

Section I. Richland County Profile

A. History/Topography



Located in eastern Montana, Richland County is Montana's 20st most populous county with 10,810 residents (from provided by the 2012 the Census Bureau). *Crane, Fairview, Lambert, Savage and Sidney are the cities and towns located within Richland County.* Cradled in the outstretched arms of the mighty Missouri to the north and the free flowing Yellowstone to the southeast, Richland County is the only county in Montana with two major rivers flowing through it. Richland County was established as a county in 1914. The County encompasses 2,103 square miles (of which 18.9 square miles is inland water and 2084 square miles of it is land) tucked neatly in the heart of the fertile Lower Yellowstone Valley. The County is also just a few miles from the Confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers.

The county ranks at or near the top of all Montana counties in a number of agricultural and other production areas, including number one in the production of sugar beets, and in the top 10 state wide for hay and spring wheat. The county also ranks first in oil production in the state, and its livestock center is one of the largest in the state. Anglers enjoy the border waterways of Eastern Montana and Western North Dakota where there are more than 40 varieties of fish, including the exotic paddlefish, which can weigh up to 150 pounds.

The area is steeped in the lore of the American West. Lewis & Clark journeyed through the region in 1805 and making Sidney their last stop during their return trip across Montana in 1806. They noted in their journals the abundant wildlife and recommended the confluence as a strategic site for the

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burgeoning fur trade of the time. Taking their advice to heart, the American Fur Co. established Fort Union Trading Post at the confluence in 1828. It became the crown jewel of the American fur trade in the mid 1830s and is now a National Historic Site, which continues to be restored. Fort Buford followed Fort Union in 1866, a military post built just about a mile downstream from the Trading Post. Many homesteaders settled into the region aided by the arrival of the railroad.



In 1904 the Bureau of Reclamation began the process of starting the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project. During the World War I and World War II there was a shortage of sugar in the country, this provided the Richland County farmers the opportunity to grow sugar beets in the valley. The Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project maintains approximately 72 miles of main canal, 150 miles of laterals, and 150 miles of drains. The construction started in 1905, with the first irrigation water available in the planting season of 1909. However, the entire project was not completed until 1931; it serves as a model irrigation system across the country. Continued irrigation expansion was spurred when Holly Sugar Company built the sugar beet refinery in 1925, which is located northeast of Sidney. American Crystal purchased the refinery in the fall of 2002, now known as Sidney Sugars, Inc.

Agriculture was and remains the principal industry in Richland County. The county sports an abundance of arable land and wildlife habitat with its irrigated bottomland in the southeast and its rolling hills to the west. The majestic Badlands and the rugged river breaks together add to the diversity of the landscape throughout the *Richness of Richland County*.

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B. Climate



Richland County averages 13.5 inches of precipitation during the annually growing season of 140 days (May 16 - Sept 19). The clear sunny skies dominate whatever season it is. The residents within the County can experience the four seasons.

| Climate | Richland, MT | United States |
|---|--------------|---------------|
| Rainfall (in.) | 13.9 | 36.5 |
| Snowfall (in.) | 31.2 | 25 |
| Precipitation Days | 74 | 100 |
| Sunny Days | 205 | 205 |
| Avg. July High | 85.6 | 86.5 |
| Avg. Jan. Low | 0.6 | 20.5 |
| Comfort Index (higher=better) | 68 | 44 |
| UV Index | 3.7 | 4.3 |
| Elevation ft. | 2,287 | 1,443 |

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Section II. Employment and Economic Data

A. Overview

*Figures throughout this section are from the 2012 census unless otherwise noted

Richland County

Population.....10,810

Richland County split from Dawson County in 1914 and Sidney became the county seat.
Incorporated Cities: Sidney (County Seat): 5,934 Fairview: 939

Sidney



County Seat

Population.....5,934

School Enrollment K-12.....1,292

Type of Government.....Mayor / Council

No. of Businesses.....370 +

Major Employers.....Agri Industries, Franz Construction, Hurley Enterprises, Mitchell’s Oil Field Services, Reynolds Market, Sidney Health Center, Sidney Sugars, South 40, Valley View IGA.

Sidney was incorporated in 1911. Sidney is the second largest city in Eastern Montana next to Miles City, and the 19th largest city in the State.

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(Sidney continued)

Sidney dates back to 1888 and is known as the “Sunrise City”. Sidney has three public schools - one elementary, one junior high and one high school- along with one private school and 17 churches. Many of the highlights include the MonDak Heritage Center & Art Gallery, one of the best-combined museum and art facilities in the state. Sidney is unique in that it has a beautiful eighteen-hole golf course and club house, has the only indoor hockey arena in Eastern Montana, and an outdoor Olympic-size pool with water slide. Sidney is the home of the Richland County Event Center located at the fairgrounds. Sidney has been historically recognized for our trees, as well as several municipal parks. Sidney is considered to be a major retail center for Eastern Montana and Western North Dakota. It is also the home to one of the region’s finest full-service medical facilities (Sidney Health Center) in the area.



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Fairview



Population.....939
School Enrollment K-12.....394
Type of Government.....Mayor / Council
No. of Businesses.....60 +
Major Employers.....Fairview School District, MonKota Fertilizer Plant, and Safflower Technologies.

Fairview has the unique distinction of being a two-state community, with the town site straddling the Montana-North Dakota borders.

The community highlights include a beautiful city park, which offers a free campground and RV hookups, as well as a state of the art swimming pool. The Fairview Bridge, located at Sundheim Park, is a treasure that draws outdoor enthusiasts from all over. Both the Fort Union Trading Post and Fort Buford are located just 11 miles North of Fairview as is the Snowden Bridge (one of the only vertical lift bridges left in the country).

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Savage



Population.....250
School Enrollment K-12.....109
Major Employers.....Savage School District, Westmoreland Coal Mine, Valley Fuel, and
Craig’s Meat Processing

Savage was one of the many towns that sprung up along the new railroad lines at the turn of the century. The community was provided by a boost from work on the Lower Yellowstone Reclamation Project (now know as the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project).

Most of the residents are employed in agriculture or providing services to those who do. Located west of the town is the Westmoreland Coal Mine and to northeast of town lies Elk Island Recreation Area. Also located fifteen miles south of Savage on Highway 16 is Intake and the Lower Yellowstone Diversion Dam, a prime site for paddle fishing.

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Lambert



Population.....150
School Enrollment K-12.....106
Major Employers.....Lambert School District, Nortana, and Town & Country Repair.

Lambert was originally an incorporated town and was later devastated in the early 1920s due to a series of costly fires, which ultimately led to its un-incorporation in 1928.

The town is located in the western end of the county, Lambert boasts an excellent small town museum, and is located next door to the Fox Lake Wildlife Management area (an excellent waterfowl and general hunting spot).

In an effort to draw additional families to Lambert, the school district opted to construct new housing for teachers. In addition, the school district updated and renovated the entire school building adding a new gymnasium, classrooms, as well as a state of the art library.

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Richland County Statistics

Age Distribution

| <u>Age Distribution</u> (2014) | <u>20-24</u> | <u>25-44</u> | <u>45-65</u> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| # in each group | 593 | 2,691 | 3,184 |

| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Median Age: | 41 |
| Population under 18: | 23.7% |
| Population over 65: | 13.8% |

Labor Analysis

| | |
|--|----------|
| Civilian Labor Force* | 6,098 |
| Employed | 5,872 |
| Unemployed | 226 |
| Unemployment Rate | 3.7 % |
| Annual Number of High School Grads | 120 |
| Percent of High School Graduates or higher (Persons 25 and older) | 87.2 % |
| Work stoppages in the last 5 years | None |
| Right-to-Work Law | None |
| Personal Per Capita Income (2015) | \$29,285 |
| Median Household Income (2015) | \$59,941 |
| Average Household Income (2015) | \$67,900 |

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Transportation

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Airport / Airlines | Cape Air |
| Railroad | BNSF * Goods only |
| Railroad | AmTrak * Departs from Williston (70 miles) |
| Bus | Jefferson Line |

Utilities

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Electric & Natural Gas | Montana Dakota Utilities Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Coop |
| Water / Sewer | Municipal- combined sewer and water rates |
| Communications | Mid-Rivers Communications Century Link Communications |

Trade Area Analysis

Well over 500 businesses are located within a 75 mile radius of Sidney; the bulk of them are located in Sidney. This creates an impressive retail trade area which includes totals from counties located in MT as well as western ND with 40,503 in population. (This figure is based on information attained from the USPS Zip-codes.com)

Sidney is ideally situated to serve Northeastern Montana as well as residents of Western North Dakota. Products and services offered here include everything from intricate craftwork, data processing, cabinet making, bottling, sugar production, construction and coal mining. Businesses are found in all areas from retail trade and small manufacturing to mining, oil & gas development, outdoor recreation, and, of course, agriculture.

The presence of the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project, established in 1909, has provided an important stability to Richland County's Ag-dominated economy. The county also has over 2.3 billion tons in known recoverable coal reserves. The boom and bust cycle of oil and gas production also impacts the county's economy, where Richland County remains a top producer in the state even in down cycles.

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Tax Calculation Breakdown

Below is an example of the tax calculations of various industrial buildings within the city limits of Sidney, (5 Central School District) Richland County, MT. Calculations are based on the 2016 mill levy amounts, and provided by the Richland County Treasurer's Office on 2/1/2017:

| Property Market Value | \$50,000 | \$500,000 | \$1,000,000 | \$5,000,000 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Taxable Multiplier | .0135 | .0135 | .0135 | .0135 |
| Taxable Value | \$675 | \$6,750 | \$13,500 | \$67,500 |
| Mill Levy Multiplier | .45167 | .45167 | .45167 | .45167 |
| Tax Based On 2016 Levies | \$304.88 | \$3,048.77 | \$6,097.55 | \$30,487.73 |
| Airport Levy | \$2.55 | \$25.52 | \$51.03 | \$255.15 |
| Ambulance Voted Levy | \$1.03 | \$10.33 | \$20.66 | \$103.28 |
| Cemetery Levy | \$2.23 | \$22.34 | \$44.69 | \$223.43 |
| Nursing Home Levy | \$2.03 | \$20.25 | \$40.50 | \$202.50 |
| Soil Conserv Levy | \$1.39 | \$13.91 | \$27.81 | \$139.05 |
| TOTAL TAXES TO BE BILLED | \$314.11 | \$3,141.12 | \$6,282.24 | \$31,411.14 |

If there are any developer's fees or special taxes within the City, these will need to be included, i.e.: impact fees, sewer, water, solid waste, lighting, etc.

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**TRADE AREA ANALYSIS WITHIN 75 MILES OF SIDNEY
MONTANA**

| MONTANA | | NORTH | | DAKOTA | |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|------------|
| CITY / TOWN | POPULATION | CITY / TOWN | POPULATION | CITY / TOWN | POPULATION |
| SIDNEY | 5,191 | ALAMO | 57 | | |
| ANTELOPE | 51 | ALEXANDER | 223 | | |
| BAINVILLE | 208 | ARNEGARD | 115 | | |
| BROCKTON | 255 | BEACH | 1,019 | | |
| CIRCLE | 615 | BELFIELD | 800 | | |
| CULBERTSON | 714 | EPPING | 100 | | |
| FAIRVIEW | 840 | GOLVA | 61 | | |
| FROID | 185 | GRENORA | 244 | | |
| GLENDIVE | 4,935 | KILLDEER | 751 | | |
| MEDICINE LAKE | 225 | MANDAREE | 596 | | |
| POPLAR | 810 | MEDORA | 112 | | |
| RESERVE | 23 | RAY | 592 | | |
| RICHEY | 177 | SENTINEL BUTTE | 56 | | |
| WIBAUX | 589 | TIOGA | 1,230 | | |
| | <u>14,818</u> | WATFORD CITY | 1,744 | | |
| | | WILLISTON | 14,716 | | |
| | | | <u>22,416</u> | | |

TOTAL POPULATION: 40,503

| Non-incorporated MT | | Non-incorporated ND | |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| BLOOMFIELD | 150 | APPAM | 0 |
| COALRIDGE | 0 | CARTWRIGHT | 199 |
| CRANE | 102 | CHARBONNEAU | 0 |
| DAGMAR | 199 | CHARLSON | 0 |
| ENID | 0 | FAIRFIELD | 154 |
| HODGES | 0 | FRYBURG | 0 |
| HOMESTEAD | 79 | GRASSY BUTTE | 251 |
| LAMBERT | 345 | HANKS | 0 |
| LINDSAY | 149 | KEENE | 283 |
| MCCABE | 0 | MANNING | 74 |
| SAVAGE | 655 | SPRINGBROOK | 0 |
| VIDA | 206 | TRENTON | 292 |
| | <u>1,885</u> | TROTTERS | 0 |
| | | WHEELOCK | 0 |
| | | ZAHL | 131 |
| | | | <u>1,384</u> |

Information attained from the USPS Zip-Codes.com. February 1, 2017

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