

# County Profile for

## Graham County



Graham County, formed in 1881 by the 11th Territorial Legislature, was created from parts of Apache and Pima counties. The Legislature broke with the tradition of naming Arizona counties after local Indian tribes when the new county called "Graham" was named after the 10,516-foot Mount Graham, the highest peak in the area. The mountain, in turn, had been named "Graham" after Lt. Col. James Duncan Graham, a senior officer in the U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers. Graham County was inhabited by Apache Indians from prehistoric times up to the present day. Indian village sites and sacred sites abound in Graham County, rich in archaeological artifacts. There were no Spanish or Mexican settlements in Graham County until about 1850. Camp Goodwin was established in 1866, but abandoned when the troops moved to establish Fort Apache in 1871. In the 1870s, farming communities began to appear along the Gila River, which traverses the county from east to west. Munsonville, now San Jose, was established in 1873; Safford followed in 1874; Solomonville in 1876; Smithville, now known as Pima, in 1879. In the next decade, Thatcher, Eden, Central, and Bryce were settled – all within a few miles of each other. This was, and is today, a rich agricultural area. Safford was the first county seat, but it was moved to Solomonville after two years. In 1915, after an election, the county seat was returned to Safford where it remains. Graham County was almost twice its present size prior to the formation of Greenlee County. The county now measures 4,630 square miles, of which 22 square miles are water. The San Carlos Indian Reservation covers approximately one-third of the land, with San Carlos Lake a popular site for its excellent fishing and camping. Recreation and tourism follow farming and ranching as the principal industries in Graham County. Individual or corporate ownership accounts for 10 percent of land ownership; the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, 38 percent; the state of Arizona, 18 percent; Indian reservations, 36 percent.

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## Graham County, Arizona



### POPULATION

|               | 2000   | 2010   | 2023 (est.) |
|---------------|--------|--------|-------------|
| Graham County | 33,489 | 37,299 | 39,025      |

*Office of Economic Opportunity*

### SALES TAX / TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAX

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Graham County | 1.00% |
| State         | 5.60% |

## LABOR FORCE

|                      | 2000   | 2010   | 2022   |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Civilian Labor Force | 12,270 | 14,570 | 15,695 |
| Unemployed           | 666    | 1,883  | 648    |
| Unemployment Rate    | 5.4%   | 12.9%  | 4.1%   |

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## WORKFORCE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

|                                       | Count | Share |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Less than high school                 | 3,542 | 14.7% |
| High school or equivalent, no college | 7,298 | 30.3% |
| Some college or Associate degree      | 9,663 | 40.1% |
| Bachelor's degree or advanced degree  | 3,566 | 14.8% |

*American Community Survey*

## INDUSTRY (RANKED BY EMPLOYMENT)

|   | Count | Share |
|---|-------|-------|
| Education, health care & social assistance          | 3,071 | 22.9% |
| Retail trade  | 1,728 | 12.9% |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, & mining   | 1,574 | 11.8% |
| Arts, entertainment, food & recreation services     | 1,522 | 11.4% |
| Construction  | 1,290 | 9.6%  |
| Public administration                               | 966   | 7.2%  |
| Professional, scientific, & administrative services | 633   | 4.7%  |
| Finance, insurance & real estate                    | 615   | 4.6%  |
| Other services, except public administration        | 564   | 4.2%  |
| Transportation, warehousing, & utilities            | 551   | 4.1%  |
| Manufacturing                                       | 485   | 3.6%  |
| Wholesale trade                                     | 243   | 1.8%  |
| Information   | 148   | 1.1%  |

*American Community Survey*

This profile was prepared by the Arizona Commerce Authority in cooperation with local sources. For further information, please contact:

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