Hayes, Hitchcock Counties show one-year growth

By Russ Pankonin
The Imperial Republican

Like it or not, the overall population in southwest Nebraska counties continues to decline, according to 2008 Census Bureau estimates.

The estimates were released last week by the University of Nebraska-Omaha's Center for Public Affairs Research.

Research associate and census specialist David Drozd said the 2008 figures are only estimates.

For the five-county area including Chase, Dundy, Perkins, Hayes and Hitchcock, all but Hayes and Hitchcock lost population from July 1, 2007 to July 1, 2008.

The population in Hitchcock County was up two people for the one-year time frame while Hayes County was up 27 people.

In Chase County, the population declined by 65 people during the '07-'08 time frame with out-migration accounting for 48 people.

The estimated population for Chase County on July 1, 2008 stood at 3,629.

Dundy County's population dropped by 21 in the '07-'08 period with births outnumbering deaths. Out-migration accounted for a loss of 24 people.

The estimated population for Dundy County as of July 1, 2008 stood at 2,002.

Perkins County showed a one-year drop of 47 people with out-migration accounting for 42 people.

The estimated population for Perkins County as of July 1, 2008 stood at 2,884.

With an increase of two people, Hitchcock County's population as of July 1, 2008 stood at 2,836.

Hayes County's increase of 27 people represented a 2.8 percent growth rate, making it one of the largest percentage increases in the state.

Drozd said it was exciting to see growth in some of the smaller counties in the area.

It was an important mark because it put Hayes County over the 1,000 mark, Drozd said.

Their population stood at 1,005 as of the 2008 date.

In Nebraska, population increased by almost 14,000 with an estimated total of 1,783,432 Nebraskans.

2010 Census only a year away

There has been lots of interest in population data recently, especially with the 2010 nationwide census quickly approaching.

Work is already beginning on the 2010 census as workers start to verify more than 145 million addresses to insure an accurate account.

Drozd said the official 2010 census count will begin in March, 2010 when households begin to receive their census form.

All forms will consist of only 10 questions. Drozd urged every household to participate in the census and make sure they are counted.

Local address convassers sought

Lori McAlister, assistant recruiting manager for the U.S. Census, said they are still seeking workers in Chase, Dundy and Hayes Counties.

The canvassers will verify addresses in their area using a handheld computer with global

positioning software.

She said the rate of pay for a canvasser is $11 per hour plus 55 cents per mile travel reimbursement.

The canvassing project will run for five to 10 weeks, she said.

People interested in the positions must complete a 28-question basic skills test.

Applicants must also furnish two forms of identification when applying, such as a driver's license, social security card, birth certificate or passport.

The test locations are scheduled as follows:

Hayes County courthouse, Monday, March 30, 1 p.m. CT.;
Dundy County courthouse, Tuesday, March 31, 1 p.m. MT.; and
Imperial city council chamber, Wednesday, April 1, 10 a.m. MT.