

DEMOGRAPHICS

Community Vision – Work to preserve small-town rural lifestyles.

Population Growth

Most of our region is experiencing steady population growth, particularly Archuleta and La Plata counties. Much of this growth can be attributed to what is being termed "amenity migration". Newcomers are moving in to take advantage of the area's unique natural resources, quality of life, and other amenities that the region offers. Many of these newcomers are retirees or second homeowners that bring along their pensions and other retirement benefits. This "new" money impacts the local economy as it is spent on new homes and goods and services.

Population - Census Counts					Estimate
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2008
Archuleta	2,733	3,664	5,345	9,898	13,155
Dolores	1,641	1,658	1,504	1,844	2,032
La Plata	19,199	27,195	32,284	43,941	51,114
Montezuma	12,952	16,510	18,762	23,830	26,401
San Juan	831	833	745	558	594
Region 9	37,356	49,860	58,640	80,071	93,296

Some people move here for economic reasons, such as the availability of jobs. Others cite quality-of-life issues, such as clean air and water, and outdoor recreation.

Source: Colorado Demography Office April 2008

Most of the growth has occurred in unincorporated areas of the counties, reflecting the conversion of agricultural land to rural subdivisions. Population growth also has created a demand for government agencies to provide services such as treated water and sewer, infrastructure improvements such as new schools, and transportation systems to newly annexed commercial and residential areas.

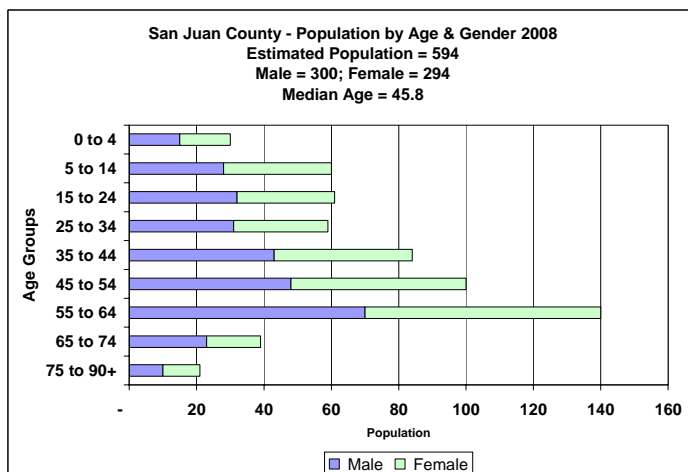
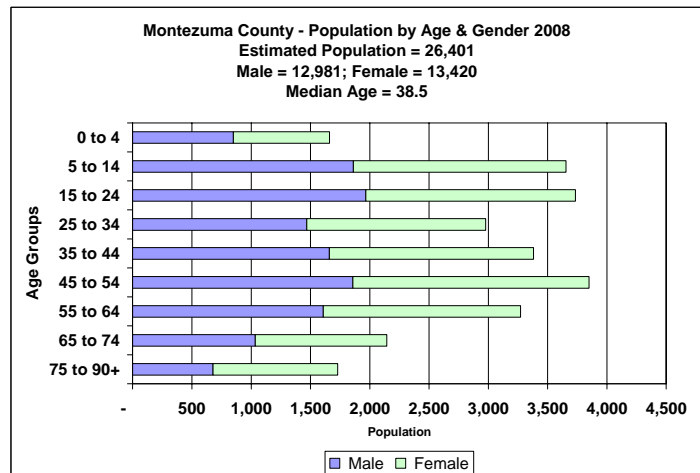
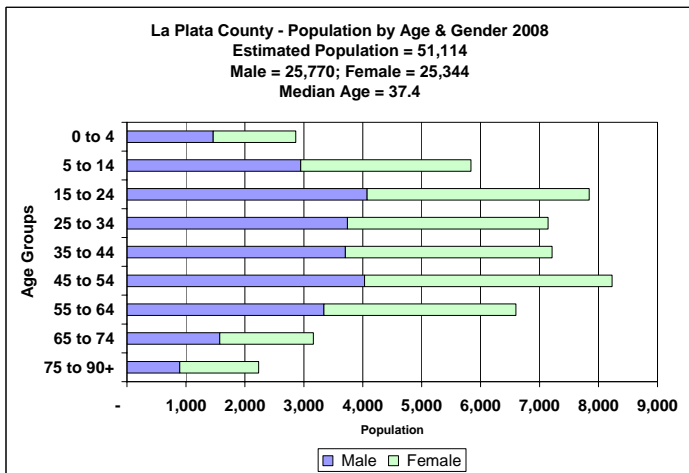
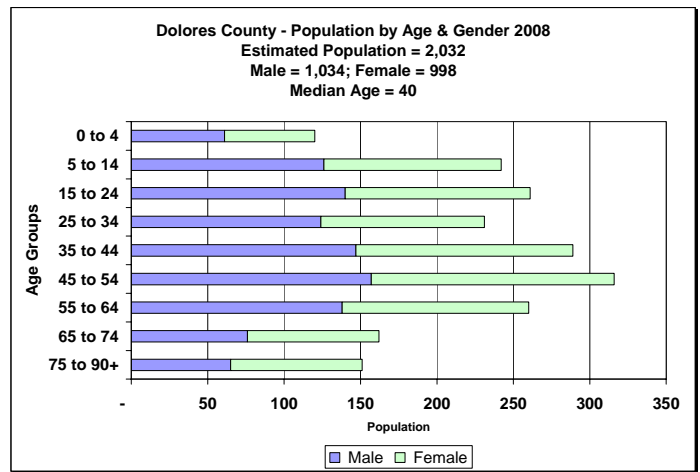
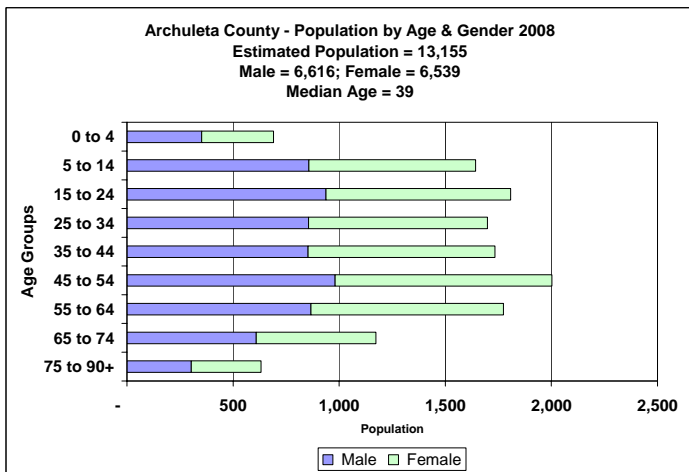
Average Annual % Change				
	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2008
Archuleta	3.4%	4.6%	8.5%	4.1%
Dolores	0.1%	-0.9%	2.3%	1.3%
La Plata	4.2%	1.9%	3.6%	2.0%
Montezuma	2.7%	1.4%	2.7%	1.3%
San Juan	0.0%	-1.1%	-2.5%	0.8%
Region 9	3.3%	1.8%	3.7%	2.1%

Population Forecasts by County 2000 – 2035 and Annual Average Percent Change								
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Archuleta	9,898	11,716	14,131	16,653	19,552	22,878	26,797	30,527
		3.2%	3.8%	3.3%	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%	2.6%
Dolores	1,844	1,846	2,076	2,229	2,390	2,552	2,732	2,889
		0.0%	2.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%	1.1%
La Plata	43,941	48,019	53,282	60,246	68,561	75,079	81,080	86,548
		1.5%	2.1%	2.5%	2.6%	1.8%	1.5%	1.3%
Montezuma	23,830	24,862	27,523	30,554	33,673	36,726	39,538	41,971
		0.8%	2.1%	2.1%	2.0%	1.8%	1.5%	1.2%
San Juan	558	576	608	640	662	664	668	691
		0.6%	1.1%	1.0%	0.7%	0.1%	0.1%	0.7%
Region 9	80,071	87,019	97,620	110,322	124,838	137,899	150,815	162,626

The Colorado Demography Office predicts the regional population will continue to grow, but the growth rate eventually will slow down. As a community we must find ways to plan for and manage growth. The challenge is to align economic growth and development in ways that will enhance the quality of our lives and protect our natural environment.

Source: Colorado Demography Office April 2008

Age and gender estimates for 2008 present normal distributions for counties in our region, although the median ages are slightly higher than Colorado's as a whole (36.5 is the median age in Colorado).



The Colorado Demography Office (<http://dola.colorado.gov/dlg/demog/>) and the Colorado Division of Housing (<http://www.dola.state.co.us/cdh/>) provide population and housing estimates for each town and for unincorporated areas. Group quarters can include school dormitories, group homes, prisons, etc.

Estimates of Population and Households for Colorado Counties and Municipalities 2006								
Area	Total Population	Group Qtr. Population	Household Population	Persons Per Household	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Vacancy Rate
Archuleta	12,208	84	12,124	2.47	7,956	4,916	3,040	38.21
Pagosa Springs	1,696	19	1,677	2.48	823	676	147	17.86
Unincorporated	10,512	65	10,447	2.46	7,133	4,240	2,893	40.56
Dolores	1,946	0	1,946	2.34	1,236	831	405	32.77
Dove Creek	719	0	719	2.46	326	292	34	10.43
Rico	256	0	256	1.97	240	130	110	45.83
Unincorporated	971	0	971	2.37	670	409	261	38.96
La Plata	48,752	1,438	47,314	2.43	25,449	19,440	6,009	23.61
Bayfield	1,833	0	1,833	2.71	760	676	84	11.05
Durango	16,068	1,329	14,739	2.26	7,438	6,529	909	12.22
Ignacio	737	0	737	2.55	405	289	116	28.64
Unincorporated	30,114	109	30,005	2.51	16,846	11,946	4,900	29.09
Montezuma	25,343	438	24,905	2.54	10,776	9,811	965	8.96
Cortez	8,757	255	8,502	2.41	3,718	3,533	185	4.98
Dolores	932	12	920	2.27	444	405	39	8.78
Mancos	1,267	15	1,252	2.31	573	541	32	5.58
Unincorporated	14,387	156	14,231	2.67	6,041	5,332	709	11.74
San Juan	589	5	584	2.06	721	284	437	60.61
Silverton	560	5	555	2.07	483	268	215	44.51
Unincorporated	29	0	29	1.81	238	16	222	93.28

Source: Colorado Demography Office April 2008

A recent study by Region 9 (*The Social and Economic Effects of 2nd Homes – July 2006*) available at www.scan.org indicates that many of the “vacant” units actually belong to non-local homeowners – those whose mailing addresses are outside the county where they own property. These part-time residents are not included in population counts. The impacts of second homeowners are still being evaluated, and the results of a pilot study of La Plata County are expected to be completed in July 2008.

