

Fall 2022

County Focus

A PUBLICATION OF THE IDAHO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Benefits of the IAC Membership

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**Supporting Idaho's Small
Businesses & Local Gems**

**Return-to-Work Programs
Impact the Bottom Line**

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Payments**





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Celebrating the IAC Membership's Success & Strength

Seth Grigg

IAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Idaho Association of Counties (IAC) was founded in 1976 by counties to coordinate the efforts of county government on a number of fronts: training and continuing education, research and analysis, and legislative advocacy. Since then, IAC has expanded its scope to include additional member services, such as establishing litigation funds that assist counties in navigating lawsuits related to natural resources and appeals of assessments, setting up a member unemployment fund, and founding a scholarship program to benefit the children of county elected officials and county employees as well as the grandchildren of county elected officials.

IAC's vision is to be the most trusted source for county government policy information and the leading source of knowledge for county officials. IAC accomplishes this through our robust member education programs featured at our spring and fall County Officials Institute, Annual Conference, and Midwinter Legislative Conference. IAC is also one of the most trusted advocacy organizations in Idaho and is relied upon by legislators and the executive branch to answer tough policy questions.

IAC could not succeed without the dedicated efforts of our members. Here are a few of IAC's accomplishments over the last year; none of which would have been possible without you:

1. A team of six Idaho officials partnered with IAC and the National Association of Counties (NACo) to lobby Congress to ensure Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Funds were allocated to public land counties. This resulted in nearly \$100 million in revenue share funding to counties for 2022 and 2023. Idaho's team included Bannock County Commissioner Jeff Hough, Custer County Commissioner Wayne Butts, Fremont County Sheriff Len Humphries, Idaho County Commissioner Skip Brandt, Valley County Commissioner Sherry Maupin, and IAC Executive Director Seth Grigg.

IAC STAFF

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Executive Director

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Director of Professional Development
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Director of Governmental Affairs

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Kenny Huston

Graduate Research Assistant

2. IAC members raised over \$12,000 for the IAC Scholarship Fund. The member fundraising will provide scholarships to seven deserving members of the county family in Idaho.
3. IAC policy staff and the IAC Legislative Committee led a successful effort to repeal the county medically indigent program, the CAT program, and secured full state funding for indigent public defense, which will save county taxpayers more than \$350 million over the next decade.
4. Counties sent a record number of county elected officials to IAC events. Each county had at least two elected officials attend an IAC event. The average county sent six county elected officials to an IAC event. Power County gets a gold star for sending all nine of its elected officials to at least one IAC event.
5. IAC is in a strong financial position thanks to its members and Corporate Partners. Due to IAC's financial strength, IAC has partnered with the Boise State University Idaho Policy Institute in funding a graduate assistant dedicated to county-based policy research and analysis. This partnership will further strengthen IAC's research capacity and grow our ability to inform legislative decision making.

IAC has a strong foundation built upon the vision and efforts of current and prior county elected officials. IAC looks forward to continued success and is proud of the leadership demonstrated by our 396 county officials. Remember that at the end of the day, IAC is only as strong as our membership. Counties have long been a source of innovation and will continue to be looked to in the future to pioneer and meet the dynamic needs of the fastest growing state in the nation. Thanks for another great year! 🇺🇸



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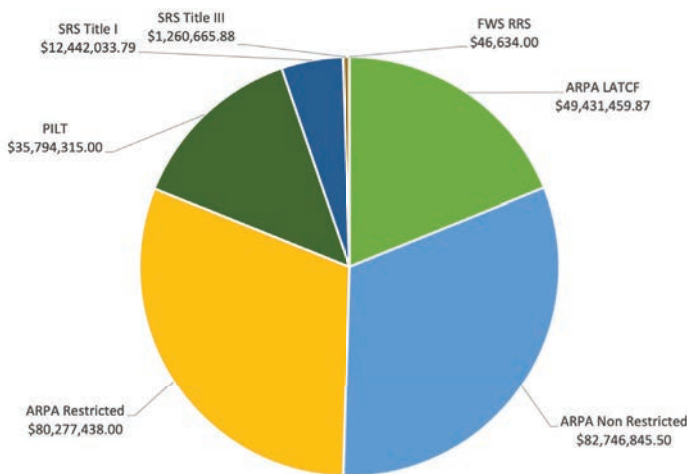
2023 START DATES

Jan. 9 • April 24 • Aug. 7 • Sept 18

Update on Federal Land Payments

Seth Grigg
IAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Federal funds to counties reached record milestones in 2022. Counties received over \$260 million in federal payments from PILT, SRS, and ARPA. PILT payments are ongoing, while SRS is authorized for two more years, and funding through ARPA will continue for one more year. Of the federal payments, 64% is intended for general use. The remaining 36% is dedicated to either maintenance of county highways or COVID mitigation and recovery. The Chart below offers a breakdown of federal funding to counties for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2022.



Federal Lands & Idaho Counties

At 63% federal land ownership, Idaho has the third highest percentage of public lands under federal management, coming in behind only Nevada and Utah. While the statewide average of federally managed public lands in Idaho counties is 48%, in many rural counties, the percentage of land owned by the federal government is much higher. For example, in Custer County, 93% of all land is federally owned. Because so much public land in Idaho is controlled by the federal government, many counties in Idaho have limited property tax bases to support county services which in turn has led to the creation of a number of federal land payment programs intended to mitigate the impact of tax-exempt lands on county budgets.

In Idaho, there are three primary federal land payment programs in which counties participate: the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program managed by the Department of the Interior, the Secure Rural School (SRS) program managed by the

US Forest Service, and the Refuge Revenue Sharing program managed by US Fish & Wildlife Service. Each of these programs provides vital funding to counties for services like maintaining county roads, providing emergency services on federal lands, and supplementing the county justice fund.

PILT

The federal government began remitting PILT payments in 1976. PILT is an entitlement program meaning that Congress must annually approve PILT funding to counties. PILT is intended to mitigate the impact of tax exempt federal lands. A county's PILT payment is based on a number of factors, including federal land acres, population, and prior year payments from other federal payment programs like SRS. Idaho counties received over \$35 million in PILT payments during federal fiscal year 2022. PILT can be used for any county general purpose. The average per acre payment in Idaho is \$1.97. Ten counties had a per acre payment of \$2.94 while Custer County, in spite of having the highest percentage of federally managed lands, had the lowest per acre payment of \$0.29.

SRS

The SRS program was established in 2000 to provide bridge funding for declining 25% Forest Services payments to counties. Unlike PILT, SRS is not an entitlement program and is subject to annual congressional authorization. Annual SRS payments are divided into three categories known as titles. Title I payments are dedicated to county roads (70%) and schools (30%). Title II payments fund projects in federal forests. Title III payments fund county mitigation projects, search and rescue, and other public safety programs conducted on federal land. In Idaho, over \$12 million in SRS funds were allocated to county road and bridge departments in 2022 with another \$6 million allocated to highway districts, \$8 million to schools, and \$1.3 million to Title III uses. A county's SRS payment is based on a number of factors including historical forest fund payments and county per capita income. SRS is fully funded for the next three years.

RRS

Only counties with US Fish & Wildlife Service refuge lands receive a RRS payment. Because Idaho has relatively few USFWS acres,

the overall payment to counties in Idaho is low. Like PILT, RRS payments can be used for any general county purpose. A county's RRS payment is determined by market value and receipts from eligible refuge lands.

One-Time Federal Payments

With the Passage of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), counties will benefit from two separate, two-year funding programs: State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) and Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Funds (LATCF). LATCF payments will be made in two tranches (the first payments went out earlier this year with final payments due spring of 2023). A county may use up to \$10 million of its SLFRF allocation for general county use (with some exceptions for litigation, uses which conflict with ARPA, and payment of debt). Allocations in excess of \$10 million must be used for dedicated ARPA mitigation and recovery

programs. Thirty-eight of Idaho's 44 counties will receive less than \$10 million and my use SLFRF for general county use. In total, counties in Idaho will be able to use \$165.5 million in SLFRF for general county use. The remaining six counties (Ada, Bannock, Bonneville, Canyon, Kootenai, and Twin Falls) have an additional \$160.5 million in SLFRF which must be used for an authorized coronavirus mitigation or recovery purpose.

Counties in Idaho will also receive \$98.8 million in LATCF payments which can be used for any general county purpose except for lobbying activities. A county's LATCF payment is based on a number of factors including federal land acres, unemployment rate, and per capita income. LATCF's formula prioritizes federal land counties over nonfederal land counties. Each county in Idaho will receive at least \$100,000 in LATCF payments. Idaho County is the largest recipient of LATCF at \$10.2 million. The average county LATCF payment in Idaho is \$1.1 million. 📌

Elevating the Standard of County Leadership & Civility

Dotti Owens

IAC PRESIDENT & ADA COUNTY CORONER



As we head into the new year, let's strive to set a higher standard of leadership in county government. The last several years have been difficult, to say the least, as we've had our share of struggles both individually and collectively.

In spite of these challenges, we've managed to come out stronger as county officials and as part of IAC's Membership. We are at our most formidable and impactful when we unite, in spite of our differences, and I ask that we all take this opportunity to raise the bar and lead with civility.

As county officials, we have the responsibility and privilege to serve, unify, and set the higher standard I believe we are all capable of achieving. The current quality of civility toward one another in all arms of government, in my opinion, is at a staggering low point. It seems that some believe that if you disagree on a topic, you can no longer debate it. I am optimistic that we can still talk to one another, debate issues, disagree and agree alike, all while treating one another with respect and dignity.

In spite of our difference of opinions and varying backgrounds, there is one commonality that unites us all: our calling to serve and act on what we feel is best for Idaho's counties and our constituents. That in itself is a noble task and deserving of the respectful discourse. If we hold ourselves to that higher standard, and we expect more from ourselves and from others, there's no limit to what we can accomplish together.

I look forward to continuing to forge relationships with you all and am honored to lead IAC. 📌



IAC Membership Supports 16 Proposed Resolutions: Legislative Committee Prioritizes Five

Sara Westbrook
IAC POLICY DIRECTOR

Idaho Association of Counties (IAC) members actively engaged in the resolution process during the IAC Annual Conference in late September. Three of the four IAC Steering Committees discussed proposed resolutions during committee meetings. The general membership voted to advance 16 of the 20 resolutions proposed in the 2023 Resolution Packet.

The IAC Legislative Committee recently met to set priorities for the 2023 IAC Legislative Package. The legislative committee agreed to set five priorities with the understanding that depending on the outcome of the November election and legislative leadership races, the feasibility of some of these priorities may change requiring a shift in prioritization. The ** symbol denotes the five prioritized resolutions. Unstarred resolutions are considered IAC Policy for 2023.

Resolutions Considered for IAC Prioritization

*IGA-04 Election Recount Fees***

Currently, county clerks may charge \$100 per precinct when an election recount is requested. This amount was put into law in 1957. The current \$100 fee per precinct does not begin to cover the cost. IGA-04 proposed the \$100 fee rise to \$400-\$500. This would save taxpayer dollars, shifting the costs associated with the recount to the requester instead of county taxpayers. This would not include elections with a 0.10 percent vote margin, as those elections may be recounted upon request with no expense to the candidates.

IGA-05 Removal of Food Establishment License Fees from Code

The Idaho Food Code requires public health districts to perform at least one food safety inspection annually for each licensed food establishment. Currently, the fee amount is set in statute. When the state aided in funding health districts, general fund appropriations were used to subsidize food establishment license fees. Since House Bill 316 passed in 2021, the state no longer provides funding to health districts. This means county taxpayers now subsidize food license fees. IGA-05 would allow health districts to set the license fees to ensure businesses are paying the inspection cost instead of the burden-shifting to property taxes. Public health districts are taking the lead on this legislation.

*IGA-06 Eliminate Preliminary Levy Rate***

House Bill 389 (passed in 2021) changed how levy rates are calculated, creating a new preliminary levy rate. IGA-06 proposes reverting the levy calculation process back to the way it was calculated prior to HB389 with a caveat. In keeping with the spirit of House Bill 389's original intent, instead of multiplying the entire value of new construction by the prior year's levy rate, 90 percent of new construction would be multiplied by the prior year's levy rate. All other aspects of House Bill 389, including the eight percent cap on property tax budgets, would remain intact, as would restrictions on forgone and urban renewal.

*IGA-07 Clean Up House Bill 735***

House Bill 735 was a priority for IAC last year. Upon passage, a few outstanding issues were discovered that need resolution. IGA-07 will place the definition of reimbursement into the jail medical statute to allow the pricing policy to remain. In addition, the \$5 seatbelt fine currently routed to the CAT Fund will be diverted to a different fund once the CAT program is repealed. Other CAT funding will also be repealed once the program ends. IGA-07 also will put a policy in place to take care of any CAT settlement offers and any litigation that may arise after the repeal of the CAT Board.

*IGA-11 Nicotine Vapor Products Tax***

IGA-11 would define "Nicotine vapor product" in Idaho Code to include vaping liquids containing nicotine intended to be used in e-cigarettes and vaporizer equipment. The products would be taxed at the same level as tobacco products. The distribution of funds will be the same as it is for tobacco products.

IGA-12 Fair Advisory Board Option

Currently, Idaho Code only allows counties with populations greater than 200,000 the opportunity for the fair board to be an advisory board. Only two counties in Idaho meet the criteria for an advisory board. IGA-12 would give the board of county commissioners the option to have a fair board or a fair advisory board, allowing flexibility to choose the fair governance model that works best for each county.

IGA-17 Travel Convention Tax

Idaho collects a two percent travel and convention tax above the six percent sales tax on lodging sales to promote and subsidize the travel and tourism industry through the Idaho Department of Commerce. IGA-17 would add an additional two percent to this tax to be distributed to counties to mitigate the effects of tourism. After discussing with the bill sponsor, the IAC Legislative Committee proposed that the additional sales tax be split 50/50 between counties and cities that do not already collect a local option sales tax.

*IGA-18 Homeowners Exemption Cleanup HB562***

Currently, there is an active lawsuit between Latah/Lincoln Counties and the State Tax Commission regarding the original intent of HB562. IGA-18 would create a uniform, prorated system for implementing a new homeowner's exemption.

TRI-01 Land Use Planning for Roads

At least two counties in Idaho are not currently zoned. The legislation proposed in TRI-01 would allow non-zoned counties to enforce road and development agreements. Idaho Code now allows for this if a county is rezoned; however, for those counties that have never been zoned, it is impossible to rezone, thus the need for this proposed legislation. Valley County will take the lead on this bill.

Affiliates Agreed to Carry Some Proposed Resolutions

The Idaho Association of County Recorders and Clerks (IACRC), Idaho Association of County Treasurers (IACT), and Idaho Association of County Assessors (IACA) volunteered to carry some of the legislative resolutions proposed. The members voted to have IAC offer general support without prioritizing the following resolutions:

IGA-02 Change of Venue Fee (IACRC)

Since Odyssey was implemented, there have been issues with filing fees when a judge orders a change of venue from one county to another. The proposed change will allow the outgoing county to collect the venue change fee through Odyssey. The Idaho Association of County Recorders and Clerks offered to carry IGA-02.

IGA-03 Court Fees Paid to State Treasurer (IACRC)

IGA-03 is meant to follow up on House Bill 542, which shifted the dates county clerks are required to send payments to the state from the 5th day of each month to the 15th day of each month to align with other fee payments. The following code sections were overlooked in House Bill 542: §31-3201B, §31-3201H, and §31-3204. IGA-03 will update these sections to provide consistency.

IGA-08 Law Clerks (IACRC)

District court judges rely on assistance from law clerks. Though county employees are paid from county budgets, law clerks are

accountable directly to their supervising judge. The supervising judge is a state employee. IGA-08 proposes that law clerks become state employees. The proposal is meant to ensure direct accountability and liability and clear up confusion regarding the hiring, discipline, and firing of these employees.

IGA-09 Election Disruptions (IACRC)

During the 2022 Primary Elections, an incident occurred at a precinct in Blaine County, requiring a lockdown of several precincts. This evacuation triggered conflicting advice regarding whether it would be appropriate for a county clerk to petition a district judge to keep the polls open longer if the emergency disallowed the use of the precinct for longer than an hour. The proposal outlined in IGA-09 would help alleviate current confusion regarding what is and is not allowed in Idaho Code regarding this issue.

IGA-10 Precinct Committeemen, No Election if Uncontested (IACRC)

Currently, precinct committeemen must appear on the ballot even if the election is uncontested, leading to increased costs to counties and additional ballot styles for every precinct. Reducing the number of ballot styles may lead to less room for errors at the polls. Not holding an election if the election is uncontested is already in place for cities, highway districts, and other special-purpose district elections.

IGA-13 Investment of County Funds (IACT)

This resolution adds a section of code that directs treasurers to other sections of Idaho Code that describe Idaho laws regarding investment practices.

IGA-16 DMV Title/Vin Fees (IACA)

Due to the recent centralization of many DMV processes, county assessors are seeking an increase in Title and VIN inspection fees to enable counties to maintain a DMV brick-and-mortar presence in each county.

Next Steps

Now that the 2023 IAC Legislative Package is in place, the fun work begins. The IAC policy team will be meeting with legislators over the next couple of months to share IAC's priorities. We will have a better understanding of the feasibility of each priority in early December once leadership elections in the House and Senate are complete and committee chair assignments are complete.

IAC is only as strong as our members. We encourage you to continue to reach out to your legislators and share the 2023 IAC Legislative Package. Strive to build relationships with your legislators prior to the start of the 2023 session so they will know who to reach out to when a county issue enters the fray. 📌

Organizing Special Events

How to prepare for unwanted surprises

Kelly Paananen, ARM
HR RISK MANAGER, ICRMP



Many public entities host at least one special event each year. Special events include parades, circuses, fairs, concerts, rallies, and certain sporting events, such as marathons. Generally, a special event is defined as an organized assembly or activity conducted by an individual or organization for a common purpose. Even if a public entity is not the organizer of an event, the entity may have responsibilities if the event involves the use of public facilities such as parks or fire stations, or public services such as law enforcement or trash pick-up.

Controlling exposures from special events often requires the participation and consideration of several different departments. For example, law enforcement may develop a traffic control plan to keep traffic moving into and around the event, but the plan may conflict with the strategy of fire and EMS leaders for the staging and emergency exit of fire and EMS vehicles. All stakeholders should be at the planning table.

Attention to the following areas can minimize the risks and hazards of special events:

Event Organization

Whether the event is small, medium-sized, or large-scale, your team should be organized to plan for the needs of the event. There should be a written outline to define who will be responsible for each goal and the lines of communication. Organizers of medium-sized and large-scale events should hold regular meetings where minutes are kept and formal action plans are developed.

Building Facilities

Inspect all permanent structures such as bleachers, grandstands, or stages during the planning and just before the event. Ensure the proper permits are filed for temporary structures that will be erected. Inspect walkways and parking lots that will be used for the event. Inspect athletic fields with the event organizer. All inspections should be documented.

Supplemental lighting may be needed for night events. Sanitary concerns will be a significant consideration for large crowds and if food will be served. Portable toilets may be necessary. Health departments generally recommend one toilet for every 250 people, based on a maximum expected attendance.

Fire & Life Safety

The fire inspector should review the projected occupancy of all enclosures, use of tents, or other temporary structures. Permits may be needed for the handling of vehicle fuel, cooking facilities, and the use of an open flame or fireworks. Make provisions for inspecting electrical wiring installed for the event.

Include the local fire and EMS departments in planning. The event may require additional fire and EMS crews to handle the excess call volume that can be expected. Standby crews may need to be scheduled to monitor specific operations, such as fireworks. Mutual aid from neighboring towns should be considered.

Law Enforcement & Safety

Make sure there are enough police officers, lifeguards, and other emergency personnel assigned to the event to ensure the safety of all participants while still maintaining routine services to the community. Law enforcement agencies should develop specific written plans for missing children, terrorism, and private security services.

Traffic Control

Map out parking areas and travel routes to and from an event site to avoid traffic problems, both for event attendees and non-participants who must travel through the area. Coordinate with local Traffic Safety Officers for the placement of barriers, cones, and warning signs. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices provides guidance on traffic control for special events. It is especially important to keep emergency routes open for ambulances, fire trucks, and other emergency vehicles.

Food & Beverages

If food is served or sold at the event, verify food handling, preparation, and distribution comply with local and county food safety guidelines. Coordinate with health departments to schedule inspections. If alcohol is to be served, strong controls must be established for its distribution and consumption. The availability of alcohol may necessitate additional law enforcement or emergency medical personnel. Including alcohol as a part of a special event requires close communications with your risk manager.

Sanitation/Clean Up Plan

Groups using public facilities should have a plan for cleaning up equipment, premises, or streets after an event. They should be notified in writing that if they do not clean up satisfactorily or if they damage public property, they will be financially responsible for cleanups or repairs.

Special Events/Facility Use Permits

Groups using public facilities should have a plan for cleaning up equipment, premises, or streets after an event. They should be notified in writing that if they do not clean up satisfactorily or if they damage public property, they will be financially responsible for cleanups or repairs.

Insurance & Liability Concerns

Consult with ICRMP regarding insurance and risk management best practices. Consult with your attorneys for new or unusual situations. Some issues to consider discussing:

- Facility Use Agreements
- Hold Harmless and Indemnification Agreements/Waivers
- Compliance with local special event ordinances
- Updating ordinances
- Minimum levels of insurance coverage

Special events provide many benefits. They also present many challenges to the community. Overcoming these challenges starts with a good plan and organization. Involve all stakeholders early to minimize surprises. 🏗️





Support Local Gems: A Commitment to Idaho's Small Businesses

James E. Risch
IDAHO U.S. SENATOR

Idaho is consistently ranked one of the best states to do business. That is due to the ingenuity and drive of our small business owners.

Being a small business owner is not an easy task, especially at the moment. I commend those who have been able to strategize and keep their doors open throughout these last few years. Between labor shortages, historically high inflation, and supply chain disruptions, Idaho small businesses have proven that with grit, perseverance, and a deep commitment to community, it is possible to keep the lights on.

These values make small businesses the backbone of Idaho's economy and the engine of our success. It is my belief that the small businesses in our communities embody the very best of our great state and make Idaho special.

That is why in April 2020, I partnered with the Idaho Association of Counties (IAC) and organizations across the Gem State to launch "Support Local Gems": a campaign to highlight Idaho's small businesses and encourage Idahoans to shop local.

The idea behind Support Local Gems is simple: Idahoans are invited to "Support Local Gems" by shopping at their favorite small business, dining at an independent restaurant, purchasing a gift card for a loved one, writing a review online, or simply saying "thank you" to a small business they love.

As the holiday season grows near, consider skipping the big box stores and purchasing your gifts from a small shop on Main Street. Not only will you find a special gift for your loved ones, but your purchase is also a gift to the owner, their employees, and their families.

In Idaho, small business is big business. But for many Idaho entrepreneurs, business operations are a way of life and a family affair with a multi-generational legacy. These mainstays have become the heart of our communities and the homes of many fond memories.

Idaho continues to grow and prosper thanks to the values upheld by Main Street boutiques, local diners, and mom-and-pop shops. Now, it is our turn to show our commitment to the small businesses that have shaped and supported our great state.

The Support Local Gems campaign celebrates the small businesses that have inspired our communities with their spirit, passion, hard work, and resolve. Let's ensure these mainstays continue to power the Gem State well into the future. 📍

**SUPPORT
LOCAL
GEMS**



NOVEMBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30			

DECEMBER 2022						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JANUARY 2023						
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29	30	31	1	2		

FEBRUARY 2023						
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

See all upcoming events at
idcounties.org/events-training/calendar/

2022-2023 Upcoming Events

November 16-17

Fall County Officials Institute
 Best Western Inn // Moscow, ID

November 29

IACA Fall Meeting
 Hilton Garden Inn // Boise, ID

December 6-7

Fall County Officials Institute
 Residence Inn // Idaho Falls, ID

December 8-9

Fall County Officials Institute
 Riverside Hotel // Boise, ID

December 13-15

ISA & IJAA Annual Conference
 Riverside Hotel // Boise, ID

January 4-6

IACRC Elections Conference
 Riverside Hotel // Boise, ID

January 30 - February 2

IAC Midwinter Legislative Conference
 Riverside Hotel // Boise, ID

February 1-3

IPAA Winter Conference
 Grove Hotel // Boise, ID

February 2-3

ISACC Midwinter Conference
 Riverside Hotel // Boise, ID

February 11-14

NACo Annual Conference
 Washington Hilton // DC

The Idaho Association of Counties' Profile & Member Benefits

IAC Staff
IDAHO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

The Idaho Association of Counties (IAC), formed in 1976, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan member service organization dedicated to the improvement of county government. It was designed and incorporated by county elected officials to provide services, research, uniformity, and coordination among member counties, in order for the county elected officials to serve their constituents better. Idaho's county governments own, organize, and operate IAC. IAC is funded annually by dues paid by member counties and revenues generated by IAC services.

The mission of IAC is to promote county interests, encourage ethical behavior, advocate for good public policy on behalf of Idaho counties, support best practices, and provide education and training to assist Idaho county officials in the performance of public service. Our vision is to be the most trusted source for county government policy information and the leading source of knowledge for county officials.

Here are 10 ways IAC serves and provides value to its members:

Lobbying

IAC is instrumental in educating legislators and ensuring they understand the "county view" on issues such as property taxes, public defense, public lands, transportation funding, medically indigent services, elections, and more. IAC works closely with our members to aid in building relationships with legislators, so they will know whom to call when county issues arise. The IAC policy staff works closely with the IAC Legislative Committee throughout the year to ensure we are pursuing the issues our members want us to tackle. IAC hosts a weekly live virtual update for all members with live Q&As throughout the session on the latest policy issues relevant to counties.

Conferences

IAC's Midwinter Legislative and Annual Conferences are the best places to acquire information to make informed decisions and network with your peers. These conferences also offer opportunities to hear from the Governor and to meet with legislators in an informal setting. During the Annual Conference,

the following germane committees meet to discuss current policy issues and proposed legislative resolutions: Intergovernmental Affairs, Justice & Public Safety, Public Lands, and Transportation & Infrastructure. The Midwinter Legislative Conference allows IAC members to participate directly in the legislative process at the capitol, whether sitting in on a committee hearing, testifying on a bill, or meeting with legislators to discuss the impacts of legislation.

Networking

Whether you attend conferences, participate on one of IAC's steering committees, or attend IAC district meetings, the interaction and friendships developed with other county officials are invaluable.

Publications & Technical Assistance

A full catalog of the latest publications, upcoming event information, technical assistance, and much more are available on IAC's website (idcounties.org). For members with questions about state laws, county policies, or IAC services, IAC staff are just a phone call away for all of your technical assistance needs.

County News

IAC produces *County Focus*, a quarterly magazine that is mailed to every county elected official. The magazine provides in-depth articles relevant to counties, information about upcoming events, and fun opportunities to learn more about each of the 44 counties and various county elected officials across the Gem State. Keep an eye on your inbox for the bi-weekly newsletter, The County Connection, for up-to-date information about many issues relevant to counties, from possible grant opportunities to links to the latest IAC publications, information about upcoming training opportunities, and so much more. During the legislative session, IAC produces a weekly Legislative Bulletin with up-to-the-minute information regarding top county issues.

Corporate Partners

These are our strongest supporters and consistent partners for counties. These companies and organizations are always looking for ways to strengthen their relationship with counties. They seek out



IAC Programs & Services

UNEMPLOYMENT FUND

The IAC, in conjunction with Employer Advocates, has provided a program to ease the burden of required state unemployment insurance since 1978. This is done by stabilizing premium payments and auditing claims to assure that no erroneous claims are paid.

PUBLIC LANDS TRUST

The Idaho Association of Counties Public Lands Trust is a fund created by the IAC Board of Directors. It provides a source of funds that supports IAC and its membership in the National Association of Counties, Western Interstate Region, and in participating with any other organization that supports public lands issues consistent with IAC policy. The program is funded by voluntary contributions of counties through an assessment that is based on the percentage of PILT that a county receives from the federal government.

CAPITAL CRIMES DEFENSE FUND

Idaho's counties are authorized by Idaho Code Section 19-863A to create a voluntary capital crimes defense fund to ease the burden of the cost of trials for death penalty cases. The Capital Crimes Defense Fund (CCDF) is created through a Joint Powers Agreement authorized by chapter 23, title 67, Idaho Code, and is administered by a seven-member Board of Directors elected by the counties. The counties, on a per capita basis, pay the cost of operating the CCDF.

ADMINISTRATIVE & EXECUTIVE ACTIONS

Idaho's counties are affected by numerous non-legislative actions taken by state and federal agencies. IAC represents and works to protect the interests of county governments in Idaho by continuously monitoring and advising numerous state and federal agencies.

VALUATION LITIGATION FUND

IAC's membership voted to establish an Industrial Litigation Fund to assist counties in defending industrial litigation cases. An oversight committee establishes criteria, reviews, and determines the propriety of using the Industrial Litigation Fund. Costs related to expert witnesses, outside appraisals, additional legal services, and court preparation costs (depositions, exhibits, charts, etc.) are eligible for usage of the fund.

NATURAL RESOURCE LITIGATION FUND

The Natural Resource Litigation Fund assists counties in litigating natural resource issues. Based on established criteria, an oversight committee reviews and determines the propriety of using the Natural Resource Litigation Fund to litigate such cases.

JUDICIAL ACTIONS

There are times when the only way the interests of Idaho's counties can be protected and advanced is through court action. IAC participates in judicial action on an as-needed basis. In addition, Idaho's court facilities are funded by the counties and all court personnel, except the judges, are county employees. IAC works with the judiciary to ensure the system is working effectively. Eligible use of fund include costs related to expert witnesses, outside appraisals, additional legal services, and court preparation costs.

opportunities to help counties fulfill their statutory obligations and serve as tried-and-true partners actively working with county and local governments.

Trainings & Workshops

Our in-person trainings, webinars, and workshops are filled with information to make you the best county official you can be. If you are interested in a customized training approach to issues that may be specific to your county, IAC can also assist with that.

County Officials Institute (COI)

The County Officials Institute is a training program designed to provide the skills and knowledge to be an effective leader in county government. County elected officials and county staff are encouraged to participate in the program. Roles and Responsibilities of Idaho's County Elected Officials, Ethics in Government, How a Bill Becomes a Law, Crisis Communications, Personnel Management, and Property Appraisal and Taxation are some of the many courses offered through the COI. Learn more on our website: bit.ly/IDCountiesCOI.

IAC Promotes County Government

IAC works to promote local government and help the general public understand why local governance is critical for a well-run democracy. IAC ensures that the media is aware of the importance of counties through press releases and public relations activities.

Programs & Services

IAC offers several programs and services including Unemployment Fund, Capital Crimes Defense Fund, Valuation Litigation Fund, Natural Resources Fund, the Public Surplus Program, and more. Counties who participate in these programs and services can save taxpayer dollars.

IAC staff are here to support county elected officials and county staff and to help them be effective leaders in county government. We look forward to connecting further through our conferences, trainings, technical assistance, and programs and services. 📍

2022 IAC Annual Conference Recap

Jessica Roth
IAC Communications & Marketing Manager

The Idaho Association of Counties (IAC) hosted its 2022 Annual Conference at the Boise Centre from September 26 to September 28. County elected officials and county staff from all parts of Idaho gathered in Downtown Boise to participate in the three-day conference. The event featured interactive workshops with presentations from subject-matter experts on topics impacting counties, such as preventing cybersecurity attacks, the state of worker's compensation, financing county facilities, social media and the first amendment, and many more. Keynote speakers Governor Brad Little and Francis Benjamin, WSU's Political Interaction Lab Director, also addressed IAC's membership and took questions during Monday's and Tuesday's general sessions, respectively.

County elected officials and county staff also had time to meet with their committees, affiliates, and members of counties from similar population sizes to discuss relevant issues. In addition to meeting in smaller groups, IAC's full membership discussed and voted on IAC's legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative session. Sixteen resolutions were advanced. "IAC's Annual Conference provides the perfect opportunity for the membership to come together and have meaningful discussions about the issues impacting counties and constituents," said IAC Executive Director Seth Grigg. "Attending our conferences and participating in the legislative discourse is one important way to ensure your county has a voice and that it is heard."

The conference also provided updates on important topics such as the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program and the Secure Rural Schools and Community

Self Determination Act (SRS), as well as updates from Jonathan Shuffield, the National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Director – Public Lands for the Western Interstate Region (WIR).

IAC's installation of IAC's 2022-2023 executive board officers also took place during the conference. Chris Goetz, Clearwater County Sheriff, took his position as Immediate Past President, while Dotti Owens, Ada County Coroner, accepted her new role of IAC President. Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney Vic

Pearson was installed as the First Vice President. Blaine County Treasurer John David Davidson would have been sworn in as Second Vice President, but unfortunately he was unable to attend the conference due to illness. He will be installed at a later time.

"It was an honor to serve this organization as its president, and I am looking forward to seeing the great things Dotti will accomplish as IAC's new president," said Goetz.

IAC also held its 2022 annual awards presentation where distinguished officials from various affiliate associations were recognized by peers for their leadership, dedication, and significant contributions to their counties.

In addition to the ceremonies, workshops, and

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**Attending our conferences
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ensure your county has a
voice and that it is heard.**



presentations, IAC held fundraisers which included live and silent auctions, as well as the First Annual Cornhole Tournament to raise money for IAC's Scholarship Fund. The tournament was held during Monday night's reception, which was accompanied by live music from local Idaho band Soul Serene. The tournament unexpectedly wrapped up Monday night, with winners Brion Poston and GovPros Co-Founder Rick Sena being announced at Tuesday's general session. They were honored with custom sashes and a trophy by IAC Policy Advisor Kelli Brassfield, who organized the cornhole tournament.

The IAC Scholarship Fund was created in 1996 to assist the children of county employees and the children and grandchildren of county elected officials with the increasing cost of college tuition. Between the cornhole tournament, the live auction of an IAC-branded YETI cooler, and the silent auction of the custom-made cornhole boards donated by Brion Poston and Tom Alexander, a preliminary total of \$6,463.10 was raised! "This scholarship wouldn't be possible without the generosity of Idahoans, including our county elected officials and county staff, and our Corporate Partners," said Brassfield. "We're grateful to everyone who participated and helped make our fundraising efforts successful and fun!"

In addition to the robust educational opportunities, the conference hosted a full house of exhibitors, event sponsors and IAC Corporate Partners like ICRMP, GemPlan, Blue Cross of Idaho, Western States Cat, and SIF, Idaho Workers' Compensation. Networking breaks were scheduled into the agenda so that attendees would have ample time to connect with exhibitors, and a virtual scavenger hunt was used as a fun incentive to help IAC members learn about the various exhibitors and their organizations. Conference attendees who completed their trivia questions after meeting with all of the exhibitors were entered to win prizes.

"Our conference exhibitors, sponsors, and Corporate Partners make a tremendous impact on the success of our events and on accomplishing IAC's mission," said IAC Communications and Marketing Manager Jessica Roth. "We can't express enough how much we value their support."

This was IAC's second annual conference to take place in-person after a hiatus during the pandemic. IAC's Executive Director believes that gathering as a group makes a powerful impact. "It's inspiring to see our full membership come together -- it demonstrates the strength we have as an organization to make important decisions and truly represent the interests of Idaho's counties and their constituents," said Grigg. "I'm looking forward to gathering again in February for our Midwinter Legislative Conference."

To see the full photo album from the conference and download pictures, visit IAC's flickr page: [flickr.com/photos/idcounties/albums](https://www.flickr.com/photos/idcounties/albums). 📷





NACo: Representing Counties Across the U.S.

Mark Ritacco
NACO DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo assists America's 3,069 counties, nearly 40,000 county elected officials, and 3.6 million county employees in pursuing excellence in public service to produce healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient counties. NACo promotes sound public policies, fosters county solutions and innovation, promotes intergovernmental and public-private collaboration, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money.

NACo is a membership-driven organization, and we are proud to say that all of Idaho's 44 counties are members. In addition to counties as organization-wide members, county elected officials and employees can individually serve on a wide range of caucuses and committees that help shape federal policymaking. NACo has ten policy steering committees that cover a wide range of domestic policy issues that collectively help counties speak as one voice to our intergovernmental partners.

Every year, NACo holds two conferences for members to vote on policy resolutions to be added, amended, or removed from our American County Platform, NACo's permanent policy document. The American County Platform reflects the objectives of our membership and is used to deliver the county government message to the Administration, Congress, and the American Public. NACo holds several other annual conferences such as convenings for our Rural Action Caucus, Western Interstate Region, Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) Fly-in to Washington, D.C., and more.

In addition to the events that NACo hosts which provide members with an opportunity to share proven practices and strengthen knowledge networks, NACo also produces a plethora of world-class reports and toolkits. NACo frequently releases in-depth legislative analyses to

highlight the county-impact of new federal laws, and blogs are released almost daily to provide members with specific county-related updates on new upcoming federal regulations and legislation.

Since the enactment of the American Rescue Plan (ARP), NACo has released several detailed analyses on Treasury's guidance for the program, answered nearly 1,700 questions from members, and published a Local Government ARP Investment Tracker that demonstrates how counties are investing their State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. In addition to providing these resources to members, NACo was able to successfully advocate for additional flexibility when allocating funds by highlighting the critical investments counties have made in their local communities.

NACo also developed an interactive funding chart the funding opportunities accessible by counties from historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The matrix includes details on how to access funding, special eligibility requirements, federal cost share information, and the BIL funding opportunities that are currently available and open to county governments.

NACo strives to strengthen America's 3,069 counties to help our communities thrive across America. Through our conferences, resources, and advocacy work, the NACo team works everyday to advocate for county priorities in federal policymaking, and enrich the public's understanding of county government. 📌





How Effective Return-to-Work Programs Impact the Bottom Line

Paul K. Sears

IDAHO'S WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workplace accidents present a challenge for injured workers and employers alike. An injured worker with a serious injury may face lost time from work, permanent impairment, and a loss of access to the labor market. Likewise, employers face the temporary loss of a valued employee. One solution in an employer's toolbox to help minimize the financial strain of a work injury is to utilize a return-to-work program.

Idaho's Workers' Compensation Law does not require an employer to hold a job open or rehire an injured worker after recovery from a work-related injury or disease. But injured workers who are offered a light duty position benefit in several ways. First, injured workers with a light duty position maintain the routine of showing up and being connected to the workforce in general. If medically appropriate, keeping ill or injured employees in the workforce will also provide them with ongoing financial security. The employer also benefits by keeping a skilled employee on staff to provide training and mentorship to others, do partial work to keep productivity up, or take on tasks that the employer hasn't had time to address.

The longer an injured worker remains off of work for an injury, their statistical likelihood of returning to the workforce lessens considerably. According to a 2017 report from the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, the probability of returning to work after failing to return within the first three months of the injury date decreases by 36.8%. The numbers worsen further as time goes on. Injured workers off work for more than two years have only a 4.9% chance of ever returning to the workforce.

Employers that offer light or modified duty to an injured worker will lessen the burden of industrial injury claims. Provided they are mindful of the worker's safety and health,

employer's with light duty availability will be able to maintain productivity. Return-to-work programs also signal to healthy employees that the employer cares and wishes to retain valued employees. Financial benefits are also part of the social and cultural benefits of light duty. Reduced temporary total or partial disability payments will lower insurance carriers' claims cost, lowering the experience modification and premiums charged to the employer. An argument can also be made that injured workers on light duty recover more quickly than those who remain away from the job.

The impact of industrial injuries and the degree of disability experienced in many industrialized communities worldwide exacts a heavy toll. Therefore, it is vital that we, as a statewide community, bring about a discussion and shift the paradigm to recognize that all parties possess some responsibility in the restoration of an individual human life. To do otherwise is not sustainable.

Employers need to stay engaged with out-of-work employees and take steps to not only reassure them, but to get them back to work as soon as safely possible. A Return-to-Work program is a formal way to initiate and oversee this process, and it benefits both employees and employers.

Find more resources at www.idahosif.org.



2022 Award Recipients Honored at IAC Annual Conference

Jessica Roth

IAC Communications & Marketing Manager

The Idaho Association of Counties (IAC) hosted its 2022 Annual Conference in Downtown Boise this September. One of the many highlights of the event was the awards presentation to honor distinguished county elected officials.

The Mills-Adler Award is given to officials from various affiliate associations for their dedication and significant contributions to their counties. The award is named in honor of two distinguished county elected officials: the late Darwin Mills, Lincoln County Sheriff, and the late Betty Adler, Payette County Treasurer. Both exemplified the qualities all county elected officials strive for.

The first Mills-Adler Award recipient was Carrie May, Clark County Assessor. Carrie has lived all of her life in Idaho. Carrie took office as assessor in 2004 and has been a part of many boards and committees. She served on the Sixth District of Elected Officials Board moving through the ranks, and she was the IACA President from 2014-2015. She currently sits on the ITD County Engagement Team, the Centrally Assessed Property Committee, the Motor Vehicles/Parks and Recreation, and the Nominating committee. She is currently the IACA representative on the IAC Board of Directors.

The next Mills-Adler Award recipient was Kim Muir, Madison County Clerk. Before she was elected clerk, Kim stayed busy keeping books for several different businesses. She went to work for the county in the prosecuting attorney's office in 2009 as a crime victims coordinator and as a secretary. She was elected as the county clerk in 2011. Kim currently serves on the IACRC Elections committee, has served as the IACRC President, and has served on numerous committees both in the Clerk's organization and IAC.

Vaughn Rasmussen, Bear Lake County Commissioner, was also named

a recipient. Vaughn was elected county commissioner in 2005 and has worked diligently to build relationships with other commissioners and state legislators to navigate and find solutions for issues impacting Idaho counties. He has served on the Gem Plan board since 2011 and has contributed countless hours to help keep insurance costs low for counties. In addition, he has served on the ICRMP Board of Trustees since 2019, serves as a trustee for the Idaho Association of District Boards of Health, is on the local Board of the Directors Memorial Hospital, is the commissioner liaison to the Golf, Historical Society, Shooting Range, Mosquito Abatement, TV Translator District Boards, and participates on the District 6 Juvenile Detention Board.

Commissioner Rasmussen was not present to accept his award, so Commissioner Jack Johnson presented the award to a Amy Bishop, Bear Lake County Clerk, on Commissioner Rasmussen's behalf.

Minidoka County Coroner Lucky Bourn was also honored as a recipient of the award. Lucky took office as coroner in 2009 and is a jack of all trades. Before being elected coroner, this individual served in the U.S. Army, was an Idaho State Police Trooper, Deputy Sheriff, EMT Safety Director, and a rancher and farmer. Lucky has served on the IAC Legislative committee, is the chair of the Idaho State Association of County Corners Education Committee, and had been the President of the Idaho State Association of County Coroners for the last three years. His passion and dedication as the county coroner is why he was chosen to be this year's recipient.

Another deserving recipient was Keisha Oxendine, former Shoshone County Prosecuting Attorney. Keisha was elected county prosecuting attorney in 2011. While serving as the county prosecuting attorney, she was also the president and a board member of the Idaho Prosecuting Attorney's Association. This prosecutor has also been the



past president of the Rotary Club, PEO, the Youth Association, and board member of the county Women's Resource Center. All of the organizations in which she held leadership positions serve the interests of her county and its citizens. Her willingness to be an active member, including leadership positions, shows her commitment to those organizations. Her efforts to educate the public on the operation of county government improved the image of county government in that the citizens had a better understanding of the laws controlling open meetings and public record requests. Better understanding in these areas improved the communications between county government and the citizens.

The next recipient was Richie Skiles, Latah County Sheriff. Richie served our country proudly in the United States Marines in the Security Forces for four years. He started his law enforcement career in the county sheriff's office in 1996 where he worked for 12 years. He then went to work for the City of Troy as their chief of police. In 2016, he was elected to the position of sheriff and is currently in his second four-year term. He is currently serving as the ISA president after being elected by his peer sheriffs to the Idaho Sheriffs' Association Executive Board. Richie received the Spirit of Idaho Award, presented by Senator Mike Crapo, for his dedication to his community.

Mark Hansen, Bonneville County Treasurer was the final recipient of this year's Mills-Adler Award. Mark attended Ricks College and Brigham Young University earning a bachelor's degree in Accounting and went to work for Kingston Company. He worked many years in the banking industry which prepared him well for public service. In 1998, he was elected the county treasurer which started his career as a public servant. During his time as the county treasurer, he conducted a significant review and revamp of the county investment portfolio which has benefited the county in big ways. He supported a significant software upgrade to the county's financial software and aided in moving the treasurer's office to the new location in 2019.

The second distinction presented at the conference was the H. Sydney Duncombe Award, which is IAC's highest honor given to individuals who have greatly contributed to furthering county government through development and education in Idaho. The award was created in 1988 in honor of the late Dr. H. Sydney Duncombe, who taught and trained numerous county officials in their roles and responsibilities.

The recipient of the H. Sydney Duncombe Award for Excellence in County Government is Keisha Oxendine, First District Magistrate Judge.

"Keisha is a leader. She was an effective prosecutor, and I trusted her inherently to handle conflict cases. She was always professional and kind in her interactions, and she provided excellent representation for her constituents. It was no surprise that she was chosen to be a Magistrate Judge based on her work for Shoshone County," said Kootenai County Prosecuting Attorney Barry McHugh.

IAC was honored to acknowledge these exemplary individuals and highlight their many achievements and service to Idaho's counties. 🇮🇩



Lewis County

Photo Courtesy of Jessica Johanson of Johanson Photography



2022 Winchester Days Parade

What is your county especially known for?

Lewis County is well known for its agriculture: producing soft white wheat, canola, garbanzo beans, barley, lentils, peas and blue grass. Lewis County is one of the largest producers of Kentucky Blue Grass in Idaho. We also have several hay and livestock operations in the area. Lewis County is 480 square miles with the majority of that being natural prairie.

What are some hidden gems that people might not know about in your county?

Winchester Lake is a man-made lake, originally used as a mill pond created in 1910 by damming Lapwai Creek. It is currently a state park with fishing and camping. The Clearwater River runs through Lewis County providing boating, floating, and fishing. The river was a main trading route for the Nez Perce Tribe and Lewis and Clark. The river was also used to float logs down to mill sites along the river.

There are also several seasonal celebrations in the County: the Lewis County Fair, Winchester Rodeo, Chief Lookingglass Powwow, June Picnic, Reubens Sausage Feed, and Prairie Days to name a few.

When was your county founded and how did it get its name?

Lewis County was founded in 1911, and it was named after explorer Meriwether Lewis. The towns on the prairie were stage coach stops used by early settlers. Lewis County was originally a part of Nezperce County and partitioned off in 1911. The County lies within the Nez Perce Indian Reservation and is the fourth least-populated county in Idaho.

What is it about your county that draws people to the area (either to live or recreate or both)?

Lewis County is made up of small rural communities. Visitors can retrace the Lewis & Clark expedition, fish, hunt or spend



Old Lewis County Fair barn after being hit by a winter storm
Photo Courtesy of Steve Wherry - Editor, Lewis County Herald



Clearwater River
Photo Submitted by Lewis County

a lazy day on the river. Residents enjoy a small-town feel where everyone knows your name and waves at you when you drive by. The average graduation class size is 10-15 students. The Upriver Youth Leadership Council has a teen center in Kamiah with teen-friendly activities such as pool, foosball, ping pong, video gaming, music, movies, and activities such as cooking classes, book club, and arts and crafts. Nezperce also has a youth center with similar activities.

What are four interesting historical facts about your county?

1. Nezperce has a haunted hotel that was featured on the Travel Channel. The story goes that a lady of the evening was killed by a traveling salesman who was

staying at the hotel. People report having seen a dark-haired woman in a red dress. There have also been reports of children laughing and playing in the hotel, blinds moving up and down on their own, and locked doors opening on their own.

2. A series of high railroad bridges was constructed in 1908. The Camas Prairie railroad was known as the 'railroad on stilts' due to the many wooden trestles along its route. In one five-mile stretch, there were more than a dozen trestles. The trestle in Lawyers Canyon is 1,520 feet long and 280 feet high. The railroad ran agricultural products as late as 1975. The trestles have been featured in the movies 'Wild Wild West', 'Breakheart Pass' and in television series 'Death Valley Days'.

3. The old Winchester Grade, which was completed in 1923, held the first organized road race in 1964. Among the participants in the hill climb was Bob Knievel from Butte, Montana, who was later better known as Evel Knievel.
4. Lewis County's largest city is Kamiah. The Nez Perce Appaloosa was first bred in this area. Lewis and Clark explorers camped in the Kamiah area in the 1800s. The city of Craigmont was named after William Craig; a mountain man with a Nez Perce wife. Winchester was named in 1900 after the rifle during a meeting to establish a school district. While considering the possibilities, an individual looked at the stack of rifles by the door and suggested the name which was approved. The city of Nezperce was named after the Nez Perce Tribe. The meaning in the Nez Perce language means "pierced nose". 📍

LEWIS COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Shelley Brian
Assessor

Lisa Winner
Clerk

Greg Johnson
Commissioner

Justin McLeod
Commissioner

Mike Ponozzo
Commissioner

Perry Larson
Coroner

Zach Pall
Prosecuting Attorney

Jason Davis
Sheriff

Shelley Ponozzo
Treasurer

2022 IAC Corporate Partners

>>> IAC's Corporate Partner Program can help you accomplish your goals of creating and strengthening awareness and visibility. Our Corporate Partners are uniquely positioned to build and deepen relationships with county elected officials from all 44 counties.

Diamond



Platinum



Gold



Silver





IAC Member Spotlight

Annette Dygert Owyhee County Treasurer

Why did you decide to run for county office?

I was the chief deputy for 12 years, and when the treasurer decided to leave, I was appointed. I officially ran the following spring. I LOVE serving as the Owyhee County Treasurer. I enjoy my job, my employees, and the people of Owyhee County.

If you could go back in time, what year would you travel to and why?

I would like to go back to 1787-1788 to observe and listen to conversations as the Constitution was being drafted and ratified.

How would your 10-year-old self react to what you do for a living?

She would definitely laugh. I always thought I would marry a rich rancher and we would run the ranch together forever!

What is the best restaurant that you've eaten at and what did you order?

Lock Stock and Barrel – I ordered the Prime Rib.

What's one thing you'll never do again?

Train and run a half marathon. I ran my first half marathon in 2021. STUPID...STUPID...Did I mention it was STUPID? I don't mind the 5K but that is the most I ever want to run again!

What's one of your favorite family traditions?

Having four boys at home, no one wanted to do the dishes, so we would get the shotgun and clay pigeons and have a shooting contest. The loser would clean the kitchen. I became a really good shot!

Would you rather ride a bike, ride a horse or drive a car?

A horse! I grew up on a ranch in Nevada and learned to ride before I could walk. There is nothing like trailing cows on a beautiful day out in the country!

What is your favorite "hidden gem" in your county?

The Owyhee Mountains. They aren't hidden but they are definitely a 'gem'. There is so much to explore and a lot of beauty to behold on foot, by 4-wheeler, by vehicle, or my favorite: by horse!

What are three items on your bucket list?

Go on a cruise, go to the Kentucky Derby (complete with attire and hat), and visit Australia.

What fictional place would you most like to visit?

I want to go to Bedrock with the Flintstones. All of the "modern conveniences" they have but done in the stone age are hilarious. Plus I love watching the show (with or without my grandkids).

Who would play you in the movie of your life?

Sandra Bullock as the character she played in Miss Congeniality! I am more comfortable in boots and jeans, so sometimes when I dress up, I feel out of place and usually end up tripping! 🐾

Lincoln County



Shoshone: Train Town USA | Photo Submitted by Lincoln County

Photo Submitted by Lincoln County



What is your county especially known for?

Lincoln County is primarily known for its agriculture, where major crops are beef, dairy, alfalfa, corn, beets, and others. Glanbia is a staple agriculture business here producing whey protein powder. Our major employers are our dairies, ITD, Glanbia, BLM and the school districts.

Recreation opportunities in Lincoln County are unique with many lava caves, Black Magic Canyon, miles and miles of equine, ATV, and hiking trails, as well as great hunting and fishing opportunities.

What are some hidden gems in your county?

The Lincoln County Courthouse (111 West B. Street) was completed in 1904. The original oak furniture has been restored and is still in use. Inside, visitors will find a display case containing some of the early items used

in the court house. Early pictures of the area are also displayed on the walls. The jail in the basement is reported to be the last remaining “flat-iron” jails in existence in the West.

Another hidden gem is the Shoshone Ice Caves, which is a great family activity filled with history. Idaho’s Mammoth Cave & Shoshone Bird Museum of Natural History is incredibly high caliber and rivals any Smithsonian. This museum is hidden out in the desert with no electricity and makes for an exciting and educational adventure.

When was your county founded and how did it get its name?

Lincoln County was created by the Idaho Legislature on March 18, 1895, by a partitioning of Blaine County, which was created earlier that month by a merger of Alturas and Logan Counties. Lincoln County itself was partitioned on January 28, 1913, with a western portion becoming Gooding County and an eastern portion

becoming Minidoka County. The county assumed its present borders on February 8, 1919 when a southern portion became Jerome County.

Lincoln County is named after President Abraham Lincoln. The Idaho Territory was created in 1863, during the Lincoln Administration of 1861–65.

What is it about your county that draws people to the area (either to live or to recreate or both)?

Folks who enjoy outdoor recreation, great traditions of rodeo, sports, and FFA, and who value a safe environment to raise their families are drawn to Lincoln County. Many people visit to explore the ice caves and lava rock canyons, go fishing on Little Wood River, and enjoy the great hunting the area provides.

What are four interesting historical facts about your county?

1. Lincoln County is a historic train town named a 'Train Town USA'.
2. Shoshone was the only town in the West with cold beer and pop due to having ice-filled lava caves.
3. The process of drying whey that is now commonly used in smoothies and sports

drinks was invented by a business owner from Richfield, Idaho.

4. Shoshone was laid out in 1882 in anticipation of the soon to follow Union Pacific short line railroad. Shoshone became not only the town with the widest main street in the world but also one of the wildest towns in the West. Even before being formally established, it was filled with miners from Hailey, railroad men, and sheep herders.

Do you have any specific programs or services that may be unique to your county?

Lincoln County Commissioners started the Lincoln County Youth center in 2021 to support learning loss, childcare and safety, and STEM and agricultural education to serve all of the county's children. The resources are administered through accessible after school and summer programs.

Another program is the newly formed Lincoln County Connection, which is a rural transportation program to help the elderly go to medical appointments or shopping, and to take students to college at CSI.

The Good Samaritan free medical clinic is another program that serves residents of Lincoln County. 📍



The ledge at Little Wood River
Photo Submitted by Lincoln County

LINCOLN COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Linda Jones
Assessor

Cindi Sievers
Clerk

Joann Rutler
Commissioner

Rebecca Wood
Commissioner

Roy Hubert
Commissioner

Mike Piper
Coroner

Richard Roats
Prosecuting Attorney

Rene King
Sheriff

Ann Youts
Treasurer



Black Magic Canyon | Photo Submitted by Lincoln County



What is the County Officials Institute?

The County Officials Institute (COI) is a training program designed to provide the skills and knowledge to be an effective leader in county government. County elected officials and county staff are encouraged to participate in the program.

Why do I want to sign up for the County Officials Institute?

In addition to receiving valuable education and tools for you to be a better public servant, you will also receive a certificate upon graduation at the IAC Annual Conference. All graduates will receive a digital logo to include in your email signature, a lapel pin, and recognition with a name badge ribbon at all IAC conferences. Oh, and did we mention bragging rights?

How do I earn a County Officials Institute Certificate?

All participants must complete 14 core courses (18 total credit hours) and 12 credit hours of electives. Commissioners must complete an additional 8 credit hours of commissioner core courses. Commissioner core courses may count for electives for all other elected officials. Credits must be completed within 4 years. To view the course catalog, visit idcounties.org/events-training/.

How much does it cost to participate in the County Officials Institute?

COI courses are offered throughout the year at the Fall and Spring COIs, IAC Midwinter Legislative Conference, IACC Annual Conference, IAC Annual Conference, and as webinars. The in-person events have a registration cost but there is no additional cost to enroll in the COI.

I'm in! How do I enroll in the County Officials Institute?

All participants that register for the Fall or Spring COIs are automatically enrolled in the program. Participants are responsible for signing the attendance sheet at in-person courses. IAC will track progress of all participants.

Questions?

If you have any questions about COI, please contact any of the IAC Operations Team (Kristin Cundiff, Mindy Linn, Amanda Steinmetz, or Jessica Roth) at 208.345.9126. We can assist with registration, upcoming course opportunities, or invoices.





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GemPlan is governed by a board of trustees comprised of elected officials voted in by member counties.

Let's start a conversation

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