Umatilla County, Oregon

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Coordinates: 45.375131°N 118.7513661°W

Umatilla County (/ˌjuːmə̩ˈtɪlə/) is one of the 36 counties in the U.S. state of Oregon. As of the 2010 census, the population was 75,889.[1] The county seat is Pendleton, but the largest city is Hermiston.[2] The county is named for the Umatilla River.

Umatilla County is part of the Hermiston-Pendleton, OR Micropolitan Statistical Area. It is included in the eight-county definition of Eastern Oregon.

Umatilla County
U.S. county

Stafford Hansell Government Center in Hermiston

Location within the U.S. state of Oregon

Oregon's location within the U.S.
Coordinates: 45°22'30"N 118°45'05"W

Country	United States
State	Oregon
Founded	September 27, 1862
Seat	Pendleton
Largest city	Hermiston
Area	
• **Total**	3,231 sq mi (8,370 km²)
• **Land**	3,216 sq mi (8,330 km²)
• **Water**	16 sq mi (40 km²) 0.5%%
Population (2010)	
• **Total**	75,889
• **Estimate** (2019)	77,950
• **Density**	20/sq mi (9/km²)
Time zone	UTC−8 (Pacific)
• **Summer (DST)**	UTC−7 (PDT)
Congressional district	2nd
Website	www.co.umatilla.or.us

I-84 eastbound and McKay Reservoir in Umatilla County

Contents [hide]

1 History
2 Geography
2.1 Adjacent counties
2.2 National protected areas
3 Demographics
3.1 2010 census
3.2 2016 Census household incomes
4 Government and politics
4.1 State legislature
4.2 Board of commissioners
4.3 Make-up of Umatilla County voters
5 Economy
6 Communities
6.1 Cities
6.2 Census-designated places
6.3 Unincorporated communities
7 See also
8 References
9 External links

History [edit]

Umatilla County was created on September 27, 1862, out of a portion of Wasco County. Adjustments were made to the county's boundaries following the creation of Grant, Morrow, Union, and Wallowa Counties. This legislative act also designated Marshall Station as the temporary county seat. An 1865 election selected Umatilla City, now known as Umatilla, as the county seat. With the development of wheat farming, population shifted to the north and east parts of the county, and a subsequent election in 1868 moved the county seat again to Pendleton.

The Umatilla Indian Reservation was established by the Treaty of Walla Walla in 1855. The Umatillas, Walla Wallas, and Cayuse tribes were resettled there, and is located immediately southeast of Pendleton.

EZ Wireless of Hermiston officially opened on February 4, 2004, one of the largest known Wi-Fi wide area networks in the United States, covering parts of Umatilla County, Morrow County and Benton County, Washington. Although created to facilitate communications among local police, firemen and EMT workers who immediately respond to possible accidents or terrorist attacks on the Umatilla Chemical Depot, where the U.S. Army maintained a national arsenal of nerve gas, the network can be accessed in some places by the public for free.[3]

Geography [edit]

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 3,231 square miles (8,370 km²), of which 3,216 square miles (8,330 km²) are land and 16 square miles (41 km²) (0.5%) are covered by water.[4] It borders the Columbia River across from Washington.

Adjacent counties [edit]

- Benton County, Washington (north)
- Walla Walla County, Washington (north)
- Columbia County, Washington (northeast)
- Wallowa County (east)
- Union County (east)
- Grant County (south)
- Morrow County (west)

National protected areas [edit]

- Cold Springs National Wildlife Refuge
- McKay Creek National Wildlife Refuge
- Umatilla National Forest (part)
- Whitman National Forest (part)

Demographics [edit]

2010 census [edit]

As of the 2010 United States Census, 75,889 people, 26,904 households, and 18,647 families resided in the county.[10] The population density was 23.6 inhabitants per square mile (9.1/km²). The 29,693 housing units had an average density of 9.2 per square mile (3.6/km²).[11] The racial makeup of the county was 79.1% White, 3.5% American Indian, 0.9% Asian, 0.8% Black or African American, 0.1% Pacific islander, 12.5% from other races, and 3.1% from two or more races. Those of Hispanic or Latino origin made up 23.9% of the population.[10] In terms of ancestry, 21.4% were German, 12.8% were Irish, 11.6% were English, and 5.6% were American.[12]

Of the 26,904 households, 36.4% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 50.9% were married couples living together, 12.0% had a female householder with no husband present, 30.7% were non-families, and 24.7% of all households were made up of individuals. The average household size was 2.67 and the average family size was 3.17. The median age was 35.7 years.[10]

The median income for a household in the county was $45,861 and for a family was $53,585. Males had a median income of $39,288 versus $30,489 for females. The per capita income for the county was $20,035. About 11.0% of families and 15.8% of the population were below the poverty line, including 21.4% of those under age 18 and 9.5% of those age 65 or over.[13]

2016 Census household incomes [edit]

Strong economic growth in the west end of the county has propelled Hermiston well past Pendleton with the highest median household incomes in Umatilla County.

2016 Median household incomes

Rank	City	Median Income	% Change from 2010
1	Hermiston	$49,008	+15.1%
2	Pendleton	$46,190	+1.6%
3	Umatilla	$41,818	-0.1%
4	Milton-Freewater	$37,077	+9.2%

Historical population

Census	Pop.	%±
1870	2,916	—
1880	9,607	229.5%
1890	13,381	39.3%
1900	18,049	34.9%
1910	20,309	12.5%
1920	25,946	27.8%
1930	24,399	−6.0%
1940	26,030	6.7%
1950	41,703	60.2%
1960	44,352	6.4%
1970	44,923	1.3%
1980	58,861	31.0%
1990	59,249	0.7%
2000	70,548	19.1%
2010	75,889	7.6%
2019 (est.)	77,950[5]	2.7%

U.S. Decennial Census[6]
1790-1960[7] 1900-1990[8]
1990-2000[9] 2010-2019[1]

Government and politics [edit]

State legislature [edit]

Umatilla County contains two Oregon State House Districts: State House District 57, which is currently represented by Greg Smith, and State House District 58, which is currently represented by Greg Barreto. Umatilla County is also located in Oregon State Senate District 29, represented by Bill Hansell. Smith, Barreto, and Hansell are registered Republicans.

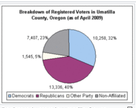
Board of commissioners [edit]

Umatilla County is represented and governed by three county commissioners. The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners is currently made up of William J. "Bill" Elfering, John Shafer, and Chair George Murdock.

Make-up of Umatilla County voters [edit]

Like all counties in eastern Oregon, the majority of registered voters who are part of a political party in Umatilla County are members of the Republican Party.[15] In the 2008 presidential election, 59.77% of Umatilla County voters voted for Republican John McCain, while 37.16% voted for Democrat Barack Obama and 3.07% of voters either voted for a third-party candidate or wrote in a candidate. These numbers show a small but definite shift towards the Democratic candidate when compared to the 2004 presidential election, in which 65.8% of Umatilla Country voters voted for George W. Bush, while 32.8% voted for John Kerry, and 1.4% of voters either voted for a third-party candidate or wrote in a candidate.[16]

Presidential elections results [show]



Registered voters in Umatilla County, April 2009[14]

Economy [edit]

The gold rush of 1862 brought miners and stock raisers to the mountains and grasslands of Umatilla County. Another stimulus was the arrival of the railroad in 1881, opening the region to the development of dry-land wheat farming. Water for irrigation has been key to economic diversification and growth, most recently in the Hermiston area, where potatoes, onions, corn, and more than 200 other crops are grown commercially. Low-cost power through Umatilla Electric Cooperative and good freeway access are also driving growth in the Hermiston area, with amazon.com developing large data-center operations there, and major distribution facilities for Walmart, FedEx, and UPS are all located in Hermiston.

Communities [edit]

Umatilla County is generally divided into three distinct economic and cultural areas, which are the West End, the Pendleton area, and the Milton-Freewater area. Although each of these communities shares some economic ties, the distance between each creates three very distinct communities. The West End includes the communities of Hermiston, Umatilla, Stanfield, and Echo. The Pendleton area includes Pendleton, Pilot Rock, Adams, and Athena. The Milton-Freewater area is largely tied to the Walla Walla, Washington area, and is considered a part of the Walla Walla Metropolitan Planning Organization. The similarities between the areas has created a long-standing rivalry, particularly between the West-End and the Pendleton-area, with regard to economic opportunity and public resources. The West End, led by Hermiston as its largest city, is now nearly twice the size of the Pendleton area, and is projected to be nearly three times the size of the Pendleton area by 2035.[19]

Trestle seen off Sparks Station Rd at Pendleton Country Club, opposite of the McKay Reservoir, Pendleton, Oregon. Transportation linkages in Umatilla are one of the county's major advantages.[18]

Cities [edit]

- Adams
- Athena
- Echo
- Helix
- Hermiston
- Milton-Freewater
- Pendleton (county seat)
- Pilot Rock
- Stanfield
- Ukiah
- Umatilla
- Weston

An old grain elevator along Steen Road south of Milton-Freewater, Umatilla County.

Census-designated places [edit]

- Cayuse
- Gopher Flats
- Kirkpatrick
- Mission
- Riverside
- Tutuilla
- Umapine

Unincorporated communities [edit]

- Bingham Springs
- Blakeley (ghost town)
- Cold Springs
- Cold Springs Junction
- Ferndale
- Gibbon
- Green Meadows
- Havana
- Hinkle
- Holdman
- Lehman Springs
- McKay
- McNary
- Meacham
- Myrick
- Nolin
- Nye
- Ordnance (ghost town)
- Pine Grove
- Power City
- Rieth
- Riverview (ghost town)
- Sunnyside
- Tollgate
- Westland

See also [edit]

- National Register of Historic Places listings in Umatilla County, Oregon
- Umatilla County Fair

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External links [edit]

- Umatilla County (official website)

v • t • e Municipalities and communities of Umatilla County, Oregon, United States [show]

v • t • e State of Oregon [show]

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Categories: Oregon counties | Umatilla County, Oregon | 1862 establishments in Oregon | Populated places established in 1862
| Pendleton–Hermiston Micropolitan Statistical Area

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