

Gaines Families See Slight Decrease in Income

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WASHINGTON -- Nearly 7 out of 10 rural counties saw their median family incomes drop from 2007 to 2010, according to figures from the U.S. Census.

Median income is point where half the families in the county make more than that amount and half make less.

The national median family income in 2010 was \$50,046.

Only 120 rural counties (out of 2,036 total rural counties) had median family incomes higher than the national median.

2007 was picked as the comparison date because that was before the recession, which officially began in December of that year.

A map illustrating the changes in rural family incomes showed counties divided into five categories.

Brick red counties showed the largest annual loss, more than \$3,000 per household.

Pink counties saw losses of between \$300 and \$3,000.

Gray counties saw little change, either a loss or gain of less than \$300.

Light green counties saw income gains of between \$300 and \$3,000.

Dark green counties saw the largest increases in family income, more than \$3,000.

Gaines County was one of 800 pink counties nationwide that saw a slight decrease in family income.

Noticeable blocks of dark green counties -- those that saw the largest income gains -- were in the Permian Basin of West Texas and north in the Great Plains and the Dakotas, areas where there has been heavy oil and gas drilling in recent years.

As our nation prepares to ring in the new year, the U.S. Census Bureau today projected the Jan. 1, 2012, total United States population will be 312,780,968. This would represent an increase of 2,250,129, or 0.7 percent, from New Year's Day 2011, and an increase of 4,035,430, or 1.3 percent, since Census Day (April 1, 2010).

In January 2012, one birth is expected to occur every eight seconds in the United States and one death every 12 seconds.

Meanwhile, net international migration is expected to add one person to the U.S. population every 46 seconds in January 2012. The combination of births, deaths and net international migration results in an increase in the total U.S. population of one person every 17 seconds.

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