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Washoe County, Nevada

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Coordinates: 40.63°N 119.68°W

Washoe County (/ˈwɑːʃoʊ/) is a county in the U.S. state of Nevada. As of the 2020 census, the population was 486,492,[1] making it Nevada's second-most populous county. Its county seat is Reno.[2] Washoe County is included in the Reno, NV Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Washoe County Courthouse

Seal

Location within the U.S. state of Nevada

Nevada's location within the U.S.
Coordinates: 40°38'N 119°41'W

Washoe County	
Country	United States
State	Nevada
Founded	November 25, 1861; 161 years ago
Named for	Washoe people
Seat	Reno
Largest city	Reno
Area	
• Total	6,542 sq mi (16,940 km²)
• Land	6,302 sq mi (16,320 km²)
• Water	240 sq mi (600 km²) 3.7%
Population (2023)[1]	
• Total	486,492
• Estimate (2021)[2]	493,392
• Density	74/sq mi (29/km²)
Time zone	UTC−8 (Pacific)
• Summer (DST)	UTC−7 (PDT)
Congressional district	2nd
Website	washoecounty.us

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History [edit]

Washoe County was created on November 25, 1861, as one of the original nine counties of the Nevada Territory. It is named after the Washoe people who originally inhabited the area. It was consolidated with Roop County in 1864. Washoe City was the first county seat in 1861 and was replaced by Reno in 1871.

In 1911, a small band of Shoshone and Bannock led by Mike Daggett killed four stockmen in Washoe County.[3] A posse was formed, and on February 26, 1911, at the Battle of Kelley Creek, eight of Daggett's band were killed, along with one member of the posse, Ed Hoge.[4] Three children and a woman who survived the battle were captured. The remains of some of the members of the band were repatriated from the Smithsonian Institution to the Fort Hall Idaho Shoshone-Bannock Tribe in 1994.[5]

In 1918, Washoe County elected the first woman elected to the Nevada Legislature, Sadie Hurst, a Republican.[6]

As of 2013, "Washoe County is the first school district in the state to offer Paiute classes," offering an elective course in the Paiute language at Spanish Springs High School[7] and North Valleys High School.

Geography [edit]

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 6,542 square miles (16,940 km²), of which 6,302 square miles (16,320 km²) is land and 240 square miles (620 km²) (3.7%) is water.[8] The highest point in Washoe County is Mount Rose at 10,785 ft (3,287 m), while the most topographically prominent peak is Virginia Peak.

There are two incorporated cities within the county, namely Reno and Sparks. In 2010, there was a ballot question asking whether the Reno city government and the Washoe County government should become one combined governmental body.[9] According to unofficial results the day after the election, 54% of voters approved of the ballot measure to consolidate the governments.[10]

The Truckee Meadows of Washoe County starts at the furthest southern runway of Reno Tahoe International Airport. GPS Coordinates 39.468836,-119.770912 and runs south east. Rattle Snake Mountain at Huffaker Park. Follows the span of Steamboat Creek to the southern east end of Washoe County. This is the last of the range/prairie and wild grass water shed from the eastern range of the Reno Tahoe basin.

Adjacent counties [edit]

- Lake County, Oregon – north
- Harney County, Oregon – northeast
- Humboldt County – east
- Pershing County – east
- Churchill County – east
- Lyon County – southeast
- Storey County – south
- Carson City – south
- Placer County, California – southwest
- Nevada County, California – west
- Sierra County, California – west
- Lassen County, California – west
- Modoc County, California – west

Major highways [edit]

- I-80
- Interstate 80 Business (Verdi)
- Interstate 80 Business (Reno–Sparks)
- Interstate 80 Business (Yadkerich–Fernley)
- I-580
- US 395 U.S. Route 395
- US 395 U.S. Route 395 Alternate
- US 395 U.S. Route 395 Business (Reno)
- SR 28
- SR 341
- SR 425
- SR 426
- SR 427
- SR 430
- SR 431
- SR 439
- SR 443
- SR 445
- SR 446
- SR 447
- SR 647
- SR 648
- SR 653
- SR 655
- SR 659
- SR 667
- SR 668
- SR 671
- SR 673
- SR 877
- SR 878
- SR 880

National protected areas [edit]

- Anaho Island National Wildlife Refuge
- Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area (part)
- Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge (part)
- Toiyabe National Forest (part)

Demographics [edit]

Race / Ethnicity	Pop 2010[11]	Pop 2020[12]	% 2010	% 2020
White alone (NH)	278,213	287,862	66.02%	60.90%
Black or African American alone (NH)	9,088	11,527	2.16%	2.37%
Native American or Alaska Native alone (NH)	5,782	5,790	0.19%	0.19%
Asian alone (NH)	21,288	28,063	5.05%	5.77%
Pacific Islander alone (NH)	2,358	3,250	0.23%	0.67%
Some Other Race alone (NH)	673	2,485	0.16%	0.51%
Mixed Race/Multi-Racial (NH)	10,281	23,445	2.44%	4.82%
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	93,724	122,204	22.24%	25.12%
Total	**421,407**	**486,492**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**

2000 census [edit]

As of the census[16] of 2000, there were 339,486 people, 132,084 households, and 83,741 families living in the county. The population density was 54 people per square mile (21/km²). There were 143,908 housing units at an average density of 23 per square mile (9/km²). The racial makeup of the county was 80.4% White, 2.1% Black or African American, 1.8% Native American, 4.3% Asian, 0.5% Pacific Islander, 7.7% from other races, and 3.3% from two or more races. 16.6% of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race.

There were 132,084 households, out of which 31.1% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 47.9% were married couples living together, 10.30% had a female householder with no husband present, and 36.60% were non-families. 27.0% of all households were made up of individuals, and 7.7% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.53 and the average family size was 3.09.

In the county, the population was spread out, with 24.6% under the age of 18, 9.8% from 18 to 24, 31.0% from 25 to 44, 23.8% from 45 to 64, and 10.5% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 36 years. For every 100 females, there were 102.8 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 101.8 males.

The median income for a household in the county was $45,815, and the median income for a family was $54,293. Males had a median income of $38,226 versus $27,953 for females. The per capita income for the county was $24,277. About 6.7% of families and 10.0% of the population were below the poverty line, including 12.2% of those under age 18 and 6.2% of those age 65 or over.

2010 census [edit]

As of the 2010 United States Census, there were 421,407 people, 163,445 households, and 102,768 families living in the county.[11] The population density was 66.9 inhabitants per square mile (25.8/km²). There were 184,841 housing units at an average density of 29.3 per square mile (11.3/km²).[201] The racial makeup of the county was 76.9% white, 5.2% Asian, 2.3% black or African American, 1.7% American Indian, 0.6% Pacific islander, 9.5% from other races, and 3.8% from two or more races. Those of Hispanic or Latino origin made up 22.2% of the population.[19] In terms of ancestry, 16.9% were German, 13.1% were Irish, 11.8% were English, 7.2% were Italian, and 4.7% were American.[21]

Of the 163,445 households, 32.0% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 45.6% were married couples living together, 11.3% had a female householder with no husband present, 37.1% were non-families, and 27.2% of all households were made up of individuals. The average household size was 2.55 and the average family size was 3.11. The median age was 37.0 years.[19]

The median income for a household in the county was $55,658 and the median income for a family was $67,428. Males had a median income of $46,653 versus $35,559 for females. The per capita income for the county was $29,687. About 8.5% of families and 12.6% of the population were below the poverty line, including 17.0% of those under age 18 and 6.4% of those age 65 or over.[22]

2016 [edit]

The Demographics of Washoe County covers 6,540.4 square miles. There are approximately 42,154 households in the unincorporated areas with an estimated population of 419,945. The average household size in 2007 was estimated at 2.79.[23] The Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District is charged with fire protection and emergency services in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Politics [edit]

Washoe County was a Republican stronghold throughout the late twentieth century, having only voted for the Democratic candidate once between 1944 and 2004 (in the 1964 Democrat landslide). Since the 1990s, it has become more competitive, going from a 22-point win for George H. W. Bush in 1988 to only a three-point win for Bush in 1992. From 1996 to 2004, the Republican candidate tallied a margin greater than four points. Barack Obama won it by a 12-point margin in 2008, and since then, it has always voted Democratic in presidential elections, albeit by relatively narrow margins. However, Republicans still hold the majority of the county's seats in the state legislature. Democratic strength is concentrated in Reno and Sparks, while the rest of the county is much more Republican.

The county is governed by an elected five-member Board of County Commissioners and an appointed county manager.[24] The commissioners serve staggered four-year terms - three are elected during midterm elections and two during presidential elections.

Washoe County Board of County Commissioners[25]

District	Commissioner	Party	First elected	Last elected	Notes
1	Alexis Hill	Democratic	2020	2020	Vice-Chair
2	Bob Lucey	Republican	2014	2018	
3	Kitty Jung	Democratic	2007[1]	2018	
4	Vaughn Hartung	Republican	2012	2020	Chair
5	Jeanne Herman	Republican	2014	2018	

[1] Appointed by Governor Jim Gibbons.

Nevada Senate districts

- 13th (central Reno and Sparks)
- 14th (northern Washoe County)
- 15th (Cold Springs, Mogul, Verdi)
- 16th (Incline Village, Washoe Valley)

United States presidential election results for Washoe County, Nevada[WE27]
[hide]

Year	Republican No.	Republican %	Democratic No.	Democratic %	Third party No.	Third party %
2020	116,760	48.31%	126,128	**50.82%**	7,254	2.85%
2016	94,758	45.14%	97,379	**46.39%**	17,772	8.47%
2012	88,453	47.09%	95,409	**50.79%**	3,993	2.13%
2008	76,880	42.61%	99,671	**55.25%**	3,863	2.14%
2004	81,545	**51.26%**	74,841	47.05%	2,693	1.69%
2000	63,640	**52.04%**	52,097	42.60%	6,564	5.37%
1996	49,477	**45.28%**	44,915	41.11%	14,874	13.61%
1992	42,636	**37.18%**	39,500	34.45%	32,535	28.37%
1988	52,654	**59.34%**	32,902	37.08%	3,172	3.57%
1984	50,418	**67.67%**	22,321	29.96%	1,772	2.38%
1980	41,276	**63.54%**	15,621	24.05%	8,059	12.41%
1976	29,264	**54.98%**	21,687	40.74%	2,276	4.28%
1972	33,538	**66.22%**	17,106	33.78%	0	0.00%
1968	23,492	**54.65%**	14,560	33.87%	4,936	11.48%
1964	18,350	47.64%	20,170	**52.36%**	0	0.00%
1960	18,833	**55.21%**	15,280	44.79%	0	0.00%
1956	16,865	**66.45%**	8,525	33.55%	0	0.00%
1952	19,044	**68.18%**	8,888	31.82%	0	0.00%
1948	11,323	**56.09%**	8,365	41.44%	500	2.48%
1944	9,024	**51.84%**	8,384	48.16%	0	0.00%
1940	8,062	46.59%	9,243	**53.41%**	0	0.00%
1936	4,358	31.42%	9,514	**68.58%**	0	0.00%
1932	4,333	34.74%	8,141	**65.26%**	0	0.00%
1928	5,767	**59.34%**	3,952	40.66%	0	0.00%
1924	3,549	**45.70%**	1,669	21.49%	2,548	32.81%
1920	4,189	**61.02%**	2,357	34.33%	319	4.65%
1916	3,225	45.44%	3,341	**47.07%**	532	7.50%
1912	644	17.88%	1,446	**40.14%**	1,512	41.98%
1908	2,053	**59.01%**	1,745	42.51%	307	7.48%
1904	1,517	**59.44%**	721	28.25%	314	12.30%
1900	919	47.77%	1,005	**52.23%**	0	0.00%
1896	513	33.68%	1,010	**66.32%**	0	0.00%
1892	530	32.56%	235	14.43%	863	**53.01%**
1888	902	**57.42%**	655	41.69%	14	0.89%
1884	716	**59.22%**	493	40.78%	0	0.00%
1880	755	47.69%	828	**52.31%**	0	0.00%

Communities [edit]

Cities [edit]

- Reno (county seat)
- Sparks

Census-designated places [edit]

- Cold Springs
- Crystal Bay
- Empire
- Gerlach
- Golden Valley
- Incline Village
- Lemmon Valley
- Mogul
- Nixon
- Spanish Springs
- Sun Valley
- Sutcliffe
- Verdi
- Wadsworth
- Washoe Valley

Unincorporated communities [edit]

- Deep Hole
- Flanigan
- Galena
- New Washoe City
- Poeville
- Pleasant Valley
- Pyramid
- Steamboat Springs
- Vya
- Washoe City

Education [edit]

Washoe County School District is the school district for the entire county.[28]

The Bureau of Indian Education-contracted Pyramid Lake Schools is in Nixon.

There is a charter school, Coral Academy of Science; and these private schools: Bishop Manogue High School and Excel Christian School.

University of Nevada, Reno is in Reno.

Washoe County Library System is the public library system.

Notable Residents [edit]

Jeremy Renner - Hollywood Actor

Ranching in Washoe County

See also [edit]

- National Register of Historic Places listings in Washoe County, Nevada
- *Reno 911!*, a parody cop show set in Washoe County
- Washoe Zephyr, a regional wind referenced by Mark Twain.

Nevada portal

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External links [edit]

- Official website
- Historical Markers of Washoe County

Wikimedia Commons has media related to *Washoe County, Nevada*.

Places adjacent to Washoe County, Nevada [show]
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