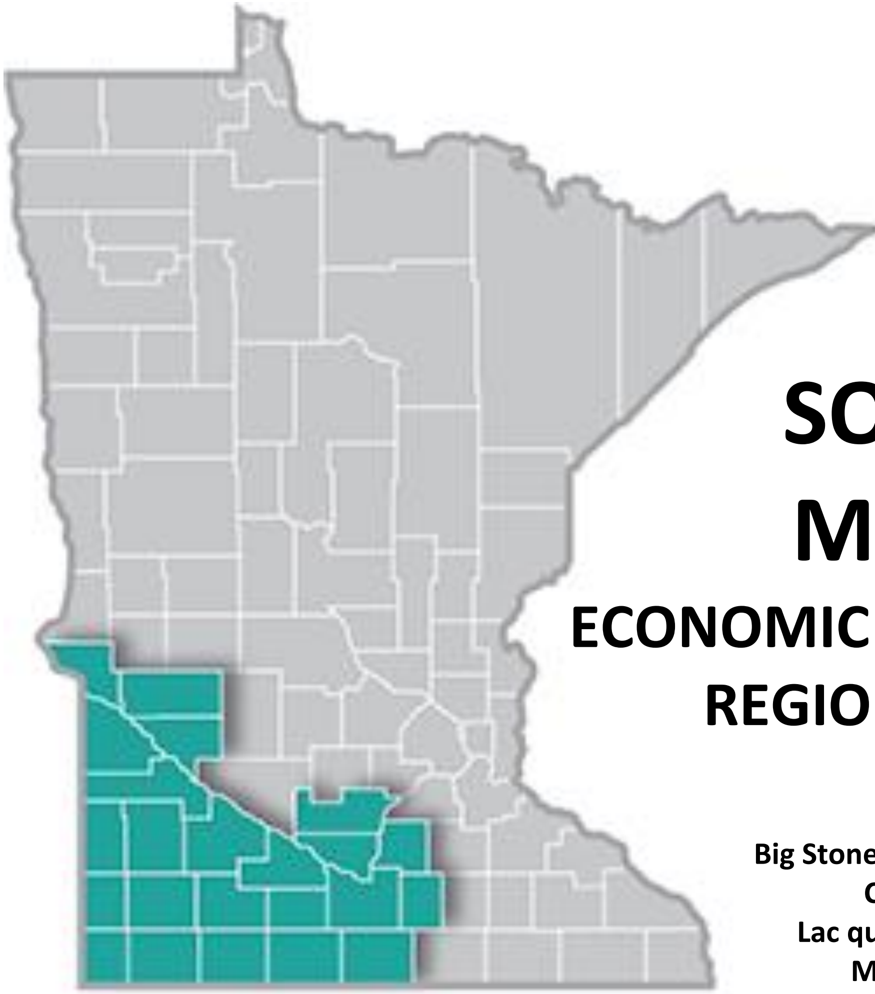

SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REGIONS 6W, 8, and 9

Covers counties:

Big Stone, Blue Earth, Brown, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Lac qui Parle, Le Sueur, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, Sibley, Swift, Waseca, Watonwan, and Yellow Medicine

2017 REGIONAL PROFILE

Updated August 1, 2017

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DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION CHANGE, 2000-2016

The Southwest Minnesota planning region includes a total of 23 counties, covering three Economic Development Regions (EDRs) and two Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). In sum, Southwest Minnesota was home to 391,702 people in 2016, comprising 7.1 percent of the state's total population. The region saw a small 0.7 percent decline in population over the past 16 years, primarily due to larger losses in EDR 6W and EDR 8, which were nearly offset by a steady increase in EDR 9. In comparison, the state of Minnesota saw a steady 12.2 percent gain (see Table 1).

Only 5 of the 23 counties in the region gained population from 2000 to 2016, with the other 18 seeing declines – including Swift County, which was the fastest declining county in the state. The largest counties in the region are Blue Earth and Nicollet County, which make up the Mankato/North Mankato Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). With 66,441 people, Blue Earth is the 13th largest county out of 87 in the state, and Nicollet has 33,575 people. Other large counties in the region include Le Sueur with 27,591 people, Lyon with 25,699 people, Brown with 25,331 people, and Nobles with 21,848 people.

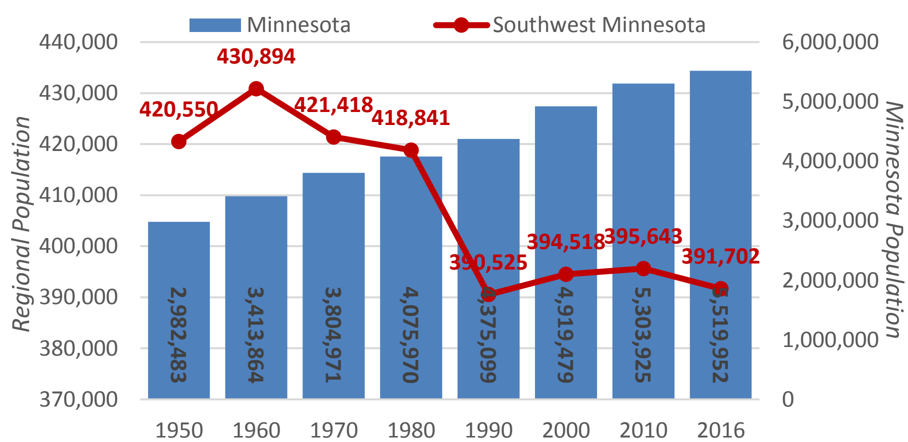
Table 1. Population Change 2000-2016

	2000 Population	2016 Estimates	*2000-2016 Change*	
			Number	*Percent*
Southwest Minnesota	**394,518**	**391,702**	***-2,816***	***-0.7%***
Region 6W	**50,011**	**43,252**	***-6,759***	***-13.5%***
Big Stone Co.	5,820	5,050	*-770*	*-13.2%*
Chippewa Co.	13,088	12,133	*-955*	*-7.3%*
Lac qui Parle Co.	8,067	6,715	*-1,352*	*-16.8%*
Swift Co.	11,956	9,419	*-2,537*	*-21.2%*
Yellow Medicine Co.	11,080	9,935	*-1,145*	*-10.3%*
Region 8	**121,717**	**117,102**	***-4,615***	***-3.8%***
Cottonwood Co.	12,167	11,470	*-697*	*-5.7%*
Jackson Co.	11,268	9,944	*-1,324*	*-11.8%*
Lincoln Co.	6,429	5,783	*-646*	*-10.0%*
Lyon Co.	25,425	25,699	*+274*	*+1.1%*
Murray Co.	9,165	8,329	*-836*	*-9.1%*
Nobles Co.	20,832	21,848	*+1,016*	*+4.9%*
Pipestone Co.	9,895	9,202	*-693*	*-7.0%*
Redwood Co.	16,815	15,263	*-1,552*	*-9.2%*
Rock Co.	9,721	9,564	*-157*	*-1.6%*
Region 9	**222,790**	**231,348**	***+8,558***	***+3.8%***
Blue Earth Co.	55,941	66,441	*+10,500*	*+18.8%*
Brown Co.	26,911	25,331	*-1,580*	*-5.9%*
Faribault Co.	16,181	13,935	*-2,246*	*-13.9%*
Le Sueur Co.	25,426	27,591	*+2,165*	*+8.5%*
Martin Co.	21,802	19,829	*-1,973*	*-9.0%*
Nicollet Co.	29,771	33,575	*+3,804*	*+12.8%*
Sibley Co.	15,356	14,827	*-529*	*-3.4%*
Waseca Co.	19,526	18,911	*-615*	*-3.1%*
Watonwan Co.	11,876	10,908	*-968*	*-8.2%*
State of Minnesota	**4,919,479**	**5,519,952**	***+600,473***	***+12.2%***

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates

The recent declines are part of a much longer-term trend in the region, where the population has declined by nearly 40,000 people over the past 56 years after peaking in 1960. As shown in Figure 1, the region suffered severe population loss during the farm crisis in the 1980s, and has mostly held steady since then, hanging around 390,000 people since 1990.

Figure 1. Population Change, 1950-2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Likewise, 18 of the 23 counties in Southwest Minnesota suffered population declines from 1950 through 2016, including 8 counties that lost more than 5,000 residents during that timeframe. The largest decline occurred in Faribault County, which lost almost 10,000 people since 1950. Lac qui Parle County suffered the fastest decline in the region, losing just over 50 percent of its population from 1950 to 2016.

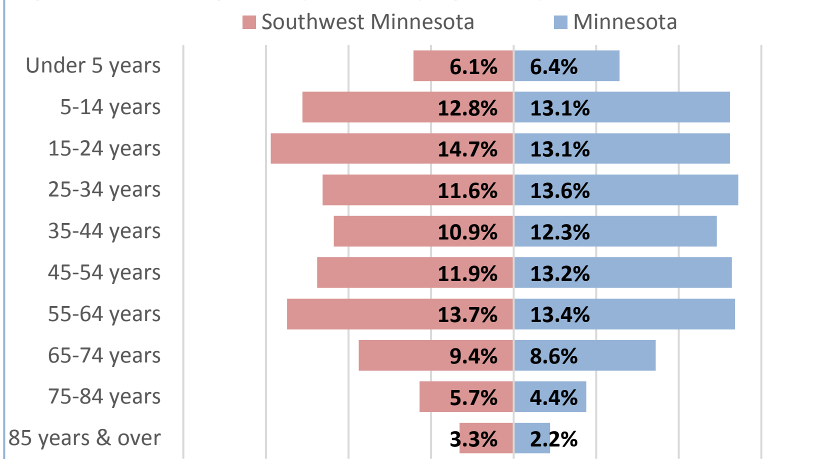
In sum, EDR 6W saw its population shrink by 40.8 percent from 1950 to 2016, by far the largest decline of any economic development region in the state. EDR 8's population dropped by 21.5 percent during the past 66 years, the second fastest decline of the 13 EDRs.

In contrast, the five counties that enjoyed population increases from 1950 to 2016 include Blue Earth, Nicollet, Le Sueur, Waseca, and Lyon County. Blue Earth County gained 28,114 people, a 73.3 percent increase, making it the largest and fastest growing county in the region; followed by Nicollet County, which added 12,646 people for a 60.4 percent growth rate. Waseca County lost population from 2000 to 2016, but was still up nearly 4,000 people from 1950. Overall, EDR 9 has grown 16.6 percent since 1950.

POPULATION BY AGE GROUP, 2000-2016

Southwest Minnesota has a much older population than the rest of the state, with 18.4 percent of residents aged 65 years and over, compared to 15.2 percent statewide. Consequently, Southwest Minnesota had a lower percentage of people in the 25- to 54-year-old age group, typically considered the "prime working years," as well as a smaller percent of school-aged children. However, having several postsecondary institutions in the region led to a higher percentage of people aged 15 to 24 (see Figure 2).

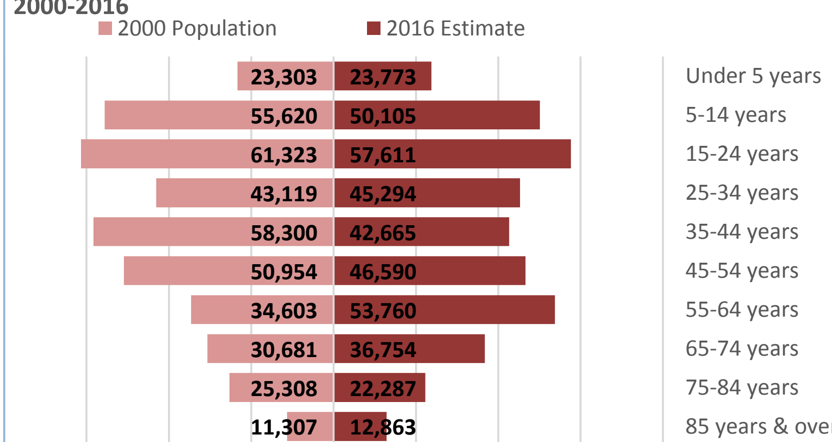
Figure 2. Percentage of Population by Age Group, 2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates

More than one-fourth of the region's population was a part of the Baby Boom generation, people born between 1946 and 1964, which is creating a significant shift in the population over time. While the number of younger and middle-aged residents is declining, the number of residents aged 55 years and over was rapidly increasing. This included a huge jump in the number of people from 55 to 64 years of age, but a more measured increase in people aged 65 years and over (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Southwest Minnesota Population Pyramid, 2000-2016



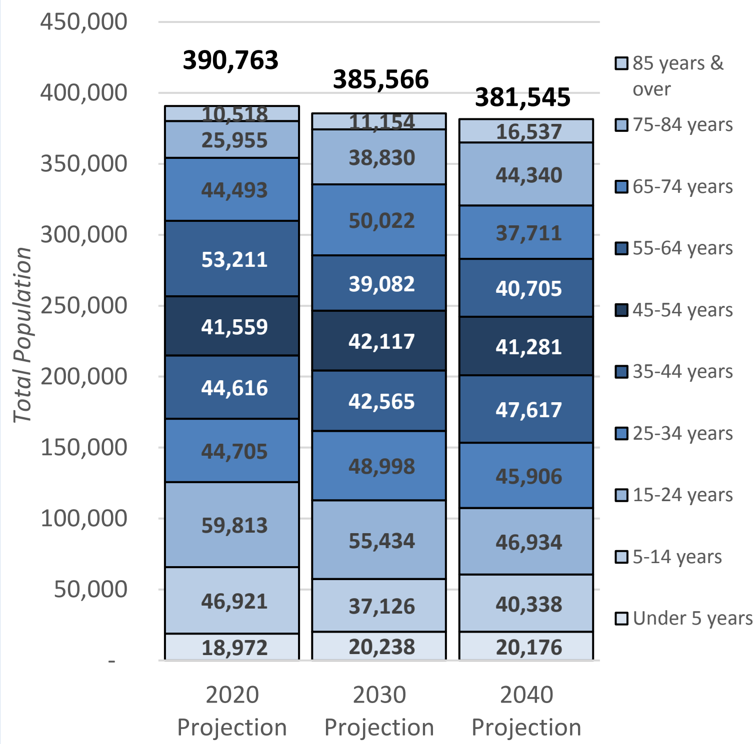
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY AGE GROUP, 2020-2040

The entire region is projected to experience a population decline in the next 20 years. According to population projections from the State Demographic Center, Southwest Minnesota is expected to lose just over 9,200 residents from 2020 to 2040, a -2.4 percent decline (see Figure 4). In comparison, the state of Minnesota is projected to grow 8.8 percent.

Most notably, Southwest Minnesota is projected to gain nearly 24,400 people aged 75 years and over, a 67 percent increase. The region is also expected to see a small increase in the 25- to 44-year-old age group, as well as a corresponding bump in children under 5 years of age. In contrast, Southwest Minnesota is expected to lose school-aged children and young adults from 5 to 24 years of age, as well as people from 45 to 64 years of age – as the current Baby Boom generation moves through the population pyramid.

Figure 4. Southwest Minnesota Population Projections by Age Group, 2020-2040



Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

POPULATION BY RACE, 2015

Southwest Minnesota's population is less diverse than the state's, but is becoming more diverse over time. In 2015, about 93.4 percent of the region's residents reported White alone as their race, compared to 84.8 percent of residents statewide. The region had much smaller percentages of Black or African American residents, Asian or Other Pacific Islanders, and people of Two or More Races. However at 6.0 percent, Southwest Minnesota had a higher percentage of people reporting Hispanic or Latino origin than the state, and a similar percentage of people of some other race, and American Indian (see Table 2).

Nobles County had the most diverse populace in the region, including 25 percent of residents reporting Hispanic origin, which was highest rate in the state. Redwood, Lyon, and Watonwan were also relatively diverse. In contrast, at least 97 percent of residents in Big Stone, Brown, Faribault, Lac qui Parle, and Lincoln County were White alone, making them among the least diverse in the state.

Table 2. Race and Hispanic Origin, 2015	Southwest Minnesota			Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	*Change from 2000-2015*	Percent	*Change from 2000-2015*
Total	**393,174**	**100.0%**	***-0.3%***	**100.0%**	***+10.2%***
White	367,246	93.4%	*-2.3%*	84.8%	*+4.4%*
Black or African American	6,282	1.6%	*+132.4%*	5.5%	*+74.2%*
American Indian & Alaska Native	2,591	0.7%	*+30.6%*	1.0%	*+2.9%*
Asian & Other Pac. Islander	6,340	1.6%	*+47.2%*	4.5%	*+68.6%*
Some Other Race	5,631	1.4%	*-11.5%*	1.5%	*+24.7%*
Two or More Races	5,084	1.3%	*+52.1%*	2.7%	*+74.3%*
Hispanic or Latino	23,564	6.0%	*+89.3%*	5.0%	*+89.0%*

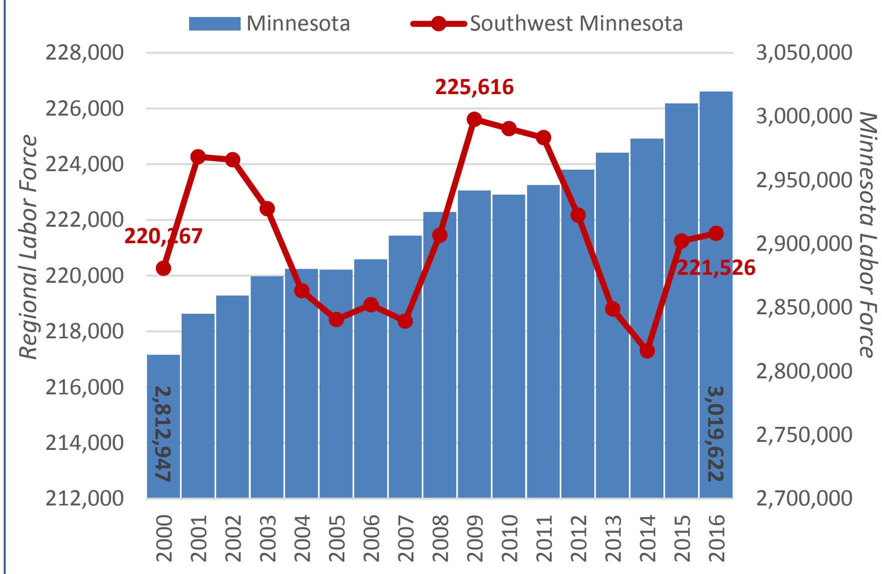
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

LABOR FORCE

LABOR FORCE CHANGE, 2000-2016

According to data from DEED's Local Area Unemployment Statistics program, Southwest Minnesota has experienced some substantial fluctuations in the size of the available labor force over the last 16 years in response to changing economic conditions. During the recessions in both 2001 and 2007, workers flooded into the labor market to earn extra income; then dropped back out when the region's economy improved. Despite the region's population decline overall, Southwest Minnesota gained about 1,250 workers over the last 16 years, from 220,267 available workers in 2000 to 221,526 workers in 2016. In contrast, the state was steadily gaining workers over the past decade and a half (see Figure 5). As the economy has recovered, the labor market in the region has been getting tighter, with only about 8,800 unemployed workers that were actively seeking work in 2016.

Figure 5. Annual Labor Force Estimates



Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program

LABOR FORCE PROJECTIONS, 2020-2030

If Southwest Minnesota's population changes at the projected rates shown in Figure 4 above, the region would be expected to see a decline in the labor force over the next decade. Applying current labor force participation rates to future population projections by age group creates labor force projections for the region, which show a steady drop in workforce numbers (see Table 3).

In addition to the overall decline, the labor force will also see a significant shift over time, with large gains in the number of workers aged 65 years and over against huge declines in the number of workers aged 55 to 64 years. The region is also expected to lose teenaged workers and entry-level workers. However, the region is expected to see gains in the number of 25 to 44 year olds. Due to the growth, the 25 to 54 year old age group will make up about 58 percent of the total workforce in 2030, up from 54.5 percent in 2010. Either way, these long-term declines will likely lead to a tight labor market in the future, with employers needing to respond to the changing labor force availability in the region.

Table 3. Southwest Minnesota Labor Force Projections

	2020 Labor Force Projection	2030 Labor Force Projection	*2020-2030 Change*	
			Numeric	*Percent*
16 to 19 years	12,088	10,622	*-1,466*	*-12.1%*
20 to 24 years	27,403	26,451	*-953*	*-3.5%*
25 to 44 years	79,436	81,430	*+1,994*	*+2.5%*
45 to 54 years	36,471	36,960	*+490*	*+1.3%*
55 to 64 years	41,291	30,327	*-10,964*	*-26.6%*
65 to 74 years	13,520	15,200	*+1,680*	*+12.4%*
75 years & over	2,379	3,260	*+881*	*+37.0%*
Total Labor Force	**212,588**	**204,250**	***-8,337***	***-3.9%***

Source: calculated from MN State Demographic Center projections, and 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS, 2015

With 68.5 percent of the population aged 16 years and over in the labor force, Southwest Minnesota had slightly lower labor force participation rates than the state's 70 percent rate. However, the region actually had higher labor force participation rates than the state in all but one age group, but the overall rate was lower because a higher percentage of Southwest Minnesota's labor force was older (see Table 4).

In contrast, the region had lower participation rates than the state for almost every race group; and also had large unemployment rate disparities for minorities. Southwest Minnesota had about 9,800 veterans and just over 10,500 workers with disabilities in the labor force, with both having higher participation rates in the region than the state. In sum, unemployment rates were highest for young people, minorities, and workers with disabilities.

Table 4. Employment Characteristics, 2015

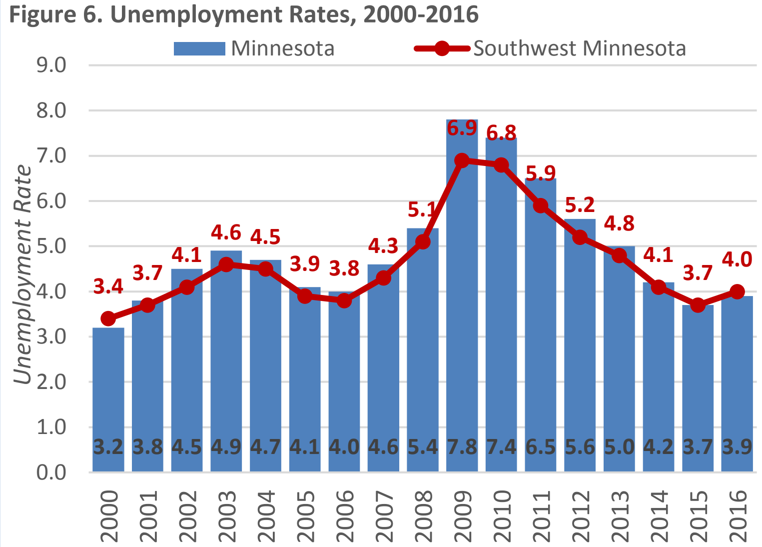
	Southwest Minnesota			Minnesota	
	In Labor Force	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate
Total Labor Force	**214,756**	**68.5%**	**4.5%**	**70.0%**	**5.6%**
16 to 19 years	12,829	56.8%	14.0%	51.9%	16.1%
20 to 24 years	24,373	82.5%	6.3%	82.8%	9.2%
25 to 44 years	79,206	88.9%	4.2%	88.1%	5.0%
45 to 54 years	45,141	87.8%	3.0%	87.2%	4.3%
55 to 64 years	40,722	77.6%	2.8%	72.1%	4.2%
65 to 74 years	10,162	30.4%	3.1%	26.9%	3.6%
75 years & over	2,294	6.5%	3.6%	6.0%	3.5%
Employment Characteristics by Race & Hispanic Origin					
White alone	203,074	68.5%	4.1%	70.0%	4.8%
Black or African American	2,983	67.3%	15.9%	68.8%	14.7%
American Indian & Alaska Native	1,123	60.0%	7.5%	58.6%	16.3%
Asian or Other Pac. Islanders	3,197	66.9%	4.8%	70.4%	6.4%
Some Other Race	2,717	76.8%	11.6%	77.4%	9.4%
Two or More Races	1,649	67.5%	11.2%	71.0%	11.5%
Hispanic or Latino	10,433	72.2%	10.7%	75.0%	9.1%
Employment Characteristics by Veteran Status					
Veterans, 18 to 64 years	9,812	80.9%	5.4%	77.6%	5.7%
Employment Characteristics by Disability					
With Any Disability	10,510	56.6%	9.2%	51.3%	12.7%
Employment Characteristics by Educational Attainment					
Population, 25 to 64 years	165,059	85.5%	3.3%	84.0%	4.6%
Less than H.S. Diploma	9,212	69.6%	4.1%	65.4%	6.5%
H.S. Diploma or Equivalent	50,678	82.9%	3.0%	78.8%	3.9%
Some College or Assoc. Degree	63,850	87.5%	3.0%	85.2%	4.7%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	41,328	90.5%	1.6%	89.3%	2.7%

Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2000-2016

Up until 2015, Southwest Minnesota had consistently reported slightly lower unemployment rates than Minnesota and the nation, regardless of the state of the economy. According to Local Area Unemployment Statistics, the region's unemployment rate hovered just below the state rate from 2002 to 2008, before rising to about 7.0 percent in 2009 and 2010, then dropping back to prerecession levels in 2014 and 2015, when it matched the state rate (see Figure 6). The region is home to many of the counties with the lowest unemployment rates in the state.

Figure 6. Unemployment Rates, 2000-2016



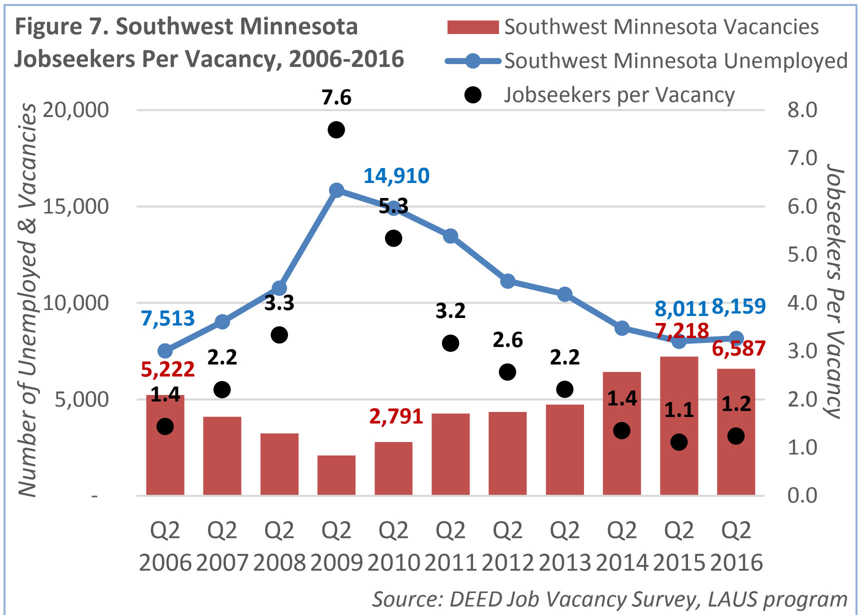
Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program

JOBSEEKERS PER VACANCY, 2016

As the number of available workers has declined and the economy continues to recover, the region's labor market has tightened. One clear demonstration of this is the ratio of unemployed jobseekers per vacancy, which now stands at 1.2-to-1 in Southwest Minnesota.

According to recent job vacancy survey results, there were 6,587 openings reported by employers compared to 8,159 unemployed jobseekers in the region. The ratio climbed as high as 7.6 during the recession in 2009 (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. Southwest Minnesota Jobseekers Per Vacancy, 2006-2016



Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, LAUS program

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY AGE GROUP, 2015

With 30.4 percent of adults aged 18 years and over having a college degree, Southwest Minnesota has lower educational attainment than the state, where 41.3 percent of adults have an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree. In contrast, Southwest has a higher percentage of people with some college but no degree, and a high school diploma or less (see Table 5).

However, for younger residents, a different picture emerges. Nearly half (49.8%) of people in the region aged 18 to 24 years have attended some college, but hadn't earned a degree yet, and almost 14 percent already had a college degree. Southwest also had a higher percentage of people in the 25 to 44 and 45 to 64 year old age groups who had attended some college and earned associate's degrees than the state, but lower percentages of bachelor's degree or higher in both age groups.

Not only does Southwest Minnesota have a higher percentage of the population in the oldest age groups, those residents have much lower educational attainment than the rest of the state, and those in younger age groups (see Table 5).

Table 5. Educational Attainment by Age Group, 2015	Southwest Minnesota		Minnesota
	Number	Percent	Percent
18 to 24 years	**42,265**	**13.9%**	**12.2%**
Less than high school	4,769	11.3%	12.7%
High school grad. (incl. equiv.)	10,599	25.1%	26.2%
Some college, no degree	21,053	49.8%	42.7%
Associate's degree	2,963	7.0%	6.3%
Bachelor's degree	2,832	6.7%	11.6%
Advanced degree	49	0.1%	0.4%
25 to 44 years	**89,062**	**29.3%**	**34.1%**
Less than high school	7,104	8.0%	6.7%
High school grad. (incl. equiv.)	23,403	26.3%	19.2%
Some college, no degree	20,582	23.1%	21.6%
Associate's degree	14,736	16.5%	13.1%
Bachelor's degree	18,040	20.3%	27.6%
Advanced degree	5,197	5.8%	11.7%
45 to 64 years	**103,917**	**34.2%**	**35.5%**
Less than high school	6,126	5.9%	5.7%
High school grad. (incl. equiv.)	37,696	36.3%	26.9%
Some college, no degree	25,259	24.3%	23.3%
Associate's degree	12,421	12.0%	11.3%
Bachelor's degree	16,151	15.5%	21.4%
Advanced degree	6,264	6.0%	11.4%
65 years & over	**68,610**	**22.6%**	**18.2%**
Less than high school	11,966	17.4%	12.8%
High school grad. (incl. equiv.)	30,555	44.5%	37.3%
Some college, no degree	12,335	18.0%	19.8%
Associate's degree	2,569	3.7%	5.1%
Bachelor's degree	7,249	10.6%	15.2%
Advanced degree	3,936	5.7%	9.8%

Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

COMMUTE SHED AND LABOR SHED, 2014

According to commuting data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the vast majority – about 76 percent – of workers who live in the region also work within the region. However, Southwest Minnesota is a net exporter of labor, having slightly more workers than available jobs; not only drawing in workers from surrounding counties but also having residents drive outside the region to find work. In sum, 147,444 workers both lived and worked in Southwest Minnesota in 2014, while another 38,656 workers drove into the region for work, compared to 46,670 workers who lived in the region but drove to surrounding counties for work (see Table 6 and Figure 8).

Table 6. Southwest Minnesota Inflow/Outflow Job Counts (All Jobs), 2014	2014	
	Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area	186,100	100.0%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	38,656	20.8%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	147,444	79.2%
Living in the Selection Area	194,114	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	46,670	24.0%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	147,444	76.0%

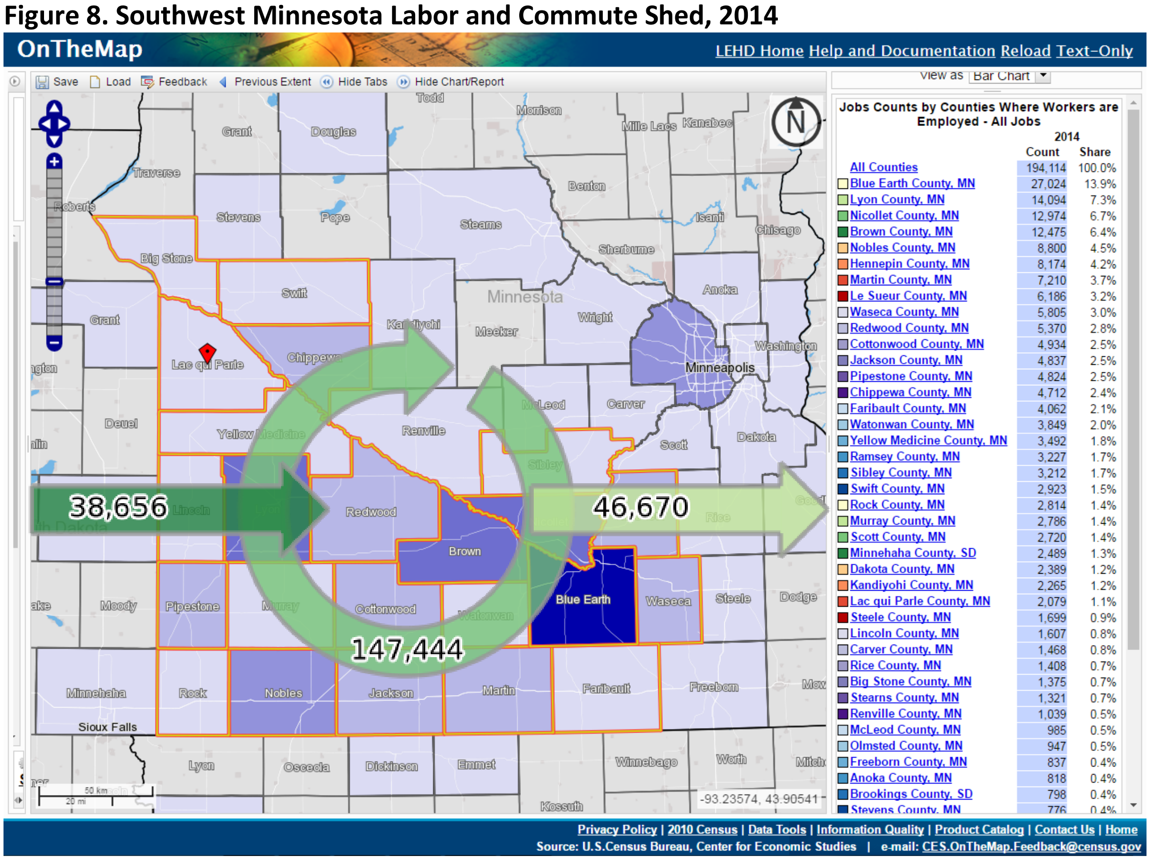
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap

Blue Earth County is the largest employment center in the region and was the biggest draw for workers, followed by Lyon, Nicollet, Brown, Nobles, Martin, Le Sueur, and Redwood County. Employers in the region both lose and draw workers from the Twin Cities metro area, as well as Minnehaha County in South Dakota, which includes the Sioux Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area. In contrast, the region also sends workers out of the region, primarily to larger metro areas including Sioux Falls, as well as the Twin Cities (see Table 7 and Figure 8).

Table 7. Southwest Commuting Data	
Counties outside the region that send the most workers into the region	Counties outside the region that the most workers from inside the region travel to
Hennepin Co. MN	Hennepin Co. MN
Dakota Co. MN	Ramsey Co. MN
Scott Co. MN	Scott Co. MN
Rice Co. MN	Minnehaha Co. SD
Ramsey Co. MN	Dakota Co. MN

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap

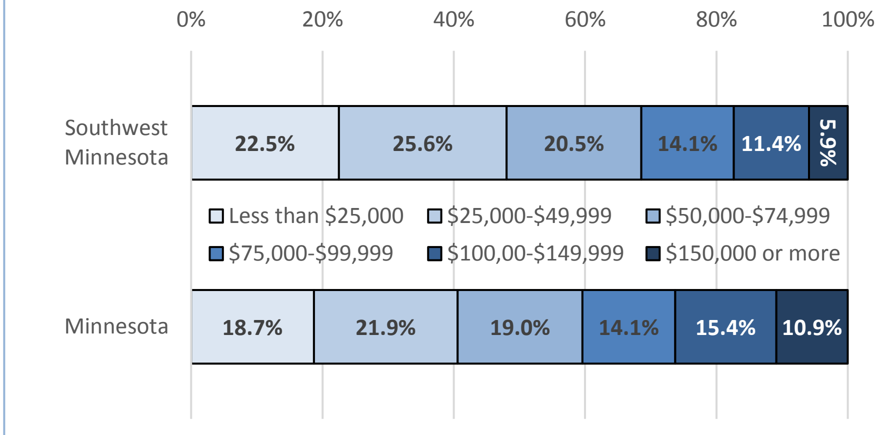
Figure 8. Southwest Minnesota Labor and Commute Shed, 2014



INCOMES, WAGES AND OCCUPATIONS

HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

Figure 9. Household Incomes, 2015



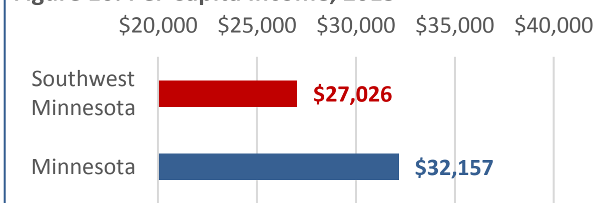
Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Household incomes were significantly lower in Southwest Minnesota than the rest of the state. The median household income in Southwest was $52,018 in 2015, compared to $61,492 in Minnesota. Nearly half (48.1%) of the households in the region had incomes below $50,000 in 2015, compared to 40.6 percent of households statewide. About 35 percent of households earned between $50,000 and $100,000 in the region. In contrast, only 17.4 percent of households in Southwest Minnesota earned over $100,000 per year, compared to 26.3 percent of households statewide (see Figure 9).

PER CAPITA INCOMES

Per capita incomes were also lower in the region than the state, ranging from $26,298 in EDR 8 to $27,294 in EDR 6W to $27,346 in EDR 9, compared to $32,157 in Minnesota (see Figure 10). Southwest Minnesota's per capita income was just 84 percent of the statewide level.

Figure 10. Per Capita Income, 2015



Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey

COST OF LIVING

According to DEED's Cost of Living tool, the basic needs budget for an average Minnesota family (which consists of 2 adults and 1 child, with 1 full-time and 1 part-time worker) was $55,200 in 2017. The cost of living for a similar family in Southwest Minnesota was $43,776 – which was easily the lowest in the state. The highest monthly costs were for transportation, food, and housing; with the region's housing, child care, taxes, and transportation costs were significantly lower than the rest of the state (see Table 8).

Table 8. Family Yearly Cost, Worker Hourly Wage, and Family Monthly Costs, 2017

Region	Family Yearly Cost of Living	Hourly Wage Required	Monthly Costs: Child Care	Food	Health Care	Housing	Trans-portation	Other	Taxes
Southwest	$43,776	$14.03	$214	$758	$396	$720	$712	$432	$416
Minnesota	$55,200	$17.69	$468	$763	$472	$936	$788	$496	$677

Source: DEED Cost of Living tool

In order to meet the basic cost of living for the region, the workers in the family scenario described would need to earn $14.03 per hour over the course of 60 hours per work week. DEED's Cost of Living tool provides different estimates for household compositions including single people, partnered couples, and up to 4 children. For a single person living alone and working full-time, the estimated yearly cost in Southwest would be $25,440, which would require an hourly wage of $12.23 to meet the basic needs standard of living.

WAGES AND OCCUPATIONS

According to DEED's Occupational Employment Statistics program, the median hourly wage for all occupations in Southwest Minnesota was $16.58 in the first quarter of 2017, which was the lowest wage level of the six planning regions in the state. Southwest's median wage was $3.00 below the state's median hourly wage, equaling 84.5 percent of the statewide wage rate, and about $5.00 below the median hourly wage in the Twin Cities metro area, which would amount to over $10,000 per year for a full-time worker. At $15.93, EDR 6W had the lowest median wage in the region, just below EDR 8 at $16.17, and well below EDR 9 at $16.99 (see Table 9).

Table 9. Occupational Employment Statistics by Region, 1st Qtr. 2017	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment
Central Minnesota	$17.45	280,910
Twin Cities Metro Area	$21.55	1,751,580
Northeast Minnesota	$17.25	141,910
Northwest Minnesota	$16.71	215,520
Southeast Minnesota	$18.53	259,060
Southwest Minnesota	**$16.58**	**181,430**
EDR 6W - Upper MN Valley	$15.93	16,600
EDR 8 - Southwest	$16.17	50,360
EDR 9 - South Central	$16.99	114,470
State of Minnesota	**$19.62**	**2,810,400**

Source: DEED Occupational Employment Statistics

Southwest Minnesota stands out for having higher concentrations of farming, production; education, training, and library; and transportation and material moving workers than the state. Not surprisingly, the lowest-paying jobs are concentrated in food preparation and serving, sales and related, personal care and service, healthcare support, and building, grounds cleaning and maintenance jobs, which tend to have lower educational and training requirements. For the most part, the gap in pay between Southwest Minnesota and the state is also much lower in these jobs (see Table 10).

Table 10. Southwest Minnesota Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Qtr. 2017

	Southwest Minnesota				State of Minnesota		
	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment	*Share of Total Employment*	*Location Quotient*	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment	*Share of Total Employment*
Total, All Occupations	**$16.58**	**181,430**	***100.0%***	***1.0***	**$19.62**	**2,810,400**	***100.0%***
Office & Administrative Support	$16.32	25,080	*13.8%*	*1.0*	$18.26	404,120	*14.4%*
Production	$16.26	20,820	*11.5%*	*1.5*	$17.46	220,570	*7.8%*
Sales & Related	$11.62	17,630	*9.7%*	*1.0*	$13.48	275,740	*9.8%*
Education, Training & Library	$21.10	16,730	*9.2%*	*1.6*	$23.33	164,560	*5.9%*
Transportation & Material Moving	$16.47	14,500	*8.0%*	*1.3*	$17.06	178,270	*6.3%*
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	$25.70	11,510	*6.3%*	*1.0*	$32.85	174,230	*6.2%*
Personal Care & Service	$12.14	10,440	*5.8%*	*1.2*	$11.77	129,490	*4.6%*
Food Preparation & Serving Related	$9.89	9,330	*5.1%*	*0.6*	$10.05	236,820	*8.4%*
Management	$37.86	8,670	*4.8%*	*0.8*	$49.20	168,370	*6.0%*
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	$20.46	6,690	*3.7%*	*1.1*	$22.41	95,700	*3.4%*
Healthcare Support	$13.04	6,140	*3.4%*	*1.1*	$15.11	84,730	*3.0%*
Business & Financial Operations	$27.47	6,110	*3.4%*	*0.6*	$31.83	164,180	*5.8%*
Construction & Extraction	$22.49	5,950	*3.3%*	*0.9*	$26.55	98,730	*3.5%*
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	$12.13	5,270	*2.9%*	*1.0*	$13.68	83,180	*3.0%*
Community & Social Service	$21.04	3,400	*1.9%*	*1.0*	$21.32	53,060	*1.9%*
Protective Service	$18.91	3,270	*1.8%*	*1.2*	$19.80	42,740	*1.5%*
Computer & Mathematical	$28.13	2,820	*1.6%*	*0.4*	$39.75	97,680	*3.5%*
Architecture & Engineering	$30.31	2,590	*1.4%*	*0.7*	$35.96	54,400	*1.9%*
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	$17.31	1,690	*0.9%*	*0.7*	$22.39	37,290	*1.3%*
Life, Physical & Social Science	$25.70	1,510	*0.8%*	*1.0*	$30.59	24,230	*0.9%*
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	$14.44	810	*0.4%*	*3.4*	$15.31	3,680	*0.1%*
Legal	$34.51	490	*0.3%*	*0.4*	$40.36	18,640	*0.7%*

Source: DEED Occupational Employment Statistics, Qtr. 1 2017

In contrast, the highest paying jobs are found in management, legal, architecture and engineering, computer, business and financial operations, healthcare practitioners, and life, physical, and social science occupations, which all need higher levels of education and experience, including many that require postsecondary training. The pay gaps between the region and state are much bigger in these occupations.

JOB VACANCY SURVEY

Employers reported 6,322 job vacancies in the fourth quarter of 2016, which was a decline of about 700 fewer openings compared to the past year, but still the seventh highest number ever reported. Overall, 33 percent of the openings were part-time, 30 percent required postsecondary education, and 32 percent required a year or more of experience. The median hourly wage offer was $12.95 across all occupations, but ranged from a low of $10.00 to $25 per hour or more for architecture and engineering, healthcare practitioners, and management occupations. The largest number of vacancies were in sales and related occupations, followed by food preparation and serving, personal care, and health care (see Table 11).

Table 11. Southwest Minnesota Job Vacancy Survey Results, 4th Qtr. 2016

	Number of Total Vacancies	Percent Part-time	Percent Temporary or Seasonal	Requiring Post-Secondary Education	Requiring 1 or More Years of Experience	Requiring Certificate or License	Median Hourly Wage Offer
Total, All Occupations	**6,322**	**33%**	**8%**	**30%**	**32%**	**30%**	**$12.95**
Sales & Related	932	39%	3%	4%	35%	1%	$12.18
Food Preparation & Serving Related	737	55%	2%	0%	7%	6%	$10.77
Personal Care & Service	690	26%	1%	11%	9%	11%	$10.49
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	524	28%	0%	97%	55%	96%	$27.00
Production	469	18%	2%	11%	28%	5%	$12.96
Transportation & Material Moving	437	56%	13%	6%	29%	75%	$12.00
Office & Administrative Support	402	19%	2%	34%	25%	42%	$15.66
Education, Training & Library	310	44%	12%	92%	36%	54%	$17.33
Construction & Extraction	307	3%	87%	14%	15%	13%	$10.00
Healthcare Support	305	56%	0%	48%	3%	81%	$12.59
Management	215	2%	0%	74%	94%	30%	$24.84
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	172	60%	20%	4%	9%	4%	$12.04
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	162	4%	0%	74%	80%	59%	$19.79
Community & Social Service	135	9%	0%	61%	57%	19%	$14.51
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	93	65%	10%	14%	60%	3%	$11.91
Architecture & Engineering	91	2%	0%	94%	86%	25%	$29.22
Life, Physical & Social Sciences	78	35%	2%	58%	55%	26%	$14.90
Business & Financial Operations	76	3%	2%	80%	81%	36%	$21.69
Protective Service	45	45%	23%	23%	38%	59%	$12.92
Computer & Mathematical	24	0%	0%	77%	77%	0%	$20.43
Legal	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$18.64

Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, 4th Qtr. 2016

OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

According to DEED's Occupations in Demand tool, there are well over 200 occupations showing relatively high demand in the region, with training and education requirements ranging from short-term on-the-job training to postsecondary education to advanced degrees. These occupations are spread across different sectors but are also concentrated in the region's major industries. For example, nursing assistants, home health aides, production workers, mechanics and repair workers, and heavy and tractor trailer truck drivers are among the top occupations in demand based on the consistent need for workers in these industries. Many of the jobs are concentrated in manufacturing, health care, transportation, and other related industries (see Table 12).

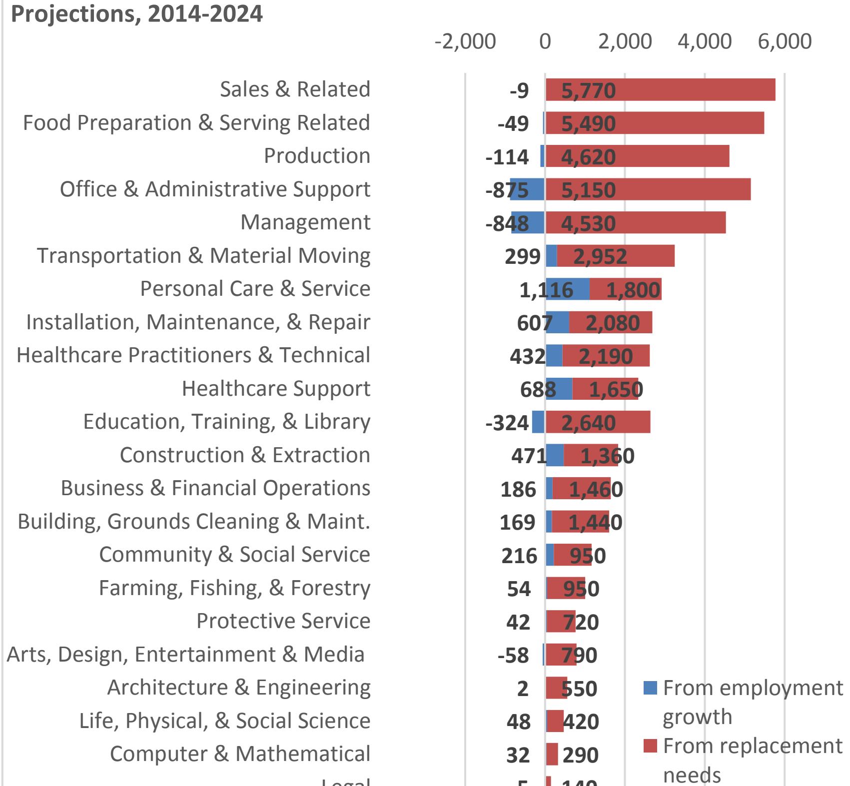
Table 12. Southwest Minnesota Occupations in Demand by Education Level, 2016			
Less than High School	**High School or Equivalent**	**Some College or Assoc. Degree**	**Bachelor's Degree or Higher**
Food Prep & Serving Workers ($19,090)	Customer Service Representatives ($31,269)	Nursing Assistants ($25,136)	Elementary & Secondary School Teachers ($48,572)
Personal Care Aides ($25,098)	Office Clerks, General ($30,173)	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers ($37,196)	Accountants & Auditors ($60,471)
Home Health Aides ($22,896)	Secretaries & Administrative Assistants ($35,541)	Registered Nurses ($55,837)	Industrial Engineers ($72,620)
Cashiers ($19,248)	Bus, Truck & Diesel Engine Mechanics ($36,660)	Licensed Practical & Licensed Voc. Nurses ($41,577)	Sales Managers ($95,718)
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers ($21,830)	Social & Human Service Assistants ($40,679)	Teacher Assistants ($26,098)	Financial Managers ($95,820)
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers ($28,992)	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General ($38,534)	HVAC Mechanics ($47,356)	Network & Computer Systems Admins. ($62,067)
Retail Salespersons ($20,298)	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client ($27,018)	Computer User Support Specialists ($42,052)	Family & General Practitioners ($18,1359)
Janitors & Cleaners ($24,723)	Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Mfg. ($51,863)	Medical Assistants ($27,648)	Child, Family, & School Social Workers ($51,702)
Cooks, Restaurant ($19,930)	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers ($33,533)	Industrial Engineering Technicians ($45,750)	Industrial Production Managers ($78,204)
Helpers--Production Workers ($30,293)	Team Assemblers ($30,567)	Emergency Medical Techns. & Paramedics ($30,400)	Mental Health Counselors ($69,836)
			Source: DEED Occupations in Demand

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

The 23-county Southwest planning region, which includes Region 6W, 8, and 9, is projected to grow just 1.0 percent from 2014 to 2024, making it the slowest growing planning region in the state, which is expected to expand by 4.3 percent.

The region could gain 2,114 new jobs, but will also need to fill 48,070 replacement openings for existing jobs left vacant by retirements and other career changes. In fact, the number of replacement openings is expected to dwarf the number of new jobs in every group except for personal care and service occupations. Seven occupational groups will not see any new growth, but will still have demand for workers (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Southwest Minnesota Regional Employment Projections, 2014-2024



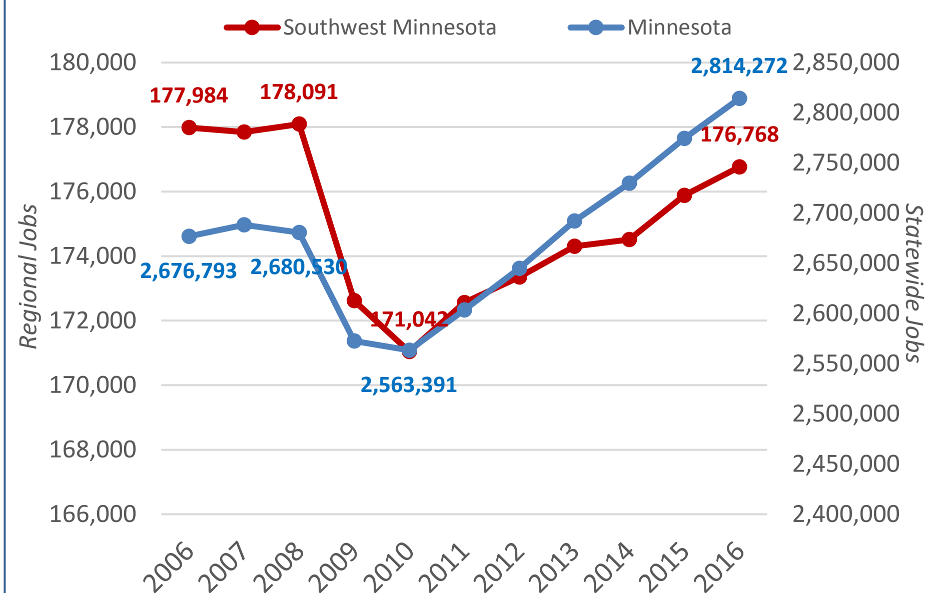
Source: DEED 2014-2024 Employment Outlook

ECONOMY

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

Southwest Minnesota has seen employment ups and downs over the past decade, but ended 2016 with about 1,200 fewer jobs than it had in 2006. The region entered the recession later than the state, still experiencing job growth through 2008, before suffering severe declines in 2009 and 2010. Since then, Southwest Minnesota has recovered much more slowly than the state, which gained jobs at an 8.1 percent clip from 2011 to 2016, compared to a 2.4 percent increase in the region. Southwest Minnesota reached a peak of 178,091 jobs in 2008, then hit a low of 171,042 jobs in 2010, and has still not recovered all of the jobs lost during the recession (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Industry Employment Statistics, 2006-2016



Source: DEED QCEW program

According to DEED's [Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program](), Southwest Minnesota was home to 11,690 business establishments providing 176,768 covered jobs through 2016, with a total payroll of just under $6.9 billion. That was about 6.3 percent of total employment in the state of Minnesota. Average annual wages were $38,850 in the region, which was almost $15,500 lower than the state's average annual wage (see Table 13).

Table 13. Southwest Industry Employment Statistics, 2016

Geography	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Total Payroll	Average Annual Wage	*2011-2016* *Change in Jobs*	*2011-2016* *Percent Change*	*2015-2016* *Change in Jobs*	*2015-2016* *Percent Change*
Southwest Minnesota	**11,690**	**176,768**	**$6,867,369,237**	**$38,850**	***+4,206***	***+2.4%***	***+883***	***+0.5%***
Region 6W	1,519	17,286	$629,088,118	$36,393	*-774*	*-4.3%*	*+3*	*0.0%*
Region 8	3,827	54,119	$2,045,220,060	$37,791	*+607*	*+1.1%*	*-563*	*-1.0%*
Region 9	6,345	105,362	$4,193,061,059	$39,797	*+4,373*	*+4.3%*	*+1,443*	*+1.4%*
Minnesota	**161,520**	**2,814,272**	**$152,795,190,643**	**$54,293**	***+210,746***	***+8.1%***	***+39,864***	***+1.4%***

Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW)

With 105,362 jobs at 6,345 business establishments, EDR 9 accounts for about 60 percent of total employment in the Southwest Minnesota planning region. EDR 9 also provided the bulk of the region's job growth during the recovery from 2011 to 2016, adding 4,373 net new jobs. In contrast, EDR 6W had the smallest number of firms and jobs, with 17,286 jobs at 1,519 establishments, and saw a loss of 774 jobs in the past five years. EDR 8 had 3,827 establishments providing 54,119 jobs in 2016, regaining over 600 jobs since 2001 despite a loss of 563 jobs in the past year. EDR 9 had the highest average annual wages at $39,797, though that was still nearly $15,000 below the state average. Wages were $36,393 in EDR 6W and $37,791 in EDR 8, but increased over the past year (see Table 13).

With 31,390 jobs at 604 firms, Southwest Minnesota is the only region where manufacturing is still the largest employing industry, accounting for 17.8 percent of total jobs in the region. That is 6.5 percent higher than the state's concentration of employment in manufacturing. In addition, Southwest Minnesota is still adding manufacturing jobs, gaining 61 net new jobs over the past five years. At $48,326 in 2016, average annual wages were nearly $10,000 higher in manufacturing than the total of all industries.

The next largest industry in Southwest Minnesota was health care and social assistance, with 30,527 jobs at 1,025 firms, after gaining 544 net new jobs in the past five years. Due to the region's older population, the largest sector was nursing and residential care facilities with just over 10,000 jobs, followed by hospitals with 8,049 jobs, ambulatory health care services with 7,018 jobs, and social assistance, with 5,446 jobs.

Retail trade is the third largest industry, with 20,576 jobs at 1,523 establishments, while the closely related accommodation and food services industry was fifth largest with 12,792 jobs at 796 firms. Though the region has seen steady job gains over the past five years, annual wages are still relatively low in these service-providing industries. With 15,797 jobs accounting for 8.9 percent of total jobs, the region has a higher concentration of employment in educational services than the state (8.0%).

Other important industries in Southwest Minnesota include public administration, construction, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, finance and insurance, agriculture, and other services. Thirteen of the 20 main industries in the region added jobs since 2011, with huge gains occurring in agriculture, transportation and warehousing, construction, health care and social assistance, educational services, and retail trade. In contrast, the region saw job declines in management of companies, other services, wholesale trade, and utilities. Ten of the 20 industries saw job growth in the past year (see Table 14).

Table 14. Southwest Minnesota Industry Employment Statistics, 2016

	2016 Annual Data				Avg.	*2011-2016*		*2015-2016*	
NAICS Industry Title	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	*Percent of Jobs*	Total Payroll ($1,000s)	Annual Wage	*Change in Jobs*	*Percent Change*	*Change in Jobs*	*Percent Change*
Total, All Industries	**11,690**	**176,768**	***100.0%***	**$6,867,369**	**$38,850**	***+4,206***	***+2.4%***	***+883***	***+0.5%***
Manufacturing	604	31,390	*17.8%*	$1,516,939	$48,326	*+61*	*+0.2%*	*-226*	*-0.7%*
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,025	30,527	*17.3%*	$1,169,423	$38,308	*+544*	*+1.8%*	*+204*	*+0.7%*
Retail Trade	1,523	20,576	*11.6%*	$469,154	$22,801	*+474*	*+2.4%*	*+162*	*+0.8%*
Educational Services	236	15,797	*8.9%*	$631,667	$39,987	*+487*	*+3.2%*	*+315*	*+2.0%*
Accommodation & Food Services	796	12,792	*7.2%*	$173,542	$13,566	*+249*	*+2.0%*	*+33*	*+0.3%*
Public Administration	582	9,878	*5.6%*	$401,942	$40,691	*+428*	*+4.5%*	*+224*	*+2.3%*
Construction	1,451	8,113	*4.6%*	$398,997	$49,180	*+695*	*+9.4%*	*-38*	*-0.5%*
Wholesale Trade	625	7,854	*4.4%*	$424,393	$54,035	*-59*	*-0.7%*	*+89*	*+1.1%*
Transportation & Warehousing	727	6,625	*3.7%*	$241,437	$36,443	*+725*	*+12.3%*	*+297*	*+4.7%*
Finance & Insurance	733	6,053	*3.4%*	$344,024	$56,835	*+205*	*+3.5%*	*+39*	*+0.6%*
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	633	5,344	*3.0%*	$216,816	$40,572	*+935*	*+21.2%*	*+128*	*+2.5%*
Other Services	982	4,903	*2.8%*	$127,105	$25,924	*-358*	*-6.8%*	*-83*	*-1.7%*
Professional & Technical Services	580	4,064	*2.3%*	$212,187	$52,211	*+261*	*+6.9%*	*-69*	*-1.7%*
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Svcs.	358	4,002	*2.3%*	$120,659	$30,150	*+208*	*+5.5%*	*+157*	*+4.1%*
Information	202	2,802	*1.6%*	$127,348	$45,449	*#N/A*	*#N/A*	*-83*	*-2.9%*
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	219	1,959	*1.1%*	$30,700	$15,671	*+68*	*+3.6%*	*-10*	*-0.5%*
Management of Companies	48	1,544	*0.9%*	$128,645	$83,320	*-554*	*-26.4%*	*-153*	*-9.0%*
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	272	1,227	*0.7%*	$31,589	$25,745	*-1*	*-0.1%*	*-10*	*-0.8%*
Utilities	74	971	*0.5%*	$78,174	$80,509	*-56*	*-5.5%*	*-28*	*-2.8%*
Mining	23	342	*0.2%*	$22,627	$66,161	*-21*	*-5.8%*	*-64*	*-15.8%*

Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW)

DISTINGUISHING INDUSTRIES

Southwest Minnesota stands out in the state for its higher concentrations of employment in manufacturing and agriculture. Southwest Minnesota has 6.3 percent of total state employment, but has 36.5 percent of the state's jobs in animal production and aquaculture, and over 22 percent of statewide jobs in support activities for agriculture, electrical equipment manufacturing, and food manufacturing. The region also has strengths in printing, truck transportation, and merchant wholesalers of nondurable goods (see Table 15).

Table 15. Southwest Minnesota Distinguishing Industries, 2016						
NAICS Industry Title	NAICS Code	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Total Payroll	Avg. Annual Wages	Location Quotient
Total, All Industries	**0**	**11,690**	**176,768**	**$6,867,369,237**	**$38,850**	**1.0**
Animal Production & Aquaculture	112	312	3,928	$161,633,143	$41,149	5.8
Support Activities for Agriculture	115	106	563	$26,349,744	$46,802	3.7
Electrical Equip., Appl, & Component Mfg.	335	20	1,928	$107,145,306	$55,573	3.6
Food Manufacturing	311	103	10,600	$524,236,745	$49,456	3.6
Nonmetallic Mineral Product Mfg.	327	32	1,747	$98,414,460	$56,333	2.7
Printing & Related Support Activities	323	61	3,531	$142,958,207	$40,487	2.5
Truck Transportation	484	417	3,371	$134,676,621	$39,952	2.0
Gasoline Stations	447	225	2,933	$52,130,262	$17,774	1.9
Crop Production	111	201	814	$28,046,270	$34,455	1.8
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	424	344	4,632	$252,348,484	$54,479	1.7

Source: *DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW)*

INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS

As noted above, the 23-county Southwest Minnesota Planning Area is projected to grow 1.0 percent from 2014 to 2024, a gain of 2,114 new jobs. The largest and fastest growing industry is expected to be health care and social assistance, which may gain over 3,100 jobs.

Southwest is also expected to see rapid employment growth in construction, administrative support and waste services, wholesale trade, finance and insurance, and transportation and warehousing. In contrast, the region is expected to see declines in retail trade, public administration, self-employed workers, manufacturing, information, other services, and management of companies (see Table 16).

Table 16. Southwest Minnesota Industry Projections, 2014-2024				
Industry	Estimated Employment 2014	Projected Employment 2024	*Percent Change 2014-2024*	*Numeric Change 2014-2024*
Total, All Industries	**208,555**	**210,669**	***+1.0%***	***+2,114***
Manufacturing	31,340	30,844	*-1.5%*	*-496*
Public Administration	31,816	30,682	*-3.5%*	*-1,134*
Health Care & Social Assistance	25,914	29,025	*+12.0%*	*+3,111*
Self-Employed & Family Workers	26,449	26,008	*-1.6%*	*-441*
Retail Trade	20,285	19,570	*-3.5%*	*-715*
Accommodation & Food Services	12,038	12,106	*+0.5%*	*+68*
Wholesale Trade	8,104	8,457	*+4.3%*	*+353*
Construction	7,613	8,164	*+7.2%*	*+551*
Other Services	8,056	7,901	*-1.9%*	*-155*
Finance & Insurance	6,131	6,399	*+4.3%*	*+268*
Transportation & Warehousing	5,377	5,583	*+3.8%*	*+206*
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	5,335	5,360	*+0.4%*	*+25*
Admin. Supp. & Waste Mgmt Svcs.	4,200	4,566	*+8.7%*	*+366*
Professional & Technical Services	4,301	4,458	*+3.6%*	*+157*
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2,556	2,784	*+8.9%*	*+228*
Information	2,839	2,673	*-5.8%*	*-166*
Educational Services	1,950	1,920	*-1.5%*	*-30*
Management of Companies	1,822	1,625	*-10.8%*	*-197*
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	1,225	1,376	*+12.3%*	*+151*
Utilities	813	760	*-6.5%*	*-53*
Mining	391	408	*+4.3%*	*+17*

Source: *DEED 2014-2024 Employment Outlook*

EMPLOYERS BY SIZE CLASS

The vast majority of businesses in Southwest Minnesota are small businesses, with 53.6 percent of businesses reporting 1 to 4 employees in 2015, according to County Business Patterns from the U.S. Census Bureau. Another 33.3 percent had between 5 and 19 employees; and 10.9 percent had between 20 and 99 employees. Just 2.0 percent had 100 to 499 employees, and only 18 businesses in the region had more than 500 employees, which is the Small Business Administration's official cut off for a "small business". Obviously then, small businesses are vital to the region's economy (see Table 17).

Table 17. Employers by Size Class, 2015			
	Southwest Minnesota		Minnesota
Number of Employees	Number of Firms	Percent of Firms	Percent of Firms
1-4	6,088	53.6%	53.7%
5-9	2,247	19.8%	17.7%
10-19	1,534	13.5%	13.3%
20-49	942	8.3%	9.3%
50-99	290	2.6%	3.2%
100-249	187	1.6%	1.9%
250-499	48	0.4%	0.5%
500 or more	18	0.2%	0.3%
Total Firms	**11,354**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Source: U.S. Census, County Business Patterns			

NONEMPLOYER ESTABLISHMENTS

Before growing, the basic building block of most small businesses is a self-employed business. Southwest Minnesota was home to 27,233 self-employed businesses or "nonemployers" in 2015, which are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as "businesses without paid employees that are subject to federal income tax, originating from tax return information of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)." Much like covered employment, Southwest Minnesota has seen a small decline in nonemployers over the past decade. In sum, the region suffered a net loss of 62 nonemployers from 2005 to 2015, a -0.2 percent decline. The largest amount of nonemployers and the fastest growth occurred in EDR 9, while EDR 6W and EDR 8 both saw decreases in self-employment. These nonemployers generated sales receipts of $1.2 billion in 2015 (see Table 18).

Table 18. Nonemployer Statistics, 2015				
	2015		*2005-2015*	
	Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)	*Change in Firms*	*Percent Change*
Southwest Minnesota	**27,233**	**$1,202,475**	***-62***	***-0.2%***
Region 6W	3,308	$137,522	*-136*	*-3.9%*
Region 8	8,331	$381,104	*-125*	*-1.5%*
Region 9	15,594	$683,849	*+199*	*+1.3%*
State of Minnesota	**397,378**	**$18,435,244**	***+23,959***	***+6.4%***
Source: U.S. Census, Nonemployer Statistics program				

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

Finally, one of the most important industries in Southwest Minnesota is agriculture, with 19,151 farms producing nearly $8.4 billion in the market value of products sold in 2012, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Southwest Minnesota had 25.7 percent of the state's farms, and 39.4 percent of the state's total market value, led by Blue Earth, Faribault, Lyon, Martin, Nobles, Redwood and Rock County, which were all among the top 20 counties in the state for the market value of products sold. Despite seeing a small decline in the number of farms, the region saw a 53 percent increase in the market value of products sold from 2007 to 2012, as many farms got bigger and commodity prices went up (see Table 19).

Table 19. Census of Agriculture, 2012			*Change in Market Value, 2007-2012*
	Number of Farms	Market Value of Products Sold	
Southwest Minnesota	**19,151**	**$8,386,406,000**	***+53.4%***
Region 6W	3,612	$1,471,581,000	*+77.6%*
Region 8	7,621	$3,419,803,000	*+45.3%*
Region 9	7,918	$3,495,022,000	*+53.0%*
State of Minnesota	**74,542**	**$21,280,184,000**	***+61.5%***
Source: 2012 Census of Agriculture			

Upon request, this information can be made available in alternate formats for people with disabilities by contacting Luke Greiner at 320-308-5378 or at luke.greiner@state.mn.us or Mark Schultz at 507-205-6068 or at mark.schultz@state.mn.us.