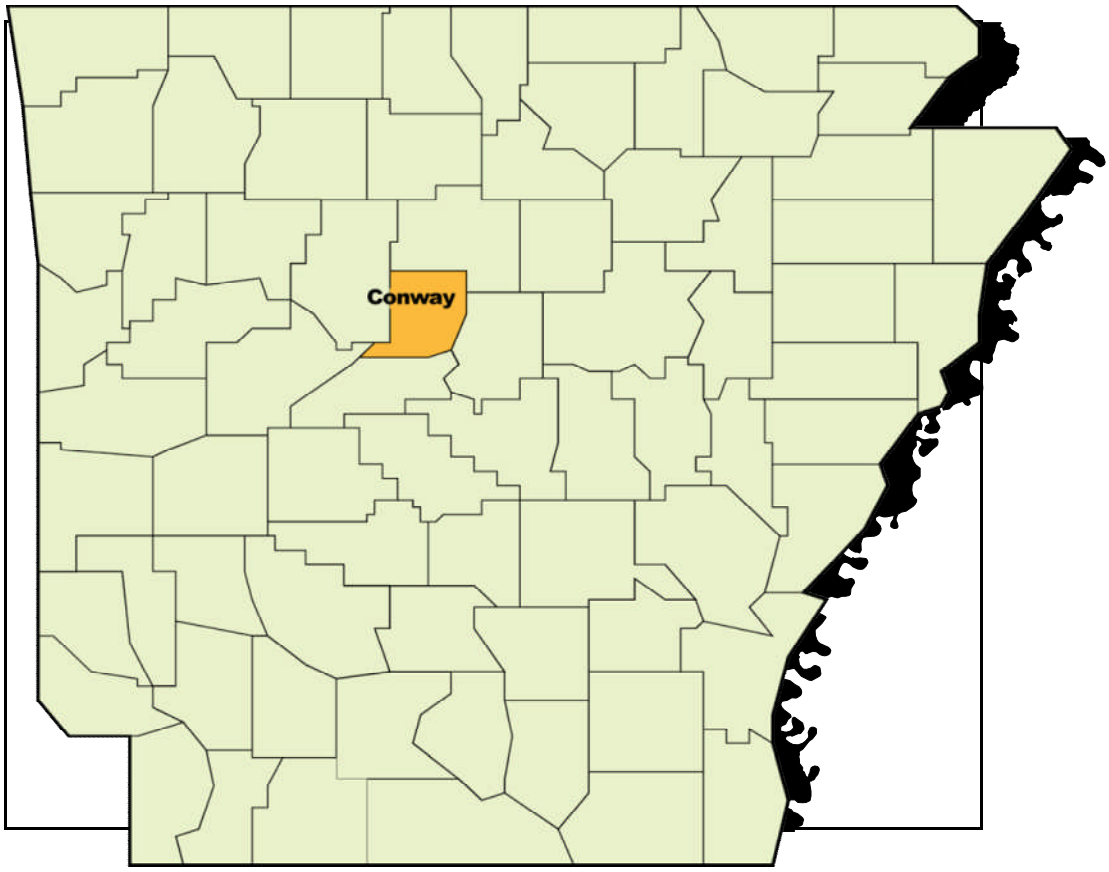
Conway County Profile

2006



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
Cooperative Extension Service

Wayne Miller, Professor
Cooperative Extension Service
University of Arkansas

Ben Olson
University of Wisconsin Student
Political Science Department

Cooperative Extension Service
Division of Agriculture
University of Arkansas

Foreword & Acknowledgments

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service is pleased to release these updated county profiles in hopes that these publications may serve as a useful tool for local officials, community leaders, and economic development professionals.

This publication provides a comparison and overview of the demographic, economic and social trends in Arkansas counties. The information is presented in graphs and maps to allow the reader to quickly grasp current trends and conditions and gain insight into local and regional contexts. We encourage leaders and decision makers to use this publication in conjunction with their knowledge of the local geography, culture and political environment to make wise decisions for Arkansas' future.

The State agencies providing data and assistance for this publication include the State Data Center at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, the Arkansas Department of Education, and the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services. We thank the many individuals at these departments and organizations for their quick response to our requests for information.

Several departments and individuals of the University of Arkansas worked in collaboration to publish these county profiles. Dr. Wayne Miller, Community and Economic Development, coordinated the project. Mr. Ben Olson compiled the data and developed graphs, maps, and charts. Mr. Todd Hodgson and Dr. Frank Farmer, Department of Consumer Environmental Sciences, provided the population pyramid. Dr. Frank Roth, formerly employed at the Southwest Research and Extension Center, provided information on the forestry industry. Katy Elliott, Community and Economic Development, edited the profiles while Donna Rinke and Paul Boliou, Communications Department, published the profiles on the Cooperative Extension website. Their many hours of effort are reflected in the quality of the publication.

We hope you find this publication useful as you plan for the future of your communities.

Dr. Ivory W. Lyles
Associate Vice President for Agricultural Extension

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(For Local Staff Chair See Inside Backcover)

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Internet Sources of Information

Population

- Arkansas State Data Center – 2000 Census .....www.aiea.ualr.edu/census/censusdata/default.html
- Bureau of Census – 2000 Census .....www.census.gov/dmd/www/databank.html
- Bureau of Census .....www.census.gov

Education

- Arkansas Department of Education .....http://arkedu.state.ar.us
- Arkansas School Education Site .....www.as-is.org
- U.S. Department of Education .....www.ed.gov
- National Center for Education Statistics .....http://nces.ed.gov

Employment

- Arkansas Department of Workforce Services .....www.arkansas.gov/esd/
- Bureau of Economic Analysis.....www.bea.doc.gov/bea/regional/data.htm
- Bureau of Census – 2002 Economic Census www.census.gov/econ/census02/

Income

- Bureau of Economic Analysis.....www.bea.gov/bea/regional/data.htm
- Bureau of Census .....www.census.gov/hhes/www/income.html
- Bureau of Census – 2002 Economic Census www.census.gov/econ/census02/

Retail Sales

- Bureau of Census – 2002 Economic Census www.census.gov/econ/census02/

Poverty

- Bureau of Census .....www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html

Health

- Arkansas Department of Health .....www.healthyarkansas.com/data/data.html
- National Health Information Center.....www.health.gov/nhic

Households

- Bureau of Census – 2000 Census .....www.census.gov/dmd/www/databank.html

Agriculture

- National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) .....www.nass.usda.gov
- NASS – County Data .....www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/

Housing

- Bureau of Census – 2000 Census .....www.census.gov/dmd/www/databank.html
- Bureau of Census .....www.census.gov/hes/www/housing/ahs/ahs.html

Transportation

- Bureau of Transportation Statistics .....www.bts.gov
- Arkansas Highway & Transportation Department .....www.arkansashighways.com

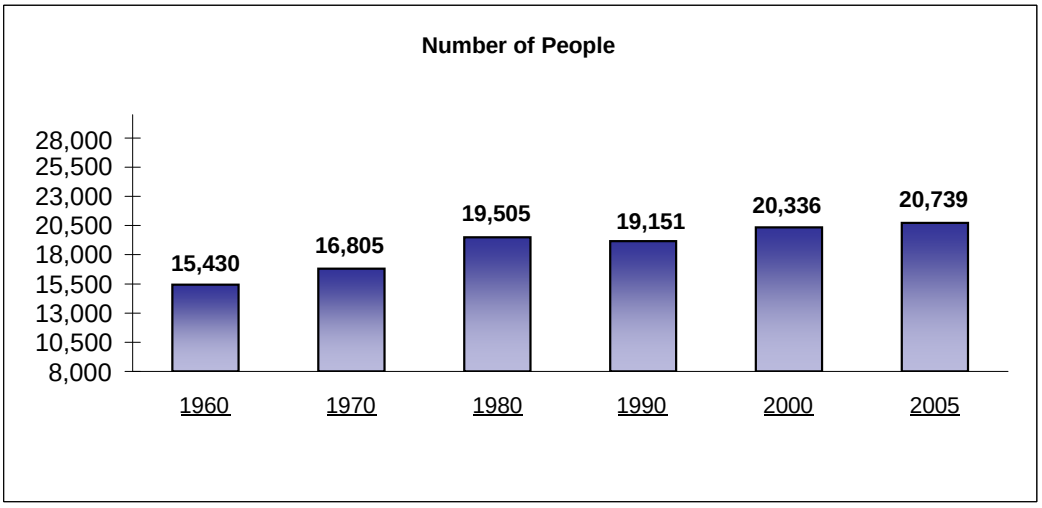
Local Government

- Bureau of Economic Analysis.....www.bea.gov/regional/data.htm

Population, 1960-2005

Conway County

Figure 1



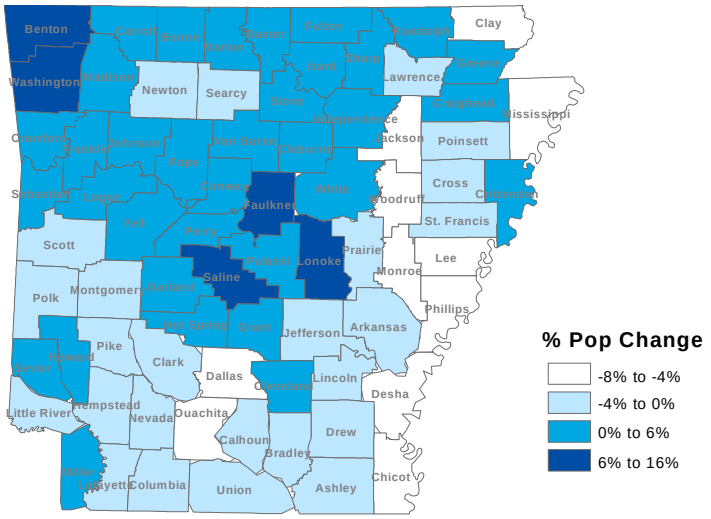
Source: 1960,1960,1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census of Population & 2005 Population Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

The population of Conway County increased gradually from 15,430 in 1960 to 20,739 in 2005.

Population Change, 2000-2004

The Natural State

Figure 2

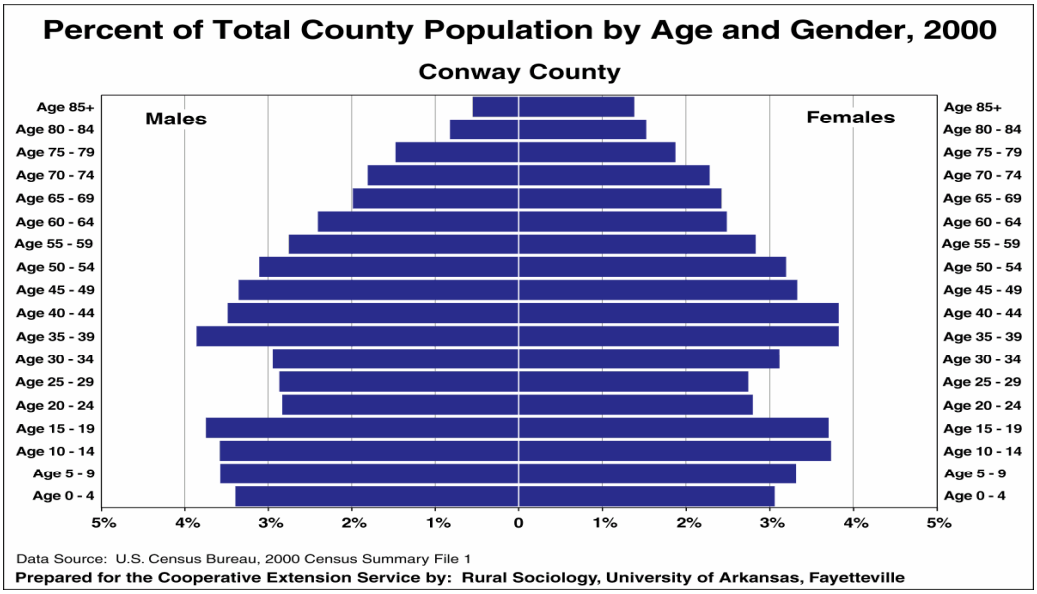


Source: 2000 Census of Population & 2004 Population Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

Population grew most rapidly in Northwest & Central Arkansas counties and declined in some East and South Arkansas counties.

Population

Figure 3

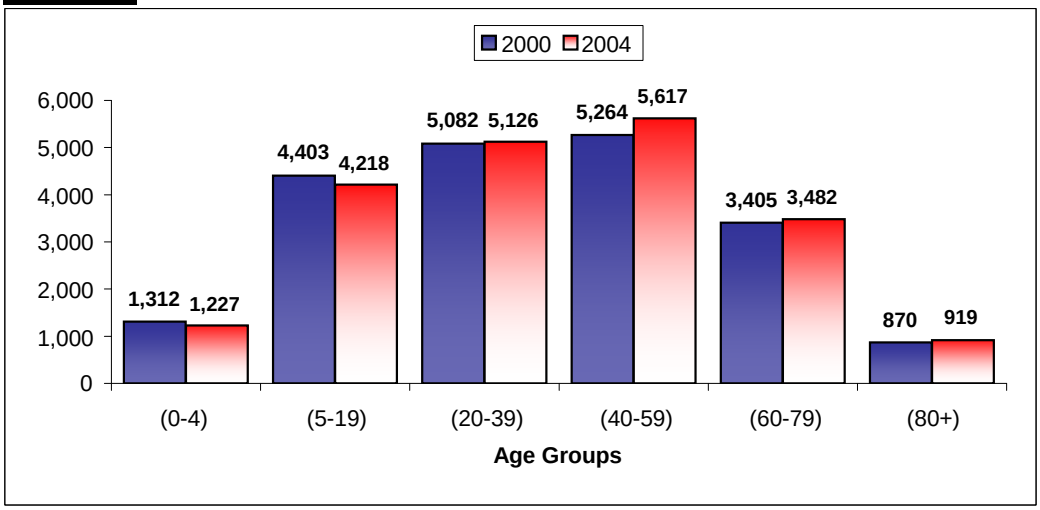


There are fewer people living in Conway County between the ages of 20 to 34 than in both younger and older age categories.

Population by Age, 2000 & 2004

Conway County

Figure 4



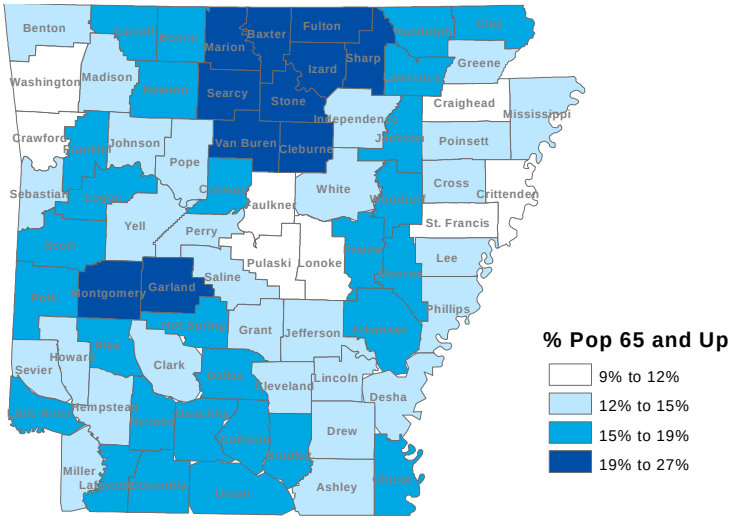
Source: 2000 Census of Population & 2004 Population Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

While the population of most age groups in Conway County changed little between 2000 and 2004, the population of the 40 to 59 age group increased considerably.

Population 65 and Older, 2004

The Natural State

Figure 5



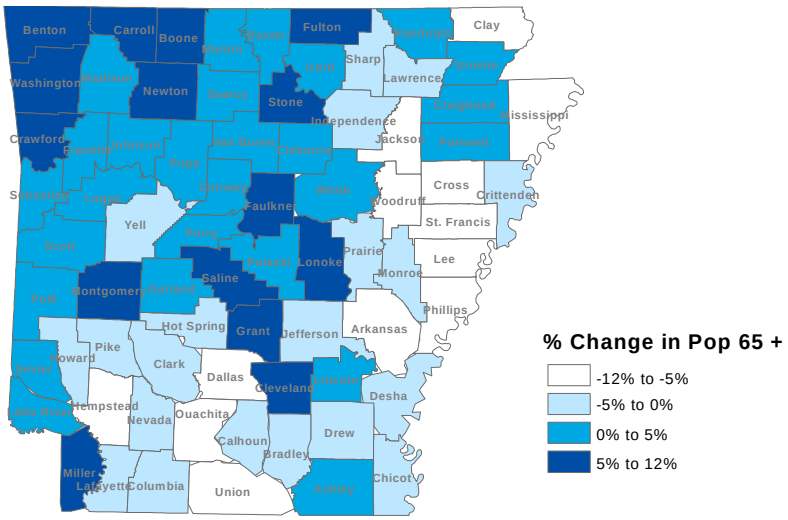
Source: 2004 Population Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

Counties in Northcentral Arkansas have the highest proportion of people aged 65 and older.

Population Change of People 65 & Older, 2000 - 2004

The Natural State

Figure 6



Source: 2000 Census of Population & 2004 Population Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

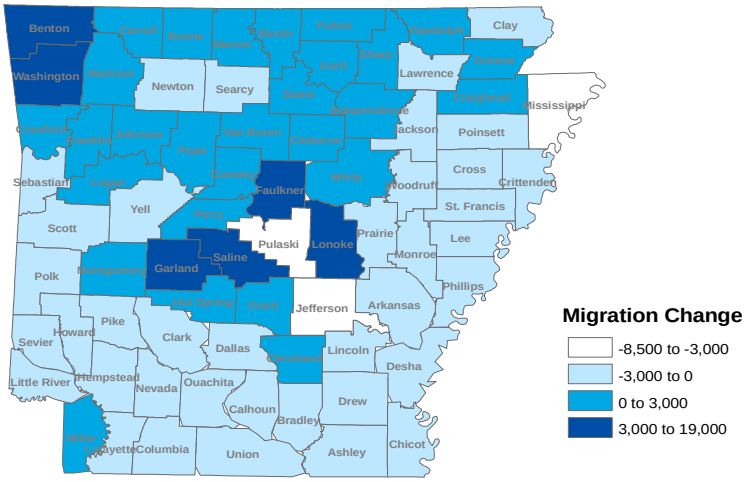
The elderly population as a proportion of the total population grew most rapidly in Central and Northwest Arkansas.

Population

Net Domestic Migration of People, 2000 to 2004

The Natural State

Figure 7



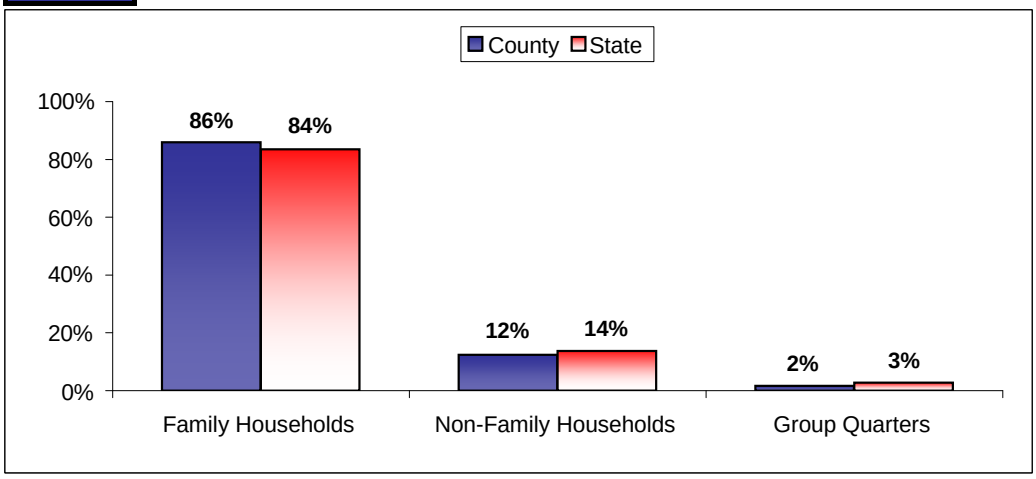
Source: 2000 to 2004 Population Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

Central & Northwest Arkansas had the highest in-migration of people between 2000 and 2004, while Pulaski, Jefferson, and Mississippi Counties had the largest out-migration of people during this period.

Population by Household Type, 2000

Conway County

Figure 8

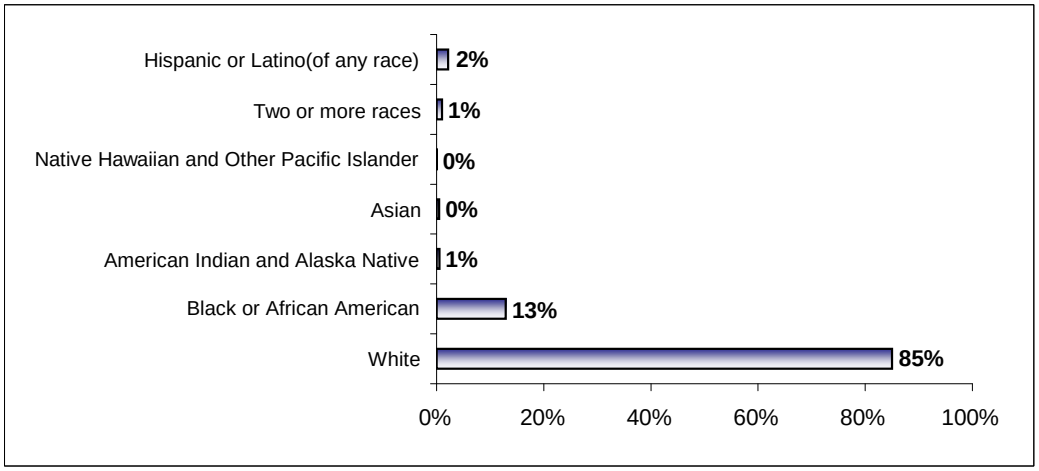


Source: 2000 Census of Population, U.S. Bureau of Census

Most of the people (86%) in Conway County live in family households. The proportion of people living in non-family households and group quarters was lower than the state average in 2000.

Population by Race, 2004
Conway County

Figure 9

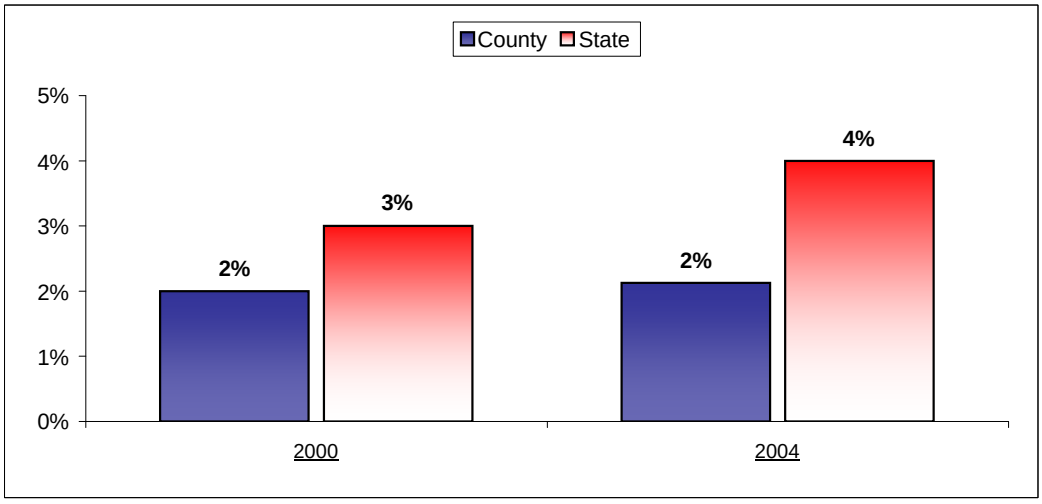


Source: 2004 Population Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

Eighty-five percent of the people living in Conway County in 2004 were Caucasian. Thirteen percent were of Black or African American. Other minorities represented only about two percent of the population.

Population of Hispanic Origin, State and County for 2000 & 2004
Conway County

Figure 10



Source: 2000 Census of Population & 2004 Population Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

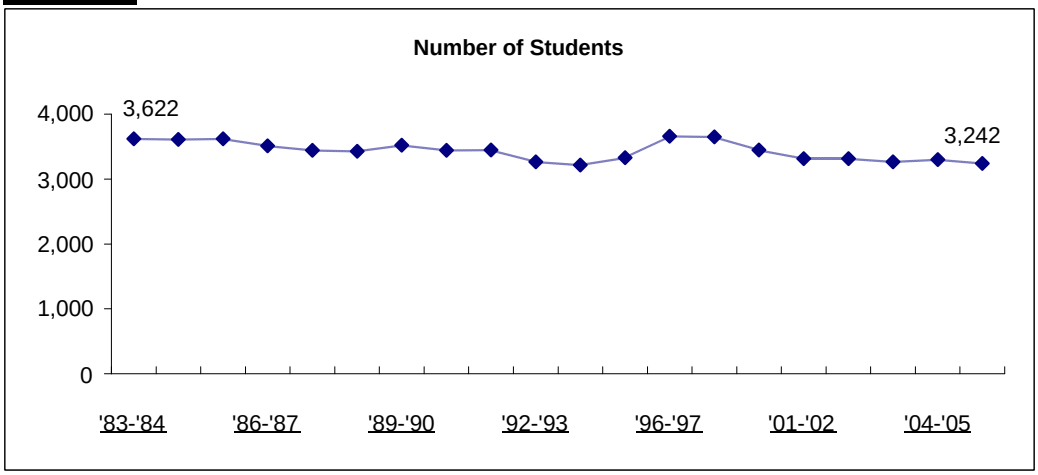
The proportion of Hispanic people living in Conway County remained at two percent of the population between 2000 and 2004. The Hispanic population may be of any race: white, black or any other combination of races.

Education

Public School Enrollment, 1983-1984 to 2005-2006

Conway County

Figure 11



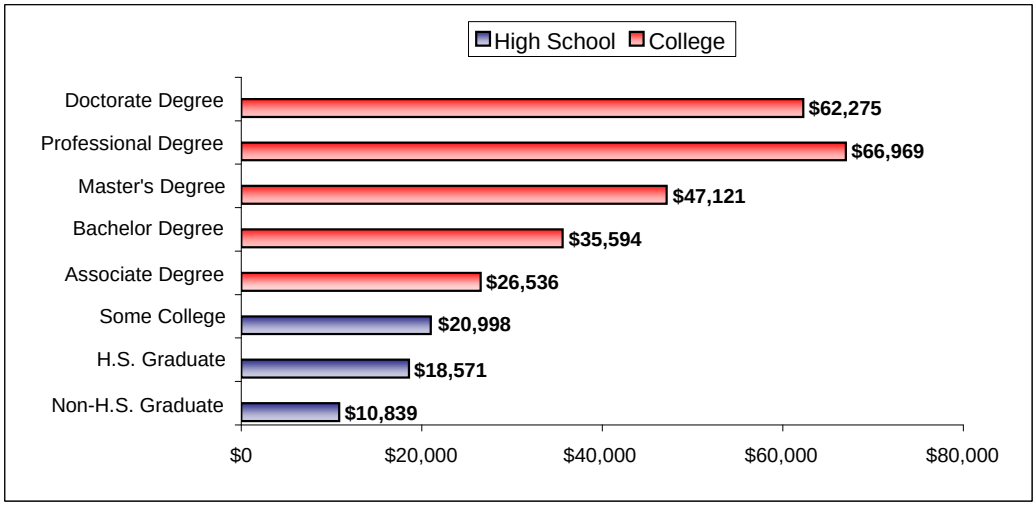
Source: Arkansas School Information Site (www.as-is.org), Arkansas Department of Education

Public school enrollment in Conway County declined from 3,622 in 1983-1984 to 3,242 in 2004-2005.

Median Income By Educational Attainment, 1999

The Natural State

Figure 12



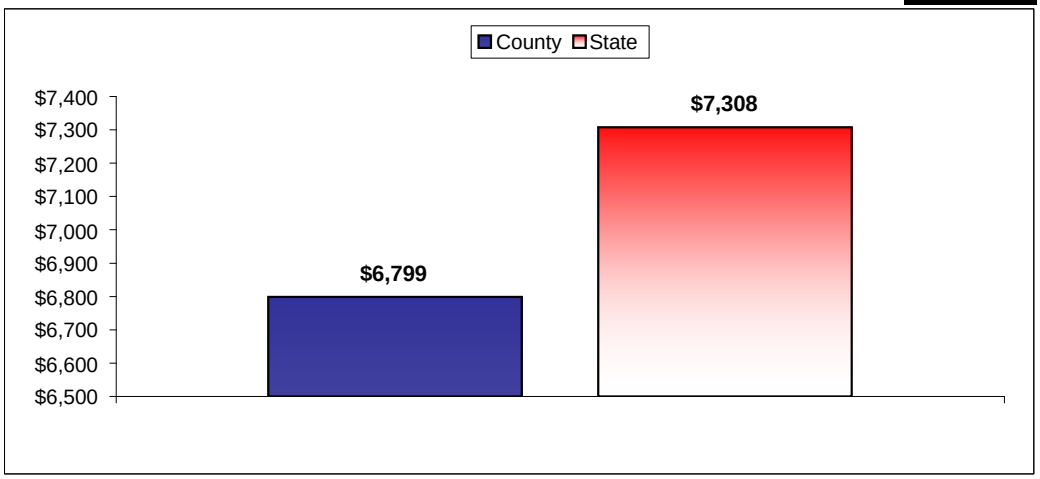
Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

The median income of people who have not graduated from high school is $10,839 as compared to a median income of $62,275 for people with a professional degree.

Education Expenditure Per Child, County & State 2003-2004

Conway County

Figure 13



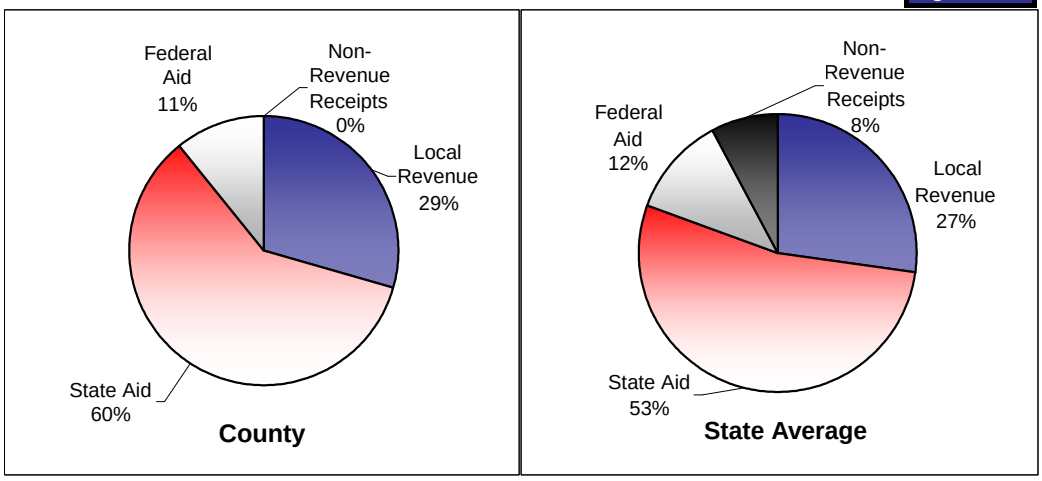
Source: Arkansas School Information Site (www.as-is.org), Arkansas Department of Education

Schools in Conway County spent $6,799 per child in the 2003-2004 school year as compared to an average expenditure of $7,308 statewide.

Education Revenue By Source, County & State 2003-2004

Conway County

Figure 14



Source: Arkansas School Information Site (www.as-is.org), Arkansas Department of Education

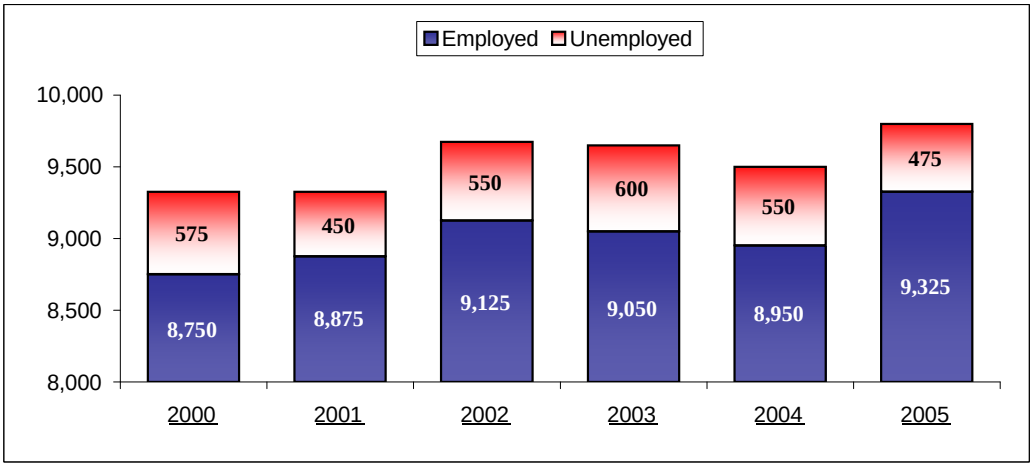
Conway County schools raised a larger percent of their revenue from local sources and state aid than did the average of all Arkansas schools.

Employment

Labor Force, 2000 to 2005

Conway County

Figure 15



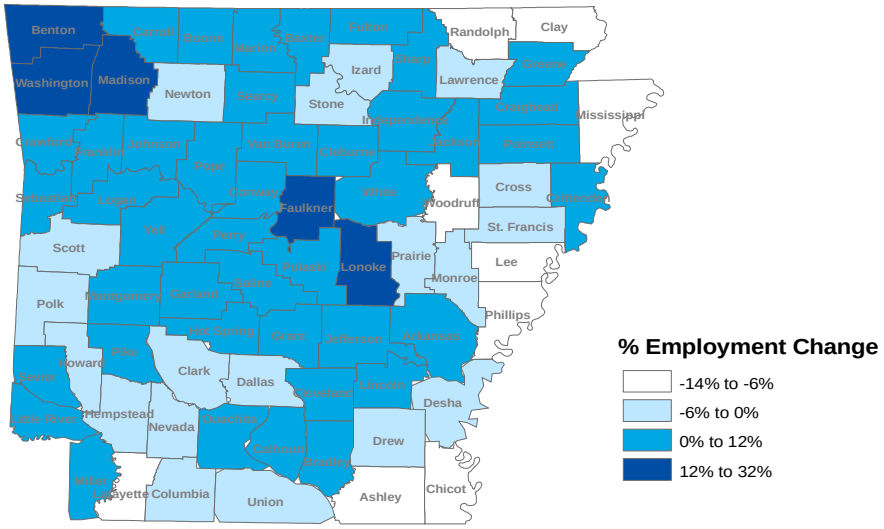
Source: Labor Market Information, Arkansas Employment Security Department

The Conway County labor force remained relatively stable between 2000 and 2005.

Change in Employment, 2000-2005

The Natural State

Figure 16



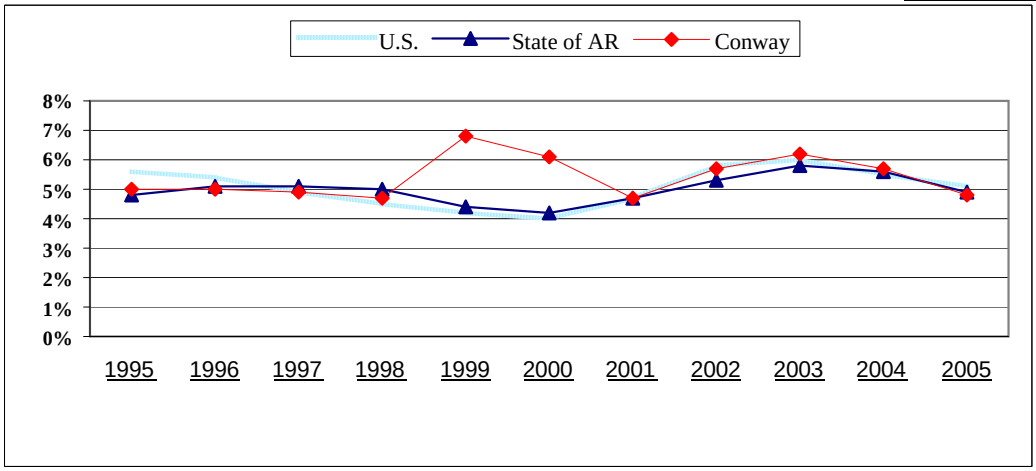
Source: Labor Market Information, Arkansas Employment Security Department

Employment growth was highest in Central & Northwest Arkansas between 2000 and 2005. Some counties in Southwest & Northcentral Arkansas also experienced employment growth.

Unemployment Rates, 1995 to 2005

Conway County, State of AR, and United States

Figure 17



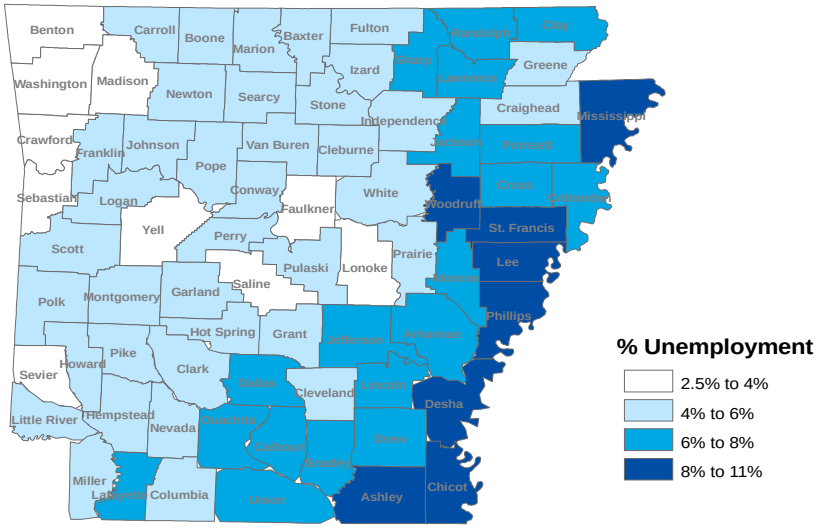
Source: Labor Market Information, Arkansas Employment Security Department

Unemployment rates in Conway County were about the same as state and national averages between 1995 and 2005, with the exception of a jump to seven percent in 1999.

Unemployment Rates, 2005

The Natural State

Figure 18



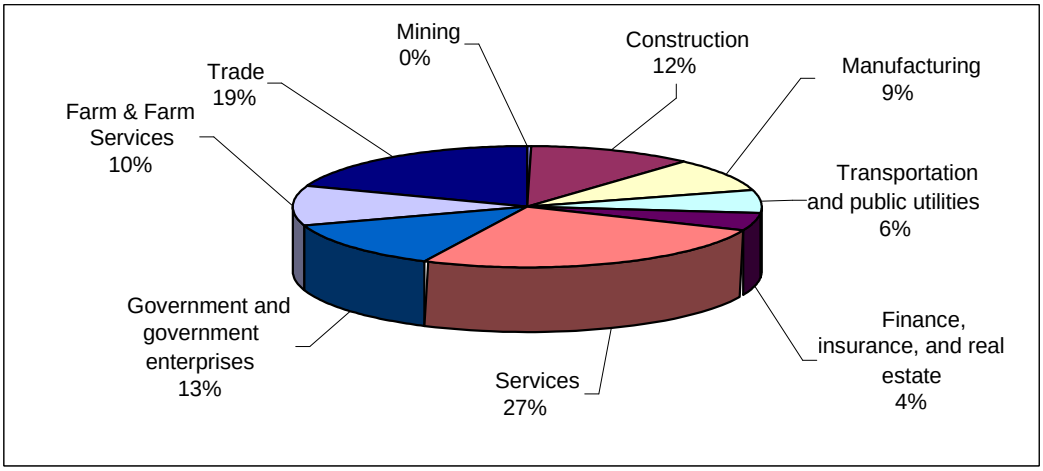
Source: Labor Market Information, Arkansas Employment Security Department

In general, Northwest, Central, and Western Arkansas counties have the lowest unemployment rates while Delta and Coastal Plain counties have the highest rates.

Employment

Jobs by Sector, 2003
Conway County

Figure 19

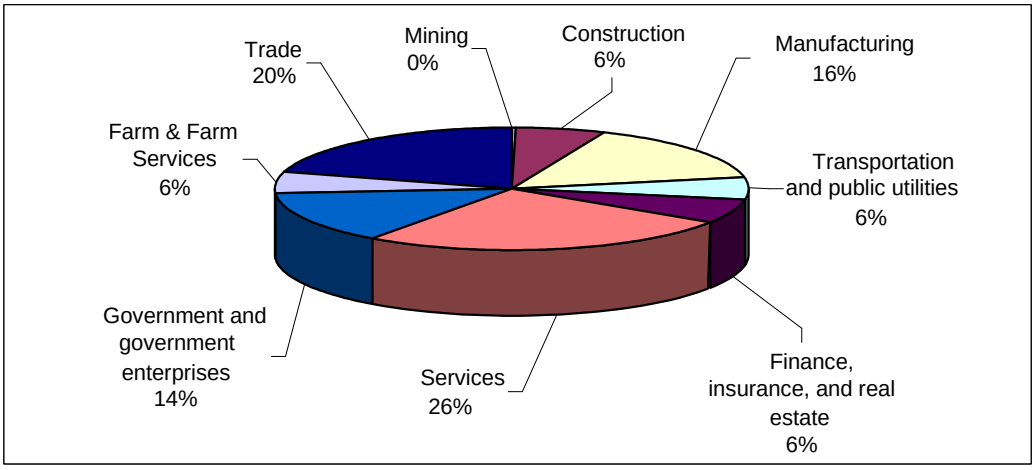


Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc

The farm & farm services and construction sectors account for twenty-two percent of jobs in Conway County, while they account for twelve percent of jobs for the state.

Jobs by Sector, 2003
The Natural State

Figure 20

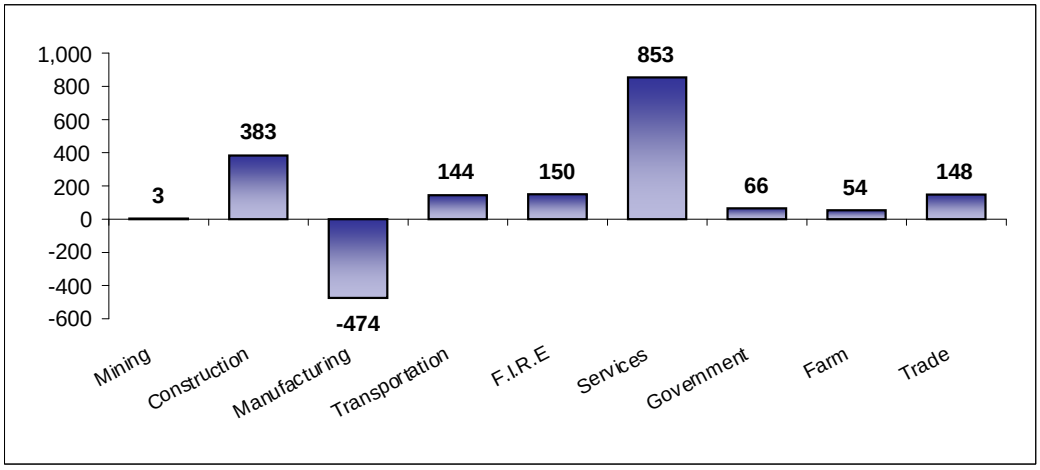


Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc

The service sector is the largest sector of the Arkansas economy, providing over one-fourth of the jobs in Arkansas. Combined, the service & trade businesses provide for nearly one-half (46%) of all jobs in Arkansas.

Changes in Jobs by Sector, 1999 to 2003
Conway County

Figure 21

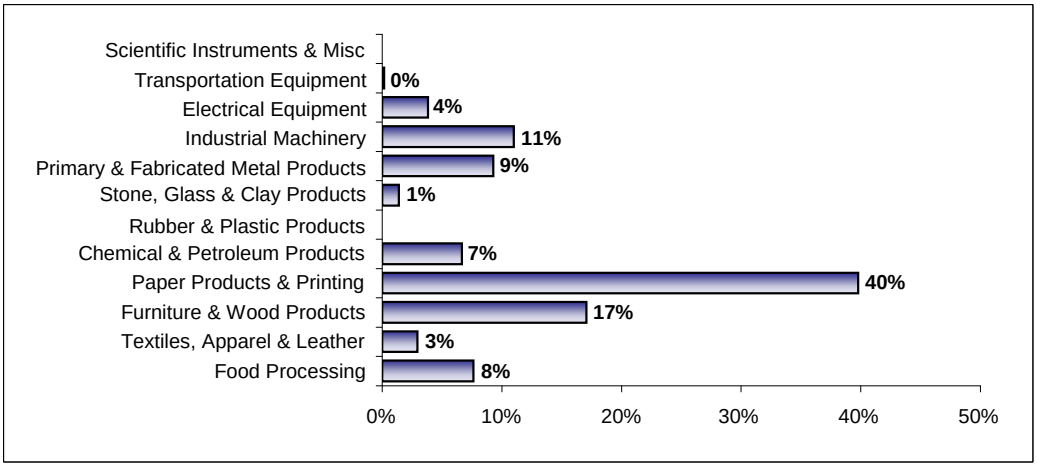


Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Department of Commerce & Woods & Poole Economics, Inc

The services sector created more new jobs between 1999 and 2003 than any other sector in Conway County. New jobs were created in all sectors except manufacturing, which lost a significant number of jobs.

Jobs in Manufacturing, 2001
Conway County

Figure 22



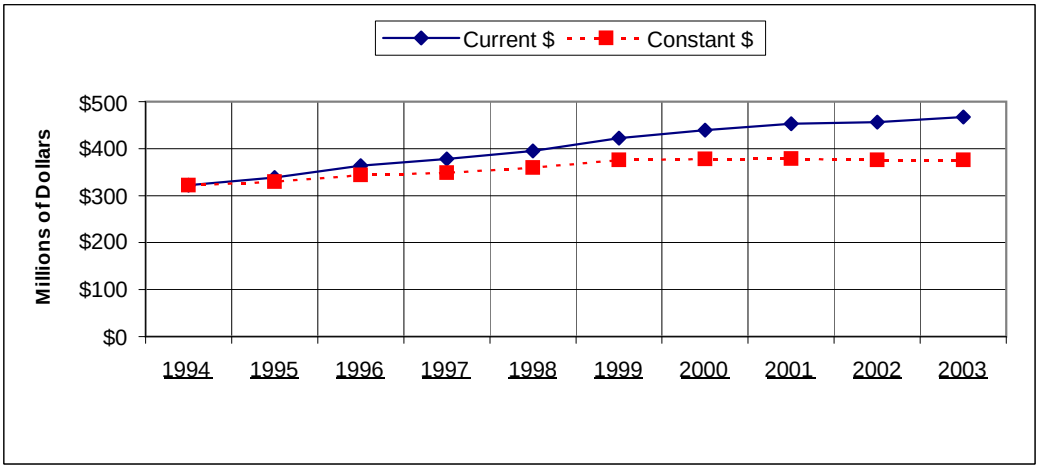
Source: 2001 Regional OneSource

Forty percent of the jobs in the manufacturing sector in 2001 were in the paper products and printing industry. A wide variety of industries composed the remaining sixty percent.

Income

Total Personal Income, 1994 to 2003
Conway County

Figure 23

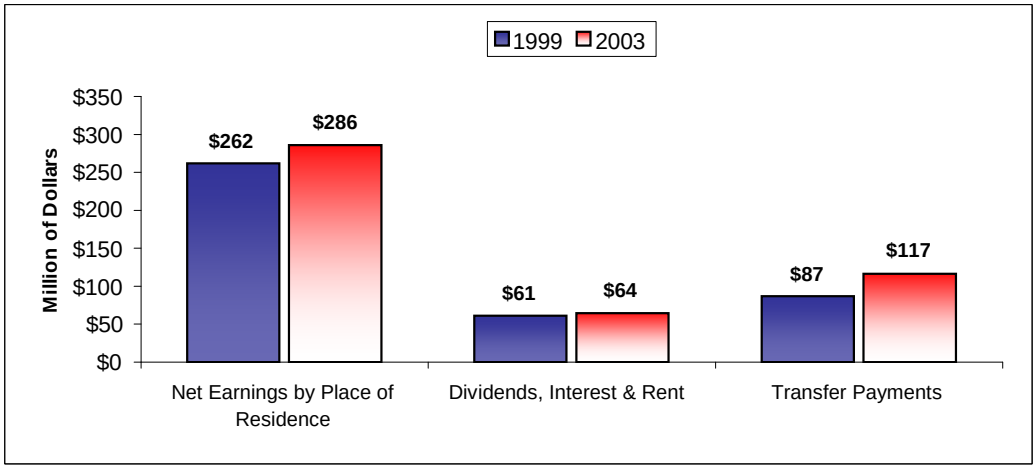


Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Total personal income (in constant dollars) in Conway County climbed between 1994 and 2003 from $320 million to $376 million.

Income by Source, 1999 & 2003
Conway County

Figure 24

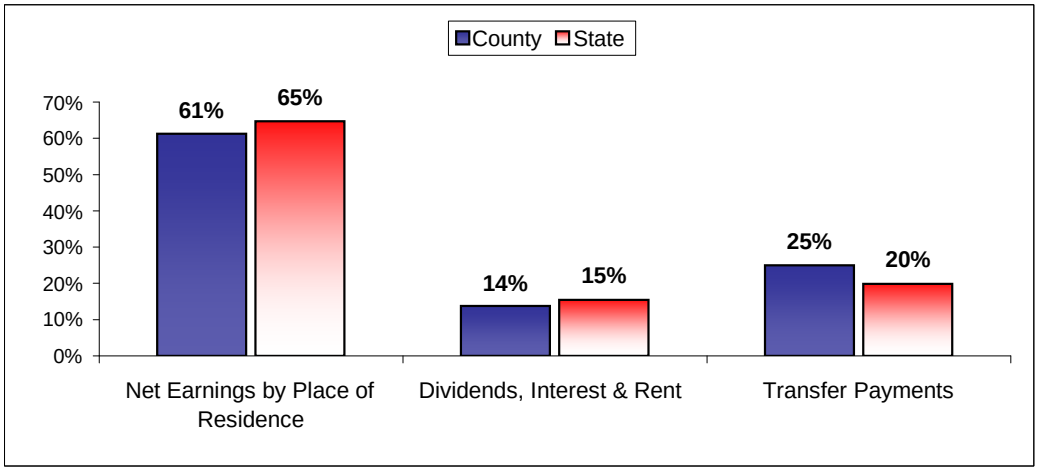


Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Income increased from all sources grew in Conway County between 1999 and 2003.

Personal Income by Source, County and State, 2003
Conway County

Figure 25

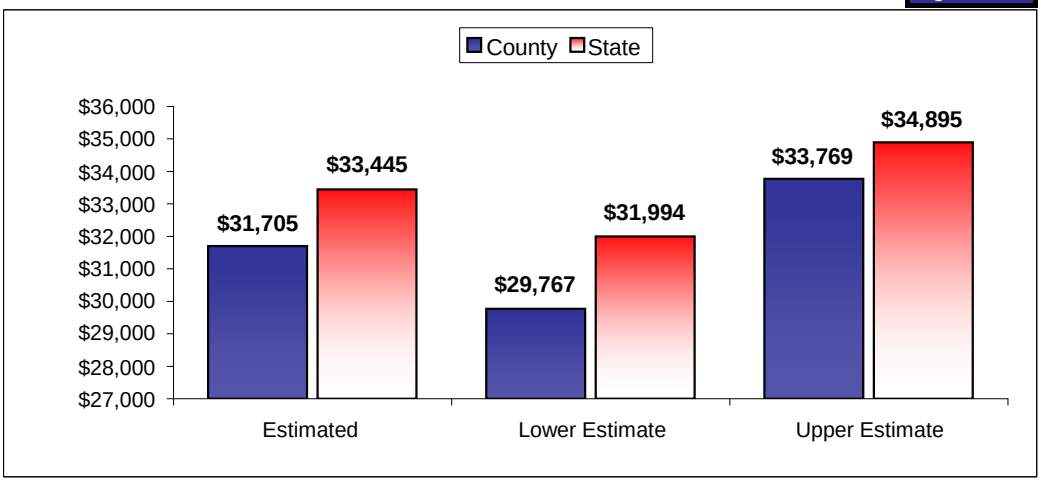


Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Conway County residents received more of their income in 2003 from transfer payments and less from earnings and dividends, interest, & rent than the average for all Arkansas residents.

Median Household Income, 2003
Conway County

Figure 26



Source: Household Income Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

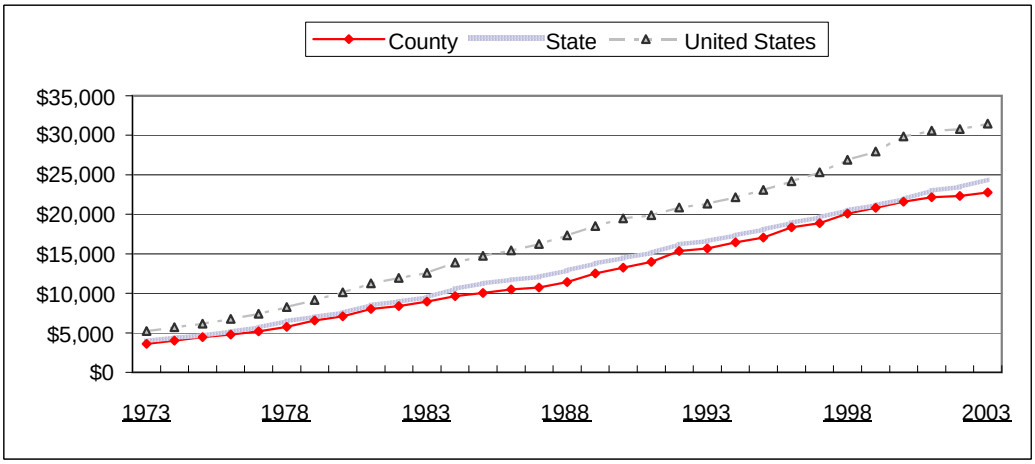
In 2003, median household income in Conway County was slightly lower than the state average.

Income

Per Capita Income, 1973 to 2003

Conway County

Figure 27



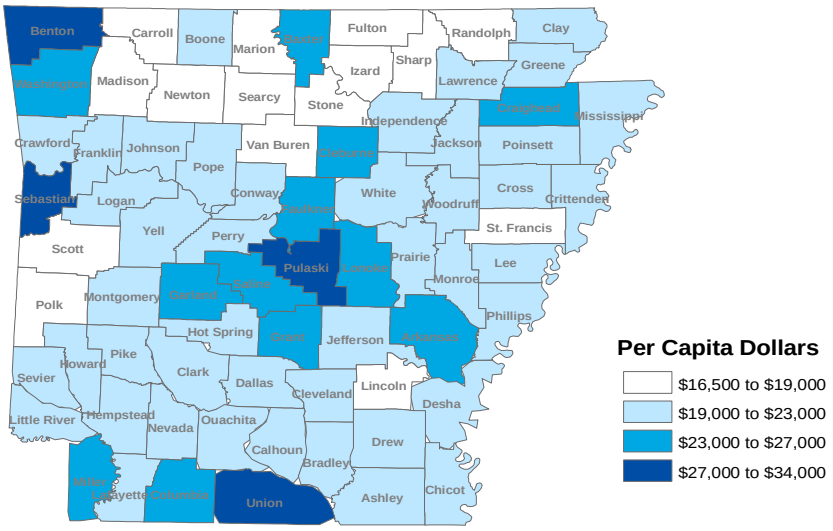
Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Conway County per capita income, was lower than the U.S. average, and at or below the Arkansas average between 1973 and 2003.

Per Capita Income, 2003

The Natural State

Figure 28

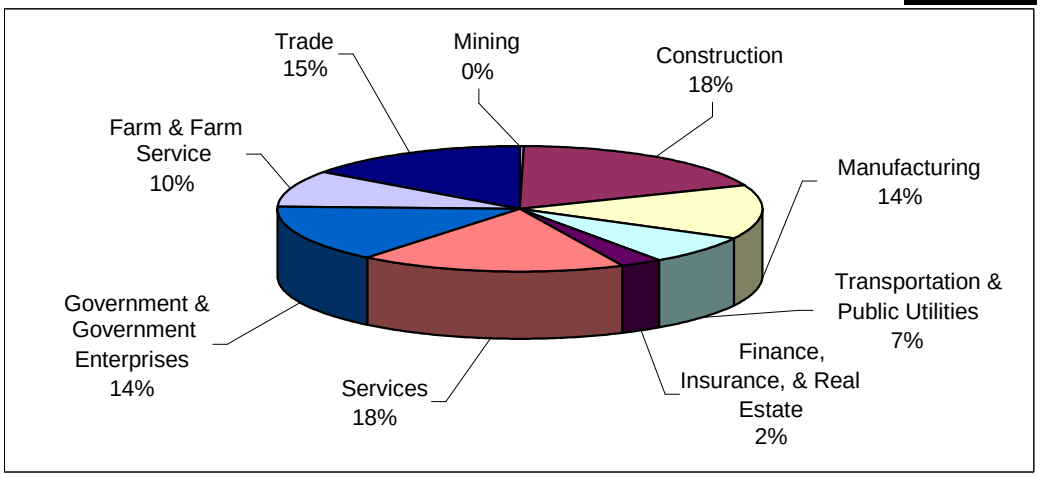


Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Per capita incomes are highest in Central & Northwest Arkansas and lowest in some Delta & Northcentral counties.

Earnings by Sector, 2003
Conway County

Figure 29

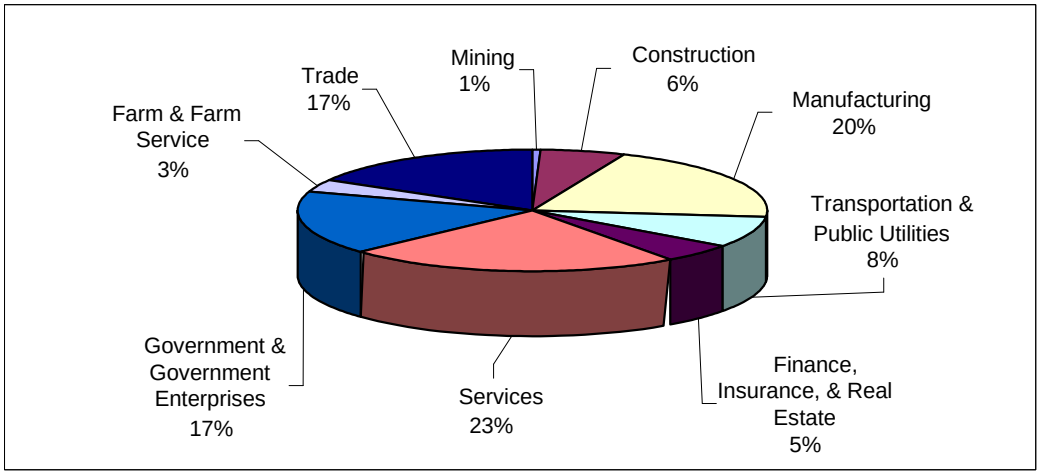


Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

Combined, the farm & farm services and construction sectors accounted for twenty-eight percent of earnings in Conway County in 2003. This is considerably higher than for the state economy where these sectors contributed only nine percent of earnings.

Earnings by Sector, 2003
The Natural State

Figure 30



Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

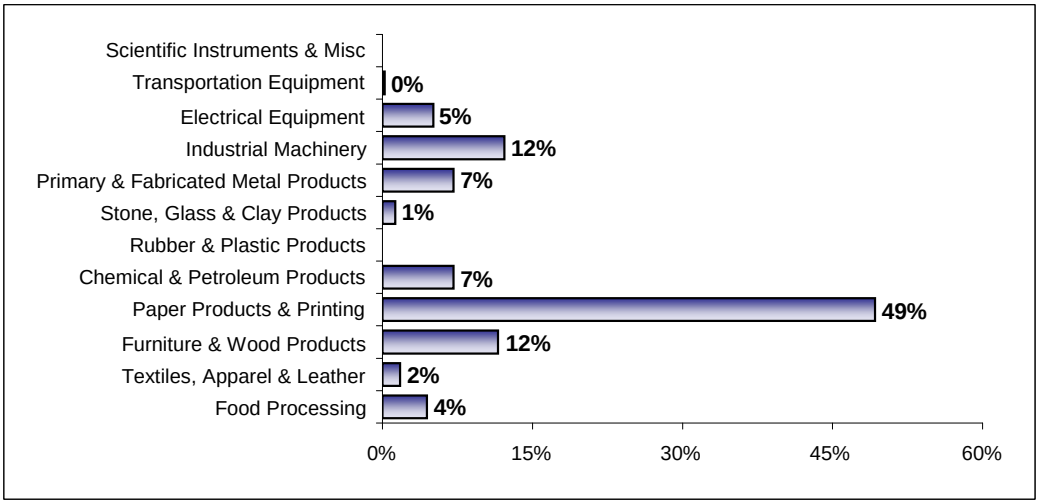
The services sector is the largest sector in the state as measured by earnings. However, the manufacturing sector is a close second with twenty percent of earnings, while trade and government contributed seventeen percent of earnings from each sector.

Income

Earnings of Manufacturing Sector, 2001

Conway County

Figure 31



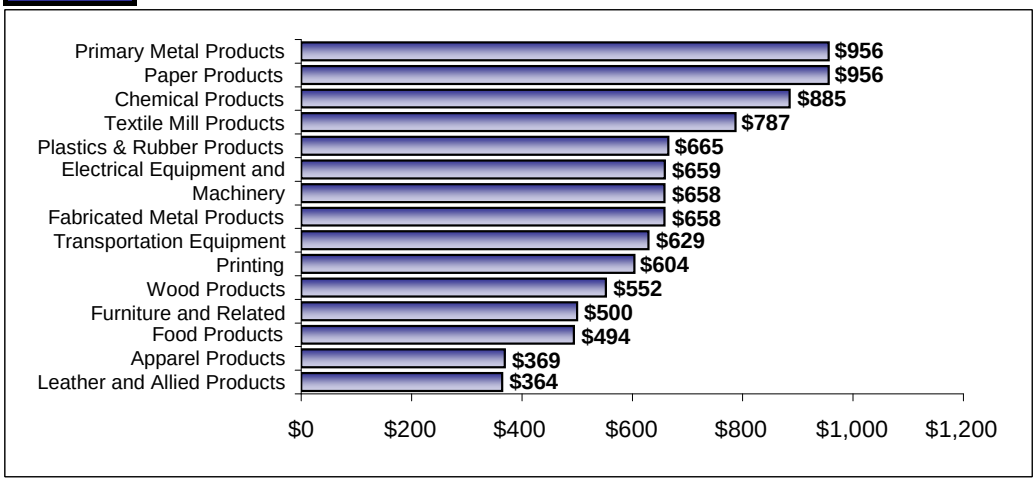
Source: 2001 Regional OneSource

Nearly half of the earnings in the Conway County manufacturing sector in 2001 came from paper products & printing industry. A variety of industries accounted for the other half.

Average Weekly Earnings, 2004

The Natural State

Figure 32



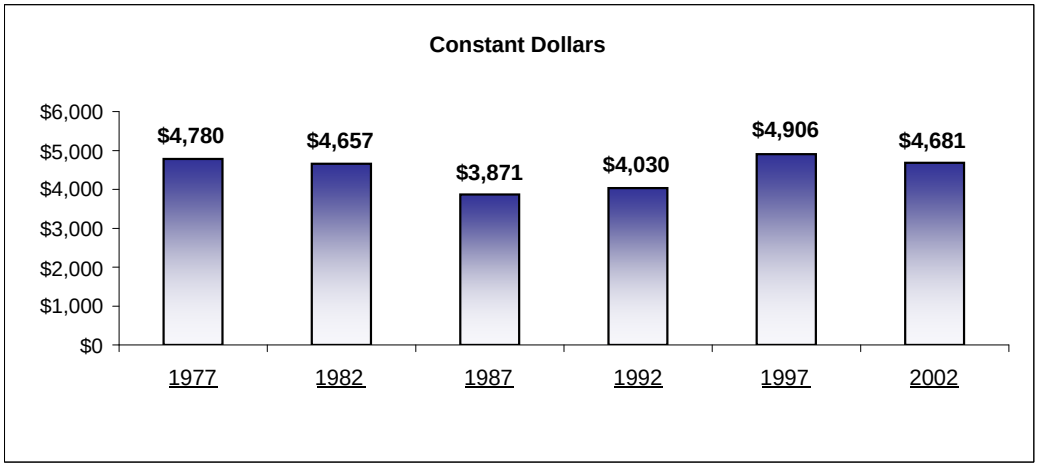
Source: Labor Market Information, Arkansas Employment Security Department

Average weekly earnings in the manufacturing sector range from a high of $956 in both the paper products industry and the primary metal products industry to a low of $364 in the leather and allied products industry.

Retail Sales Per Capita, 1977 to 2002

Conway County

Figure 33



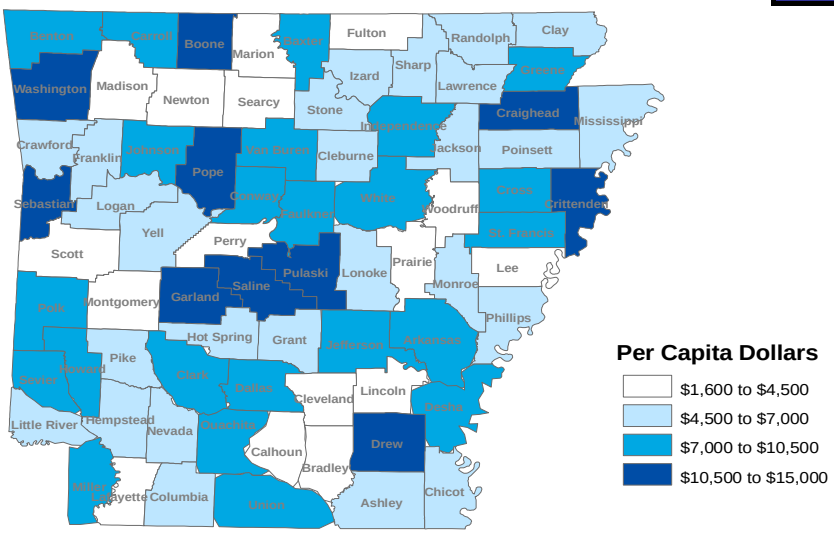
Source: Census of Retail Trade, U.S. Department of Commerce

Conway County retail sales per capita grew substantially between 1987 and 1997.

Retail Sales Per Capita, 2002

The Natural State

Figure 34



Source: Census of Retail Trade, U.S. Department of Commerce

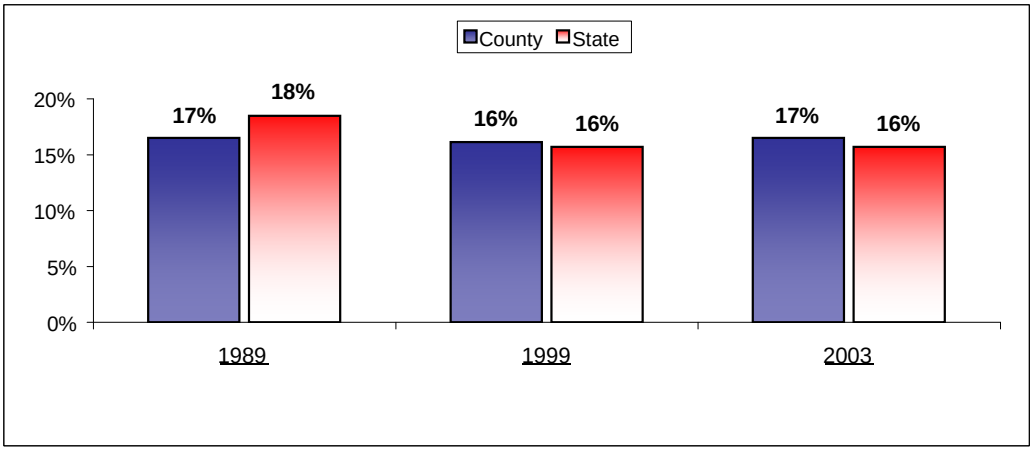
Retail sales per capita are highest in counties with large towns and those that benefit from travelers and tourists.

Poverty

Persons Below Poverty Level, 1989, & 1999 & 2003

Conway County

Figure 35



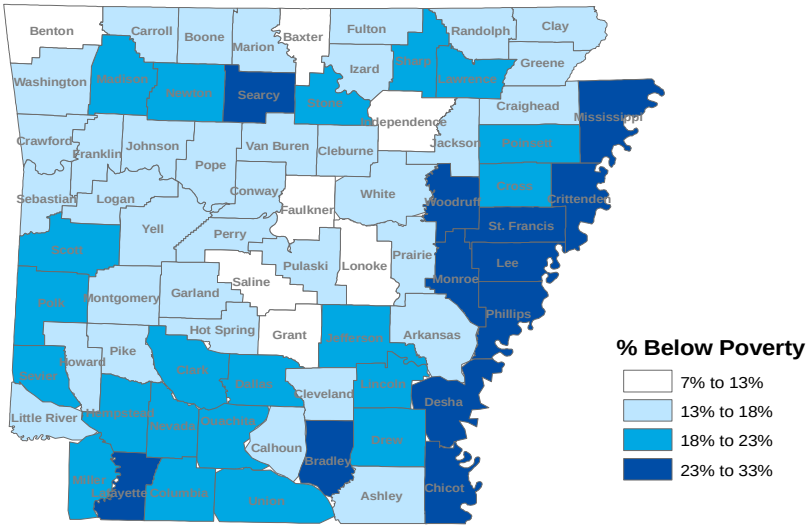
Source: Census of Population, U.S. Bureau of Census

The percentage of the Conway County population below poverty level was about the same as the state average between 1989 and 2003.

Estimated People Below Poverty Level, 2003

The Natural State

Figure 36



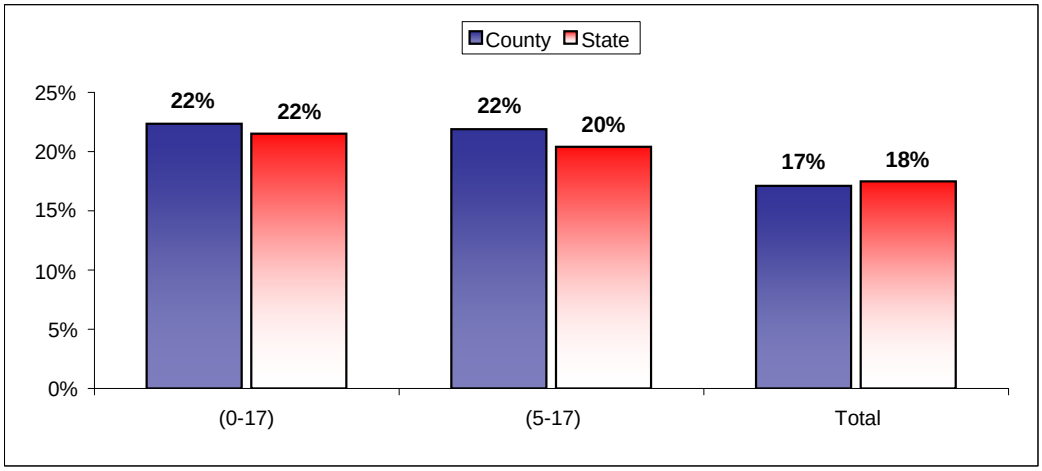
Source: 2003 Poverty Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

The estimated poverty level is highest in the Delta with many counties having a poverty level over eighteen percent.

Age Groups & Estimated Poverty, 1999

Conway County

Figure 37



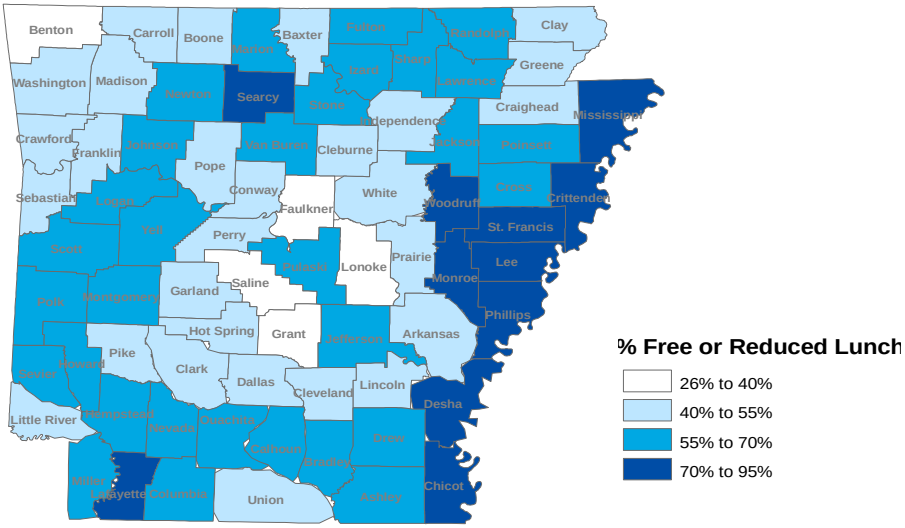
Source: 1997 Poverty Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Census

A larger proportion of children live in poverty than for the population as a whole. In 1999, Conway County was close to the state average for children living in poverty.

Proportion of Students Receiving Free or Reduced Price Lunch, 2004-2005

The Natural State

Figure 38



Source: Arkansas Department of Education

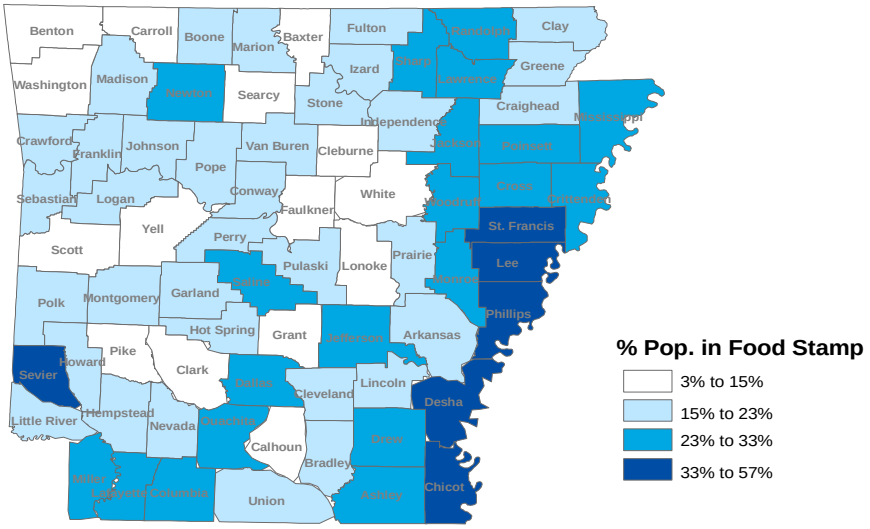
Across the seventy-five counties, there is a wide range in the proportion of students who receive free and reduced price school lunches. Participation rates range from twenty-six percent to ninety-five percent with youth in the Delta Region counties and Searcy and Lafayette Counties receiving the highest percentage of free and reduced price lunches.

Poverty

Proportion of Population Participating in Food Stamp Program, 2004

The Natural State

Figure 39



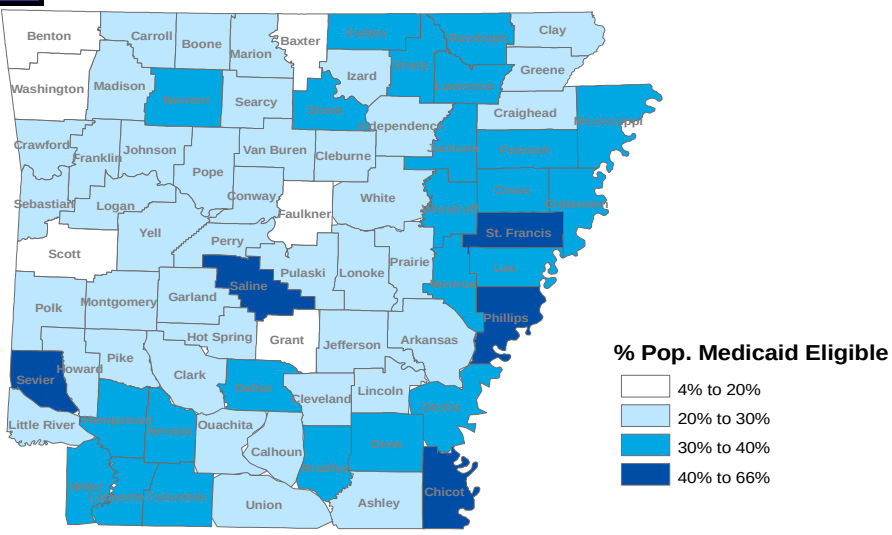
Source: 2004 Statistical Report, Arkansas Department of Human Services

A larger proportion of people living in the Delta counties participate in the Food Stamp Program when compared to people in other parts of the state.

Proportion of Population Medicaid Eligibles, 2004

The Natural State

Figure 40



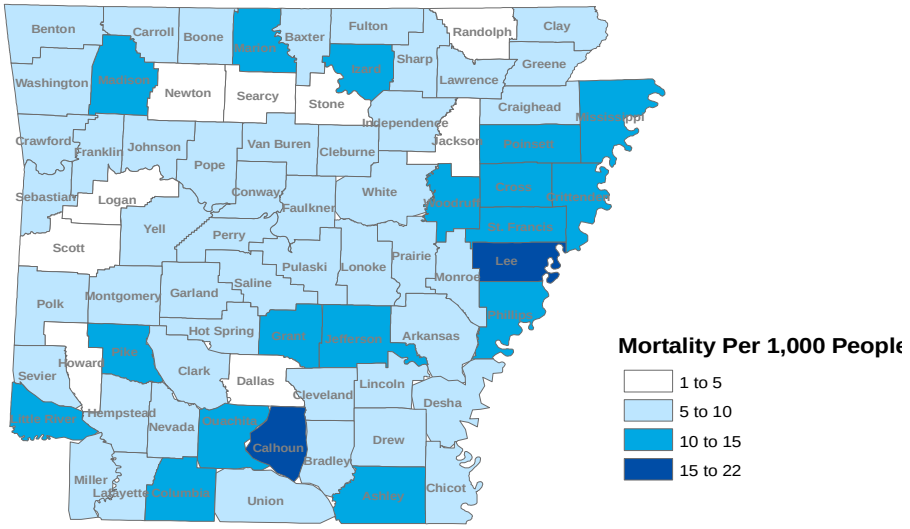
Source: 2004 Statistical Report, Arkansas Department of Human Services

In twenty-eight counties, primarily located in the Eastern and Southern parts of the state, a substantial percentage of the population (over 30%) is eligible for Medicaid.

Infant Mortality Rate, 2000 to 2004

The Natural State

Figure 41



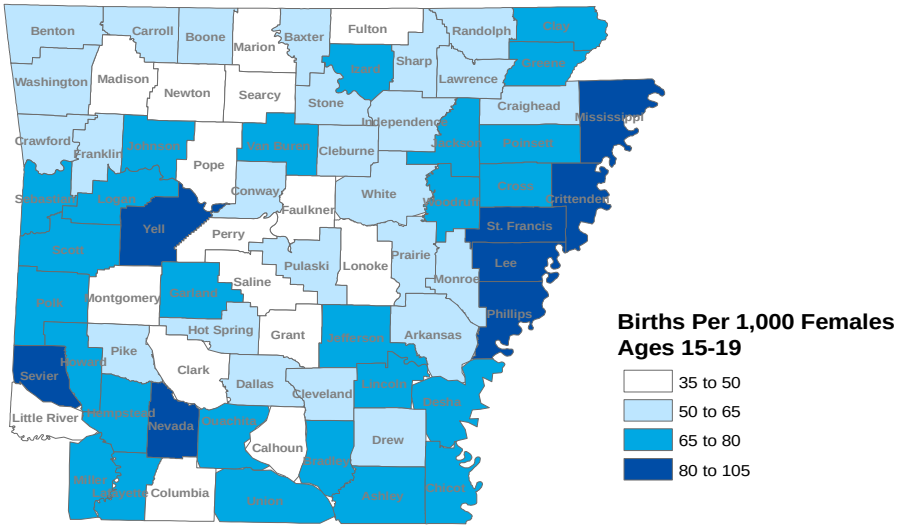
Source: County Trends in Maternal & Child Health, Center for Health Statistics, Arkansas Department of Health

The infant mortality rate is slightly higher in the Delta & Coastal Plain counties, with the exception of a few North Arkansas counties.

Teen Fertility Rate, 2000 to 2004

The Natural State

Figure 42



Source: County Trends in Maternal & Child Health, Center for Health Statistics, Arkansas Department of Health

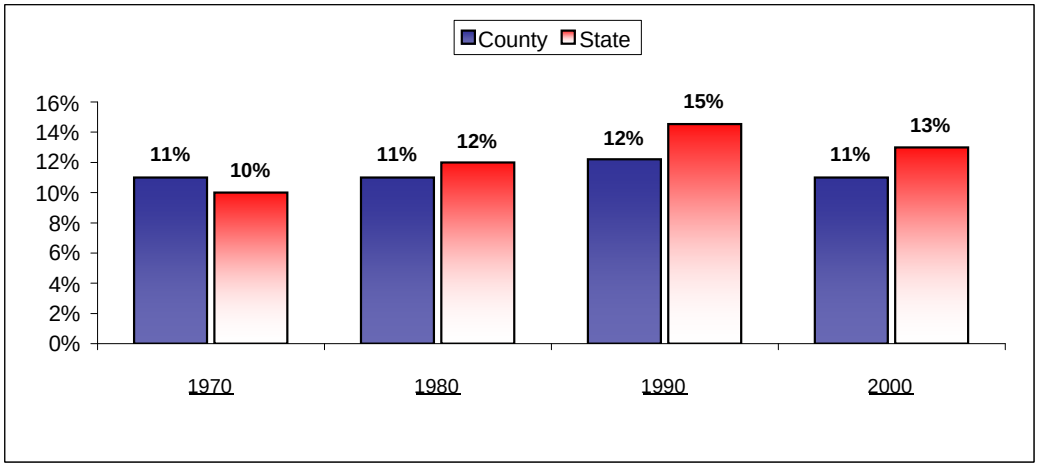
The teen fertility rate varies from county to county across the state of Arkansas. Some Ouachita highland counties also have relatively high teen fertility rates. Counties with the highest teen fertility rates include Sevier, Yell, Nevada, Mississippi, Crittenden, St. Francis, Lee, and Phillips Counties.

Households

Female Headed Families, 1970, 1980, 1990, & 2000

Conway County

Figure 43



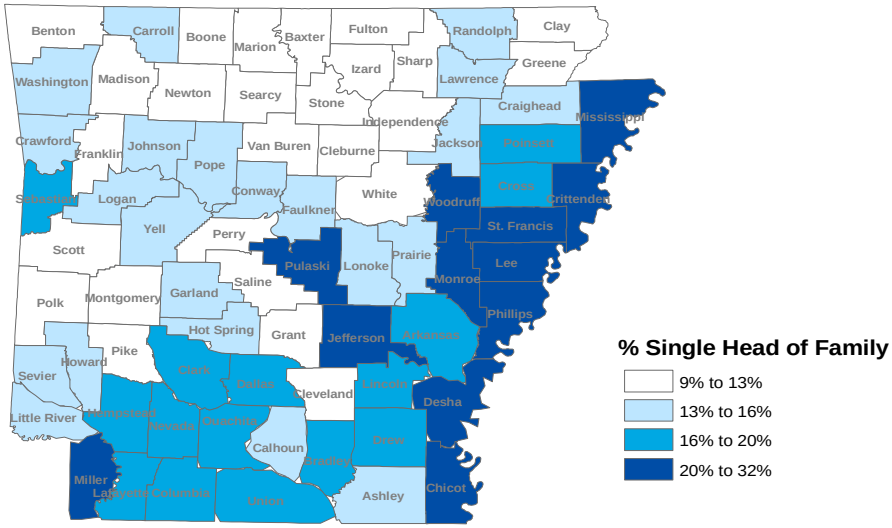
Source: 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census of Population, U.S. Bureau of Census

Female headed families as a proportion of total families in Conway County remained relatively constant from 1970 to 2000 and was lower than the state average.

Single Head of Family, 2000

The Natural State

Figure 44



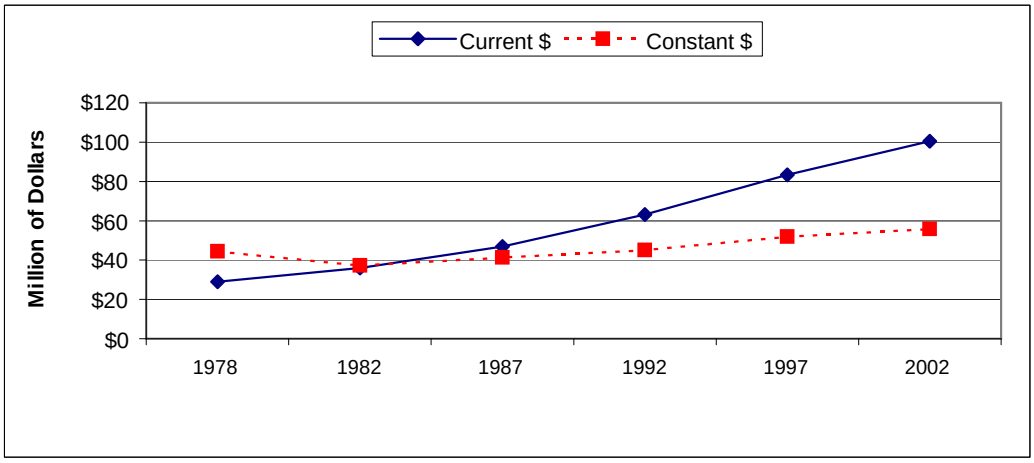
Source: 2000 Census of Population, U.S. Bureau of Census

The Delta counties followed by the Coastal Plains counties have the highest proportion of families with only a single parent present.

Market Value of Agriculture Products Sold, 1978 - 2002

Conway County

Figure 45



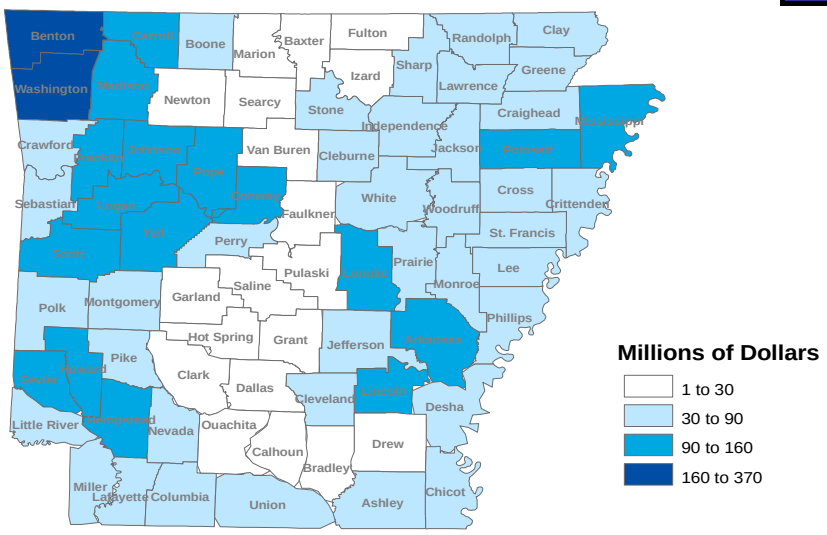
Source: Census of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistical Service

The market value (in constant dollars) of agricultural products sold in Conway County increased from $44 million in 1978 to $55 million in 2002.

Market Value of Agriculture Products Sold, 2002

The Natural State

Figure 46



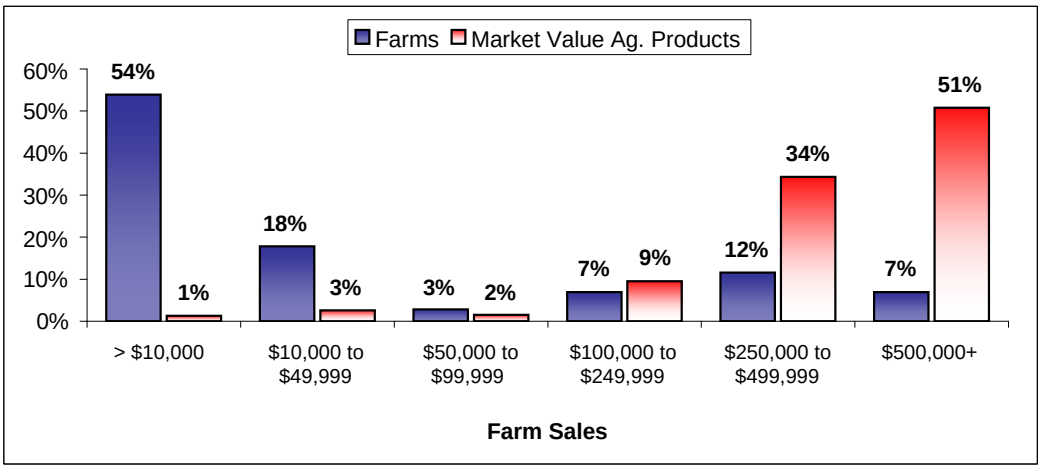
Source: 2002 Census of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistical Service

The two counties with the highest market value of agricultural production are in Northwest Arkansas. However, many Delta counties and some Ouachita & Ozark mountain counties also rank high in terms of the market value of agricultural production.

Agriculture

Farms & Farm Sales by Size, 2002
Conway County

Figure 47

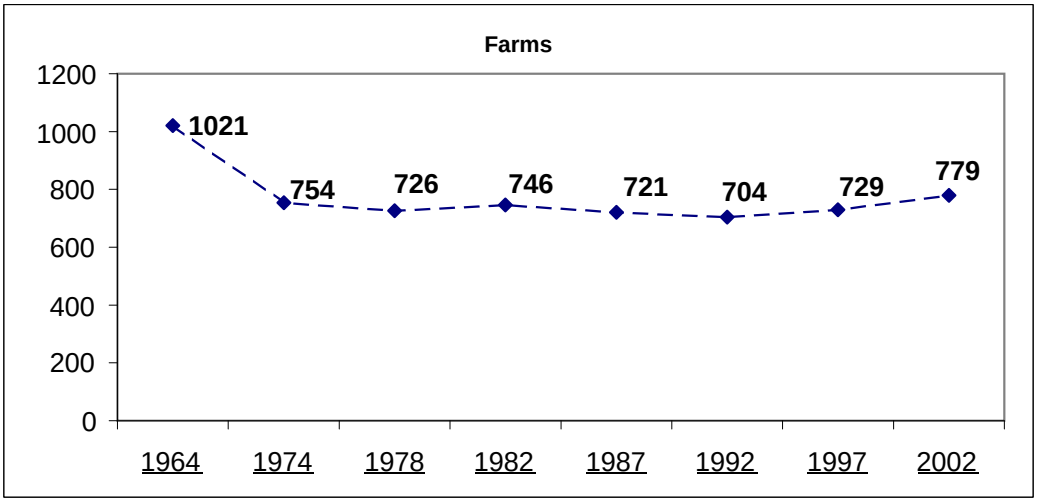


Source: 2002 Census of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistical Service

In 2002, seventy-five percent of the farms in Conway County had sales of less than $100,000. These farms accounted for about six percent of total farm sales. Seven percent of the farms had sales of $500,000 or more and these farms accounted for over half (51%) of total sales.

Number of Farms, 1964 - 2002
Conway County

Figure 48

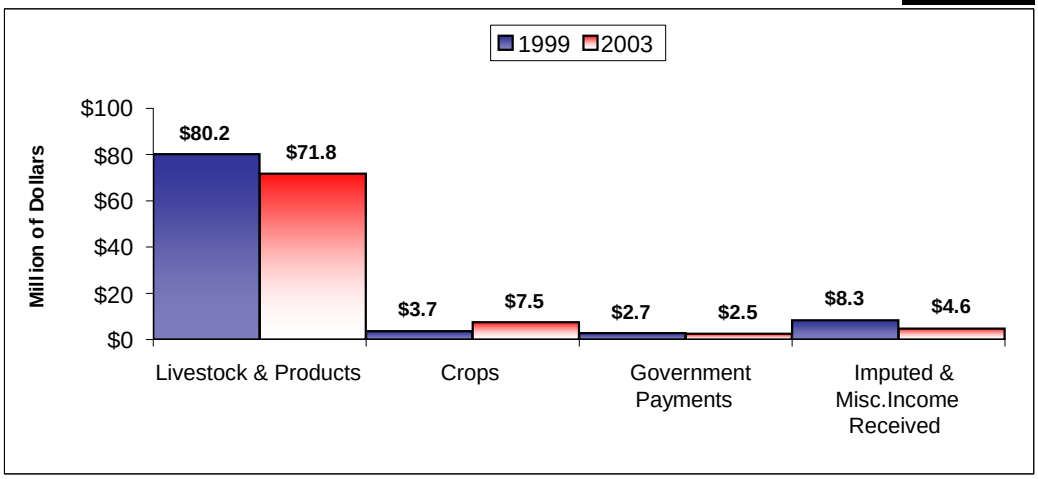


Source: Census of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistical Service

The number of farms in Conway County declined significantly from 1964 to 1974, but changed little between 1974 and 2002.

Source of Farm Income, County, 1999 - 2003
Conway County

Figure 49

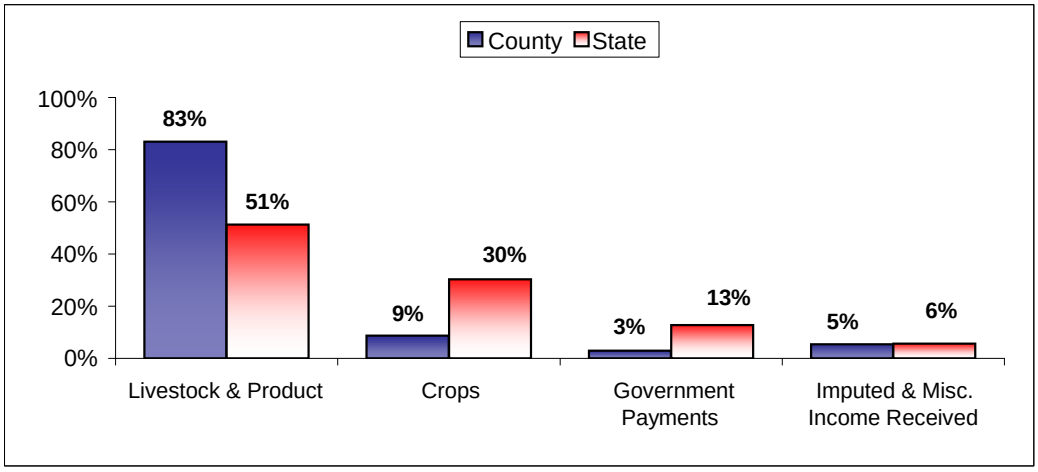


Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Livestock sales were the major source of income for Conway County farmers between 1999 and 2003. Income from livestock & products, government payments, and imputed & miscellaneous sources decreased during this period, while income from crops increased.

Source of Farm Income, County & State, 2003
Conway County

Figure 50



Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

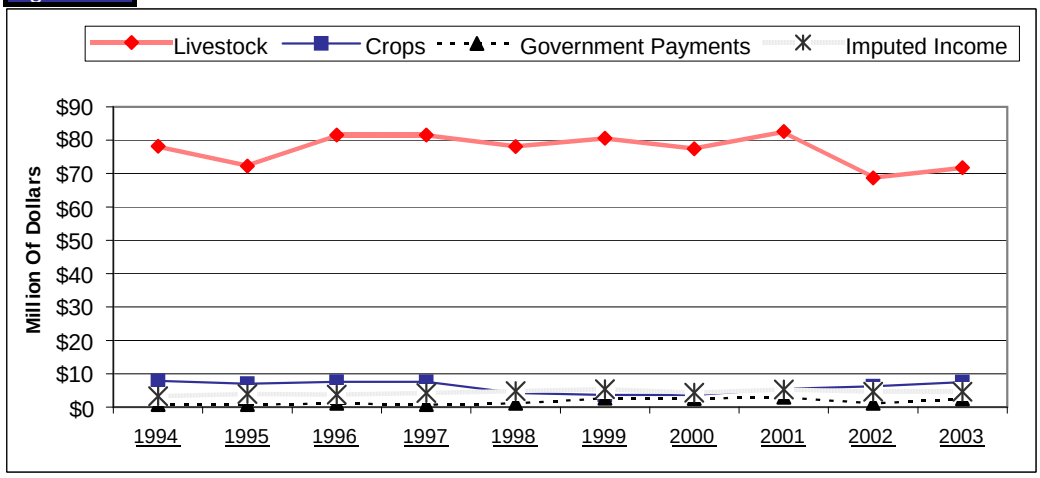
Conway County farmers receive a higher proportion of their farm income from livestock & product than the average for all Arkansas farmers, and a lower proportion of income from crops, government payments, and imputed & miscellaneous sources.

Agriculture & Forestry

Farm Income, 1994 to 2003

Conway County

Figure 51



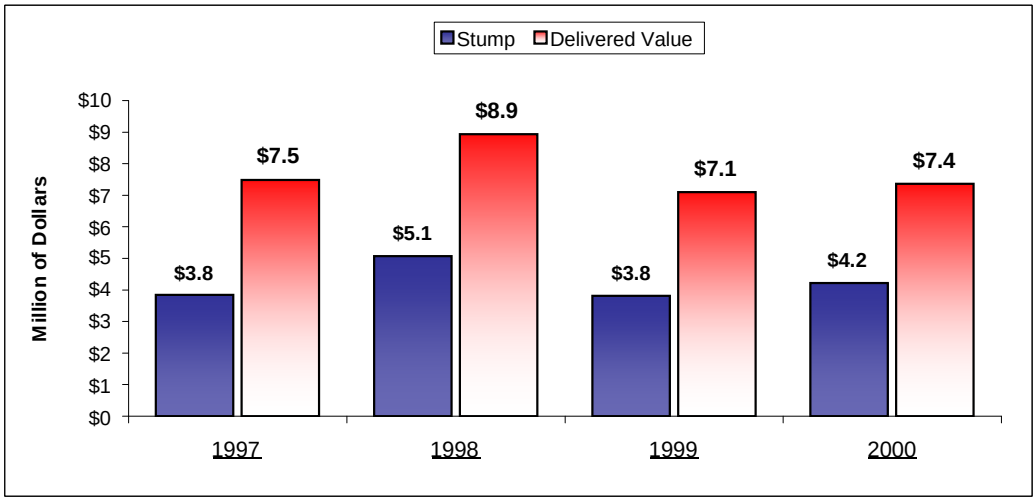
Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Farm income from livestock & product sales decreased from $78 million in 1994 to $71 million in 2003.

Stumpage & Delivered Value of Harvested Timber, 1997 to 2000

Conway County

Figure 52



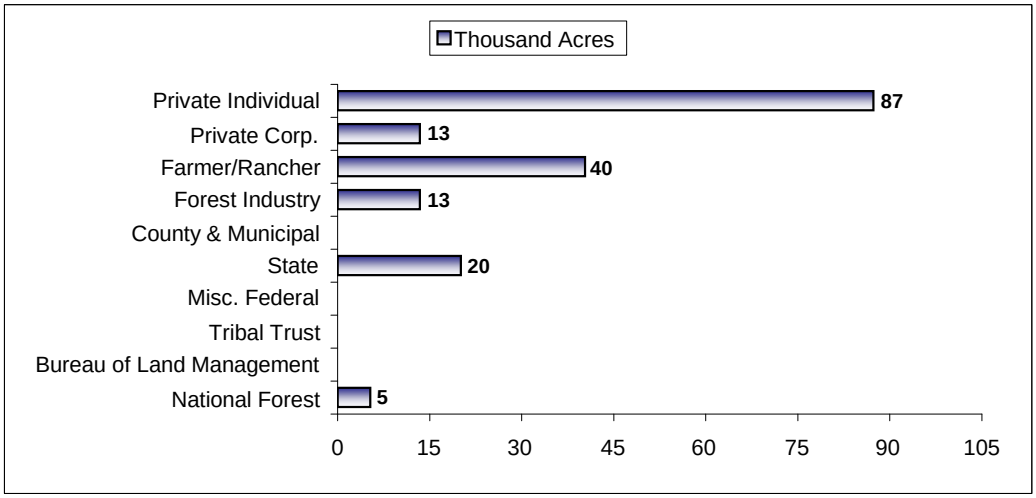
Source: Data provided by Dr. Frank Roth, Forester, Southwest Research and Extension Center, University of Arkansas, Hope, Arkansas

The value of harvested timber in Conway County fluctuated somewhat between 1997 and 2000. Stumpage value rose from $3.8 million in 1997 to $5.1 million in 1998 and then declined to $4.2 million in 2000.

Area of Timberland by Ownership Class, 1995

Conway County

Figure 53



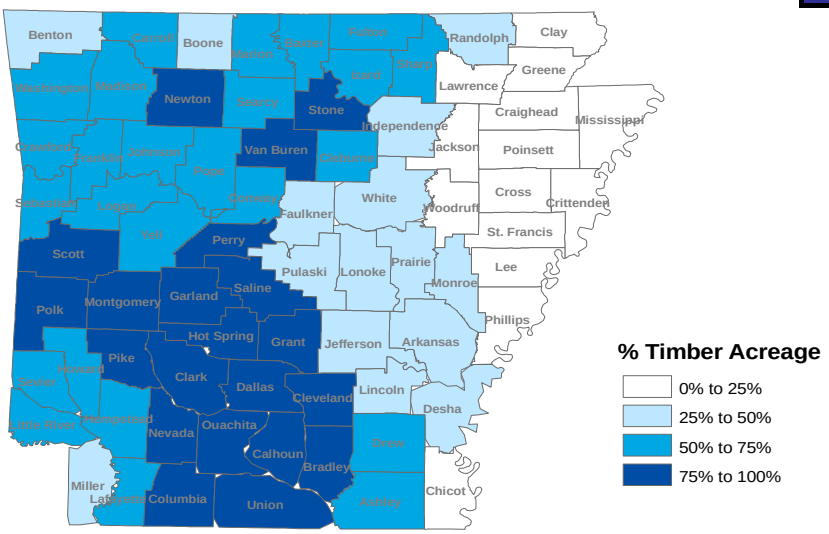
Source: Southern Forest Inventory & Analysis, Southern Research Station, Forest Service, USDA.

Nearly half of Conway County's 178 acres of timberland in 1995 was owned by private individuals.

Percent of Land in Forest By County, 1995

The Natural State

Figure 54



Source: Southern Forest Inventory & Analysis, Southern Research Station, Forest Service, USDA.

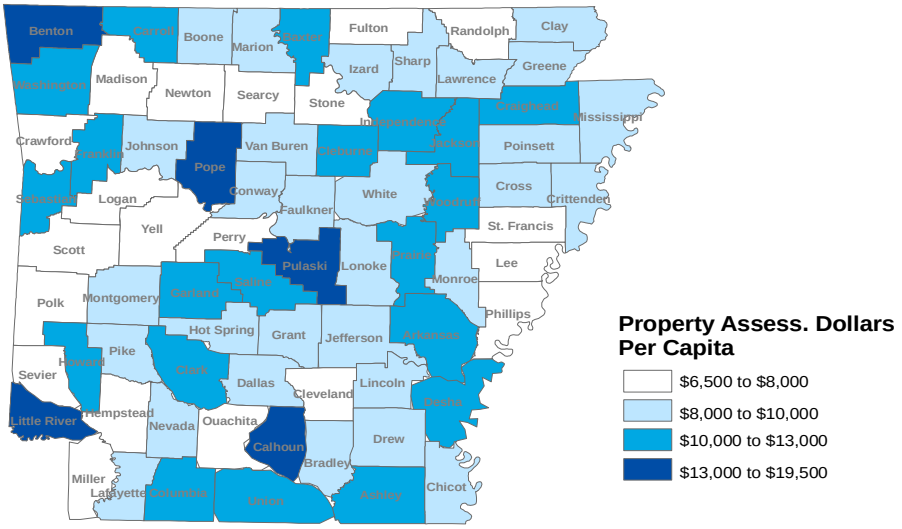
Over seventy-five percent of the land area in many Coastal Plain and Ouachita Highland counties qualifies as timber acreage.

Property Assessment & Roads

Property Assessments Per Person, 2003

The Natural State

Figure 55



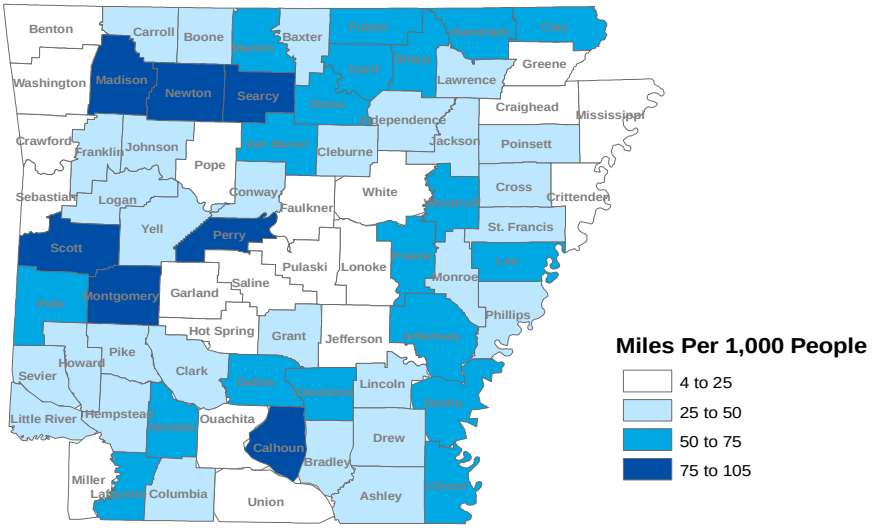
Source: Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department, Little Rock, Arkansas.

The average property assessments per person in 2003 vary greatly among Arkansas counties, from $6,500 to $19,500.

Miles of County Roads Per Person, 2000

The Natural State

Figure 56



Source: 44 Biennial Report, Arkansas State Highway Commission

In general, sparsely populated counties have more miles of county roads to maintain per person than more densely populated counties.

Glossary

AGRICULTURAL SERVICES Includes establishments primarily engaged in performing soil preparation services, crop services, veterinary and other animal services, farm labor and management services, and landscape and horticultural services, for others on a contract or fee basis.

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE The sum of all employed and unemployed persons 16 years of age or older. Members of the Armed Forces are excluded.

"CONSTANT $" Figures adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index, 1982-1984 = 100.

"CURRENT $" Figures not adjusted for inflation.

CONSTRUCTION Includes general building contractors (residential, operative, and nonresidential); heavy construction contractors (highway, street, etc.); and special trade contractors (plumbing, heating, air conditioning, painting, paper hanging, electrical, masonry, stonework, roofing, sheet metal, concrete, and miscellaneous special trade contractors).

DELIVERED VALUE OF HARVESTED TIMBER The value of harvested timber delivered to the first processing point. The value includes the value of the timber (stumpage value), the cost of harvesting, and the cost of transporting the timber to the first processing point.

EARNINGS Earnings include wages and salaries, other labor income, and proprietors' income by place of work.

EMPLOYMENT An estimate of the number of persons, on a place-of-residence basis, who worked anytime for pay or profit or worked 15 hours or more as an unpaid family worker during the week of reference (the week including the 12th of the month). Also included are those who, although not working, had some job attachment and were not looking for work, and persons involved in labor-management disputes.

FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS Includes a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. The number of family households always equals the number of families; however, a family household may also include non-relatives living with the family. Families are classified by type as either a married-couple family or other family which is further classified into "male householder" (a family with a male householder and no wife present) or "female householder" (a family with a female householder and no husband present).

FARMING Includes businesses whose primary source of revenue is from crop and livestock production.

FEMALE HEADED FAMILIES A family with a female householder and no husband present.

FINANCIAL SERVICES Financial, insurance, and real estate services.

GOVERNMENT Employees of city, county, state and federal governments.

IMPUTED & MISC. INCOME RECEIVED Consists of imputed income, such as gross rental value of dwellings and value of home consumption, and other farm related income components, such as machine hire and custom work income, rental income, and income from forest products.

INCOME Total income is the algebraic sum of the amount reported separately for wage or salary income; non-farm net self-employment income; farm net self-employment income; interest, dividend, net royalty or rental income; social security or railroad retirement income; public assistance or welfare income and all other income.

INFANT MORTALITY RATE The number of infant deaths (under one year of age) per 1,000 live births.

JOBS The number of full-time and part-time jobs in a geographic area.

MANUFACTURING Includes manufacturing industries dealing with food and kindred products; textile mill products; apparel products; lumber and wood products; furniture and fixtures; paper and allied products; printing and publishing; chemicals; petroleum and coal; rubber and miscellaneous plastics; leather; stone, clay and glass; primary metal industries; fabricated metal products; machinery; electrical and electronic equipment; transportation equipment; instruments; and miscellaneous industries.

Glossary

MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SOLD The gross market value before taxes and production expenses of all agricultural products sold or removed from place regardless of who received payment. It includes sales by the operator as well as the value of any shares received by partners, landlords, contractors, or others associated with the operation. It does not include payment received for participation in federal farm programs nor does it include income from farm-related sources such as agricultural services, or income from non-farm sources.

MINING Includes extraction of oil and gas, non-metallic minerals, sand and gravel.

NET DOMESTIC MIGRATION The difference between domestic in-migration to an area and domestic out-migration from the area during the period.

PER CAPITA INCOME The per capita income is the total personal income divided by the total population of the area studied. The per capita income measure should be used with care. In the short run, it may temporarily vary from the result of unusual conditions (bumper crops, a major construction project or a catastrophe). In the long run, it may misrepresent the economic well-being of the general population because of the presence of a large institutional population (college, prison). While per capita income reflects average income per person, it does not accurately reflect family unit spendable income.

PERSONAL INCOME The total income received by residents of an area, including earnings, transfer payments, and interest, dividends and rent.

POVERTY LEVEL An individual or household is considered to be living below the poverty level when their income is below an income threshold established by the Bureau of Census. The income cutoffs used by the Bureau of Census to determine the poverty status of families and unrelated individuals consist of a set of 48 thresholds arranged in a two-dimensional matrix consisting of family size cross-classified by presence and number of family members under 18 years old.

RETAIL SALES Includes sales from general merchandise stores; department stores; variety stores; food, bakery and dairy stores; automotive dealers; gasoline stations; eating and drinking establishments; and other retail trade establishments.

SINGLE HEAD OF FAMILY Single head of a family with no spouse present.

SERVICES Includes a variety of items ranging from hotels to attorneys. Included in this category are hotels and other lodging places; personal services (laundry, photographic studios, beauty shops, shoe repair, funeral services); business services (advertising, mailing, news syndicates, personnel supply services, computer services); auto repair services and garages (retail, parking, repair); miscellaneous repair services (electrical, etc.); amusement and recreation services (orchestra, dance halls, etc.); health services (physicians, dentists, nursing care facilities, hospitals, medical labs, outpatient care); legal services; educational services; social services (job training, individual and family services, day care); membership organizations (business, professional, labor, civic, social, etc.); engineering and architectural services; and other similar services.

STUMPAGE VALUE OF HARVESTED TIMBER The value of timber harvested going to the landowner.

TEEN FERTILITY RATE is the birth rate for women 15 to 19 years of age. It is the number of live births per 1000 women 15-19 years of age.

TRADE Includes wholesale and retail trade.

TRANSPORTATION Includes railroads; trucking service and warehousing; other transportation services (bus, air, and U.S. postal service); communication systems (radio, T.V., etc.); and utilities and sanitary services.

UNEMPLOYMENT An estimate of the number of persons who, for the entire week of reference (the week including the 12th of the month), did not work at all, were able to work, and available for work, and (1) were looking for work, or (2) would have looked for work except that (a) they were waiting to return to a job from which they had been laid off, or (b) they were waiting to report to a new job.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE The number of unemployed workers as a percentage of the civilian labor force.

Local Cooperative Extension Office

Conway County Staff Chair

Dora Dinnan

UACCM 1537 University Blvd
Morrilton, AR 72110

501-354-9618(office)
501-354-9650(fax)

or

E-Mail: ddinnan@uaex.edu

District

Ozark District

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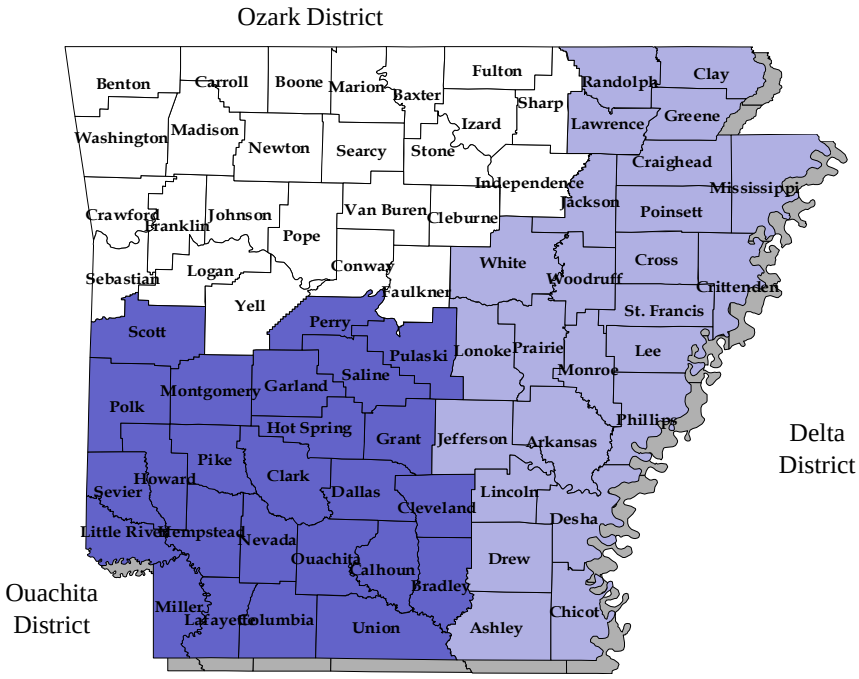

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture, and County Governments Cooperating

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DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
Cooperative Extension Service

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