The median age was 39.0 years.[40]

The county's median household income was $51,597 and the median family income was $63,599. Males had a median income of $45,057 versus $32,550 for females. The county's per capita income was $22,997. About 6.8% of families and 8.8% of the population were below the poverty line, including 7.3% of those under age 18 and 10.4% of those age 65 or over.[38]

Historical population

Census	Pop.	%±
1870	196	—
1880	479	144.4%
1890	703	46.8%
1900	830	18.1%
1910	2,811	238.7%
1920	4,649	65.4%
1930	5,075	9.2%
1940	5,317	4.8%
1950	6,161	15.9%
1960	8,452	37.2%
1970	10,513	24.4%
1980	13,917	32.4%
1990	17,938	28.9%
2000	23,982	33.7%
2010	24,877	3.7%
2020	25,516	2.6%

US Decennial Census[41]
1790-1960[42] 1900-1990[43]
1990-2000[44] 2010-2018[1]

Communities [edit]

City [edit]

- Fallon

Census-designated place [edit]

- Fallon Station

Unincorporated communities [edit]

- Cold Springs
- Dixie Valley
- Eastgate
- Hazen
- Middlegate
- Stillwater

Politics [edit]

Lying on the boundary between the northwest urban areas of Nevada and the conservative Mormon Great Basin, Churchill County has more in common with the latter region, being overwhelmingly Republican. It was one of three Nevada counties Barry Goldwater won in 1964, and since that time only Jimmy Carter in 1976 and Barack Obama in 2008 have passed so much as thirty percent of the county's ballots. The last time Churchill County voted for a Democratic presidential candidate was when it supported Franklin D. Roosevelt against Wendell Willkie in 1940.

United States presidential election results for Churchill County, Nevada[45] [hide]

Year	Republican		Democratic		Third party	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2020	8,372	72.71%	3,061	26.67%	407	3.62%
2016	7,830	71.59%	2,210	20.20%	898	8.21%
2012	7,061	68.79%	2,961	28.85%	243	2.37%
2008	6,832	64.42%	3,494	32.95%	279	2.63%
2004	7,335	71.65%	2,705	26.42%	197	1.92%
2000	6,237	70.69%	2,191	24.83%	395	4.48%
1996	4,369	56.28%	2,282	29.40%	1,112	14.32%
1992	3,789	49.45%	1,770	23.10%	2,104	27.46%
1988	4,578	72.86%	1,481	23.57%	224	3.57%
1984	4,479	75.53%	1,304	21.99%	147	2.48%
1980	3,641	72.84%	1,055	20.01%	377	7.15%
1976	2,358	53.04%	1,800	40.49%	288	6.48%
1972	2,970	74.10%	1,038	25.90%	0	0.00%
1968	1,954	52.25%	1,211	32.38%	575	15.37%
1964	1,607	50.66%	1,565	49.34%	0	0.00%
1960	1,765	57.42%	1,309	42.58%	0	0.00%
1956	2,013	65.31%	1,069	34.69%	0	0.00%
1952	1,948	68.33%	903	31.67%	0	0.00%
1948	1,206	50.84%	1,055	44.48%	111	4.68%
1944	1,130	51.93%	1,046	48.07%	0	0.00%
1940	1,171	48.03%	1,267	51.97%	0	0.00%
1936	759	37.04%	1,290	62.96%	0	0.00%
1932	674	30.75%	1,518	69.25%	0	0.00%
1928	1,126	59.99%	751	40.01%	0	0.00%
1924	655	41.64%	310	19.71%	608	38.65%
1920	873	54.02%	506	31.31%	237	14.67%
1916	531	34.19%	831	53.51%	191	12.30%
1912	157	15.38%	349	34.18%	515	50.44%
1908	309	46.36%	382	45.53%	68	8.10%
1904	185	49.47%	165	44.12%	24	6.42%

See also [edit]

- National Register of Historic Places listings in Churchill County, Nevada
- USS *Churchill County* (LST-583)

Notes [edit]

Notable people [edit]

- Luella Kirkbride Drumm, the only woman to serve in the Nevada State Legislature in 1939.[46][47][48]
- Mary Daisy White, one of the first women elected to the Nevada Assembly.[44][49]

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External links [edit]

- Official website

Places adjacent to Churchill County, Nevada	[show]
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