

Ada County Sesquicentennial Proclamation

By the Board of Ada County Commissioners

A PROCLAMATION

(And Brief History)

Ada County was created by the Idaho Territorial Legislature on December 22, 1864, as the eighth county in the Territory. It was partitioned from Boise County and named for Ada Riggs, the first pioneer child born in the area. Until 1891, Ada County included what is now Canyon County, Payette County and most of Gem County.

After the first territorial capital was moved from Lewiston to Boise in 1866, the Territorial Capitol building located at 700 W. Jefferson was constructed. The new State Capitol building first opened in 1912. In 2010, an extensive renovation was completed, and the Capitol was rededicated in 2010.

The first Ada County Courthouse was constructed in 1882 at 514 Jefferson Street in Boise, replacing the temporary courthouse that had been in use since 1865 at the corner of 8th and Idaho. In 1939 the Ada County Courthouse was built as part of the depression era Works Project Administration. In 2002 the current Ada County Courthouse was opened at 200 W. Front Street.

Ada County is the largest Idaho county in population and is home to the state's largest city, Boise, which serves as both the state capital and county seat. Other cities included within the county are Meridian, Eagle, Kuna, Star and Garden City. Based on current census data, the county population is 409,061.

Ada County has a total area of 1,060.33 square miles. Its terrain is bisected by the Boise River, and it contains the foothills of the Boise Mountain Range as well as the high desert in the southern part of the county bounded by the Snake River. It contains portions of the Boise National Forest and the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. Collectively, the Boise River Greenbelt and the Ridge to Rivers Trail System provide over 160 miles of publicly maintained recreational trails and access to a wide variety of public parks and open space amenities. Additionally, Lucky Peak Dam and lake provide inland waterways that offer recreational opportunities for swimming, boating, and fishing enthusiasts, as well as a source of viewing abundant wildlife.

The area was originally home to nomadic Native Americans who created immigration routes for future settlers. Beginning in 1811, trappers crossed southwestern Idaho en route to Oregon. Part of the Oregon Trail passed through Ada County. State Street, Chinden Boulevard, Hill Road and Boise Avenue are based on parts of the Oregon Trail and various immigrant trails that originated from it. Portions of the trail and wheel ruts from the settlers' wagons can be seen today.

The discovery of gold in 1862 brought an influx of miners into the region, and Boise became a mercantile hub supplying miners' needs. The fertile bottom lands of the Boise River attracted farmers and ranchers. Starting in the 1870's, irrigation reclaimed sage brush lands for agriculture.

In 1872 the first Ada County Fair was held west of Boise in the still rural area of 21st Street between State and Idaho. In 1902, the fairgrounds were located between Orchard and Curtis, south of Fairview Avenue. The Fair moved to its current location between the Boise River and Chinden Boulevard in 1967.

In 1905 the Barber Lumber Company constructed a saw mill along the Boise River, and a wooden dam was constructed. Barber Dam, now owned by Ada County and on the National Register of Historic Places, has a small hydroelectric plant that provides power to over 3,000 homes.

Air service came to the valley in 1926 with the first airmail route in the United States flying from Pasco-Boise-Elko. It was run by Boise based Varney Airlines, a predecessor of United Airlines. When the airport outgrew its riverside location and moved to Whitney Field, the old site became the home of Boise Junior College, which became Boise State University (BSU) in 1974. BSU is now the state's largest university.

In the 20th Century, Ada County entrepreneurs, Joe Albertson (grocery chain), J.R. Simplot (agriculture and food processing) Harry Morrison and Morris Knudsen (engineering and construction) started enterprises that became world renowned. In 1973, high tech came to Ada County when Hewlett Packard opened an Ada County plant. Micron Technology followed in 1978 focusing on semi-conductor design. Today, Ada County is home to a thriving tech startup community.

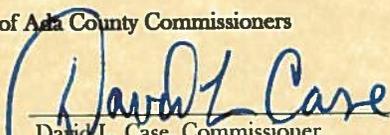
NOW, THEREFORE

In this sesquicentennial year of the creation of Ada County, the Board of Ada County Commissioners encourages all residents to take time to celebrate and participate in the rich history of our county, its agricultural roots, commerce, and technology and share in the beauty of our foothills, Boise River, desert, greenbelt, trails and historic sites. Please visit the Sesquicentennial website at www.adaweb.net to find out about activities that will take place throughout the year.

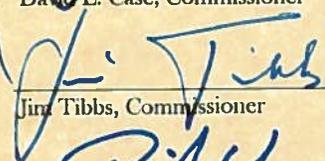
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereto set our hands this 7th day of January, 2014.

Board of Ada County Commissioners

By:


David L. Case, Commissioner

By:


Jim Tibbs, Commissioner

By:


Rick Yzaguirre, Commissioner