

# Klickitat and Skamania Counties

## Labor Area Summary

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## Monthly Review

### State of the States—and PDX

Not counting the U.S. Virgin Islands (+4.9 percent) and Puerto Rico (+2.7 percent), Nevada (+3.5 percent), Utah (+2.8 percent), Arizona and Idaho continued to be the fastest-growing states over the past year. Washington dropped to 12<sup>th</sup> and Oregon ranked 15<sup>th</sup>, the first time neither state was in the top ten in a long while.

#### State of Washington

- Bad weather was at least partly to blame for February's loss of 8,700 jobs. That wasn't enough to cancel out January's downwardly-revised but still sizable gain of +10,400 jobs.
- Over the year, job growth slower at +64,400 jobs, +1.9 percent.
- Unemployment remained low at 4.5 percent for the fourth month in a row.
- Over-the-year growth rates for some key industries: construction 4.1 percent (greatly affected by the weather), manufacturing +3.8 percent (with aerospace at 4.9 percent), "other retail trade" (which includes electronic shopping) +3.8 percent, software publishing +7.2 percent, computer systems design, +3.4 percent, corporate offices, -0.9 percent, employment services, +2.3 percent.
- Only three labor market areas have grown rapidly (4.0 percent or higher) in the past year: Asotin at 5.2 percent, Lincoln at 4.3 percent and Wahkiakum at 4.2 percent.
- Fourteen areas have grown slowly (with less than 1 percent job growth): Wenatchee (0.9 percent), Walla Walla (0.7 percent), Yakima (0.7 percent), Whitman (0.5 percent), Skamania (0.5 percent), Grays Harbor (0.1 percent), Clallam and Garfield (no change), Kittitas (-0.1 percent), Pacific (-0.2 percent), Ferry (-0.6 percent), Lewis (-1.0 percent), Adams (-1.2 percent), and Mason (-1.4 percent).

#### State of Oregon

- January was revised to a gain of +12,800 jobs, which would be the largest one month gain on record—if it makes it past benchmarking. February brought things down to earth with a small loss of 500 jobs.

Feb. 2019 Unemployment Rates			
	Feb. 2019	Jan. 2018	Feb. 2018
<b>Seasonally Adjusted:</b>			
U.S.	3.8	4.0	4.1
U.S. U-6	7.3	8.1	8.2
Washington	4.5	4.5	4.6
Oregon	4.4	4.3	4.2
Portland Metro	3.8	4.0	3.6
Columbia Gorge*	5.2	4.8	4.6
U.S.	4.1	4.4	4.4
Washington	5.2	5.3	5.3
Oregon	4.7	5.0	4.6
Columbia Gorge*	6.3	6.0	5.6
Klickitat	7.9	7.8	7.4
Skamania	6.8	6.8	7.3
Hood River	5.1	4.1	3.8
Sherman	4.4	4.5	4.8
Wasco	6.3	6.3	5.4
Clark	5.1	5.4	5.5
Cowlitz	6.6	6.9	7.0
Wahkiakum	7.5	8.1	7.9
Portland Metro	4.1	4.3	4.3
*Includes Hood River, Klickitat, Sherman, Skamania, and Wasco counties.			

- The unemployment rate went up a tenth of a point but was still low at 4.4 percent.
- Over the year job growth remained moderate at 27,800 jobs/1.5 percent.
- Key industry growth rates: construction +4.1 percent, manufacturing +3.3 percent (with electronics at 4.8 percent), software +0.9 percent, professional services -0.8 percent, corporate offices, +2.9 percent, employment services, -2.4 percent.

#### Portland Metro area

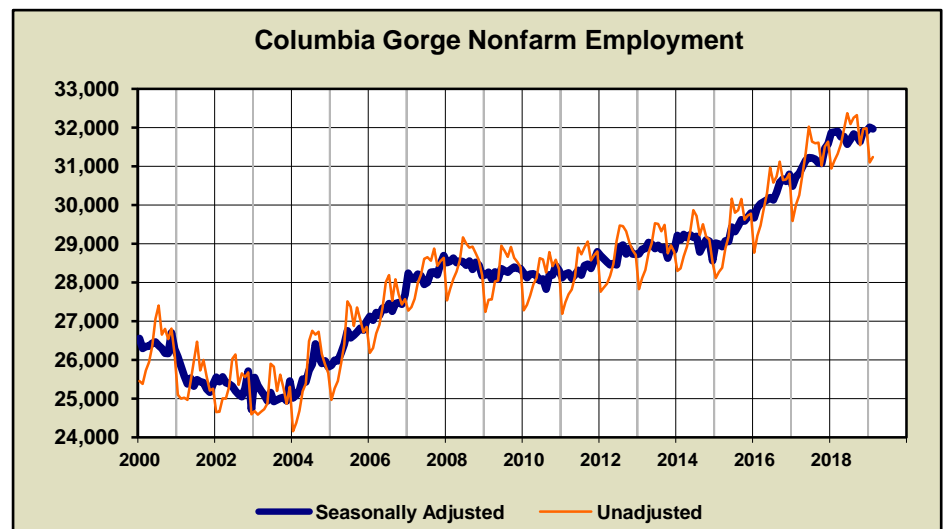
- Unemployment dropped two tenths of a point to an ultra-low 3.8 percent.
- A good January (+5,300 jobs) was followed by a bad February (-1,700 jobs).
- Over-the-year growth dropped a bit to 18,900 jobs, or 1.6 percent.
- Construction employment grew at 4.4 percent over the past 12 months. Manufacturing was solid at 3.7 percent; within manufacturing, electronics was +5.2 percent. Software rose by 3.5 percent, while computer systems design was slower at 1.3 percent. Employment services (a.k.a. temp agencies) were off 1,100 jobs over the year (-4.0 percent).

## The Gorge

Gorge nonfarm employment slid by about 40 jobs in February on a seasonally-adjusted basis.

Unadjusted employment rose by 140 jobs. Two industries accounted for the bulk of the net hiring: manufacturing (+70 jobs) and professional & business services (+60 jobs after a loss of 70 jobs last month).

Job growth in the Gorge was down to 90 jobs or 0.3 percent.

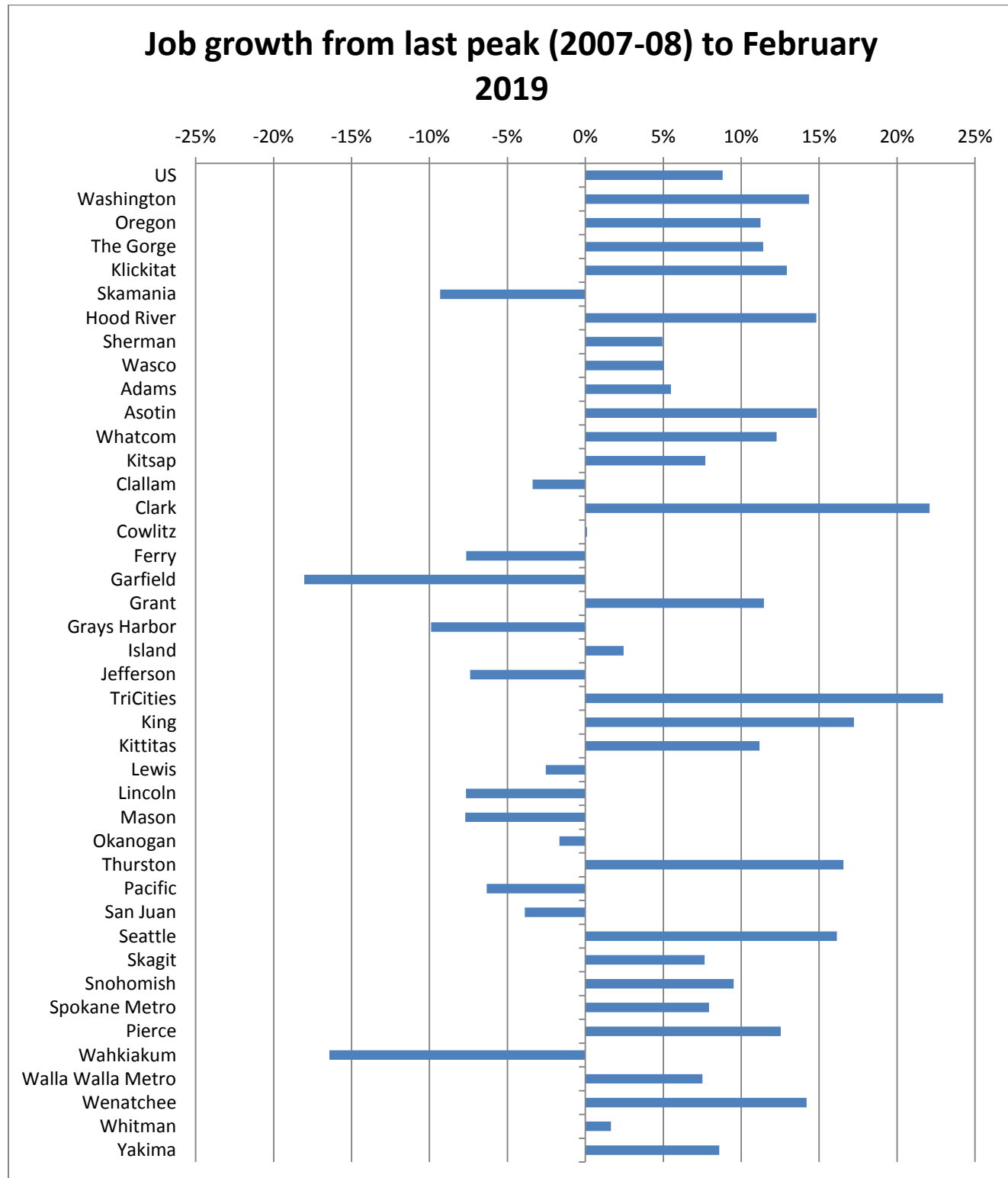


- Manufacturing continued to be the top source of new jobs at 140 jobs, a 3.2 percent growth rate.
- Close behind was education & health services which added 130 jobs (+2.9 percent).
- Trade, transportation & utilities increased by 75 jobs/1.5 percent.
- Mining, logging & construction fell by 60 jobs/-4.2 percent;
- Professional & business services employment lost 50 jobs/-2.1 percent.
- Leisure & hospitality also lost 50 jobs/-1.0 percent.
- Federal government was off by 10 jobs (-1.4 percent), state government was flat and local government was the big loser at -130 jobs (-2.6 percent). Indian tribal governments accounted for 100 of those lost jobs.
- All other industries—including information services, finance and real estate and other services—gained 45 jobs/1.8 percent.

The unemployment rate for the Gorge was estimated at 6.3 percent, seven tenths of a point higher than last February. The unofficial seasonally-adjusted rate rose by four tenths of a point to 5.2 percent.

## Perspective: job growth since the onset of the recession

We're probably getting close to the peak of this business cycle—a ten-year expansion. The chart below compares employment for each area at their previous peak (sometime in 2007 or 2008) with current employment. The Gorge, Klickitat and Hood River have all done better than the national average, Skamania is still awaiting redevelopment of the former Hot Springs resort, and Sherman and Wasco are both slower but still positive, which is more than you can say about a dozen counties in Washington and more than that in Oregon.

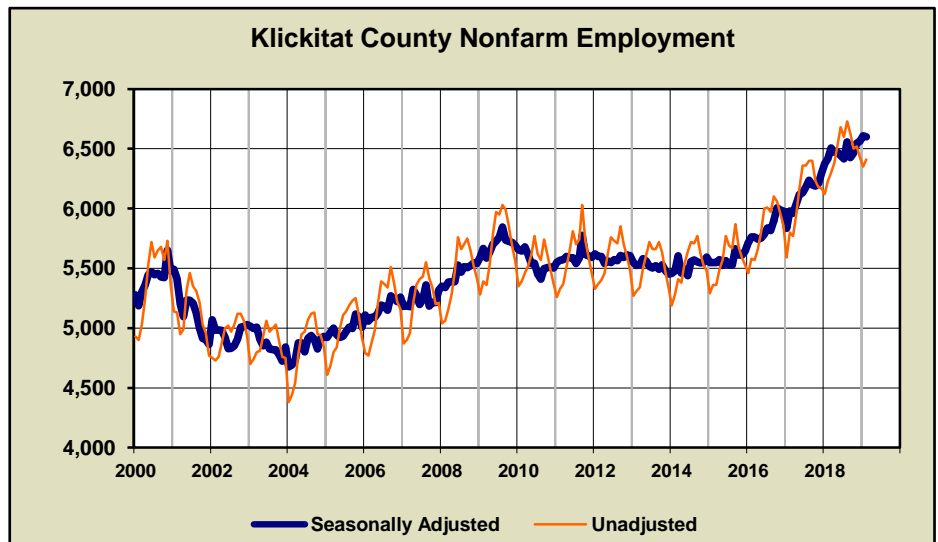


## Klickitat Summary

Klickitat County employment rose by 60 jobs in February. Manufacturing gained 60 jobs, and there were small increases in construction, wholesale trade, professional services, and leisure & hospitality. Government declined by 40 jobs.

Total employment came to 6,410 jobs—180 more than a year ago (2.9 percent). As has been the case, most of the new jobs were in manufacturing (+190). Retailers added 40 jobs over the year, and education & health services gained 30 jobs. Local government payrolls were off by 40 jobs.

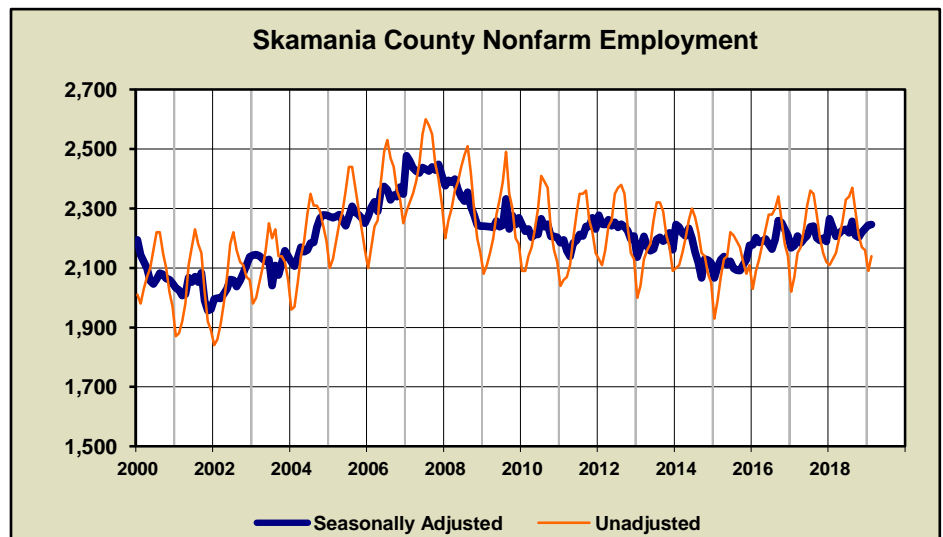
The county unemployment rate was estimated at 7.9 percent, half a point higher last February. About 780 county residents were looking for work, 60 more than a year ago.



## Skamania Summary

February brought 50 jobs to Skamania County—matching the typical seasonal trend for the month—with 30 added in leisure & hospitality, 10 in manufacturing, and 10 in trade, transportation & utilities.

That brought total employment up to 2,140 jobs, 10 more than a year earlier. Trade, transportation & utilities gained 20 jobs over the year, while “all other services”—a mix of industries—was off by 20.



The county’s unemployment rate was estimated at 6.8 percent, half a point lower than a year earlier. About 380 county residents were jobless and seeking work, down slightly from a year ago.