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# Region 9 Report

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October 1998

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## INTRODUCTION

**The Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado, Inc.** provides economic and community development services to a five county area, including Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma and San Juan Counties. Region 9 encompasses 6,594 square miles and is located in a transitional zone between the southwestern edge of the Rocky Mountains and the eastern edge of the Colorado Plateau.

This *Report* summarizes demographic and economic information for the region as a whole, as well as for each of the individual counties. General information on tribal populations within the planning and management area is also presented. The purpose of this *Report* is to present some of the significant aspects of the Region 9 economy and to identify trends that may add insights into the regional economy. The *Report* is not intended to be a comprehensive regional economic study, but serves as an overview. More detailed profiles for each county and municipality are available through Region 9. These profiles include sections on local government, taxation, and community development issues, as well as demographic and economic information.

The counties that comprise Region 9 are relatively diverse, in both demographic and economic respects. The La Plata County economy is based primarily on year-round tourism and recreational opportunities. Agriculture related services and forestry remain significant sources of income for certain parts of the region, including Montezuma, Dolores, and Archuleta counties. Mountainous San Juan County boasts the highest mean elevation of any county in the United States, and has a rich history tied to the booms and busts of the mining industry. Currently, however, the historic major industries of mining, agriculture and forestry now provide less than 10% of earnings

in the regional economy. Economic diversification is a high priority for Region 9.

The region has experienced significant population growth, 34% between 1970 and 1980, and 17% from 1980 to 1990. The number of people moving from urban areas to rural SW Colorado has also created a significant shortage of affordable housing in the region, particularly in La Plata and Archuleta counties. In contrast, Dolores and San Juan counties experienced a decrease in population from 1980 to 1990 due to the decline of the mining industry. At present there are almost 74,000 people residing in the region.

This *Report* is organized by county. When appropriate, information regarding individual municipalities within the counties is also presented. Four broad categories of data are incorporated into each county section: Population; Employment and Income; Real Estate and Retail Sales.

## Notes on Sources

The Demography Section - Colorado Division of Local Government (CDLG) is the source of demographic information. The demographic data presented in this *Report* is either actual census data or estimates of population prepared by the State Demographer (September 1998).

The Demography Section also provided employment and income projections using 1996 data from the Colorado Department of Labor (ES202) and information from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). Unfortunately, 1997 projections were not available for the preparation of this report. The Section prepared a sketch economic base analysis which distinguishes those economic activities or incomes which are "direct basic", "indirect basic", or "local resident services". This analysis was then compared with data from people in the local communities to shape the final projections. Figures provided for Total Per Capital Income (TCPI) and Total Personal Income (TPI) are also drawn from these projections.

The Colorado Department of Revenue (CDR) provided information regarding retail sales (adjusted 3/21/97). Recent measures to protect confidential information have resulted in the suppression of some data by the CDR.

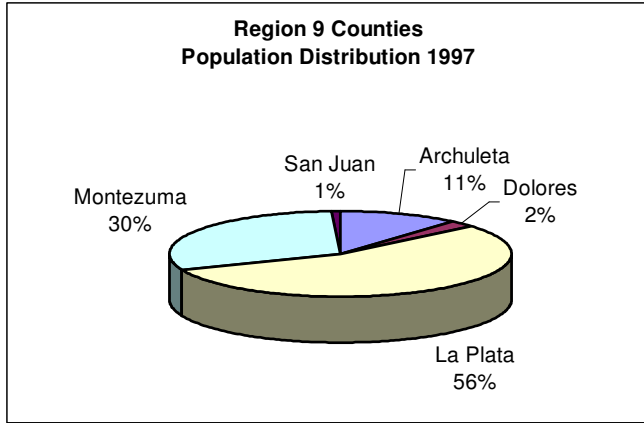
The Colorado Department of Education provided school enrollment information. Various county assessors and local real estate brokers provided the real estate values included in this *Report*. Other sources are noted in text.

## REGION 9 OVERVIEW

### Population

Of the 73,675 people living in Region 9 in 1997 more than half resided in La Plata County, followed by Montezuma, Archuleta, Dolores, and San Juan Counties, shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1.



The largest municipality in Region 9 is the City of Durango in La Plata County (14,151); followed by the City of Cortez in Montezuma County (8,209); and the Town of Pagosa Springs in Archuleta County (1,767). The smallest population center is the Town of Rico (163) in Dolores County. Figure 2 presents population estimates for 1993 - 1997 for each of the counties in Region 9.

Figure 2. Region 9 - Population Estimates 1993-1997

	Population Estimates				
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Archuleta	6,149	6,504	7,057	7,861	8,450
Dolores	1,437	1,514	1,584	1,657	1,706
La Plata	35,676	36,998	38,888	39,865	40,504
Montezuma	20,430	21,112	21,791	22,206	22,466
San Juan	526	548	551	549	549
<b>Region 9</b>	<b>64,218</b>	<b>66,676</b>	<b>69,871</b>	<b>72,138</b>	<b>73,675</b>

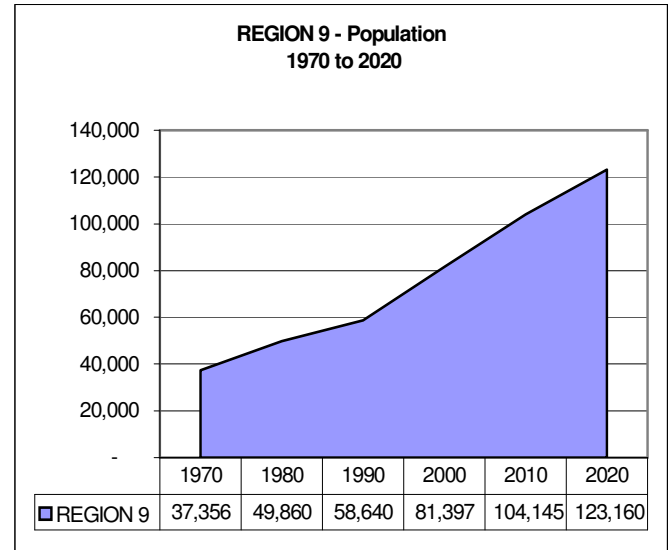
Figure 3 charts the annual average percent population change for each county to give a historical perspective of growth and decline in the region from 1970 to 1997.

Figure 3. Rates of Population Change 1970-1997

	Average Annual % Change		
	1970-80	1980-90	1990-97
Archuleta	3.4%	4.6%	8.3%
Dolores	0.1%	-0.9%	1.9%
La Plata	4.2%	1.9%	3.6%
Montezuma	2.7%	1.4%	2.8%
San Juan	0.0%	-1.1%	-3.8%
<b>Region 9</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>

Between 1993 and 1997 Region 9 grew at an annual rate of 4%. A slower rate of growth (1.8% statewide) after the year 2000 has been projected by the Demography Section based on the assumption that the overall rate of growth of the U.S. population will slow down. The current average annual growth rates of the U.S. population are just above one per cent (1.1%) and are expected to slow by 0.1% each decade. Regional growth from 1970 to 2020 is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4.



### Employment and Income

The number of jobs based in the region is an economic indicator that is viewed by many analysts as a reliable indicator of the local economy. In keeping with population growth, the Region 9 labor force grew by about 5,213 workers from 1993 to 1997. Although the region has seen an increase in the size of the labor force the average annual unemployment rate (5.7%) from 1994 to 1997 has exceeded the statewide annual average (4.7%). The labor force averages reported in Figure 5 are an estimate of the overall number of Region 9 residents that are engaged in work activities.

Figure 5. Region 9 Labor Force 1994 - 1997

REGION 9	1994	1995	1996	1997
Unemployed	1,924	2,151	2,239	2,106
Employed	34,925	36,310	37,054	37,711
Total Labor Force	36,849	38,461	39,548	39,817
Unemploy. Rate	5.2%	5.6%	5.7%	5.3%
State Unemploy. Rate	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	3.3%

Figure 6 presents the proportionate numbers of employment and income by sector in Region 9. These data are drawn from 1996 projections made by the Demography Section (CDLG) that include proprietors and self-employment as well as wage earners.

Please note that income figures are presented in thousands of dollars.

Figure 6. Region 9  
1996 Employment and Income by Sector

Region 9	# of Jobs	% of Jobs	Income (ooo)	% of Inc.
Ag. Products&Services	2,710	6%	\$ 8,950	1%
Mining	526	1%	\$ 24,328	3%
Construction	4,996	12%	\$ 133,381	15%
Manufacturing	1,672	4%	\$ 32,616	4%
Trans. Comm & P.U.	1,283	3%	\$ 52,957	6%
Wholesale&Retail Trade	9,749	23%	\$ 172,220	19%
F,I & RE	1,835	4%	\$ 41,276	5%
Services	14,177	33%	\$ 279,104	30%
Other	225	1%	\$ 3,567	0.4%
Government	6,123	14%	\$ 168,617	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>43,296</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 917,016</b>	<b>100%</b>

In 1996 the largest employment sector was the service industry (33%), which also provided the most income (30%). This figure reflects the dependency of the Region on tourism as a primary economic force. Unfortunately, wages in the service industry are generally low. Employment (23%) and income (19%) in the wholesale/retail trade sector are also important in the regional economy. The "other" category reflects a grouping of data and is actually a combination of sectors for which data was suppressed in individual counties.

The sum of income accruing to all residents of Region 9 is referred to as total personal income (TPI). Total personal income is comprised of four general components: net earnings from work; dividends, interest and rent; transfer payments; and residency adjustments. Total personal income for the region in 1996 was more than 1.4 billion dollars- as shown in Figure 7. Of the total: 61% was generated by net work earnings; 15% from dividends, interest and rent; 16% from transfer payments; and 3% from residency adjustments.

Figure 7. Region 9  
Total Personal Income by County - 1996

County	Employment Income	Transfer Payments	Div., Int. & Rent	Residency Adjustment	Total
Archuleta	\$ 67,569	\$ 23,653	\$ 32,029	\$ 2,973	\$ 126,224
Dolores	\$ 12,450	\$ 7,495	\$ 4,833	\$ 3,444	\$ 28,222
La Plata	\$ 585,108	\$ 112,544	\$ 204,041	\$ 14,242	\$ 915,935
Montezuma	\$ 245,297	\$ 77,022	\$ 68,107	\$ 20,487	\$ 410,913
San Juan	\$ 6,591	\$ 1,770	\$ 1,573	\$ 209	\$ 10,143
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 917,015</b>	<b>\$ 222,484</b>	<b>\$ 310,583</b>	<b>\$ 41,355</b>	<b>\$ 1,491,437</b>
<b>% of Total</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI) figures and ranks are presented in the following discussions of individual counties.

## Retail Sales

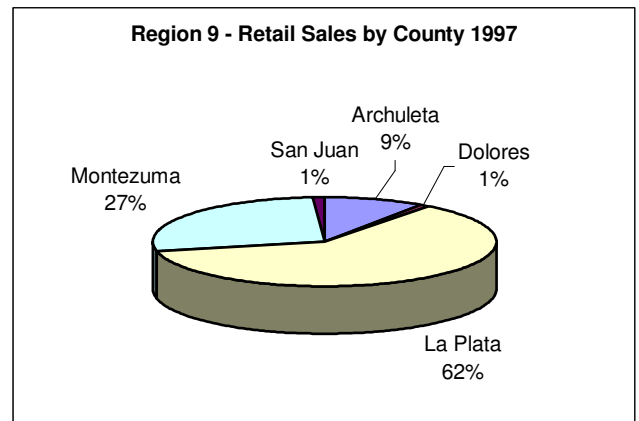
Retail sales in Region 9 totaled more than 1.2 billion dollars in 1997. The strongest sectors were food sales (14%) and auto and service stations (13%); followed by miscellaneous retail stores (10%); and building materials and farm equipment (8%) sales. Figure 8 compares the amount (in thousands of \$) and proportions of selected retail sectors.

Figure 8. Region 9  
Retail Sales by Industry 1997

Industry	(\$ooo)	% Total
Agri., Forestry & Fisheries	\$ 10,773	1%
Mining	\$ 9,398	1%
Contract Construction	\$ 63,421	5%
Manufacturing	\$ 32,971	3%
Transport. & Public Util.	\$ 87,078	7%
Wholesale Trade Ret. Sales	\$ 52,051	4%
Retail Bldg. Mat. & Farm Equip.	\$ 106,671	8%
Retail General	\$ 65,082	5.2%
Retail Food Stores	\$ 172,802	14%
Retail Auto. & Serv. Stations	\$ 164,565	13%
Retail Apparel & Acc. Stores	\$ 19,393	2%
Retail Home Furnishing Stores	\$ 36,046	3%
Retail Eat. & Drink. Places	\$ 86,963	7%
Retail Misc. Stores	\$ 121,510	10%
Finance, Insur. & Real Estate	\$ 8,581	1%
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	\$ 67,259	5%
Services Other Than Lodging	\$ 125,613	10%
Other Industries	\$ 27,200	2.16%
<b>Total Retail Sales</b>	<b>\$ 1,257,377</b>	<b>100%</b>

La Plata County had the strongest retail sales in Region 9 in 1997, followed by Montezuma, Archuleta, San Juan and Dolores Counties. Percentages of the total for each county are shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9.



## ARCHULETA COUNTY

Archuleta County is comprised of 872,960 acres (1,364 sq. miles). Of these, 34% are private lands, 14.4% are Southern Ute Tribal lands, and 51.6% are state and federal lands.

### Population

Since 1990 Archuleta County has shown the highest annual percent of population increase in Southwest Colorado at 8.3%. The majority of the county's population is concentrated within the Town of Pagosa Springs and surrounding subdivisions, presenting the challenge of providing adequate facilities and infrastructure to keep pace with the rapid population growth.

Figure 10 provides population estimates for unincorporated areas of Archuleta County and Pagosa Springs for the years 1993 to 1997. These population figures, however, do not reflect the large number of seasonal residents.

Figure 10. Archuleta County  
Population Estimates 1993 to 1997

	Estimates				
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Archuleta	6,149	6,504	7,057	7,861	8,450
Pagosa Springs	1,352	1,403	1,471	1,658	1,767
Unincorporated	4,797	5,101	5,586	6,203	6,683

Figure 11 provides population projections and average annual growth rates from 1990 to 2020.

Figure 11. Archuleta County  
Population Projections 1990 to 2020

Archuleta	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	5,345	10,107	15,080	19,949
Avg. Ann. % Change		8.9%	4.9%	3.2%

Archuleta County is served by School District 50 JT. In 1997 school enrollment in the District was 1,510. Current and projected population growth has created an immediate need for new schools in the Pagosa Springs area. A recent bond issue provided \$12.1 million for the construction of new high school facilities.

### Economic Trends

Archuleta County developed as a result of a unique combination of natural resources and natural attributes, i.e. the Hot Springs located in Pagosa Springs. Initially these resources were "Traditional West" commodities such as timber, cattle and minerals.

The establishment of two large lumber mills, and many smaller ones, helped to bring the railroad to Pagosa Springs in 1900, facilitating travel and movement of trade and commerce. The lumber boom lasted almost into the 1920's, by which time most of the accessible timber had been logged.

In 1970 manufacturing (primarily wood products) provided 30% of the county's total work income and generated \$7.4 million in earnings. Over the next 20 years, manufacturing wages declined to \$1.5 million in 1992. The decline of the timber industry in the late 1970's played a large role in this decrease. Since that time Pagosa Springs has been in transition from a traditional rural community to a more urban environment in which tourism is the number one industry.

According to the CDLG-Demography Section projections, in 1986 the per capita personal income (PCPI) of Archuleta County was \*\$15,134 and ranked 51st in the state. In 1996 Archuleta County had a PCPI of \$14,741. This PCPI ranked 58th in the state, was 57% of the state average (\$25,740), and 61% of the national average (\$24,169.) The average annual growth rate of PCPI over a ten-year period (1986-1996) was -2.42%. In comparison, the average annual growth rate for the state was 1.6%, and for the nation 1.2%.

\*Adjusted to reflect 1996 dollars for comparative purposes.

In 1996 Archuleta County had a (projected) total personal income (TPI) of \$126.2 million dollars, ranking 42<sup>nd</sup> in the state. Total personal income includes the earnings (wages and salaries, other labor income, and proprietors income); dividends, interest and rent; and transfer payments received by the residents of the county.

### Employment and Income

The composition of the economy supports a low unemployment rate although seasonal fluctuations are generally seen in the winter months. In 1997 Archuleta County had an average unemployment rate of 5.2%, slightly down from 1996 (5.5%). In comparison, the statewide unemployment rate was 3.3%. Figure 12 tracks labor force and employment figures from 1994-1997.

Figure 12. Archuleta County  
Employment Rates 1994 - 1997

ARCHULETA	1994	1995	1996	1997
Unemployed	160	171	198	199
Employed	3,072	3,190	3,377	3,645
Total Labor Force	3,232	3,361	3,575	3,844
Unemploy. Rate	5.0%	5.1%	5.5%	5.2%
State Unemploy. Rate	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	3.3%

Wage and employment information can be used to measure the strength of the various economic sectors. It is also useful to look at employment by sector in relation to income by sector. Figure 13 provides a comparison of employment and wages by sector using an analysis provided by the Demography Section (CDLG), based on 1996 projections of BEA and ES202 data. These include proprietor earnings.

Figure 13. Archuleta County  
1996 Employment and Wages by Sector

Archuleta County	# of Jobs	% of Jobs	Income (ooo)	% of Inc.	avg. annual wage *
Ag. Products&Services	267	7%	\$ 714	1%	\$ 17,919
Mining	32	1%	\$ 677	1%	\$ 17,693
Construction	660	17%	\$ 11,664	17%	\$ 17,824
Manufacturing	56	1%	\$ 1,347	2%	\$ 20,107
Trans. Comm & P.U.	94	2%	\$ 4,373	6%	\$ 31,935
Wholesale&Retail Trade	1,041	26%	\$ 14,304	21%	\$ 20,642
F, I, & RE	242	6%	\$ 4,819	7%	\$ 20,875
Services	1,081	27%	\$ 17,452	26%	\$ 15,796
Government	474	12%	\$ 12,219	18%	\$ 22,172
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,947</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 67,569</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 17,370</b>

The ratio of earnings to employment indicate which sectors are high earning sectors, on average, compared to those sectors which generate lower earnings. The service sector employs the most wage earners (27%) in the county, and represents 26% of the earnings- although it is a relatively low paying sector at an average annual wage of \$15,796. Wholesale/retail trade jobs account for 26% of total employment and contribute 21% of total income, with an average wage of \$20,875. The highest paying sector is transportation, communication and public utilities, with an average annual wage of \$31,935, though it provides only 6% of income and 1% of employment in Archuleta County.

### Real Estate Sales

Real estate transactions in Archuleta County numbered 4,461 (including lot sub-divisions, trusts and quit claims) and totaled more than \$110 million in sales in 1997. There was an average of 372 transactions per month, with the highest number of sales reported in January, March and July of 97'. The majority of these transactions (4,313) were in subdivisions, with only 148 rural transactions. Commercial transactions comprised only 2.5% of the total number of sales and accounted for 4.6% of the total dollar volume.

The predominant value for a single- family residence is in the range of \$110-140,000 although this figure can greatly vary by location. Archuleta County is also an attractive market for second homeowners. Unfortunately this has led to a rapid increase in real estate prices and local wages have not kept up with housing costs.

### Retail Sales

Historically, much of the retail sales in Archuleta County went to Durango and Farmington, New Mexico, which offer many more shopping choices. Recently, retail growth has shown a healthy increase as more local retail establishments have opened or expanded to serve the growing local population. Figure 14 charts the growth of retail sales from 1993 through 1997.

Figure 14. Archuleta County  
Retail Sales 1993 - 1997

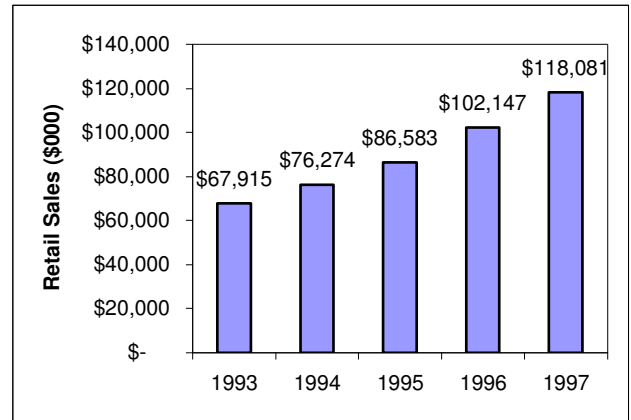


Figure 15 compares the amount (in thousands of \$) and proportions of the various sectors of retail sales in 1997. Food store sales (19%) and building material and farm equipment sales (18%) had the strongest sales, followed by eating and drinking places (8%). Other Industries include those protected by non-disclosure laws i.e. mining.

Figure 15. Archuleta County  
Comparison of Retail Sales Sectors - 1997

Industry	(\$ooo)	% Total
Agri., Forestry & Fisheries	\$ 621	1%
Contract Construction	\$ 5,288	4%
Manufacturing	\$ 2,391	2%
Transport. & Public Util.	\$ 7,258	6%
Wholesale Trade Ret. Sales	\$ 5,344	5%
Retail Bldg. Mat. & Farm Equip.	\$ 20,845	18%
Retail Food Stores	\$ 22,820	19%
Retail Auto. & Serv. Stations	\$ 8,671	7%
Retail Apparel & Acc. Stores	\$ 1,218	1%
Retail Home Furnishing Stores	\$ 3,337	3%
Retail Eat. & Drink. Places	\$ 9,562	8%
Finance, Insur. & Real Estate	\$ 823	1%
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	\$ 6,431	5%
Services Other Than Lodging	\$ 9,298	8%
Other Industries	\$ 14,174	12%
<b>Total Retail Sales</b>	<b>\$ 118,081</b>	<b>100%</b>

## DOLORES COUNTY

Dolores County is comprised of 673,897 acres (1,052 sq. miles). Of these, 58% are state and federal lands and 42% are in private ownership.

### Population

Dolores County has a relatively small population (1,706 in 1997), dispersed within two topographically distinct areas. Dove Creek, the county seat, is primarily within an agricultural area located on the west side of the county. The Town of Rico is located in the eastern portion of the county.

Mining began in Rico in Eastern Dolores County in 1869. The Town of Rico (elevation 8,827 feet) experienced the booms and busts of hard rock mining until the last mines closed in the 1970s. Anecdotal evidence is that Rico, with a 1997 population of about 163 people, is beginning to grow again based largely on people who commute to Telluride, which is undergoing rapid expansion as a Ski Town. To accommodate growth, Rico needs to develop a sewer system and upgrade its water treatment capacity.

The county as a whole has seen modest growth in the 1990's, with 1.9% average annual change from 1990 to 1997. From 1993 to 1997 Dove Creek has seen growth averaging 4% annually. From 1993 to 1997 Rico has averaged 11% annual growth, although the population remains small. Figure 16 provides population estimates for Dolores County for the years 1993 to 1997.

Figure 16. Dolores County  
Population Estimates 1993 - 1997

	Estimates				
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
<b>Dolores</b>	1,439	1,516	1,587	1,657	1,706
Dove Creek	610	636	664	696	713
Rico	114	126	136	154	163
Unincorporated	715	754	787	807	830

A slower growth trend is projected into the next century. Figure 17 provides projections of average annual (%) population change for the years 1990 to 2020.

Figure 17. Dolores County  
Population Projections 1990 - 2020

<b>Dolores</b>	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	1,504	1,827	2,177	2,539
Avg. Ann. % Change		2.1%	1.9%	1.7%

Two separate School Districts serve portions of Dolores County. District RE 2J is located in the Town of Dove Creek on the western side of the county and had an enrollment of 361 students in Fall 1997. Students from the eastern portion of the county are served by District RE - 4A located in the Town of Dolores in Montezuma County.

### Economic Trends

The Dolores County economy is dominated by agriculture. The agricultural sector in Dolores County was built upon the production of dry land crops. Dove Creek is known as the "Pinto Bean Capitol of the World" for its long-standing production of high quality pinto beans noted for their nutritional content and extended shelf life. New opportunities are being developed in the Dolores County agricultural sector including the introduction of irrigated farming with water from McPhee Reservoir and the development of new crops and value added businesses.

Historically, the mountainous (eastern) parts of Dolores County supplied a number of small saw mills and was the site of gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc and molybdenum mining in the Rico area. Uranium mining in Western San Miguel County to the North provided important supplemental income to the Dolores County economy until the mines closed in the mid-1980s. It is said that many farm mortgage payments were made with the help of a winter job in the uranium mines. Access to scenic public lands in the county provide recreational opportunities, however, the tourist base is served primarily by businesses outside of the county.

According to the CDLG-Demography Section, in 1986 the per capita personal income (PCPI) of Dolores County was \*\$16,567 and ranked 43rd in the state. In 1996 Dolores County had a PCPI of \$15,981. This PCPI ranked 52nd in the state, was 62% of the state average (\$25,740), and 66% of the national average (\$24,169.) The average annual growth rate of PCPI over a ten year period (1986-1996) was -0.3%. In comparison, the average annual growth rate for the state was 1.6%, and for the nation 1.2%.

\*Adjusted to reflect 1996 dollars for comparative purposes.

In 1996 Dolores County had a (projected) total personal income (TPI) of \$28.2 million dollars, ranking 60th in the state. Total personal income includes the earnings (wages and salaries, other labor income, and proprietors income); dividends, interest and rent; and transfer payments received by the residents of the county.

## Employment and Income

The composition of the economy defines a relatively high unemployment rate with seasonal fluctuations. In 1997 Dolores County had an average unemployment rate of 13.5%, slightly up from 1996 (12.1%). In comparison the state-wide average was 3.3%. Figure 18 tracks labor force and employment figures from 1994 to 1997.

Figure 18. Dolores County Employment Rates 1994 - 1997

DOLORES	1994	1995	1996	1997
Unemployed	58	59	76	83
Employed	620	569	553	533
Total Labor Force	678	628	629	616
Unemploy. Rate	8.6%	9.4%	12.1%	13.5%
State Unemploy. Rate	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	3.3%

Figure 19 provides a comparison of employment and wages by sector using an analysis provided by the Demography Section (CDLG), based on 1996 projections of BEA and ES202 data. These include proprietor earnings.

Figure 19. Dolores County 1996 Employment and Wages by Sector

Dolores County	# of Jobs	% of Jobs	Income (ooo)	% of Inc.	avg. annual wage *
Other*	189	30%	\$ 2,077	17%	n/a
Mining	24	4%	\$ 1,115	9%	\$ 30,165
Trans. Comm & P.U.	24	4%	\$ 2,944	24%	\$ 25,595
Wholesale&Retail Trade	154	24%	\$ 2,025	16%	\$ 17,886
F,I & RE	12	2%	\$ 233	2%	\$ 17,590
Services	55	9%	\$ 599	5%	\$ 15,201
Government	174	28%	\$ 3,457	28%	\$ 15,963
<b>Total</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 12,450</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 17,042</b>

\* Other sectors include agricultural products and services, construction and manufacturing. They are grouped due to non-disclosure of individual sectors.

The government sector comprises the largest percentage (28%) of wage jobs in Dolores County. Of these 174 jobs, 88.5% are in state and local government; 8.7% are federal civilian jobs; and 2.8% are federal military jobs. Wholesale and retail trade is also an important sector, providing 24% of the total employment in the county. Unlike other counties in Region 9, in which tourism and the provision of services is very important, the service sector plays a relatively small (9%) but still significant role in total wage employment of the county.

## Real Estate Sales

Real Estate transactions in Dolores County numbered 136 and totaled more than \$13 million in 1997. There was an average of 11 transactions per month, with the highest number of sales reported in August and September of 97'. The majority of these sales were in vacant lands (49%), accounting for 27% of

the total dollar volume. Agricultural lands with improvements (33% of sales) accounted for 60% of the total dollar volume. Residential transactions (13%) accounted for 7% of the total dollar volume. Commercial transactions comprised only 5% of the total number of sales and accounted for 6% of the total dollar volume. The average sale price for residential property in Dove Creek was \$25,000; and in Rico \$67,000. Rural country homes averaged \$28,000 in 1997.

## Retail Sales

Retail sales in Dolores County have seen a great deal of fluctuation from 1993 to 1997. Though neighboring Montezuma County captures many local sales due to a larger selection of goods and services, retail sales totaled more than 12 million dollars in 1997.

Figure 20. Dolores County Retail Sales 1993 - 1997

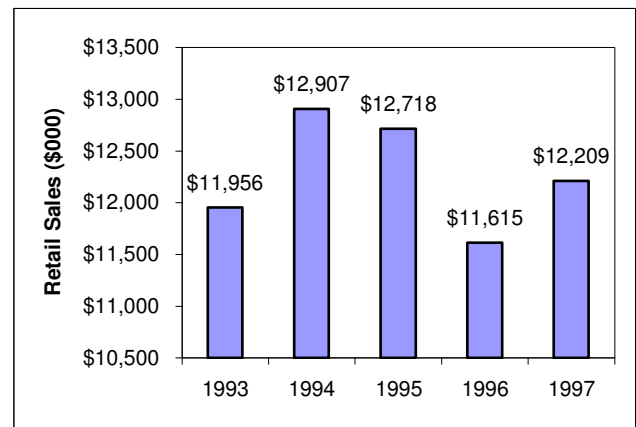


Figure 21 compares the amount (in thousands of \$) and proportions of the various sectors of retail sales in 1997. Auto and service stations (28%) and building material and farm equipment (12%) had the strongest sales, followed by retail food stores sales 6%.

Figure 21. Dolores County Comparison of Retail Sales Sectors 1997

Industry	(\$ooo)	% Total
Mining	\$ 200	2%
Contract Construction	\$ 1	0%
Manufacturing	\$ 196	2%
Transport. & Public Util.	\$ 953	8%
Retail Bldg. Mat. & Farm Equip.	\$ 1,410	12%
Retail Food Stores	\$ 672	6%
Retail Auto. & Serv. Stations	\$ 3,429	28%
Retail Eat. & Drink. Places	\$ 653	5%
Retail Misc. Stores	\$ 452	4%
Services Other Than Lodging	\$ 515	4%
Other Industries	\$ 3,728	31%
<b>Total Retail Sales</b>	<b>\$ 12,209</b>	<b>69%</b>

## LA PLATA COUNTY

La Plata County is comprised of 1,081,616 acres (1690 sq. miles). Of these, 41.1% are private lands, 17.8% are tribal lands, and 41.1% are state and federal lands.

### Population

La Plata County has the largest population in Region 9. There is a considerable awareness of the growth occurring in La Plata County due to an expanded tourism economy, oil and gas development, retiree immigration, and many recreational opportunities. Figure 22 presents population figures broken out into municipalities and unincorporated areas of the county in order to illustrate growth patterns for different entities from 1993 to 1997. Unincorporated areas include tribal populations, i.e. Southern Ute.

Figure 22. La Plata County  
Population Estimates 1993- 1997

	Estimates				
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
<b>La Plata</b>	35,725	36,985	38,940	39,865	40,504
Durango	13,350	13,582	13,713	14,095	14,151
Bayfield	1,239	1,356	1,452	1,562	1,590
Ignacio	742	749	747	773	788
Unincorporated	20,394	21,298	23,028	23,435	23,975

Between 1993 and 1997 the La Plata County averaged 3% annual growth, with most of the growth occurring in Bayfield and unincorporated areas of the county. The Town of Bayfield, saw 7% average annual growth. A primary goal for Bayfield is to provide for orderly growth in a way that does not adversely affect the community's small town character, while providing the infrastructure for expansion. A new high school opened in 1997.

The City of Durango grew by 2% annually and is also currently dealing with infrastructure issues. These include: how to provide services to accommodate visitor and residential growth within the city limits; how to respond to the need for water and sewer services in potential service areas outside of the city; and how to improve traffic circulation and congestion.

In the Town of Ignacio growth has also been moderate (2% annually), but with the advent of Casino Gambling on the Southern Ute Reservation and other expanding tribal enterprises, growth is probably inevitable. Since Ignacio is surrounded by Southern Ute Reservation land there is limited room for expansion so the use of remaining land must be carefully considered.

La Plata County is served by 3 school districts; Durango 9-R (Fall 97' enrollment 4,785), Bayfield 10 JT-R (1,067) and Ignacio 11 JT (1,078).

A slower growth trend is projected into the next century based on the assumption that the relocation boom currently being experienced will subside, and growth will more closely mirror that anticipated for Colorado as a whole.

Figure 23. La Plata County  
Population Projections 1990 - 2020

La Plata	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	32,284	44,556	56,087	63,987
Avg. Ann. % Change		3.8%	2.6%	1.4%

### Economic Trends

Historically, La Plata County developed as a result of "Traditional West" commodities such as minerals, cattle and timber. Over time, the discovery and development of energy resources; the establishment of Fort Lewis College as a four year College; the development of Purgatory Ski Area ; the transformation of the narrow gauge rail line from Durango to Silverton into a visitor attraction; and the emergence of tourism and resort development as a major industry have transformed La Plata County into a "New West" economy. Direct base income from tourism was estimated at \$122.5 million in 1996.

According to the CDLG-Demography Section, in 1986 the per capita personal income (PCPI) of La Plata County was \$18,202 and ranked 34th in the state. In 1996 La Plata County had a PCPI of \$22,012. This PCPI ranked 20th in the state, was 85% of the state average (\$25,740), and 91% of the national average (\$24,169.) The average annual growth rate of PCPI over a ten year period (1986-1996) was 2.1%. In comparison, the average annual growth rate for the state was 1.6%, and for the nation 1.2%.

\*Adjusted to reflect 1996 dollars for comparative purposes.

In 1996 La Plata County had a (projected) total personal income (TPI) of \$915.9 million dollars, ranking 13th in the state. Total personal income includes the earnings (wages and salaries, other labor income, and proprietors income); dividends, interest and rent; and transfer payments received by the residents of the county.

### Employment and Income

The composition of the economy supports a low unemployment rate although seasonal fluctuations are generally seen in the winter months. Figure 24 tracks labor force and employment figures from 1994-1997. In 1997 La Plata County had an average unemployment rate of 4.4%, slightly down from 1996.



Figure 24. La Plata County  
Employment Rates 1994 - 1997

LA PLATA	1994	1995	1996	1997
Unemployed	929	1,081	1,139	1,056
Employed	20,885	22,028	22,372	22,922
Total Labor Force	21,814	23,109	23,511	23,978
Unemploy. Rate	4.3%	4.7%	4.8%	4.4%
State Unemploy. Rate	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	3.3%

Wage and employment information can be used to measure the strength of the various economic sectors. Figure 25 provides a comparison of employment and wages by sector using an analysis provided by the Demography Section (CDLG), based on 1996 projections of BEA and ES202 data. These include proprietor earnings.

Figure 25. La Plata County  
1996 Employment and Wages by Sector

La Plata County	# of Jobs	% of Jobs	Income (ooo)	% of Inc.	avg. annual wage *
Ag. Products&Services	1,160	4%	\$ 6,401	1%	\$ 16,243
Mining	352	1%	\$ 13,936	2%	\$ 38,852
Construction	2,785	11%	\$ 75,849	13%	\$ 25,021
Manufacturing	1,070	4%	\$ 19,958	3%	\$ 20,300
Trans. Comm & P.U.	751	3%	\$ 30,899	5%	\$ 30,284
Wholesale&Retail Trade	6,037	23%	\$ 110,656	19%	\$ 20,465
F,I & RE	1,185	5%	\$ 28,277	5%	\$ 25,216
Services	9,410	36%	\$ 203,070	35%	\$ 21,116
Government	3,506	13%	\$ 96,063	16%	\$ 26,971
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,256</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 585,109</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 21,371</b>

The ratio of earnings to employment indicate which sectors are high earning sectors, on average, compared to those sectors which generate lower earnings. The service sector accounts for 35% of earnings and 36% of jobs. Wholesale/Retail, on the other hand, represents 23% of the counties' employment and only 19% of the earnings- reflecting a relatively low paying sector. Government sector jobs (13%) are fairly well paying but may be decreasing due to a downsizing trend in state and federal agencies.

### Real Estate Sales

Real Estate transactions in La Plata County numbered 1,715 and totaled more than \$264.4 million in 1997. There was an average of 143 transactions per month, with the highest number of sales reported in July, August and September of 97'. The majority of these sales were residential properties (44%), accounting for 51% of the total dollar volume. Vacant land (43% of sales) accounted for 30% of the total dollar volume. Commercial transactions comprised only 3% of the total number of sales but accounted for almost 13% of the total

dollar volume (Courtesy Information Services; Allen & Associates). The average sale price for residential property in the county in 1997 was \$166,181 (MLS).

### Retail Sales

The strength and diversity of the La Plata County economy is reflected in the growth of retail sales, totaling more than \$769 million in 1997. Figure 26 charts the growth of retail sales from 1993 through 1997.

Figure 26. La Plata County  
Retail Sales 1993-1997

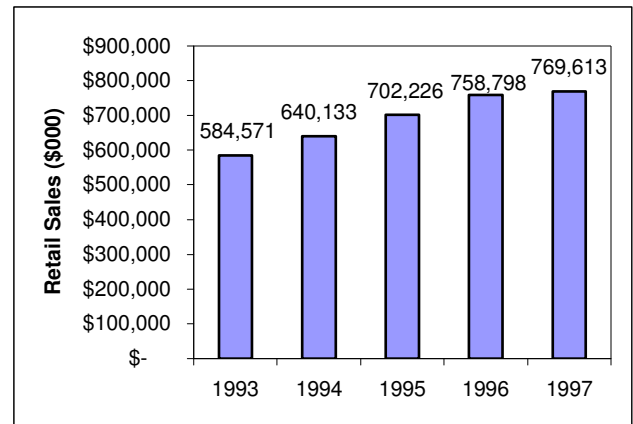


Figure 27 compares the amount (in thousands of \$) and proportions of the various sectors of retail sales in 1997. Food stores (13%) and auto/service stations (12%) had the strongest sales, followed closely by services other than lodging (12%) and miscellaneous retail stores (11%).

Figure 27. La Plata County  
Comparison of Retail Sales Sectors - 1997

Industry	(\$ooo)	% Total
Agri., Forestry & Fisheries	\$ 5,803	1%
Mining	\$ 4,059	1%
Contract Construction	\$ 46,542	6%
Manufacturing	\$ 16,654	2%
Transport. & Public Util.	\$ 49,400	6%
Wholesale Trade Ret. Sales	\$ 35,756	5%
Retail Bldg. Mat. & Farm Equip.	\$ 60,686	8%
Retail General	\$ 29,842	3.9%
Retail Food Stores	\$ 98,718	13%
Retail Auto. & Serv. Stations	\$ 94,148	12%
Retail Apparel & Acc. Stores	\$ 16,007	2%
Retail Home Furnishing Stores	\$ 24,486	3%
Retail Eat. & Drink. Places	\$ 55,556	7%
Retail Misc. Stores	\$ 80,863	11%
Finance, Insur. & Real Estate	\$ 7,758	1%
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	\$ 49,549	6%
Services Other Than Lodging	\$ 89,795	12%
Other Industries	\$ 3,991	0.52%
<b>Total Retail Sales</b>	<b>\$ 769,613</b>	<b>100%</b>

## MONTEZUMA COUNTY

Montezuma County is comprised of 1,333,888 acres (2,084sq. miles). Of these, 30% are private lands, 33% are tribal (Ute Mountain Ute), and 37% are state and federal lands.

### Population

Montezuma County has the 2nd largest population in Region 9 (22,466 in 1997). At the end of World War II, Dolores, Mancos and Cortez were about the same size. The growth that Cortez experienced was spurred by the development of the Aneth Oil Field in Southeastern Utah, which was accessed via McElmo Canyon. With Cortez as the nearest “full service” town many of the workers and their families made it their home. The development and paving of Highways 666 and 160 opened up Cortez as a regional trade center for the surrounding agricultural areas and Indian Reservations. The development of the Montezuma Valley and Mancos Valley rural water systems beginning in the 1960’s led to increased residential densities in rural parts of the county.

From 1993 to 1997 Montezuma county as a whole has seen steady population growth, with 2% average annual change. Most of this growth (4%) is occurring within the unincorporated areas of the county. Figure 28 presents population figures broken out into municipalities and unincorporated areas of the county in order to illustrate growth patterns for different entities from 1993 to 1997. Unincorporated areas include tribal populations, i.e. Ute Mountain Utes.

Figure 28. Montezuma County Population Estimates 1993 - 1997

	Estimates				
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Montezuma	20,458	21,139	21,820	22,206	22,466
Cortez	8,069	7,949	8,156	8,191	8,209
Dolores	998	992	1,031	1,042	1,045
Mancos	944	988	999	1,001	1,010
Unincorporated	10,447	11,210	11,634	11,972	12,202

Montezuma County is served by three school districts; Montezuma/Cortez RE1 (Fall 97' enrollment 3,436), Dolores RE 4A 1 (672) and Mancos RE6 (524).

For the county as a whole the population is expected to grow by 3% annually between 1990 and 2000. Slower growth is expected between 2000 and 2020 based on the assumption that the overall growth rate of the U.S population will slow down. Figure 29 presents population estimates and rates of change from 1990 to 2020.

Figure 29. Montezuma County Rates of Population Change 1990 - 2020

Montezuma	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	18,672	24,319	30,079	35,848
Avg. Ann. % Change		3.0%	2.4%	1.9%

### Economic Trends

Historically, Montezuma County developed as a result of providing mining towns in the San Juan Mountains with supplies. The extensive timber resources in the Dolores area were harvested to supply mine timbers and building lumber. The Town of Mancos built up around cattle raised to feed the mining communities. The lower elevations of the Montezuma Valley supplied agricultural products, with the City of Cortez developing as a center due to the creation of the Montezuma Valley Irrigation Company.

By the turn of the 20th century the mining boom had played out and the remaining settlers turned to subsistence agriculture and the export of agricultural and timber products. In the 1980’s, the construction of McPhee Reservoir (the Dolores Project) and its extensive irrigation systems allowed increased agricultural production and enhanced recreational opportunities for locals and tourists.

According to the CDLG-Demography Section, in 1986 the per capita personal income (PCPI) of Montezuma County was \*\$15,034 and ranked 41st in the state. In 1996 Montezuma County had a PCPI of \$17,546. This PCPI ranked 40th in the state, was 68% of the state average (\$25,740), and 72% of the national average (\$24,169.) The average annual growth rate of PCPI over a ten year period (1986-1996) was 1.7%. In comparison, the average annual growth rate for the state was 1.6%, and for the nation 1.2%.

\*Adjusted to reflect 1996 dollars for comparative purposes.

In 1996 Montezuma County had a (projected) total personal income (TPI) of \$410.9 million dollars, ranking 24th in the state. Total personal income includes the earnings (wages and salaries, other labor income, and proprietors income); dividends, interest and rent; and transfer payments received by the residents of the county.

### Employment and Income

The 1990’s have seen relatively high unemployment rates in Montezuma County. In 1997 the county had an average unemployment rate of 6.7%, slightly down from 1996 (6.9%). In comparison the state wide unemployment rate was 3.3% in 1997.

Figure 30 tracks labor force and employment figures from 1994 to 1997.

Figure 30. Montezuma County Employment Rates 1994 - 1997

MONTEZUMA	1994	1995	1996	1997
Unemployed	732	794	786	741
Employed	10,082	10,286	10,538	10,396
Total Labor Force	10,814	11,080	11,324	11,137
Unemploy. Rate	6.8%	7.2%	6.9%	6.7%
State Unemploy. Rate	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	3.3%

Wage and employment information can be used to measure the strength of the various economic sectors. It is also useful to look at employment by sector in relation to income by sector. Figure 31 provides a comparison of employment and wages by sector using an analysis provided by Demography Section (CDLG), based on 1996 projections of BEA and ES202 data. These include proprietor earnings.

Figure 31. Montezuma County 1996 Employment and Wages by Sector

Montezuma County	# of Jobs	% of Jobs	Income (ooo)	% of Inc.	avg. annual wage *
Ag. Products&Services	1,283	11%	\$ 1,835	1%	\$ 14,936
Mining	118	1%	\$ 8,600	4%	\$ 41,242
Construction	1,551	13%	\$ 45,868	19%	\$ 28,615
Manufacturing	546	4%	\$ 11,311	5%	\$ 19,746
Trans. Comm & P.U.	414	3%	\$ 14,741	6%	\$ 25,961
Wholesale&Retail Trade	2,372	19%	\$ 42,654	17%	\$ 17,063
F,I & RE	396	3%	\$ 7,947	3%	\$ 22,275
Services	3,596	30%	\$ 57,284	23%	\$ 15,364
Government	1,895	16%	\$ 55,057	22%	\$ 22,975
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,171</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 245,297</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 19,336</b>

The service sector accounts for 30% of jobs and 23% of wages; retail represents 19% of the counties' employment and only 17% of the earnings- both sectors are relatively low paying. Government sector jobs account for 16% of total employment, and are fairly well paid at \$22,975. but may be decreasing due to a downsizing trend in State and federal agencies. The highest paid jobs are in the mining industry at an average wage of \$41,242. but account for only 1% of total employment and 4% of total income.

### Real Estate Sales

According to data from the Montezuma County Assessor, in 1997 there were 804 real estate sales totaling \$75,873,754. Of these there were 450 improved residential sales totaling \$36,813,144; 164 vacant land (non-agricultural) sales totaling \$7,460,000; 43 commercial/industrial sales totaling \$8,633,860; 3 agricultural (with mobile homes) sales totaling \$17,700; and 142 agricultural (without homes) sales totaling \$22,774,950.

### Retail Sales

Montezuma County, particularly Cortez, serves as a retail center for neighboring Dolores County as well as tribal populations (i.e. Ute Mountain Utes and Navajos). The strength of the Montezuma County economy is reflected in the steady growth of retail sales, totaling more than \$343 million in 1997. Figure 32 charts the growth of retail sales from 1993 through 1997.

Figure 32. Montezuma County Retail Sales 1993 - 1997

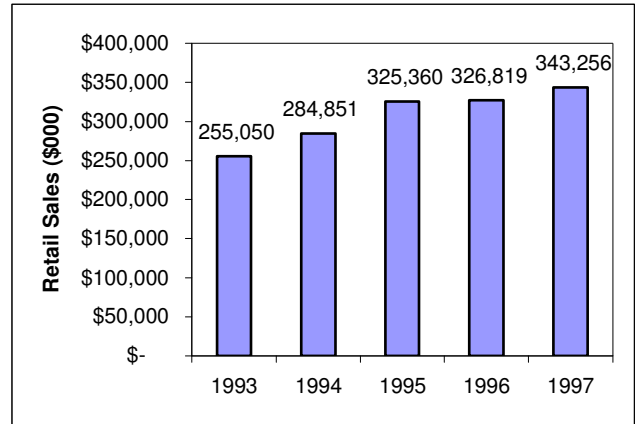


Figure 33 compares the amount (in thousands of \$) and proportions of the various sectors of retail sales in 1997. Auto/service stations (17%) and food stores (15%) had the strongest sales, followed by miscellaneous retail stores (11%) and general retail (10%).

Figure 33. Montezuma County Comparison of Retail Sales Sectors 1997

Industry	(\$ooo)	% Total
Agri., Forestry & Fisheries	\$ 4,349	1%
Mining	\$ 5,139	1%
Contract Construction	\$ 11,590	3%
Manufacturing	\$ 13,730	4%
Transport. & Public Util.	\$ 28,677	8%
Wholesale Trade Ret. Sales	\$ 10,937	3%
Retail Bldg. Mat. & Farm Equip.	\$ 23,730	7%
Retail General	\$ 34,996	10.2%
Retail Food Stores	\$ 49,791	15%
Retail Auto. & Serv. Stations	\$ 58,317	17%
Retail Apparel & Acc. Stores	\$ 1,684	0%
Retail Home Furnishing Stores	\$ 8,223	2%
Retail Eat. & Drink. Places	\$ 17,964	5%
Retail Misc. Stores	\$ 36,203	11%
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	\$ 10,555	3%
Services Other Than Lodging	\$ 25,287	7%
Other Industries	\$ 2,084	0.61%
<b>Total Retail Sales</b>	<b>\$ 343,256</b>	<b>100%</b>

## SAN JUAN COUNTY

San Juan County is comprised of 250,880 acres (392 sq. miles). Of these, 12% are private lands and 88% are state and federal lands.

### Population

The population of San Juan County peaked at about 5,000 in 1910. Since that time the population has followed the boom and bust cycles that are characteristic of mining communities, fluctuating between 750 and 1,000 people from 1960 until the last working mine closed in 1991.

The majority of the county's population is concentrated within the Town of Silverton. Silverton's population was stable between 1970 and 1980 but began to decline through the 1980's. The closure of the Sunnyside Mine in 1991 caused a rapid (-21%) population decline from 1990 - 1992. After reaching a low point in 1993 there has been modest growth in subsequent years. Figure 34 provides population estimates from 1993 - 1997 for the county, as well as the Town of Silverton and unincorporated areas.

Figure 34. San Juan County  
Population Estimates 1993 - 1997

	Estimates				
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
San Juan	526	548	551	549	549
Silverton	513	532	538	542	532
Unincorporated	21	16	13	7	17

This slow growth trend is projected to continue into the next century as well. Figure 35 provides estimates of average annual (%) population change for the years 1990 to 2020.

Figure 35. San Juan County  
Population Projections 1990 - 2020

San Juan	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	833	588	722	837
Avg. Ann. % Change		-2.9%	2.3%	1.6%

Declining population figures are generally mirrored by school enrollment figures. School District No.1 saw a drop from 155 students in 1990 to 109 in 1995. Faced with the challenge of maintaining a quality K-12 educational program the schools have implemented "cutting edge" technology by setting up a computer lab that is also used by the community. In Fall 97 there was an enrollment of 102 students.

### Economic Trends

The discovery of gold in the county by Charles Baker in 1860 was followed by a late breaking gold rush in the 1870's. By 1873 more than 1500 mining claims had been staked. After the signing of the Brunot Treaty with the Ute Indians in 1874 the Town of Silverton was established, it remains the only community in San Juan County.

In the early days one of the greatest difficulties was to get supplies across the high mountains into Silverton. The Denver and Rio Grand Railroad reached Silverton from Durango in 1882, allowing for the movement of large quantities of supplies and the transport of ore to the smelter in Durango. With the dedication of the "Million Dollar Highway" in July of 1924 the transportation of gold, silver, lead, copper and zinc moved from the narrow gauge train to Highway 550 which connects Silverton to Montrose (60 miles to the north) and to Durango (50 miles to the south). Beginning in the late 1950s the rail line that had carried ore down to Durango began, instead, to carry tourists up from Durango to enjoy the spectacular scenery and the heritage that has made Silverton a National Registered Historic Landmark.

At the present time San Juan County has become almost entirely dependent upon tourism, primarily during the summer months when the train is running. Train ridership to Silverton reached nearly 193,098 in 1997. Visitors by train are supplemented by people who come to Silverton via Highway 550, which is part of the "San Juan Skyway," one of the premier scenic by-ways in the United States.

According to the CDLG-Demography Section projections, in 1986 the per capita personal income (PCPI) of San Juan County was \*\$22,928 and ranked 10th in the state. In 1996 San Juan County had a PCPI of \$18,625. This PCPI ranked 39th in the state, was 72% of the state average (\$25,740), and 77% of the national average (\$24,169.) The average annual growth rate of PCPI over a ten year period (1986-1996) was -1.9%. In comparison, the average annual growth rate for the state was 1.6%, and for the nation 1.2%.

\*Adjusted to reflect 1996 dollars for comparative purposes.

In 1996 San Juan County had a (projected) total personal income (TPI) of \$10.1 million dollars, ranking 63rd in the state. Total personal income includes the earnings (wages and salaries, other labor income, and proprietors income); dividends, interest and rent; and transfer payments received by the residents of the county.

### Employment and Income

In 1990 San Juan County had an average unemployment rate of 7.9%. By 1992, after the closure of the Sunnyside Mine, this figure had risen to 35.1%.

In 1997, the unemployment rate had declined to 11.2%, corresponding to a decline in population. Figure 36 tracks labor force and employment figures from 1994-1997.

Figure 36. San Juan County Employment Rates 1994 - 1997

SAN JUAN	1994	1995	1996	1997
Unemployed	45	46	40	27
Employed	266	237	214	215
Total Labor Force	311	283	254	242
Unemploy. Rate	14.5%	16.3%	15.7%	11.2%
State Unemploy. Rate	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	3.3%

The composition of the economy of San Juan County has changed considerably in the 1990's. In 1990 mining contributed 72.8% of earnings and 40% of employment, in 1994 the mining industry had declined to the point that income and employment information was suppressed. Until the Sunnyside Mine closed in 1991, tourism supplemented the mining industry and filled gaps during low points in the mining cycle. Presently, trade related to tourism contributes the greatest proportion of jobs and income to the local economy.

Wage and proprietor income information provided by the Demographic Section (CDLG) indicates that in 1996 the largest industries in San Juan County were the retail sector (comprising 39% of earnings and 50% of employment); and state and local governments (which comprised 28% of earnings and 26% of employment). Figure 37 provides a comparison of the various employment sectors in 1997.

Figure 37. San Juan County 1996 Employment and Wages by Sector

San Juan	# of Jobs	% of Jobs	Income (000)	% of Inc.	avg. annual wage*
Other*	36	12%	\$ 1,490	23%	n/a
Wholesale&Retail Trade	145	50%	\$ 2,581	39%	\$ 8,870
Services	35	12%	\$ 699	11%	\$ 13,974
Government	74	26%	\$ 1,821	28%	\$ 15,963
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 6,591</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 15,644</b>

Other includes Ag products and services; mining; construction; manufacturing; Trans.,Com. & P.U.; F.I.R&E. Grouped due to non-disclosure of data.

Community development issues include: economic development that will diversify and expand local economic sectors; retention and enhancement of the town's historical character and traditional values; the provision of community services and facilities; and the preservation of the ecological and aesthetic qualities of the area. Silverton is also challenged to maintain a sufficient level of population for a viable school district.

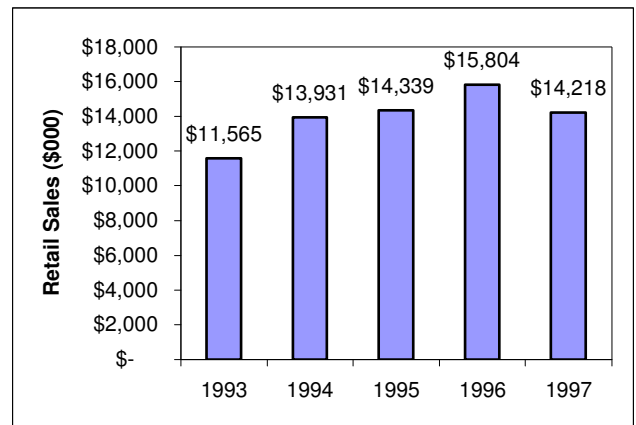
## Real Estate Sales

Most of the available real estate in San Juan County is within the Town of Silverton. With the exception of a small section of land at the south end of the county, all privately owned land is patented mining claims. During 1997 there were 20 residential property sales for a total of \$1,909,271. The median house price was \$107,965. There were 6 commercial property sales totaling \$1,750,900; 12 vacant land sales totaling \$405,500; and 5 patented mining claim sales totaling \$78,650.

## Retail Sales

Historically, most of the retail sales in San Juan County have migrated out to towns in neighboring counties, i.e. Durango and Montrose, which offer many more shopping choices. Figure 38 charts the total retail sales from 1993 through 1997.

Figure 38. San Juan County Retail Sales 1993 - 1997



Generally, the retail market in San Juan County is fairly limited, and focuses on goods and services provided to tourists, as illustrated in Figure 39, which compares the amount and proportions of the various sectors of retail sales 1997 (in thousands of \$).

Figure 39. San Juan County Comparison of Retail Sales Sectors 1997

Industry	(\$000)	% Total
Transport. & Public Util.	\$ 790	6%
Wholesale Trade Ret. Sales	\$ 14	0%
Retail General	\$ 244	1.7%
Retail Food Stores	\$ 801	6%
Retail Apparel & Acc. Stores	\$ 484	3%
Retail Eat. & Drink. Places	\$ 3,228	23%
Retail Misc. Stores	\$ 3,992	28%
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	\$ 724	5%
Services Other Than Lodging	\$ 718	5%
Other Industries	\$ 3,223	22.67%
<b>Total Retail Sales</b>	<b>\$ 14,218</b>	<b>100%</b>

## TRIBAL POPULATIONS

### History

The planning and management area of Region 9 includes two Indian reservations, the Southern Ute and the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribes. Historically, the Utes roamed throughout Colorado, Utah and New Mexico in a hunter-gatherer society. As a result of the formation of bands in the historic period, there were several distinct Ute subdivisions in Colorado. The White River Utes ranged across Northern Colorado. The Tabeguache or Uncompahgre Utes lived in the central mountains of Colorado, including the area of South Park, the Gunnison and Uncompahgre Valleys.

The Southern Ute divisions were the Muache, Capote and Weminuche. The Muache lived in the mountains of the Colorado Front Range. The Capote occupied the area between the Sangre De Cristo Mountains on the east and the continental divide on the west. The Weminuche were located west of the Continental Divide and north of the San Juan River, which generally marked their boundaries with the Navajos. Their normal territory extended westward to the Blue Mountains and Canyonlands of Southeast Utah.

In the last half of the 1800's the land base of the Ute peoples was continually decreased by intrusion from Anglo-American culture. Through a series of treaties with the U.S. Government (1849, 1855, 1863, 1868, 1873) the traditional land base continued to shrink. During the 1870's Colorado continued to seek further reductions to the Ute Reservation, and the 1879 Meeker Massacre, which involved the White River Utes, provided the opportunity to remove both the White River and Tabeguache Utes to Utah. Efforts were made in 1880 to restrict the Southern Utes Bands (the Muache, Capote and Weminuche) to a small area in the La Plata Valley.

In 1887 Congress passed the General Allotment Act (Dawes Act), which provided for the allotment of 160 acres to adult male Indians. It was believed that land ownership would accelerate the process of "civilizing" the Indians. The subsequent Act of 1895 provided that the Southern Utes should vote on the issue of land allotment. A slim majority decided the issue and by 1896 approximately 73,000 acres had been allotted to 371 Utes. As a result of the 1895 Act, the reservation was broken into two distinct units. Most of the Muache and Capote Utes accepted allotments in the eastern portion, which became known as the Southern Ute Reservation with agency headquarters at Ignacio. The Weminuche Utes, led by Chief Ignacio, refused to accept allotment and moved to the western portion, which became known as the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation with agency headquarters at Navajo Springs, and later at Towaoc.

### Ute Mountain Utes

Currently the homelands for the Ute Mountain Utes total over 597,000 acres in Southwest Colorado, Southeastern Utah, and Northern New Mexico. The tribal lands lie on the Colorado Plateau, a high desert area with deep canyons carved through the mesas. Tribal Headquarters are in Towaoc, which lies southeast of Cortez in Montezuma County. The tribal enrollment in 1997 was 1,943 with the majority of the members living on the reservation in Towaoc and the White Mesa Community. The White Mesa community of the Tribe lives in Utah, where most of the housing is on tribal lands. The majority of the lands there are allotted to tribal members and laid out in a checkerboard design. The tribal census shows the largest part of the membership are in their early twenties and younger.

The Colorado Ute Water Settlement Act of 1988, mandated within the Dolores Project (McPhee Reservoir), brought drinking and irrigation water to the reservation and expanded farm and ranching capabilities. Other tribal resources include income from oil and gas wells and tribal enterprises that revolve around tourism, i.e. a gambling casino, an RV Park, an archaeological park, and a pottery factory. The tribe employs over 900 people in its enterprises and is a major contributor to the regional economy.

### Southern Utes

The Southern Ute Reservation encompasses an area of over 750,000 acres in La Plata and Archuleta Counties. Tribal headquarters are located adjacent to the Town of Ignacio. The tribal enrollment in 1997 was 1,330 with the majority of the members living on the reservation in La Plata County. The tribal census shows the largest part of the membership are in their early twenties and younger.

Natural resources on the reservation include extensive gas reserves, coal, timber, and water for agriculture. These resources provide the basis for the establishment of a diversified tribal economic base. Tribal energy resources in the form of natural gas has played the largest role in the reservation economy over the past decade (93% of tribal revenues came from energy resource development in 1994).

The reservation's proximity to Durango and many of the tourist destinations in Southwest Colorado provides unique advantages for tourism development. The reservation land base includes seven major rivers, the Navajo State Park, Lake Capote, and most importantly the Sky Ute Casino and Motel, among other tribal enterprises. Tourist products are casino gaming, cultural tours, fishing, hunting, and the Tribal Cultural Center and Museum. These enterprises all play a roll in diversifying the overall economy. The Southern Ute Tribe employs over a thousand people and is a major contributor to the regional economy.