

Lincoln County Facts

Lincoln County is located in the extreme northwest corner of Montana. It is heavily forested and largely contained within the Kootenai National Forest. Lincoln County is bordered by both Canada and Idaho.

There are 4 incorporated areas in Lincoln County: Libby, the County Seat, Eureka, Troy and Rexford. Unincorporated communities include Stryker, Fortine, Trego, West Kootenai, Yaak Valley, Lake Creek Valley and Bull Lake. The population of Lincoln County in 2009 was estimated to be 18,717 people.

County Assistance: Most county offices are located in Libby. Some county business can also be conducted at the North County Annex in Eureka. In Montana, county governments administer or help the state with county parks, county roads, courts, county nurses and health, planning, septic systems, schools, libraries, weed abatement, driver's licenses, property taxes and many other areas. County officials are always helpful and willing to answer questions.

Climate: The county has a mountain-type climate which is warm and dry in the summer and cold and moist in the winter. Most of the snow falls during the November through March period but heavy snowstorms can occur as early as mid-September or as late as early May. Annual snowfall varies from about 40 inches in the lower valleys to an estimated 300 inches in some mountain areas. Average annual precipitation varies from 18 to 25 inches near Libby and Troy to only 14 inches in the Tobacco Valley near Eureka. The higher elevations have precipitation amounts of over 70 inches per year.

Geography: The geography of the county is dominated by mountainous, forest-covered terrain within the Cabinet, Purcell and Salish mountain ranges. The mountainous terrain is cut by narrow river valleys forming the Tobacco Valley, Libby Valley and the Yaak Valley. The elevation in Lincoln County ranges from about 1,820 feet



above sea level where the Kootenai River enters Idaho, to over 8,700 feet in the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness.

Land: Lincoln County is comprised of an area of 3,675 square miles. Approximately 90% of the county's total land is owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service, the State of Montana or large private corporations, including Plum Creek Timber Company and Stimson Lumber Company. The Kootenai National Forest has 73.5% of the land with Plum Creek Timber Company owning and controlling approximately 12.5% of the land. Lincoln County is comprised of 9.2% privately owned non-forest land and 92% of the land covered by forestland.

Industry: During the last few decades, the natural resources industries of Lincoln County have been in a state of decline. No major lumber mill exists in the county, the Christmas tree industry has ended and high land prices have caused many farmers and ranchers to subdivide their land. Mining has remained a bright spot. The main industries today are educational, health and social services, and retail with some manufacturing. With less than 10% of the land in Lincoln County privately owned, recreational opportunities are abundant. As a result, tourism and service industries are increasing. Fishing, hiking, hunting, snowmobiling and camping are popular with residents and nonresidents alike.