



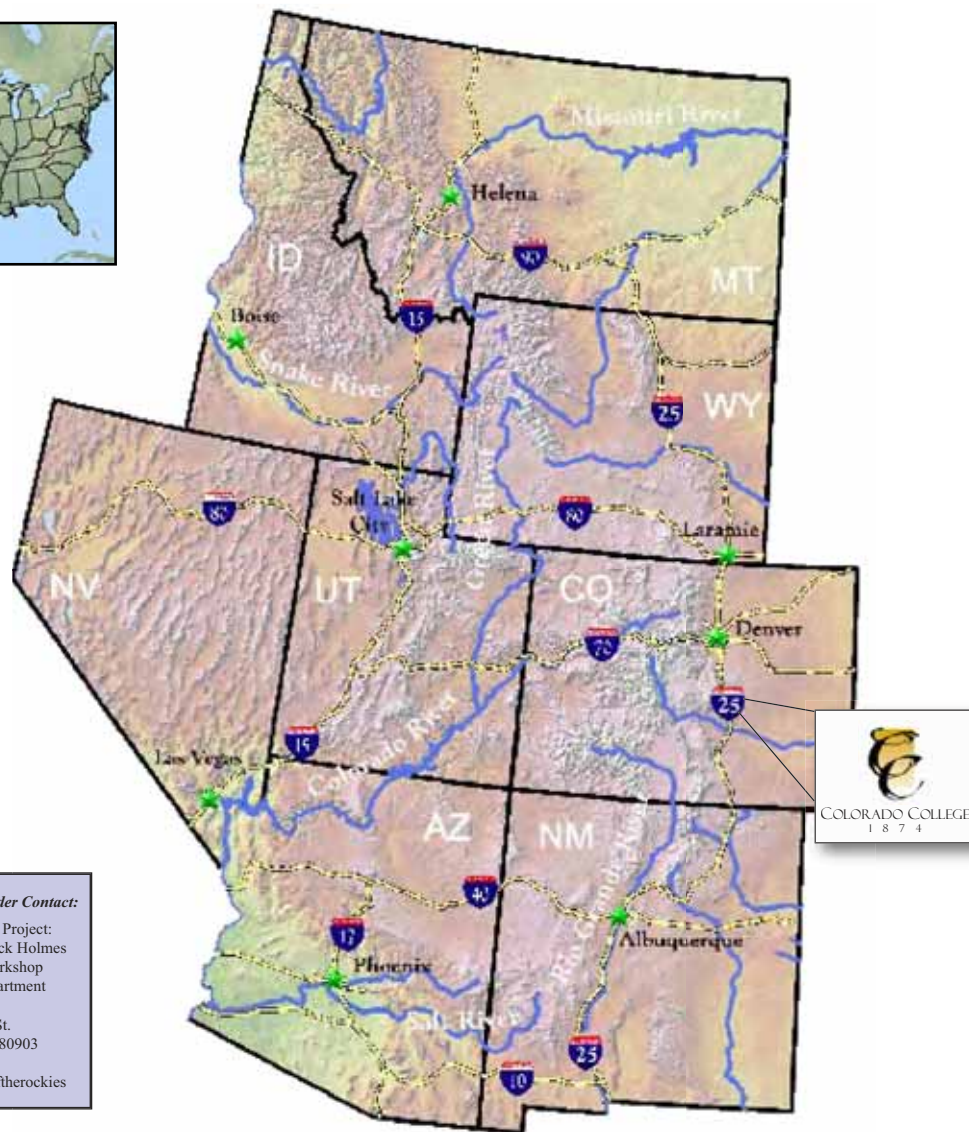
The 2004

C O L O R A D O C O L L E G E

STATE OF THE ROCKIES REPORT CARD

An Outreach Activity of
COLORADO COLLEGE 2010:
THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION AGENDA

COLORADO COLLEGE'S ROCKY MOUNTAIN STUDY REGION



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The Colorado College Rockies Project:

Location and history continue to help shape the unique character and mission of Colorado College. Grounded in the Rocky Mountains and drawing upon 13 decades of service to the region and beyond, the college now builds upon its past by developing the new Rockies program as part of "Colorado College 2010: The President's Action Agenda." Through the State of the Rockies Project, we will provide each year an annual *Colorado College State of the Rockies Report Card* and an annual State of the Rockies Conference.

The 2004

COLORADO COLLEGE

STATE OF THE ROCKIES REPORT CARD

Edited By:

Walter E. Hecox, Ph.D, and F. Patrick Holmes III

A Publication of:

The Colorado College Rockies Project
Sustainable Development Workshop and
Economics and Business Department

Colorado College

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1874

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AN INTRODUCTION FROM THE PRESIDENT

Colorado College's Rocky Mountain "Backyard"

I am proud to introduce the inaugural State of the Rockies Report Card prepared by Colorado College. The report analyzes and studies this unique region of spectacular natural beauty and cultural wealth, abundant resources, and fragile environment as part of "Colorado College 2010: The President's Action Agenda." This report builds upon CC's nearly 130 years as an institution of higher education in the Rocky Mountains. Over these decades starting in 1874 – some two years before Colorado entered the Union – CC has had a solid grounding in teaching, research, and publication on the subject of the adjacent Rockies that we call our "backyard."

Colorado College programs that have served the Rockies in the past include a unique private school of forestry with its own 13,000-acre forest preserve, a school of engineering that trained generations of individuals to help "open up" the West, preparatory schools spread throughout the region to prepare young people for a rigorous liberal arts education, early archeological explorations, and rich collections of regional manuscripts and art.

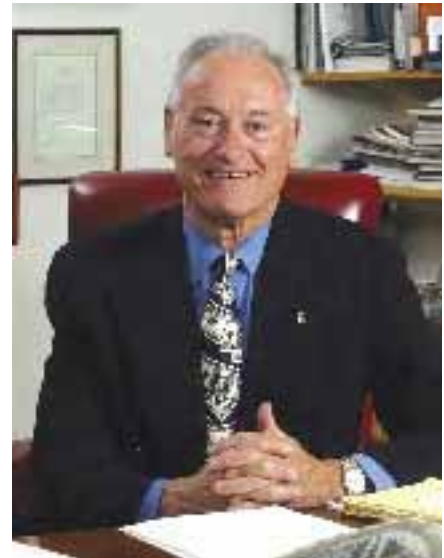
Today is no different: CC has new programs that meet evolving challenges in the Rockies, including our environmental science and Southwest studies programs, a sustainable development workshop, and exciting course fieldwork in a variety of disciplines in which students explore the Rockies through CC's unique one-course-at-a-time Block Plan.

Through the State of the Rockies Project, we will provide annually an independent perspective on key regional challenges, includ-

ing demographic growth and decay, natural resource extraction, tourism and recreation, cultural resources, environmental conditions, and a host of other indicators that define the Rockies region. *The 2004 State of the Rockies Report Card* launches our effort to provide a comprehensive and accessible annual statement on what is happening in the eight Rocky Mountain states.

Colorado College is perfectly positioned to become the source of such information and provide an independent, private perspective on challenges and controversies. The contents that follow are rich and varied, including essays on the "state" of the region by experts; a "Rockies at a Glance" section to put the region in perspective; an overview essay on the economics and demographics of the eight-state Rockies region; 15 indicator sections that rank counties based on cultural, demographic, economic, and environmental characteristics, including thumbnail sketches of innovative communities; and an essay that highlights the distinct differences for three sub-regions within the Rockies: the Continental Divide Spine, the Eastern Plains Agricultural Heritage Zone, and the West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone.

Our first State of the Rockies Conference, May 3-4, 2004, celebrates the Rockies with speakers and events including: Charles Wilkinson, University of Colorado Law School professor and prolific author, speaking on "Endurance and Sovereignty Among the Indian Nations of the Rocky Mountain West"; Ed and Betsy Marston, former editors of *High Country News*, speaking on "Home and Hope in the



CC President Richard F. Celeste

Rockies: 20 Years of Observation"; former Colorado Governor Richard Lamm, now with the University of Denver Institute for Public Policy, speaking on "The Angry West, Revisited"; Jill Baron of the U.S. Geological Survey's Natural Resource Ecology Lab, speaking on "Rocky Mountain Futures – An Ecological Perspective"; Thomas Sisk, professor at Northern Arizona University, speaking on "Developing a Public Science that Can Weather the Politics of Resource Management in the Rockies"; a panel entitled "On the Rockies Front Lines – Community Organizations Confronting Change"; and the unveiling of the *2004 Colorado College State of the Rockies Report Card*.

I invite you to explore the Rockies through the material in this report card and trust that it will inform, challenge, and stimulate you. Likewise, I invite you to participate in future years' State of the Rockies activities by attending conferences and acquiring subsequent report cards. Above all, I welcome you to a growing network of individuals and institutions linked together through common appreciation of the Rockies as a stellar region worth contemplating, nurturing, and protecting in the coming decades.

Richard F. Celeste

Richard F. Celeste
President of Colorado College

Botany Class 1938 - Colorado College Special Collections (Left)



Colorado College Students in the Field: Then and Now

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2004 Colorado College State of the Rockies Report Card



Challenge Essay: “Home and Hope in the Rockies” – Ed Marston, Senior Journalist and Former Editor: *High Country News*

Efforts to “grade” the Rockies are audacious and others have tried, including *High Country News*. The essence of the region is captured not just by letter grades, but more so the “teacher’s” scribbled notes at the bottom of the report cards. The essence of the region differs among observers, from aridity to a preponderance of public lands that are collectively owned amidst mistrust and perceived loss of sovereignty over many issues. Are we the “road kill” of national politics and economics? Do we want to gain control over our lives and region or remain a colony subsidized by the federal treasury and cut up by conflicting interest groups? Marston’s report card for the West assigns C’s and D’s to ranching and logging and farming, and F’s to oil and gas development, but only a D- to environmentalists. Exceptions to these grades stand out as individual ranchers, land trusts, and experiments in communities seeking to bridge the extractive industries with the environmental movement.

Rockies Perspectives: Sonoran Institute – Ray Rasker, SocioEconomics Program, Bozeman, Montana

The defining characteristic of the Rockies is the preponderance of public lands, over which perpetual controversy exists. The economic role of these public lands has evolved from resource extraction to provision of recreational opportunities, with few truly resource-dependent counties left in the region. Now the largest source of new personal income is non-labor, such as investments and retirement

income, followed by service-based employment. These changes call for reconsideration of the traditional multiple-use philosophy over public lands. Modifications must include “standing” for scenery and recreational amenities as drivers of entrepreneurial growth and livable communities.

Rockies Perspectives: Center for the Rocky Mountain West – Dan Kemmis, Director, Missoula, Montana

The Rocky Mountain West can be viewed as a region “settled last and settled least.” Rapid growth has far-reaching and sometimes wrenching economic, social, political, and cultural impacts. The center in Missoula exists to help interpret the West and help decision makers cope with change. Regional scholars, area leaders, and others interested in the West are brought together through summer institutes, and via Headwaters News service on the Web to serve as a database, archive, and source of information for a scattered and often disconnected citizenry in the Rockies and beyond.

Rockies Perspectives: Mountain Studies Institute – Ellen Stein, Executive Director, Silverton, Colorado

Silverton has a rich history in mining despite its isolation amidst the spectacular San Juan Mountains. Today this mountain region has 15 incorporated towns, but what unites these communities in today’s economy? How can such a region remain “relevant?” The institute serves as a place for students, researchers, educators, and the general public to meet and share views, work on problems, conceive of “relevant” solutions. Annual conferences highlight problems and challenges while an active research program asks probing questions like what might be the impacts of climate change and modified hydrologic cycles on the San Juans?

Rockies Perspectives: Gunnison Headwaters Conference – George Sibley, Coordinator, Western State College, Gunnison, Colorado

For much of the 20th century most of the towns and small cities in the mountain valleys of the Southern Rockies – the “Headwaters Re-



Indian paintbrush - Rocky Mountain National Park

gion” of the Southwest – served the nation as “supply regions” for the rest of the nation, extracting resources and fouling their nests in the process. Chronic boom-bust cycles stressed communities in the upswing and created poverty and a flight of the young in the downswings. These mountain valleys today reflect political and economic tension between “pre-urbanites” and “post-urbanites.” Quality of life often is the single common denominator among warring factions, as all seek to maintain the region’s natural amenities. Headwaters Conferences serve as an open public forums where experts and average citizens alike butt heads and hammer out shared values and workable solutions.

The Rocky Mountain Region: An Overview – Walter Hecox and F. Patrick Holmes, The Rockies Project, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado

The Continental Divide literally forms the spine of an eight state Rockies region of 280 counties containing 24% of the U.S. landmass and 6.5% of the 2000 population. This region of spectacular natural beauty, harsh climate and soil conditions, as well as vast open spaces, is easier to grasp visually by flying over the region than it is to characterize what lies below in socio-economic terms. This overview looks at the Rockies’ residents and their counties in demographic terms, as well as employment and income trends to characterize its “homogeneity,” and makes comparisons with neighboring

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

census regions to the west and east as well as to national averages. One result is to sort out myth vs. reality for the Rockies being rural, agricultural and natural resource-based, under educated, largely Caucasian, and dominated by government jobs.



Colorado College's Baca campus

The Rockies Divided: Three Sub-Regions That Make Sense -- Walter Hecox and F. Patrick Holmes, The Rockies Project, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Despite shared topography and stunning natural beauty, as well as characteristics that set it apart from the rest of the nation, the Rockies region is NOT homogeneous! Rather, analysis of regional socio-economic and demographic data, alongside differing characteristics of the land base, identify three distinct sub-regions: The Continental Divide Spine, The Eastern Plains Agricultural Heritage Zone, and The West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone. Each of these sub-regions shares many distinguishing characteristics that bind adjacent counties together and highlight substantial differences when compared to the other zones. Land characteristics are easiest to grasp, as the zones vary dramatically across the Rockies in topography, hydrology, land cover and use, government ownership, and human habitation patterns. People and their communities also differ among sub-regions, by nativity, age, race, education, degree of poverty, and vibrancy of communities. Employment patterns are driven by land and people: natural resource-based employment is small but variable among

the regions as services and government jobs better reflect occupations and employment sectors. Income largely is driven by employment, but increasingly non-work income from investments and transfer payments moderates the boom-bust cycles endemic to the historic West. For the Rockies the most interesting challenges and problems, as well as innovative solutions, exist within these zones as residents seek to maintain their valued quality of life in the face of powerful forces of change.

Grading the Rockies: F. Patrick Holmes and Walter Hecox, The Rockies Project, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado

How do individual counties around the Rockies stack up against each other? Where are the leading examples of innovation vs. the lagging communities struggling to overcome adversity? The “heart” of this Rockies Report Card lies in grades assigned to counties for a set of 15 individual indicators, plus a final overall “GPA” that picks out valedictorians and runners-up for the Rockies. The structure of this massive “grading” exercise provides a window into the types of performance variables we consider important in judging Rockies’ counties. Full details on the methodology, as well as lists of “top 10” counties, reside in the relevant sections of the *2004 Colorado College Rockies Report Card*.

Land and Environment –

1. The Rockies Playground
2. Subdivisions and “Ranchettes” in the New Rockies
3. Jewels of the Rockies

Social and Cultural Capital –

1. Native Born or Cappuccino-Cowboy?
2. Managing Immigration
3. Civic Engagement
4. Healthy Places to Live and Work
5. Education Attainment
6. Arts, Culture, and Employment in the “Creative Classes”
7. The Graying of the Rockies
8. A Good Place to Raise Kids



Income, Employment, and Equity

1. Balanced Employment Composition
2. Small Business Vitality
3. Balanced Income Distribution
4. Distressed Counties

Grading the Rockies: Vibrancy and Vitality Grading the Most “Livable” Counties in the Rockies:

Metropolitan Counties
(61 metro counties)

Micropolitan Counties
(138 non-metro counties with aggregate urban populations of greater than 2,500 people)

Rural Counties
(81 non-metro counties with an aggregate urban population of less than 2,500)

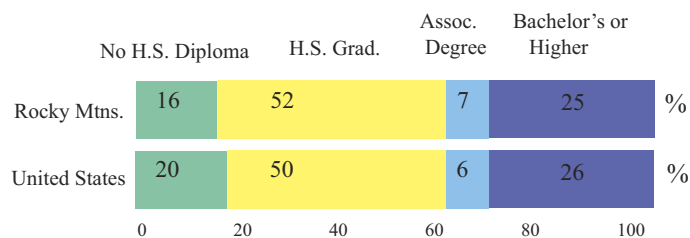


ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION AT A GLANCE

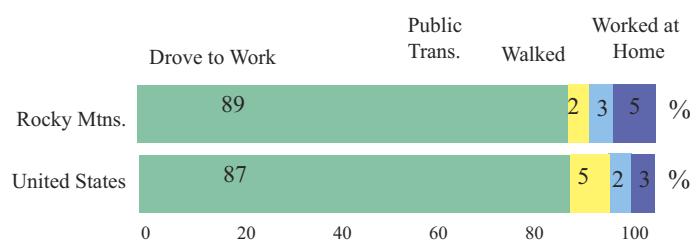


Alpine Meadow - Glacier National Park

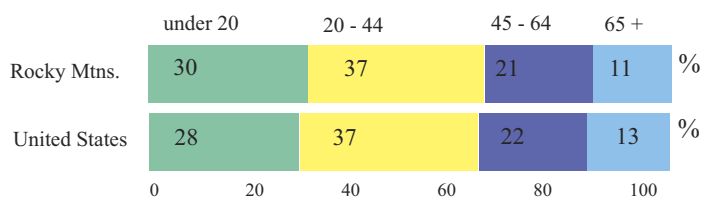
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



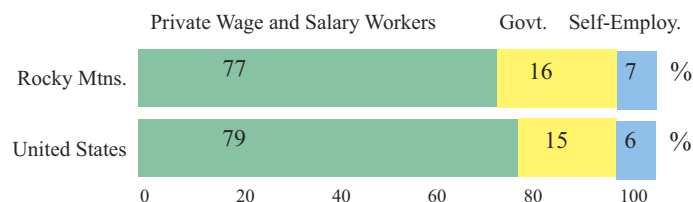
COMMUTING TO WORK



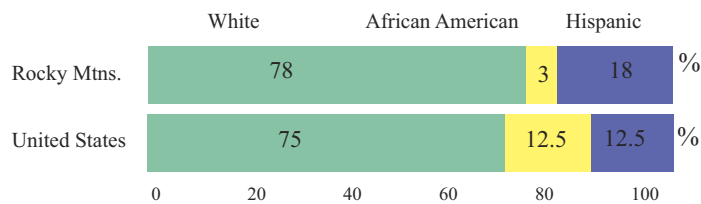
AGE



CATEGORY OF WORKER

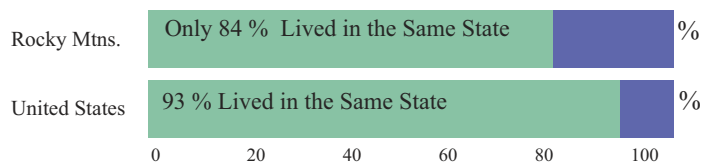


RACE

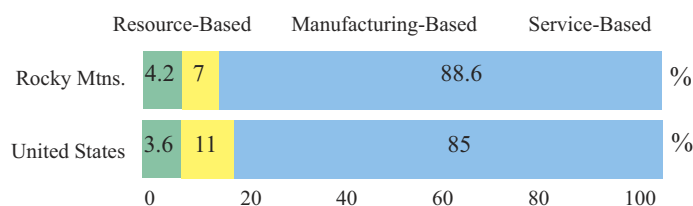


Elk Bull - Rocky Mountain National Park

STATE OF RESIDENCE IN 2000 SAME AS IN 1995

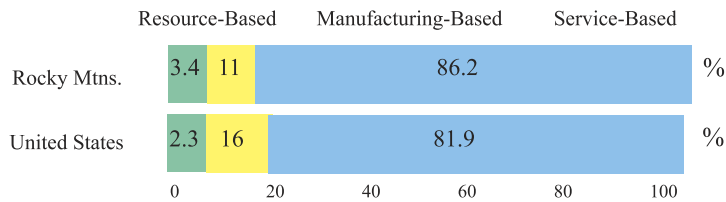


EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

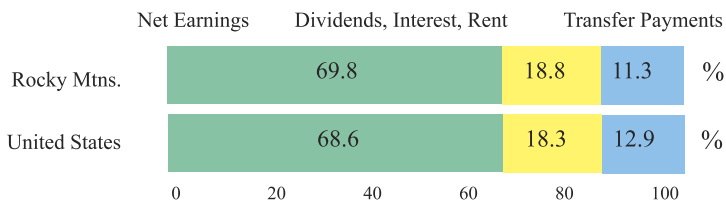


ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION AT A GLANCE

EARNINGS BY SECTOR



PERSONAL INCOME COMPONENTS

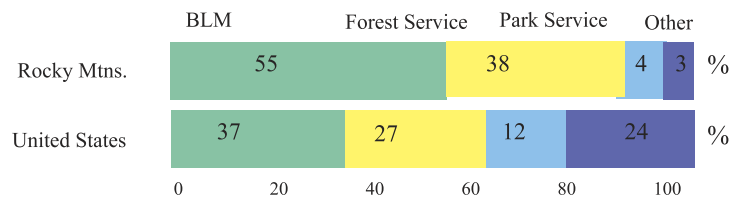


POPULATION GROWTH RATE 1970 - 2001

Rocky Mtns. **124 %**

United States **40 %**

FEDERAL LAND OWNERSHIP



AVERAGE SIZE OF A FARM 2002

Rocky Mtns. **2,086 acres**

United States **441 acres**

BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS BY EMPLOYMENT SIZE

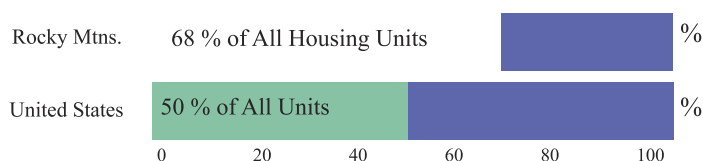


% OF LAND FEDERALLY OWNED 2003

Rocky Mtns. **46 %**

United States **31%**

HOUSING UNITS BUILT BETWEEN 1970 - 2000

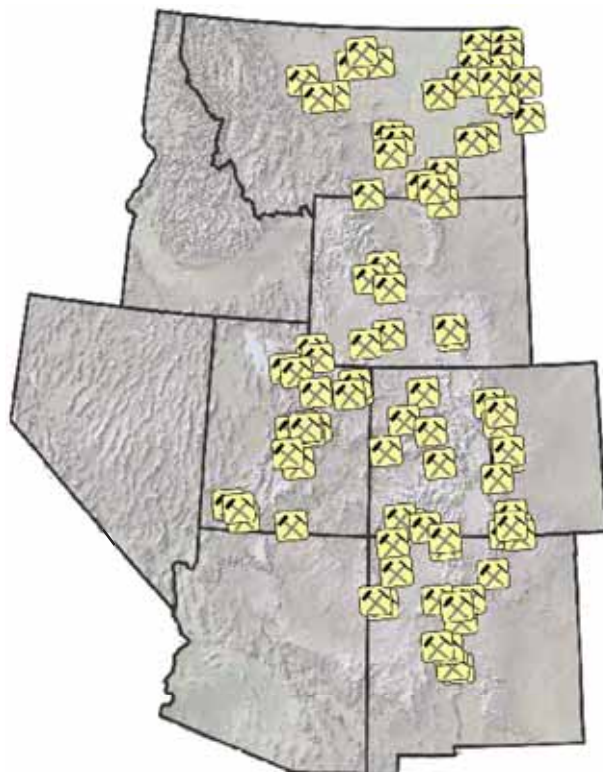


AVERAGE EARNINGS PER JOB 2000

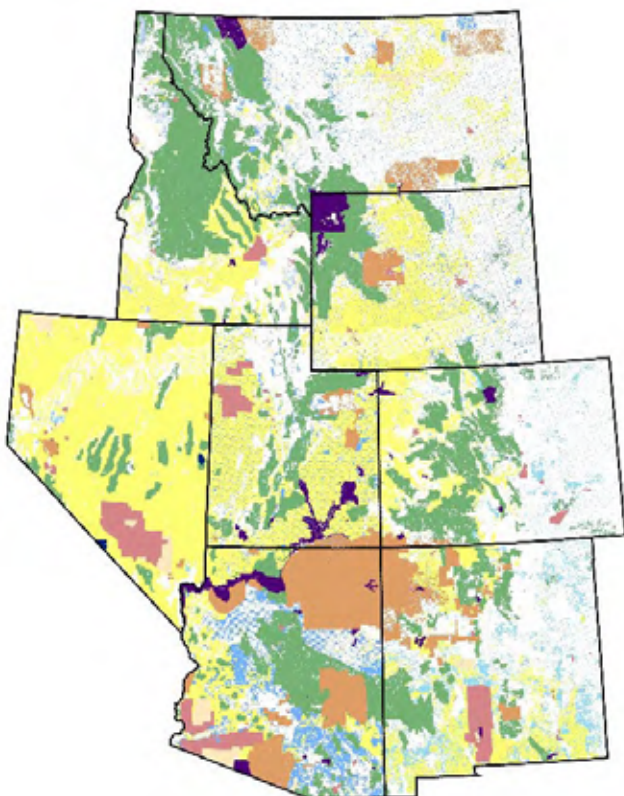
Rocky Mtns. **\$ 32,401**

United States **\$ 36,316**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION AT A GLANCE



Abandoned Coal Mine Inventory - Mines Causing Significant Harm, Damage, or Health Risk to Persons or Property



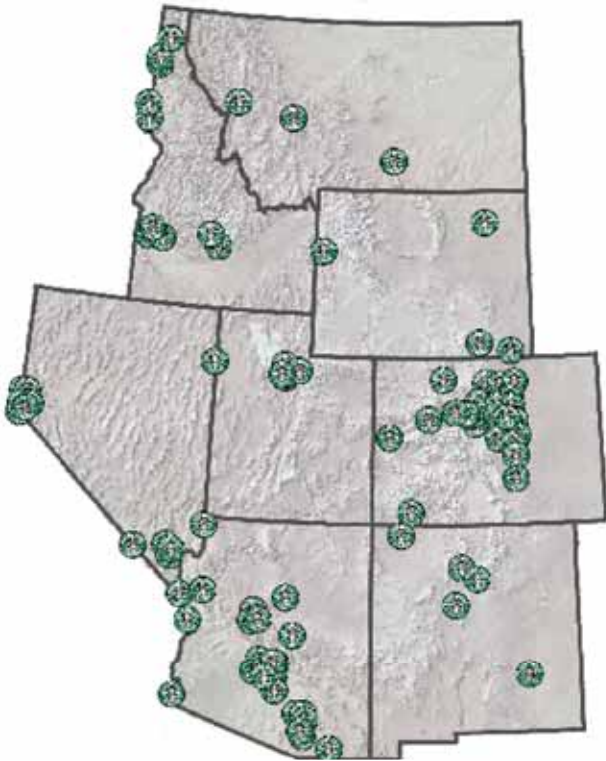
Federal Land Ownership in the Rockies

- Native American Lands
- U.S. Forest Service Lands
- Bureau of Land Management Lands
- National Park Service Lands
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Lands
- Other Federally Owned Lands

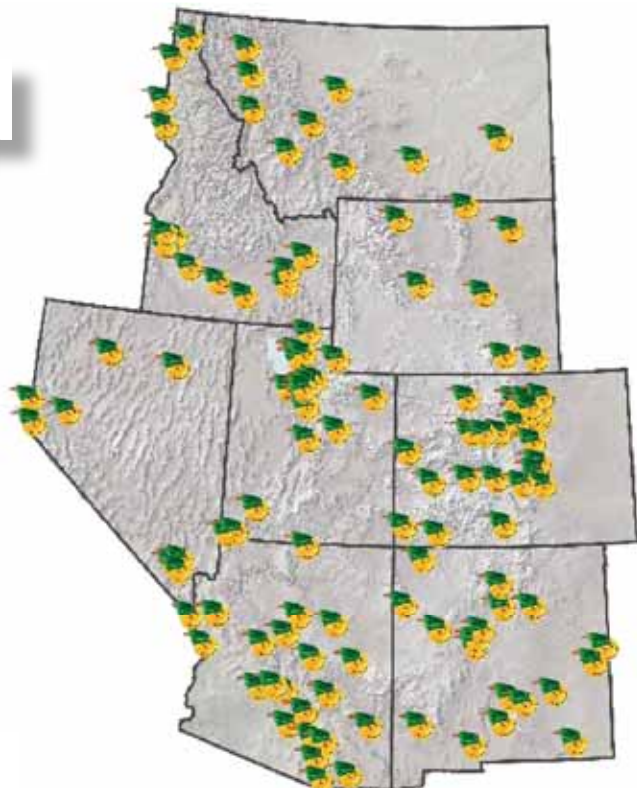


Glacier National Park

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION AT A GLANCE



The Latte Landscape - Places Containing at Least one Starbucks



Rolling Back Prices in the New Rockies - Places Containing at Least one Wal-Mart Store

HOME AND HOPE IN THE ROCKIES

The 2004 State of the Rockies Challenge Essay by Ed Marston

Colorado College would have us take the pulse of the eight-state Rocky Mountain Region.

I attempted to do approximately that over 19 years as publisher of *High Country News*. Colorado College has adopted eight of the 10 states, and one- million square miles, my paper covered. I hope you will allow me to stretch the college's region to my 10-state interior West.

It's not a major difference since any attempt to precisely define the region is impossible. The 10 states don't follow the contours of a definable interior West, so I immediately lop off the Washington and Oregon coasts, where the population is, and the great plains of Montana, Colorado, and New Mexico, because the coast and the plains have very little public land and because their cultures and landscapes are so different from that of the interior West.

Nor do I pay a lot of attention to metropolitan areas. I can't lop off the Salt Lake City and Denver metro areas since they're at the geographic heart of the region, so I create exclusionary donut holes.

Like CC, I also leave out the dog whose tail the interior West is: California, with its 35 million people and immense economy. But I include eastern California, which means I've thrown in a chunk of an 11th state. But how could I leave out eastern California? What could be more "interior" than Death Valley and Pyramid Lake and the immense salt valleys of the Great Basin?

The human core of the region I'm left with is the small-town West and the federal lands in which those communities are embedded as well, of course, as the Indians nations, with the largest being the Navajo Nation. With that as background, does it make sense to produce a report card on this region, made up politically of states with straightedge boundaries ruled across the western heart of the continent, without regard to natural or human boundaries formed by rivers and mountain ranges and cultural communities?

We are talking here of the former Empty Quarter of the nation, a term that is becoming

a misnomer at a rapid rate. At the moment, the former Empty Quarter is half empty, or half full, depending on whether you're an optimist or a pessimist, and depending on whether you want it to be empty or full.

Obviously, a statistical report card can be created about this land: we can enumerate population by age and income, per capita and gross income, divorce rates, sexually transmitted disease rates, education, number of Wal-Marts, number of Starbucks, number of Subarus, and so on. Then we can assign our values to those numbers and from that determine the "health" of the West.

But Colorado College, I think, is after something more essential than the A's and B's and F's that make up conventional report cards. It wants the scribbled notes at the bottom of report cards, in which the teacher evaluates the core of the student. It is after the essence of the region.

Does the region have an essence? Wallace Stegner wrote it was aridity. Ansel Adams said in black and white photos that it was the wettest part of the region – the high country. Water developers said in massively poured concrete that it was our ability to create an oasis culture in the desert.

The essence of my West are its federal lands. Of the one million square miles, 500,000 are owned by the federal government. The land is indivisible, as the Pledge of Allegiance describes the larger nation to be. The public land is owned collectively, in joint tenancy, with all the other 275 million Americans.

That is our legacy as Westerners. It is also our curse and challenge. We live amidst this collectively owned land mass. Because it is collective, we must live with other Westerners and with all Americans in ways that only the Alaskans also know.

We are like the residents of the medieval cathedral towns: The public land we live nearest to symbolizes America in the same way cathedrals once symbolized Christendom. Although we often deceive ourselves, we are no more in charge of or own



lands than the people who lived in the cathedral towns were in charge of the cathedrals. Nor should we dream of being fully in charge. It will not happen. It should not happen.

But we can dream of being responsible for those lands, and for learning to live with them in ways that accommodate our needs and the needs of the other land owners.

We are not doing that at present. Other Americans do not trust us to be local stewards of the land. And they are right.

This distrust has created misery for us and for them. Our destiny is tied to our relationship to the federal lands, and we have not yet learned to live alongside them in ways the rest of America finds acceptable. So we are in a state of perpetual political and economic struggle. A major result for us Westerners is that we lack sovereignty. We live as Southerners did during Reconstruction, occupied by an often federal force, and for many of the same dismal reasons.

The examples of lost sovereignty are many. We had no control over the carving up of the West by drawing of straight state boundary lines that cut up watersheds, divided human communities, and separated natural resources from those who used them.

But it was Westerners who extended rectilin-

HOME AND HOPE IN THE ROCKIES

earity to the county level. To take a Colorado example, try some winter day to get from Marble, in Gunnison County, to the county seat in Gunnison in under 2-1/2 hours. This could be fixed by land trades among three counties. But that is not going to happen in our present state of development.

The most famous example of the West's lack of sovereignty came early in the last century, when President Theodore Roosevelt and forester Gifford Pinchot created many of the forest reserves over a long White House night. This loss of sovereignty was justified, and is applauded today. But we should see it for what it was: a childish, destructive, greedy West was treated as it deserved. John D. Rockefeller later on did the same thing in Wyoming, by snatching Grand Teton National Park away from the residents of northwest Wyoming.

The trend continues. Most bitterly for Utahns, there was the secretive creation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument by the Clinton Administration in 1996, followed toward the end of the Clinton Administration by the creation or expansion of 22 national monuments.

It is not just a conservation or environmental agenda that runs over Western sovereignty. The Carter Administration ran over Alaskan sovereignty by protecting lands against the will of Alaskans. At the same time, Carter was running over the interior West through a federally subsidized push for synthetic fuels. If a region lacks sovereignty, sooner or later all sides in the region are gored.

If you don't remember synfuels, look at how the present Bush Administration is forcing gas development down our collective western throat.

The West suffers not just from the actions imposed on it by *force majeure*, but also the loss of morale that comes from being the roadkill of national politics and national economics. Does the nation need to get rid of radioactive waste? Does it need to base missiles somewhere? Does it need 5,000 square miles of airspace so that Top Guns can practice bombing and dog fighting? Are we short

of oil or natural gas? Do we need space for recreation? Or for solitude?

Eyes turn west.

In political reaction, we elect people to Washington because they hate the federal government and they hate the values held by other Americans. It makes for great sagebrush-stirring rhetoric and continued powerlessness.

I don't blame Teddy Roosevelt or Jimmy Carter or Clinton-Babbitt or even George W. Bush or corporations or national green groups for running over Westerners. I blame us for failing to even try to figure out how to become sovereign.

To take an example of regional sovereignty, although the World Trade Center site is now a national shrine, not even Californians are trying to tell the New York region how to rebuild. Our goal should be to become that strong, that sovereign.

"Colorado College, I think, is after something more essential than the A's and B's and F's that make up conventional report cards. It wants the scribbled notes at the bottom of report cards, in which the teacher evaluates the core of the student. It is after the essence of the region."

Let's return to the Colorado College report card. If I were filling it out, after the few A's and mostly C's about education levels, divorce rates, growth rates, and especially public finance, I'd write at the bottom:

"Johnny has no control over the important things in his life. More seriously, he shows little interest in gaining control, beyond habitual whining and outbursts of anger."

What can we do to gain control over our lives and our region? How can we move from Sagebrush Rebellion behavior, which is the mark of the powerless, to sovereignty?



The traditional path to regional power has been to use the federal treasury and the federal lands to bootstrap growth. After the initial looting of the West's gold, bison, beaver, forests, and arable land, attention turned to raiding the U.S. Treasury to build water projects. Water projects create a construction industry, as well as a political base, symbolized by such men as the late Colorado Congressman Wayne Aspinall and Arizona Senator Carl Hayden. Once built, they create an agricultural industry. And because irrigation, unlike dryland farming, requires a high level of cooperation, irrigated agriculture also builds community.

But Western leaders saw irrigated farming as stopgap, a prelude to industrial and residential development. The desert was to bloom, but only for awhile.

Everyone is complicitous here. When the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under President George H.W. Bush rejected the Colorado Front Range's application to build a large dam and reservoir at Two Forks in 1990, among those suing to overturn was the Colorado

Cattlemen's Association. The defeat of the environmental movement has been part hurt and part help to those who dream of conventional development in the West. Environmentalists stopped many projects, such as the dam in Dinosaur National Monument and the two dams in the Grand Canyon.

HOME AND HOPE IN THE ROCKIES



Two Forks was a victory for rural interests. But CCA didn't want to defend rural interests; it wanted to defend ranchers' ability to sell out to urban interests.

Two Forks has not been the only defeat for the conversion of rural lives and economies to urban ones. The Carter push for energy development in the late 1970s and early 1980s collapsed with energy prices. Even an \$88 billion federal subsidy couldn't make that cow fly.

Environmentalists also provided the only alternative vision to traditional development. We promote a natural West, in which wildlife and grand vistas become an engine that drives the region.

But by creating what have come to be seen as "amenities" – wilderness, national parks, national monuments, wild and scenic rivers, endangered places – environmentalists attracted population and economies that clash with pristine, protected landscapes. Environmentalism transformed the West by making it romantic and famous – thank you, Edward Abbey – and created a growth dynamic it did not foresee and cannot control.

The result has been a convergence; traditional dreams of conventional development have merged with the activity spurred by environmentalism to create one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. In the Third World, economic development dampens population growth. In the American West, it spurs population as rural land uses such as logging and ranching give way to urban economies and

their denser populations.

Since most of us live in or on the fringes of the land conversion, we see urbanization as endemic. It is not.

Of the West's 500,000 square miles of federal land, approximately 420,000 square miles are grazed under permit by 22,000 ranchers. In order to graze cattle or sheep on federal land, a rancher must own private base property. So attached to these 420,000 square miles of grazed federal lands are another 170,000 square miles of private land on which hay is raised in the summer and on which the mother herd then winters, living off the hay. 170,000 square miles are almost Colorado and Utah put together. In addition, the interior West has a large number of ranches with no attached federal grazing land.

In addition to the ranchlands, there are also huge expanses of private forested land in the hands of the timber companies.

At an accelerating rate, we are converting private ranches and industrial forests into urban settlements: ski resorts, subdivisions made up of 40-acre "lots," ranchettes made up of a few to 20-acre lots, and so on. Pretty land goes for the highest prices, but there is an urban market for any piece of undeveloped land in the West.

Environmentalists, some of whom think about the West as a whole, especially as an ecological whole, are torn. On the one hand, they see roads as the major enemy of ecological integrity, physical fragmentation of the land as the beginning of the end.

On the other hand, many of them look at the decline in species and water quality, and have decided that grazing is the enemy of ecological health. And so they do what they can to drive ranchers and cattle off the land. On other fronts, they do what they can to end logging and mining.

In the name of a pristine and unfragmented landscape, some environmentalists fight land use economies and practices that keep land open and that minimize roads. They look at the way ranching and logging and mining are done today, and decide that those econo-

mies cannot be reformed. Large parts of the environmental movement have morphed from a reform movement to a revolutionary movement, abetting the transformation of the West from a place of rural economies that depend on an open landscape to a place of intense, urban development.

But this is not a French Revolution kind of revolution. This is a revolution that pits well-educated environmentalists against working people in ranching and extraction. Environmentalists have failed to develop a strategy that distinguishes corporations from their employees. And in the case of ranching, of course, there are very few corporations to be distinguished.

So in drawing up a report card for the West, I would give C's and D's to ranching and logging and farming, and I would give F's to oil and gas development. But I would also give a D-minus to environmentalists who would drive rural economies and rural people off the land, rather than work to reform them and thereby keep the land open.

But not all environmentalists get D-minuses. The nation's 1,200 land trusts are working to keep rural places rural. In some places, land trusts protect open space around urban areas. This is mostly esthetics and recreation. But a significant number of land protection outfits are concerned at least in part with protecting working landscapes and their economies. The Nature Conservancy, for example, owns a vast amount of land. Some of that land is purely species protection, but many of its ranches try to protect species and rural economies.

Just as it is hard to define the West with boundaries, it is hard to say who and who is not an environmentalist. Land trusts, for example, are not confined to capital-E environmentalists. Cattlemen's associations, such as those in Colorado and New Mexico, have land trusts designed to keep ranches in business. And the Montana Land Trust Alliance, which few have heard of, holds 515,000 acres (800 square miles) of conservation easements from ranchers.

If you define environmentalism as a movement to protect landscapes and biodiversity, then land trusts that focus on ranching are one of

HOME AND HOPE IN THE ROCKIES

its most vital parts, lying at the intersection of more healthful food and healthy land. And land trusts are simply one part of a broader movement.

In eastern Oregon and western Idaho, there is a ranchers' cooperative called Oregon Country Beef. Something like 70 ranches with something like 70,000 mother cows, raise beef cattle without hormones and antibiotics, with the co-op's ranchers pledged to enhance rather than just protect the land.

They sell their beef under long-term contract at stable prices into upscale West Coast markets, like the Whole Foods chain. The success of this 15-year old co-op refutes the claim that public land ranching is doomed for economic reasons. The scale of this operation, which covers several hundred thousand acres of public and private land, refutes the argument that ecologically and economically sound ranching is found only here and there.

A different example is provided by the Malpai Borderlands Group in southern Arizona and New Mexico. To make a very long and beautiful story short, ranchers in that very dry territory were being driven out of business by brush, which was taking over their range, driving out vegetation palatable to cows and wildlife, and destroying watersheds.

The fires that had kept the land healthy for millennia had been stamped out by overgrazing. Lightning still struck, but dry, standing grass to carry the fires was gone. The ranchers couldn't afford to take the cattle off the land long enough to grow grass long enough to carry fire.

They were caught in a death spiral until Drum Hadley, a lifelong cowboy and heir to the Budweiser fortune, bought the Gray Ranch and let his neighbors graze their cattle on the land for the three years it took to restore their land through burning.

Instead of cash payment for his forage, the Gray Ranch requires that those who use its grass bank put conservation easements on their property equal to the cost of the three years of grazing.

The grass bank has created both a community and a vast and spreading circle of protected land. It's western-style land-use planning, done by agreement among neighbors.

Which brings us back to sovereignty, which is really the question of the West's relationship to its own metropolitan areas and to the rest of the nation.

As we noted in our report card, Johnny West lacks sovereignty because the nation does not trust him to manage or even live near the federal lands. This would be bad enough if it only affected the West. However, the region has 20 U.S. senators, and so the West's choleric disposition, as expressed by its U.S. senators in reaction to our loss of sovereignty, is a problem for all Americans.

Can progressive ranchers, driven by their own economic needs, alter this tragic dynamic? Not

"I would give C's and D's to ranching and logging and farming, and I would give F's to oil and gas development. But I would also give a D-minus to environmentalists who would drive rural economies and rural people off the land, rather than work to reform them and thereby keep the land open."

by themselves. But if a significant number of non-ranchers recognize what is at stake, and work with ranchers, I think the movement I have sketched can spread.

The movement has two parts. From one side, the so-called extractive industries have to figure out how to extract wealth in ways consistent with the health and beauty and openness of the western landscapes. Ranching is interesting not just because it controls so much private land, but because some ranches are figuring out exactly how to do that. They are showing the way for logging, water development, oil and gas and mining.



From the other side, the environmental movement has to figure out how to achieve its goals without acting like the British colonists dealing with an uncivilized people. The movement has to recognize that it has created a conflict with the region's working people, which should long ago have sent it a very loud warning signal.

If we can't each do this, we doom the West to the suburban, big-box sameness that characterizes, that suffocates, so much of America. But if we do have the largeness of spirit and imagination to undertake this effort, then we face a much brighter world.

By

Ed Marston
Senior Journalist and Former Editor
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ROCKIES PERSPECTIVES: THE SONORAN INSTITUTE

A new economic role for public lands: Time to revisit the multiple-use philosophy

By far the most defining characteristic of the West is the presence of vast expanses of publicly owned land. Over half of the West's land is in public ownership and in some states, such as Arizona and Nevada, that number is as high as 90 percent. Although the figures vary from county to county, it is not uncommon to find counties that are over eighty percent publicly owned. It is therefore not surprising that the second most distinguishing characteristic of the West are the heated debates surrounding management of these public lands. These debates play themselves out most vocally in the rural portions of the West, where employment options are limited.

Some argue quite strongly that we should continue to mine, log and develop energy resources on Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. For example, when the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument was created, Alarik Myrin, the Chair of the Standing Committee Energy, Natural Resources, and Agriculture of the Utah State Senate declared: "All Americans, not just residents of Utah, will pay dearly in the long run for the unnecessary federal environmental extremism that sets up unreasonable roadblocks to productive uses of natural resources."

Yet others, equally vocal, prefer that public lands be protected for their recreational value, and this is also economically important.

To understand the economic role of public lands, it helps to first look at how things have changed, especially in the rural areas. The economy of the West has changed so significantly in the last 30 years that economic dependence on public lands for mining, energy development, logging, and grazing has become the exception, and not the rule.

Employment in mining, logging, and energy development in the non-metropolitan portion of the West, on both public and private lands, currently represents about eight percent of total personal income, down from 20 percent in 1970. In the last three decades, seven percent of the real income growth in the last 30 years was from resource-related industries (mining, energy development, the wood products industry).

There are few truly resource-dependent counties left in the West. Of the 414 western counties; 43 counties have greater than 20 percent of county employment in agriculture; three counties have more than 20 percent dependence on employment in mining, oil, gas and energy development; and only 11 counties have more than 20 percent dependence on manufacturing. Since the wood products sectors are a subset of manufacturing, it can be safely stated that few counties, likely fewer than six, are more than 20 percent dependent on the wood products industry as a contributor to total employment.

In contrast to the traditional staples of the economy of the non-metro portion of the West, the largest source of new personal income growth in the last three decades was non-labor sources, accounting for 40 percent of net growth. These sources include money

"The focus now needs to shift, away from the battle over multiple uses, and towards creating a setting in the West for entrepreneurship to flourish."

from investments and retirement income. The second-largest source of income growth has been the service-related industries, accounting for another thirty-one percent of growth. These "services" include high-wage occupations in health, engineering, and business services, but also includes relatively low-wage occupations such as restaurant and hotel workers. Clearly, the traditional staples of the West's economy have for some time now not been the source of new jobs and income. It is unlikely that they ever will be.

Given that the economy of the rural West has changed significantly, the time is long overdue to investigate the multiple-use philosophy that guides the management of both the BLM and Forest Service lands. The constant tug and pull between competing uses overlooks the real value of public lands. In reality, public lands play a vital role in creating a setting that makes the adjacent communities attractive



Ray Rasker

places to live and do business.

Public lands help attract service workers. With an airport and an educated workforce, some towns are able to attract the high-wage services, such as finance, engineering, design and computer programming. Public lands, and the amenities they provide, also help to attract small-scale manufacturing and telecommunications industries. They also attract retirees and investment income, which in turn stimulates other sectors, such as home building and health services.

As the numbers illustrate, the transition away from resource dependence, and towards a new role for public lands as an attractant to a diverse, modern economy, has already happened.

The focus now needs to shift, away from the battle over multiple uses, and towards creating a setting in the West for entrepreneurship to flourish. A scenic environment is an essential ingredient, but it is not enough. Access to larger markets by way of airports, educational facilities, friendly, livable communities, and protected scenic vistas are also important. Together, these form the real staples of the West for the next three decades.

By

Ray Rasker, Ph.D.
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Perspectives from the Center For the Rocky Mountain West at the University of Montana

The Rocky Mountain West region addressed by this regional studies and public policy institute stretches from the northern reaches of the Canadian Rockies to the southern Rockies of New Mexico. Often described as the region “settled last and settled least,” the Rocky Mountain West has now become one of North America’s fastest growing regions. Far-reaching – sometimes wrenching – economic, social, political and cultural change is occurring in the region. Missoula, Montana, lies squarely in the heart of this region and The University of Montana and its Center for the Rocky Mountain West are well positioned both geographically and intellectually to contribute to the study and interpretation of who we Westerners have been and what changes we are experiencing, and to provide assistance to decision makers as they better position communities, states and provinces within the region for this change.

The center’s strategic planning process has resulted in this definition of our mission:

The Center for the Rocky Mountain West is a resource for a region which its people care deeply about – a resource they can use to better understand the region’s past and present and to explore and share aspirations for its future.

With a well-defined mission, a supportive institutional base, and a growing network of regional partners, the Center has, in its first decade, come steadily to a clearer understanding of our particular niche, focused on cross-jurisdictional and cross-disciplinary work.

The Center continually seeks effective methods of developing opportunities for policymakers, regional scholars, area leaders and others interested in the Rocky Mountain region to discuss where the West has been, where it currently is, and to deliberate on its future.

The Center has, for example, hosted four Summer Institutes in Missoula and co-hosted one in Calgary, Alberta. The Institutes are designed to bring together people from

throughout the Rocky Mountain West and beyond whose work complements the interests and pursuits of the Center.

Another important venue has been *Headwaters News* (<http://www.headwatersnews.org>), a daily on-line news service for the Rocky Mountain West, stretching from the Canadian Rockies to the Mexican border. Initially funded by a grant from the Hewlett Foundation, *Headwaters News* began in early 1999 as an innovative way to provide the Rocky Mountain region with a daily snapshot of itself. The editor would scan dozens of online publications for news, issues and opinion that tell readers something about the historic changes occurring across the region, from northern Alberta and B.C. to southern New Mexico and Arizona.

Most newspapers, particularly the smaller ones that constitute the majority in the Rock-

“The Center for the Rocky Mountain West is a resource for a region which its people care deeply about - a resource they can use to better understand the region’s past and present and to explore and share aspirations for its future.”

ies, focus their news on their immediate distribution area. Bigger enterprises have bureaus in state capitals and in Washington, and all rely on the Associated Press and a smattering of other wire services to deliver news from beyond their own reporters’ reach. They deliver their news within their area, and even their online product appeals mainly to those with an interest in that particular community. *Headwaters*, however, draws from the entire region, showing the relationships among similar issues in geographically diverse areas, illustrating different sentiments and approaches to common problems and, in general and in detail, adding a regional context to each single story in the day’s news. In essence, *Headwaters* holds a mirror to the Rocky Mountain region each weekday morning, and shows



Daniel Kemmis

the region where it is and why — an essential starting point for determining where westerners want to go and how to get there.

Since its inception, *Headwaters* has evolved from a simple Web page designed by hand each morning to a sophisticated, database-driven site that summarizes and provides links to three dozen carefully selected articles from around the region each morning, accessible either by Web page or email subscriptions. We have periodically updated and expanded our list of sources; added searchable archives; piloted a weekly Perspective page featuring a guest opinion column from thoughtful regional observers and policy or opinion leaders that provides context and perspective on key themes emerging from the on-going tracking activity; compiled a list of relevant stories from *Headwaters*’ archives; and provided an analysis of those stories written by the editor.

By

Daniel Kemmis
Director
Center for the Rocky Mountain West
and Regional Policy Associate
Missoula, Montana

ROCKIES PERSPECTIVES: THE MOUNTAIN STUDIES INSTITUTE

Research and Education in the San Juan Mountains, Colorado

I recently gained some perspective on my life and work with the Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) in the San Juan Mountains from the window seat of a plane from Durango to Denver on a sunny March day. We took off and some 10 minutes later I finally looked out the window. Snow blanketed the peaks and ground below. A man across the aisle yelled to his son, "Look, it's Weminuche Pass, the Rio Grande Reservoir... It's fun to look at where we've been." I asked later – they told me they'd been backpacking in that country. Indeed, in the context of working for the past two years to establish a new mountain research and education institution deep in the heart of the San Juan high country, it's important to take time away to reflect and gain perspective on not only "where we've been," but also where we are and where we plan to go.

A researcher contracted by the Forest Service interviewed me recently to understand how the Forest Service can best support communities situated adjacent to the public lands they manage. She wanted to know about people's relationships to forests and the benefits of living near forests, and she asked if we had a collective identity. I started to think about Silverton and the San Juan Mountains, and how I am going about my life and work in a community and region confronting change. I told her that each of us mountain dwellers has a very personal connection to the mountains, and that is what unites all of us, hailing as we do from very diverse backgrounds, interests, and sets of values. We share a love of high alpine-living, the extremes of altitude, sun, snow and wind, and the isolation that we still find in Silverton in 2004 during the winter and shoulder seasons.

But Silverton is just one of 15 incorporated towns from the foothills (6,000 ft.) to the alpine zone (> 14,000 ft.) of southwest Colorado's San Juan Mountains, and it is a very good question, "what unites us?" It is one MSI is asking in determining how we go about our work from the highlands to the lowlands in the southern Rocky Mountains. How can we be relevant to a diverse region where social, economic, and cultural transition mirrors the dynamically changing landscape between mountain and desert environments where we

work on the edge of the Colorado Plateau.

MSI's mission is to enhance understanding and sustainable use of the San Juan Mountains through research and education. By making existing information available, and by fostering the collection and dissemination of new information to those who can use it, we are working to build a regional learning community and economy. We have developed an electronic database (viewed via our Web site at www.mountainstudies.org) on all aspects of the San Juan Mountains. We are developing field-based education programs for college students, K-12 teachers, and the general public. And we are building a physical research infrastructure in which scientific and cultural investigation can take place.

Capitalizing on the magic of Silverton and the San Juans, MSI is creating a place where students, researchers, educators, and the general public can gather in a stunning natural setting and be part of a dynamic intellectual environment. We expect that the synergy of people and place, and the integration of knowledge about the San Juan Mountain region from the physical, biological, social, and cultural disciplines, will yield fuller understanding than the individual disciplines can provide on their own.

This is a place where local knowledge and academic knowledge can combine to produce and communicate useful information to land and environmental managers, elected officials, and the public within and beyond the region. At MSI's 2002 conference, "A Mountain Summit: Communities, Culture, Conservation," celebrating MSI's founding and the International Year of Mountains, some 80 participants identified seven areas of regional interest and concern: 1) Recreation; 2) Land Use/Natural Resources; 3) Economic Development; 4) Water Issues; 5) Education; 6) Natural Hazards; 7) Cultural and Historic Issues.

MSI's research program, at this writing under development, will in part be framed to encourage visiting researchers and their students to focus on topics of concern to regional residents about our mountain environment and communities. What, for example, might be the



Ellen R. Stein

impacts of climate change on the San Juan Mountain snow pack and rivers that feed our region and the entire Southwest? In adopting a "mountain systems" approach, investigations will be encouraged that explore the interactions of San Juan Mountain people and their biophysical and institutional environments region wide.

MSI's State of the San Juans conference will be focused this year on "San Juan Mountains Science and Research: Linking Communities, Researchers, and Practitioners." In September 2004, many people who live and work in the region will gather for two days to present and discuss academic and agency research; results of local watershed-based assessment and restoration efforts; and current natural, economic, and social conditions and trends in the San Juan Mountains.

Mountains are elaborate environments characterized by complex topography, multiple ecological zones, and built-in biological diversity (Smethurst 2000).^{*} San Juan Mountain community and environmental issues are as complex as the topography. The Mountain Studies Institute is striving to improve scientific and cultural understanding of these complex mountain issues, and be relevant to a region responding to change.

By

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San Juan Mountains
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^{*}Smethurst, D. 2000. Mountain Geography. The Geographical Review 90 (1) 35-56.

THE GUNNISON HEADWATERS CONFERENCE

Communities Confronting Change in the “Headwaters” Region of the Southern Rockies

For most of the 20th century, most of the towns and small cities in the mountain valleys of the Southern Rockies – the “Headwaters Region” of the Southwest – participated dutifully, if not always enthusiastically, in the American expansion of the 500-year European “modernity project:” the unleashing of the creative individual, unconstrained by traditional political economies based on religion and aristocracy, for the construction of an urban civilization that would pull together science, technology and democratic ideals in the mythic “rising tide that would lift all boats” around the globe.

The mountain-valley towns and cities of the Southern Rockies came into the modernity project as what Jane Jacobs described in “Cities and the Wealth of Nations” as “supply regions” – “economic grotesques ... disproportionately shaped by the markets of distant cities.” Colorado’s false-front tent cities, in what Colorado historian Duane Smith called “the urban frontier,” were “economic grotesques” that succeeded or failed solely on the basis of whether or not a railroad arrived to haul their mineral ores, coal, or livestock to those “distant cities.” The mountains of rusting tin cans indicated their physical dependence on imports from those cities, as their “opera houses” and grand hotels indicated their psychological and cultural orientation.

But despite such grandiose beginnings, most of the mountain-valley communities slumped into the chronic boom-bust poverty typical of places that export only raw materials priced by their buyers, then have to pay top dollar for the imports they need at prices set by the sellers. The most discouraging city-bound export from these communities was their own children.

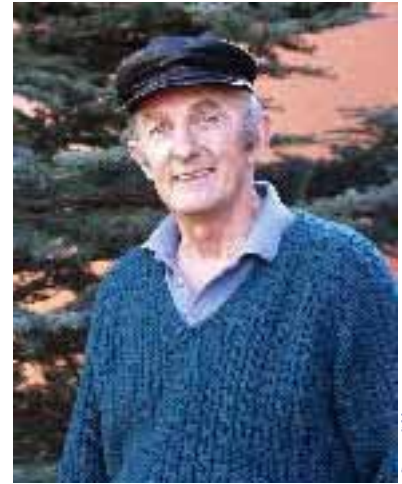
This mountain valley culture in the Southern Rockies began to change in the late 1960s, however, in what demographers called the “nonmetropolitan population turnaround:” the country-to-city migration, uninterrupted since the 1830s, began to waver, with clumps of years when the trend reversed – a net gain of people moving from the metropolitan areas into the nonmetropolitan regions. A 2002 Loyola University study by demographers Calvin Beale and Kenneth Johnson showed that

this “turnaround” has been most noticeable and persistent in “327 nonmetropolitan counties with significant concentrations of recreational activity.” Every county in Colorado’s “Headwaters Region” is on that list.

This region of mountain valleys today reflects a political and economic tension between what might be called its “pre-urbanites” and the “post-urbanites” brought in by that population turnaround. The former – mostly natives of their communities – cling to the “lunchbucket” vision of active mines, sawmills, good cattle prices, and the other memories or dreams of successful supply regions with good industrial jobs to “keep our kids here.” They generally believe in a traditional concept of economic growth. While their economic power is in decline, they often retain a disproportionate political power due to their longtime presence.

The immigrant “post-urbanites,” on the other hand, mostly come from metropolitan, even cosmopolitan, backgrounds. Some of them are young, with no established careers; some are retirees at the end of successful careers; some are in the middle years, trying to import careers from the modern world to the postmodern. Most of them are educated – Colorado’s mountain counties have some of the highest average education levels in the nation. What all the “post-urbanites” have in common is an attraction to the mountains because they are beautiful, challenging, and interesting – but also because the mountains and their communities at least appear to offer alternatives to the increasingly homogenous and dense urban-industrial world they think or hope they are leaving behind. While many are liberals in their national and global political orientations, they tend to become economic and political conservatives in their local politics, in not wanting to see any large or rapid change in their adopted mountain valleys, especially not in the natural environment.

Despite obvious tensions over economic futures, there are areas of consensus among the pre-urbanites and post-urbanites of the Headwaters Region. Both groups acknowledge the extent to which their “quality of life” beyond economic considerations derives from the region’s natural qualities. Both appreciate



George Sibley

the region’s “agricultural heritage” of mountain ranches, albeit for different reasons – the pre-urbanites because it is a working landscape, the post-urbanites because it is an open landscape where human works appears to lie lightly. Both groups have collaborated on the purchase of conservation easements for valley-floor ranchland. Both groups dislike – again for different reasons – the modern industrial tourism that is proving to be as environmentally and culturally degenerative in its own ways as the old pre-urban extractive industries.

Through its annual fall “Headwaters Conferences,” Western State College of Colorado in Gunnison – centrally located in the mountain-valley region – is attempting to establish an open public forum whereby a region with many characteristics from the traditional Jeffersonian strands of American cultural evolution can explore areas of convergence with the newer, post-urban, post-modern strands, to develop workable alternatives to the modern urban-industrial age.

By

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THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION - AN OVERVIEW



The Continental Divide literally forms the spine of an eight state region that we refer to at Colorado College as “the Rockies.” Containing 863,242 square miles and 24% of the landmass and 6.5% of the 2000 population in the United States, it is a region of spectacular natural beauty, harsh climate and soil conditions, huge tracts of sparsely settled lands juxtaposed next to rapidly growing urban areas. These vast open spaces continue to capture the imagination of residents and visitors alike: a suggested promise of rugged individualism, the reality of recreation and solitude that appears endless but in fact is limited and fragile, challenges to extract vital natural resources without damaging the land and thus diminishing its heritage to the future, the responsibility to form patterns of human habitation and resource management to match the grandeur of the scenery.

At first glance perhaps, the view millions receive as they fly “over” the Rockies region on their way to other destinations, the region appears to be a huge empty quarter. Clusters of dense population make the region 1.4% developed (urban or built-up land, including rural transportation corridors), confirming what our eyes tell us from afar. Looking more closely, patterns emerge of dense agricultural activity, roads, and clusters of people in towns, cities and large metropolitan areas. Water defines life in the region, historically along streams and in the rich river bottom areas, and increasingly today in areas where water has been pumped from the ground and diverted on the surface to feed agricultural, municipal and industrial demands. Equally defining of the Rockies is the 46% of its land publicly owned and managed in a stunning array of types, from BLM grazing lands, to forests controlled by the Forest Service, to the “crown jewels” of nature and culture under National Park Service and to formal or informal wilderness designation. Some chafe under “absentee” management from Washington D.C., while others look to this same management to preserve the public domain and its health for current and future generations.

So we have a region that is vast, rugged, and at the same time fragile, varied in the density and pattern of population and economic activ-

by Walter Hecox and F. Patrick Holmes

What's your perception of the Rockies?

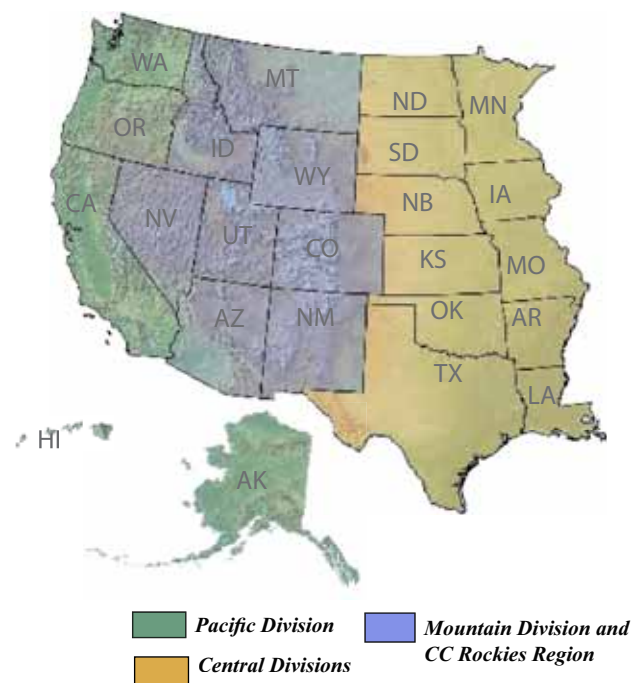
Myth	Reality
Rural	Only 3 percent of the population lived in completely rural counties in 1970 and only 1.7 percent did in 2000.
Agricultural and Natural Resource-Based	Only 4.2 percent of the employment base of the region was in these industries.
Less Educated	25 percent of the region holds a bachelor's degree or higher. That's a percent higher than the U.S.
Caucasian	Roughly 20 percent of the population in the Rockies is of Latino ethnic background.
Large Number of Government Workers	In actuality, only 16 percent of the population works for the government in the region and only a fraction of that works in matters concerning the public domain. Most government employees work for the military.

ity, alluring to waves of tourists and migrants wishing to partake of its openness and beauty. For over a century boom-bust cycles of human habitation and economic activity have alternated to make life in the Rockies challenging and uncertain. A review of how the Rockies have changed over past decades, when joined to a snapshot of the entire region as it looks today, helps us understand why it has integrity as a physiographic region connected by its Continental Divide spine running along the crest of the Rockies from the Canadian Border

in the north to Mexico in the south.

The eight state Rockies region can be viewed through three primary lenses; its people, employment, and income/earnings. Variations within the region by state help provide a glimpse of the similarities and differences across the region's political boundaries. What stands out are the similarities the region has among the states and when contrasted with its neighboring multi-state Pacific Coast and central Midwest regions (shown in Map 1.)

Map 1: Census Divisions of the Western United States



THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION - AN OVERVIEW



THE PEOPLE

Over the past 30 years, the Rockies has grown by 119% in total population, when compared to the U.S. growth rate of 39% as well as to the Midwest Region of 42%; not even the Pacific Census Division, growing at a rate of 70%, has grown faster. People have been flooding into the Rockies in search of the region's allure, but their location defies the image of a rural Rockies. Urbanization has accompanied this rapid growth, with the Rockies rural population (those living in counties with an aggregate urban population of less than 2,500 people) shrinking from 3.0% in 1970 to 1.7% in 2001! In the face of this rapid growth, not all portions of the Rockies have shared in this population boom; Map 2 shows counties whose population has increased, stayed steady, and shrunk from 1970 to 2000. This is a stark reminder that dramatic changes in the structure of economic activity and in the demographic profile of the region's population reinforce the boom-bust nature of regional change.

Table 1 profiles demographic indicators for the Rocky Mountains and the

comparison regions of the Western U.S. We see that people now living in the Rockies are relatively young (median age 33.6 years) but with a significant and growing portion above age 65 (11.2%), diverse in racial-ethnic origin (80% Caucasian, 20% Latino of any race, 3% Native American and 3% African-American), while 20% speak a language other than English at home. They are largely born in the U.S. (90%), with 46% living in the same house in both 1995 and 2000, while another 8% lived in the same state over this five-year period. One quarter of those age 25+ have a high school degree as their highest educational achievement and another 25% with a bachelor's degree or higher. The Rockies serves many who are part-time residents: 5% of housing units are for seasonal or recreational use, significantly above neighboring regions and the U.S. Poverty is present among individuals (12%) at rates near the national average, and in families with related children age 0-17 (7%) at levels below other regions and the U.S.

Map 2: Population Growth in the Rocky Mountains, 1970-2000

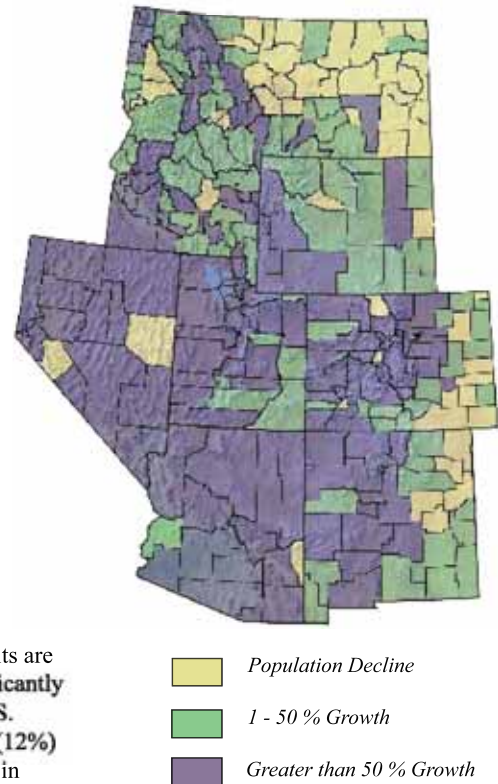


Table 1 - The People: Census 2000 Indicators	The Rocky Mountains	Percent of Total	Pacific Division	Percent of Total	Central Divisions	Percent of Total	The United States	Percent of Total
Total Population	18,172,295	100%	45,025,637	100%	64,392,776	100%	281,421,906	100%
Median Age (years)	33.6		33.8		35.6		35.3	
Population Age 65+	2,029,846	11.2%	4,892,283	10.9%	8,259,075	12.8%	34,991,753	12.4%
Caucasian Population	14,591,933	80.3%	28,682,141	63.7%	53,833,631	83.6%	211,460,626	75.1%
Latino (of any Race) Population	3,543,573	19.5%	11,796,930	26.2%	3,124,532	4.9%	35,305,818	12.6%
African-American Population	523,283	2.9%	2,553,601	5.7%	6,499,733	10.1%	34,658,190	12.3%
Native-American Population	614,553	3.4%	573,436	1.3%	399,490	0.6%	2,475,956	0.9%
Housing Units for Seasonal or Recreational Use	356,509	4.7%	381,120	2.3%	714,853	2.7%	3,578,718	3.1%
Pop. 25+, High School Graduate (Highest Attainment)	2,922,222	25.7%	6,167,869	21.6%	13,451,035	32.4%	52,168,981	28.6%
Pop. 25+, Bachelor's Degree or Higher	2,873,692	25%	7,599,805	27%	9,516,347	23%	44,462,605	24%
Pop. 5+, Living in Same House in 1995	7,768,896	46.2%	20,841,755	49.8%	33,804,543	56.3%	142,027,478	54.1%
Pop. 5+, Living in Same State in 1995	1,343,464	8%	4,032,707	9.6%	6,208,379	10.3%	25,327,355	9.7%
Population Born in the United States	16,232,413	89.3%	34,479,585	76.6%	60,457,291	93.9%	246,786,466	87.7%
Pop. 5+, Speak a Language Other than English at Home	3,317,136	19.7%	13,946,194	33.3%	5,623,538	9.4%	46,951,595	17.9%
Families in Poverty with Related Children age 0-17	318,822	6.9%	868,922	14.3%	943,409	10.9%	5,155,866	7.1%
Individuals in Poverty	2,160,431	12.1%	5,890,996	13.4%	6,360,113	10.2%	33,899,812	12.4%

Source: Census 2000

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION - AN OVERVIEW



The spread of jobs among economic sectors in the Rockies has changed in tandem with population growth and decline as well as major structural changes in the nature of technology, changing characteristics of new goods and services, and global trade flows. Table 2 shows proportions of employment broken into three major sectors in 1970 and 2000 for the Rockies and each "member" state as well as for comparison regions. Several fundamental trends are clear: farming and resource-based employment has shrunk everywhere over 30 years, and vary substantially among the Rockies' states, with Wyoming having the highest remaining jobs in this sector in 2000 (11.5%) and Nevada having the lowest (2.5%). Manufacturing has dwindled nation-wide, falling from 21% to 11% in the US and 10% to 7% in the Rockies 1970-2000. Services' based employment has risen throughout the US over 30 years (73% to 85%) while similar trends exist in the Rockies (81% to 89%) and each of the region's states.

These sectoral trends can be explored further by looking at a U.S. Census profile of jobs in the Rockies as recorded in the 2000 U.S. Census (Table 3). Current patterns of employment

Table 2 - Employment: 1970 -2000 Profile	1970 Resource-Based Employ.	2000 Resource-Based Employ	1970 Manufacturing-Based Employ	2000 Manufacturing-Based Employ	1970 Service-Based Employ	2000 Service-Based Employ
The United States	5.7%	3.6%	21.6%	11.4%	72.7%	85.0%
The Rocky Mountains	9.3%	4.2%	10.2%	7.2%	80.5%	88.6%
Arizona	7.5%	2.8%	13.5%	8.0%	78.9%	89.2%
Colorado	6.8%	3.6%	11.7%	7.3%	81.5%	89.0%
Idaho	16.0%	8.1%	13.0%	10.5%	71.0%	81.4%
Montana	15.5%	8.9%	8.4%	5.2%	76.0%	85.9%
Nevada	3.9%	2.5%	3.5%	3.7%	92.7%	93.8%
New Mexico	10.5%	5.6%	5.5%	5.0%	84%	89.4%
Utah	7.8%	3.0%	12.3%	9.8%	79.9%	87.2%
Wyoming	17.8%	11.5%	4.9%	4.1%	77.3%	84.4%
The Pacific Division	4.7%	4.1%	17.0%	10.3%	78.2%	85.7%

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis ' Regional Economic Information System (REIS)

reflect the profound changes mentioned above that have swept through the region: exploding service-based jobs alongside smaller proportions of workers involved in farming and resource extraction. Technology and environmental concerns about how natural resources are managed, alongside a global economy of open borders and easy access to world-sourcing of goods and services combine to reshape the regional economy and move it closer to neighboring regions' and the U.S.'s mix of

employment where service-based jobs account for more than 4 in 5 jobs while the remaining 20% are largely oriented towards manufacturing. Only 77% of jobs are private wage and salary based, while 16% are government workers and 7% are self-employed. So much for the "myth" that in the "rugged" Rockies people live close to the land in rural settings, wresting their sustenance from the bounty of the land, with more than its share of government workers to manage the public domain!

Table 3 - Employment: 2000 Profile	The Rocky Mountains	Percent of Total	Pacific Division	Percent of Total	Central Divisions	Percent of Total	The United States	Percent of Total
Total Employment	8,445,441	100%	19,959,860	100%	31,185,231	100%	129,721,512	100%
Agriculture,forestry,fishing and hunting,and mining	237,015	2.8%	429,655	2.2%	638,824	2.0%	2,426,053	1.9%
Construction	727,514	8.6%	1,275,334	6.4%	1,907,781	6.1%	8,801,507	6.8%
Manufacturing	767,368	9.1%	2,540,839	12.7%	5,779,367	18.5%	18,286,005	14.1%
Wholesale trade	272,308	3.2%	800,255	4.0%	1,099,737	3.5%	4,666,757	3.6%
Retail Trade	1,023,508	12.1%	2,281,044	11.4%	3,649,977	11.7%	15,221,716	11.7%
Transportation and warehousing,and utilities	420,249	5.0%	976,096	4.9%	1,602,296	5.1%	6,740,102	5.2%
Information	274,240	3.2%	733,538	3.7%	791,739	2.5%	3,996,564	3.1%
Finance,insurance,real estate, rental, and leasing	582,828	6.9%	1,338,227	6.7%	2,040,480	6.5%	8,934,972	6.9%
Professional,scientific,managemt,admin,waste mgt svcs	828,953	9.8%	2,200,688	11%	2,474,157	7.9%	12,061,865	9.3%
Educational, health, and social services	1,522,141	18%	3,742,445	18.7%	6,273,292	20.1%	25,843,029	19.9%
Arts,entertainment,recreation,accommodation,food svcs	943,355	11.2%	1,670,249	8.4%	2,291,953	7.3%	10,210,295	7.9%
Other services (except public administration)	391,532	4.6%	1,016,403	5.1%	1,434,675	4.6%	6,320,632	4.9%
Public administration	454,430	5.4%	955,087	4.8%	1,200,953	3.9%	6,212,015	4.8%
Private wage and salary workers	6,480,493	76.7%	15,188,232	76.1%	25,289,702	81.1%	101,794,361	78.5%
Government workers	1,324,239	15.7%	3,040,735	15.2%	3,886,881	12.5%	18,923,353	14.6%
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business	610,882	7.2%	1,658,006	8.3%	1,909,838	6.1%	8,603,761	6.6%

Source: Census 2000

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION - AN OVERVIEW



Changes in income for the eight state region mirror the trends in population growth and employment composition affecting the Rockies. Table 4 shows a 2001 profile of income by place of work and by earnings in each sector. Notable aspects of the region's income include the 0.7% of income that comes from farm income and 0.4% that arises from farm proprietors' income, as well as the 0.2% of earnings in the forestry, fishing, and related activities sector alongside the 1.2% of earnings in the mining sector. All confirm the shrunken importance of land and natural resources in the contemporary Rockies economy. Manufacturing earnings in 2001 stood at 6.7%, significantly below neighboring regions and the U.S. average (9.6%). Rockies government earnings at 12.7% are nearly the same proportion as in neighboring regions and the U.S. The sectors

where service-based earnings are above comparison neighboring regions and the U.S. average include: construction (6.4%); retail trade (5.4%); real estate and rental and leasing (1.6%); arts, entertainment and recreation (1.1%); and accommodation and food services (4.0%). In contrast, "lagging" service sectors in the Rockies incorporate: wholesale trade (3.5%); finance and insurance (4.2%); professional and technical services (6.1%); and health care and social assistance (5.6%).

Changing sources of income in the Rockies mirror the demographic trends we have reviewed above, including increasing numbers of people who bring significant sources of income and wealth from outside the region as they seek out "livable" communities for their recreation, relocation, and retirement. Chart 1 shows that there is now a diverse mix of net earnings (69.8%) alongside non-wage sources of income: transfer payments (11.3%) and

dividends, interest and rent (18.8%). This pattern of non-wage income supplementing "earned" wages and salaries dampens the susceptibility of regions to wild boom-bust cycles in wage-based earnings and introduces many "newcomers" and "age-diverse" residents who bring additional lifestyles and values to what has become increasingly an "amenity-based" economy in the Rocky Mountain states.

Chart 1: Personal Income Components in the Rockies, 2001

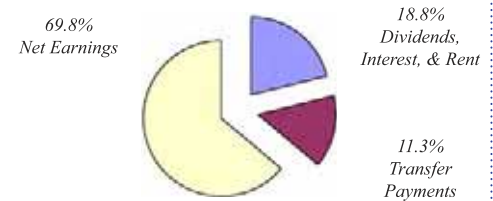


Table 4 - Income: 2001 Profile (\$000) unless otherwise indicated	The Rocky Mountains	Percent of Total	Pacific Division	Percent of Total	Central Divisions	Percent of Total	The United States	Percent of Total
Total Personal Income	514,535,089	100%	1,474,823,897	100%	1,432,374,436	100%	8,677,490,000	100%
Nonfarm Income	510,697,059	99.3%	1,466,389,082	99.4%	1,421,829,901	99.3%	8,637,420,000	99.5%
Farm Income	3,838,030	0.7%	8,434,815	0.6%	10,544,535	0.7%	40,070,000	0.5%
Per Capita Personal Income (dollars)	\$27,567		\$31,112		\$27,880		\$30,413	
Proprietor's Income	45,901,459	8.9%	140,906,881	9.6%	148,185,969	10.3%	729,092,000	8.4%
Nonfarm Proprietor's Income	43,755,773	8.5%	139,492,190	9.5%	141,511,625	9.9%	708,821,000	8.2%
Farm Proprietor's Income	2,145,686	0.4%	1,414,691	0.1%	6,674,344	0.5%	20,271,000	0.2%
Farm Earnings	3,838,030	0.7%	8,434,815	0.6%	10,544,535	0.7%	40,070,000	0.5%
Nonfarm Earnings	372,510,396	72.4%	1,069,280,441	72.5%	1,044,396,456	72.9%	6,201,907,000	71.5%
Private Earnings	306,925,027	59.7%	892,466,866	60.5%	878,059,171	61.3%	5,207,266,336	60.0%
Forestry, Fishing, and Related Activities	1,024,041	0.2%	6,283,916*	0.4%	2,730,594	0.2%	18,888,221	0.2%
Mining	6,373,675	1.2%	2,490,599*	0.2%	29,636,446	2.1%	52,407,204	0.6%
Construction	32,675,038	6.4%	69,028,949	4.7%	69,861,242	4.9%	392,150,497	4.5%
Manufacturing	34,520,284	6.7%	135,167,764	9.2%	146,966,785	10.3%	830,083,506	9.6%
Wholesale Trade	18,189,586	3.5%	50,891,055	3.5%	61,588,740	4.3%	327,809,947	3.8%
Retail Trade	28,021,507	5.4%	73,189,798	5.0%	74,037,849	5.2%	422,807,313	4.9%
Transportation and Warehousing	11,733,474	2.3%	31,043,602	2.1%	45,715,425	3.2%	206,876,728	2.4%
Information	17,603,516*	3.4%	67,864,671	4.6%	41,743,625	2.9%	282,847,627	3.3%
Finance and Insurance	21,413,207	4.2%	65,062,969	4.4%	63,311,761	4.4%	464,118,251	5.3%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	8,036,793	1.6%	21,591,300	1.5%	18,095,755	1.3%	109,614,193	1.3%
Professional and Technical Services	31,634,885	6.1%	115,494,490	7.8%	77,161,194	5.4%	577,231,982	6.7%
Educational Services	2,880,971	0.6%	10,370,922	0.7%	9,723,306	0.7%	77,348,192	0.9%
Health Care and Social Assistance	29,059,469	5.6%	80,101,130	5.4%	92,209,739	6.4%	551,332,538	6.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,554,011	1.1%	15,644,899	1.1%	9,300,147	0.6%	72,611,542	0.8%
Accommodation and Food Services	20,596,052	4.0%	37,542,463	2.5%	5,962,681	0.4%	201,106,073	2.3%
Government and Government Enterprises	65,585,369	12.7%	176,813,575	12.0%	166,337,285	11.6%	994,640,664	11.5%

* Indicates data was withheld to avoid disclosure for either Alaska or Wyoming

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis' Regional Economic Information System (REIS)

THE ROCKIES DIVIDED:



The Rockies Region is NOT homogeneous! We have just looked at overall characteristics of the region, made up by eight states containing 280 counties, and this data helps make the case that socio-economic and demographic similarities bind the region together. However, distinct Rockies zones or sub-regions can be identified by evaluating the differences among clusters of counties within the Rockies Region. It is important to focus here on various parts of the entire Rockies Region as unique groups of counties, for a “one-set-of-policies-fits-all” approach to management of resources, the environment, communities, and their infrastructure in the Rockies is as inappropriate as would be a national set of policies that does not take into account the substantial differences between the Rockies vs. the neighboring Pacific and Central Divisions that have integrity within Congress and the Census Bureau.

The Rockies Region is bound together by the Continental Divide “spine,” and clustered to the east and west of the spectacular Rockies mountain range. Our analysis of the counties within the eight state Rockies Region has identified three distinct sub-regions or zones (Map 1):

- The Continental Divide Spine
- The Eastern Plains Agricultural Heritage Zone
- The West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone

Varying topography, as well as defining characteristics of economic activity and demographics, distinguish these three sub-regions. Each of these Rockies clusters of counties shares many common characteristics that bind them together and call for different policies and programs of resource management as well as social and economic health.

Here we provide a view of distinguishing characteristics these sub-regions have that bind them together. A comparison is made to comparable data for the entire Rockies eight state region and the 50 state U.S. data.

by *Walter Hecox and F. Patrick Holmes*

Table 1 - The Land:	West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone	The Continental Divide Spine	Eastern Plains Agricultural Heritage Zone	The Rockies	The United States
Total Acres of Forested Land	27,160,320	107,370,844	8,575,989	143,586,893	736,681,000
% of Total Land Area Forested	21.2%	37.0%	7.0%	26.0%	32.6%
Population Per Square Mile	35	22	5	21	80
Acres of Public Lands	84,624,811	146,564,446	20,246,854	252,963,153	699,000,000
% of Total Land Area Publicly Owned	66.0%	50.5%	16.4%	45.8%	30.9%
Total Acres of Designated Wilderness	5,783,689	15,880,594	343,897	22,211,898	105,678,486
% of Total Land Area Wilderness	4.5%	5.5%	0.3%	4.0%	4.7%
Total Acres of National Park Service Lands	3,328,724	6,125,529	437,049	9,972,779	84,000,000
% National Park Service Owned Lands	2.6%	2.1%	0.4%	1.8%	3.7%
Total Acres of Forest Service Lands	14,562,593	73,948,117	5,528,936	95,022,002	191,000,000
% Forest Service Owned Lands	11.4%	25.5%	4.5%	17.2%	8.4%
Total Acres of BLM Lands	62,683,449	64,222,763	12,742,957	140,110,389	261,000,000
% Bureau of Land Management Lands	48.9%	22.1%	10.3%	25.4%	11.5%
Average USDA Natural Amenity Rank	5.3	5.0	4.1	4.9	-

Sources: BLM, USFS, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, and the USDA Economic Research



Topography is THE defining characteristic of the Rockies Region. While all who live in the region, whether in communities or rural settings, share either a view of the Rockies “spine” or are comforted that mountains are close-by for recreation and solitude, there are dramatic differences in the “land base” of the sub-regions. Table 1 makes this abundantly clear. Region-wide 26% of the Rockies is forested, but only 7% of the Eastern Plains Zone has forests vs. 37% of the Continental Divide Spine and 21% of the West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone. Similarly, the presence of public lands vary dramatically, standing at 31% for the U.S., 46% for the Rockies Region, but only 16% for the Eastern Plains as compared to 51% for the Continental Divide Spine and 66% for the West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone. If declared Wilderness and presence of national parks are used as rulers, the Eastern Plains represents a cluster of counties almost totally devoid of these wild lands and their protective designations. Surprisingly, national forests are present even in the Eastern Plains Zone (5%), although substantially below the 8% national level and the 17% Rockies Region proportion, with the Continental Divide Zone understandably having the highest proportion of forest lands

(26%). BLM lands, representing the lower elevation public lands largely suited for grazing, are present in the Eastern Plains Zone at 10%, very close to the U.S. proportion (12%), but again there are higher proportions of these public lands among the Continental Divide Zone (22%) and the Western and Southern Zone (49%). Wide-open spaces are not just a buzzword around the Rockies.

We have seen that only 1.4% of the Rockies region’s land is devoted to urban or built-up uses, and yet this sparseness of population itself is not evenly distributed. The population density in 2000 for the U.S. stood at 80 persons per square mile and in the Rockies Region 21, matching the “empty-quarter” image of the area. But within the Rockies on the Eastern Plains it stood at only 5 persons per square mile, while for the Continental Divide Spine it was 22 persons and for the West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone, a rapidly growing region of retirement and quality of life “seekers,” a substantially higher density of 35 persons.

THREE SUB-REGIONS THAT MAKE SENSE



Patterns of human habitation around the Rockies reinforce trends topography and changing economics establish (Table 2). Over 30 years, 1970 to 2000, the total U.S. population grew 39% while for the Rockies Region it rose 120%. Within the Rockies the West and Southern Mountain Zone grew an astounding 221% and the Continental Divide Spine a buoyant 94%, but the Eastern Plains lagged even the U.S. level at 25% population growth. In 2000 the proportion of people living in metro-designated counties reinforced the Eastern Plains stereotype: with 25%, but for the Continental Divide Spine three-fourths of counties were Metro and for the West and Southern Mountain Zone 92%.

shape available workforces and demands for social services. Nationally 29% of the population is under age 18, while for the Rockies there is a younger population with 30% below 18; among the Rockies zones the West and Southern Mountains Zone matches the national average at 29%, the Eastern Plains has 30%, and the Continental Divide Spine has 31%. At the other end of the "dependency" distribution, some 12% of the U.S. population is 65+, while for the Rockies it is 11%. Within the Rockies the smallest proportion 65+ reside within the Continental Divide Spine (10%), with the West and Southern Mountain Zone at 13% and the Eastern Plains at 14%. Median ages for these regions reflect these proportions of the elderly.

Racial composition around the Rockies highlights both homogeneity and diversity. The proportion identifying themselves in the

Map 1: Sub-Regions of the Rocky Mountains



- Continental Divide Spine
- West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone
- Eastern Plains Agricultural Heritage Zone

Ages of the Rockies residents provide additional insight into the demographics that help

Table 2 - The People: Census 2000 Indicators	The West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone	Percent	The Continental Divide Spine	Percent	The Eastern Plains Agricultural Heritage Zone	Percent	The Rocky Mountains	Percent	The United States	Percent
Population Growth 1970-2000	4,768,084	221.0%	4,921,312	94.3%	236,514	24.5%	9,925,910	119.9%	78,425,626	38.5%
Population Living in Metro Counties	6,375,768	91.9%	7,803,953	77.0%	291,447	24.2%	14,471,168	79.2%	na	na
Population Living in Non-Metro Counties	557,980	8.1%	2,337,366	23.0%	908,610	75.7%	3,803,956	20.8%	na	na
Population under Age 18	1,987,773	29.0%	3,180,016	31.2%	307,606	30.3%	5,496,844	30.2%	80,473,265	28.6%
Population Age 65+	859,535	12.5%	1,019,496	9.9%	141,536	13.9%	2,029,846	11.2%	34,991,753	12.4%
Median age (years)	38	37.6%	36	35.6%	39	39.1%	34	33.6%	35	35.3%
One race White	5,265,755	76.6%	8,406,372	82.4%	850,561	83.8%	14,591,933	80.3%	211,460,626	75.1%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,638,073	23.8%	1,741,761	17.1%	160,357	15.8%	3,543,573	19.5%	35,305,818	12.5%
Not Hispanic or Latino	5,239,060	76.2%	8,465,317	82.9%	854,413	84.2%	14,628,722	80.5%	246,116,088	87.5%
Occupied housing units	2,572,915	88.7%	3,720,040	89.5%	389,400	87.5%	6,711,902	89.0%	105,480,101	91.0%
Housing Units For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	137,124	4.7%	205,745	4.9%	11,765	2.6%	356,509	4.7%	3,578,718	3.1%
Housing Structures Built between 1995 and March 2000	609,461	21.0%	645,663	15.6%	32,764	7.4%	1,289,777	17.1%	11,234,050	9.7%
Pop 25+, Pct high school graduate or higher	79	78.8%	84	83.9%	81	80.9%	84	83.7%	80	80.4%
Pop 25+, Pct bachelor's degree or higher	15	15.4%	22	22.3%	17	16.5%	25	25.3%	24	24.4%
Pop 5+, Different house in the US in 1995	3,461,328	54.3%	4,628,743	49.0%	412,407	43.6%	8,535,218	50.7%	112,851,828	43.0%
Pop 5+, Different state	1,235,606	19.4%	1,368,836	14.5%	108,815	11.5%	2,721,112	16.2%	22,089,460	8.4%
Pop 5+ Born in United States	5,838,706	84.9%	9,357,206	91.7%	964,923	95.1%	16,232,413	89.3%	246,786,466	87.7%
Pop 5+ speak in home, English only	4,824,728	75.7%	7,811,670	82.7%	814,679	86.0%	13,516,343	80.3%	215,423,557	82.1%
Pop 5+ speak Spanish	1,193,641	18.7%	1,096,789	11.6%	104,286	11.0%	2,396,737	14.2%	28,101,052	10.7%
Pop 16+ In labor force	3,305,416	62.7%	5,191,440	67.5%	483,018	62.6%	9,018,595	65.4%	138,820,935	63.9%
Families in Poverty	151,876	8.7%	214,826	8.3%	32,280	11.9%	400,676	8.7%	6,620,945	9.2%
Families in Poverty with related children 0-17	121,280	13.5%	170,788	12.0%	25,337	17.9%	318,822	6.9%	5,155,866	7.1%
Individuals in Poverty 18+	536,848	10.8%	763,882	10.6%	95,302	13.4%	1,401,352	7.9%	22,152,954	8.1%
Individuals in Poverty 65+	64,676	7.7%	83,229	8.5%	15,026	11.3%	163,575	0.9%	3,287,774	1.2%

Source: Census 2000

THE ROCKIES DIVIDED:

2000 Census as White (one race) stood at three-fourths for the US, 80% for the Rockies, and 84% for the Eastern Plains Zone, with the Continental Divide Spine at 82% and the West and Southern Mountains Zone at 77%. Hispanic or Latino identification for the Rockies and each of its sub-regions stood above the US average of 13%, with the West and Southern Mountain Zone understandably highest with 24%.

An “amenity” region is often identified as one where tourism and recreation register strongly among types of housing units. The Rockies fit this stereotype, with 4.7% of housing units in 2000 designated for seasonal, recreational or occasional use, compared to the US total of 3.1%. But within the Rockies again the nature of topography dictates even this pattern of human habitation: for the Eastern Plains Zone non-permanent housing stood at 2.6%, but for the West and South Mountain Amenity Zone 4.7% and for the Rockies Spine 4.9%. New housing accommodates new people! While some 10% of the national housing stock was built between 1995 and 2000, for the fast-growing Rockies 17% was new in that 5 year period, and 22% for the West and Southern Mountain Zone as compared to 16% for the Rockies Spine and only 7% for the Eastern Plains.

Mobility likewise reflects the economic and demographic buoyancy of areas. For all parts of the Rockies in 2000 a larger proportion of people age 5+ moved to a different house over 1995, when compared to the national average of 43%; for the Rockies this figure was 51%, while for the Eastern Plains it was 44%, for the Continental Divide Spine it was 49%, and for the West and South Mountain Amenity Zone 54%. Consistent with national trends, a large proportion of the “moving” between houses occurs within the same state. Only 8% of the US population age 5+ moved to another state 1995 to 2000, but in the Rockies some 16% crossed state borders, and 20% did so within the West and Southern Mountain zone, 15% in the Continental Divide Spine, and 12% on the Eastern Plains.

Nativity trends are mixed for the Rockies. At the national level in 2000, 88% of the population 5+ were born in the US, while comparable data for the Rockies was 90%, for the Eastern Plains 95%, and for the Continental Divide 92%; only for the West and Southern

Mountain Zone did native-born dip below the national average at 85%. These newcomers to the nation register in another way- those age 5+ speaking English only in the home: for the US 82% did in 2000, while for the Rockies 80% spoke English only at home, 86% for the Eastern Plains, and as would be expected these proportions drop off for fast growing counties in areas close to the southwest, with 83% speaking English along the Continental Divide Spine and 76% within the West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone. Predictably 19% above the age 5 spoke Spanish in the West and Southern Mountain Zone, 11% in the Continental Divide Spine, and 11% on the Eastern Plains.

How educated are the populations within and around the Rockies? When we look at the proportion of the population age 25+ with at least a high school diploma, the Rockies at 84% exceeds the US level of 80%, but within the Rockies the fast growing West and Southern Mountains Zone lagged at 79%, the Eastern Plains registered next at 81%, and the Continental Divide Spine (that includes the major metropolitan areas) exceeds the national average at 84%. Similar results appear for the proportion of the population age 25+ with a 4-year college degree or higher: the US number in 2000 was 24%, the Rockies exceeded that level at 25%, but the Eastern Plains Zone at 15% and the Eastern Plains Zone at 17% are below the national average.

Data on employment and opportunities to earn income around the Rockies send mixed signals. The buoyant population growth outside of the Eastern Plains would be expected to signal more employment and less poverty. This pattern is mitigated by the “dependency” ages (those under age 18 and 65+) since they are outside of the traditional workforce. At the national level in 2000, 63.9% of the population age 16+ were in the labor force, and for the Rockies Region 65.4%, but both the fast-growing West and Southern Mountains Zone at 62.7% and the slow-growing and aging Eastern Plains zone at 62.6% lag the nation; only the fast growing and youth-oriented Continental Divide Spine has a higher labor force participation rate at 68%.

Poverty is distributed unevenly around the Rockies. The entire region in 2000 had a families in poverty level of 8.7% compared to the US level of 9.2%. Within the Rockies

both of the fast growing sub-regions had family poverty levels below the national average and the Eastern Plains Zone registered a high 12%. But poverty strikes different ages groups in complicated ways. The West and Southern Mountain Zone had poverty levels for families with children 0-17, those above 18, and those above 65 exceeding the comparable national averages. Deprivation among families with children at home and for the elderly exists at levels much higher than national and regional levels, signaling areas of urgent concern.



How are workers employed throughout the Rockies? A look at data from the 2000 Census reveals some predictable clusters of employment related to the region’s resource base and demographics, as well as some surprises. Regions like the Rockies with vast proportions of undeveloped land and rich natural, scenic and recreational resources would be expected to have many employed in occupations related to farming, fishing and forestry. But this pattern works only for the Eastern Plains with 2.8% in these occupations, as contrasted with the US level of 0.7% and the Rockies Region surprisingly at almost the same at 0.8%; the West and Southern Mountains Amenity Zone lags even the national level, standing at 0.5%. Thus, in the rugged Rockies workers are employed elsewhere! The occupational categories in the Rockies outpacing the national averages include: services; sales and office work; and construction, extraction and maintenance. Predictably production (manufacturing), transport and material moving occupations lag behind the US level of 14.6%, with the West and Southern Mountains Zone lowest at 10.8%.

The composition of industries that employ Rockies workers provides more detail about what is happening as employment activity. Here are some highlights from Table 3 by the Rockies regions:

Eastern Plains Agricultural Heritage Zone: agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining jobs by industry proportion (at 12%) are six times higher than the national level and four times higher than the Rockies average. Manufacturing jobs (4.9%) are far below the national average (14%) and the Rockies average (9%). Information jobs, FIRE employ-

THREE SUB-REGIONS THAT MAKE SENSE

ment (finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing) and work in professional, scientific, management, and administration categories all stand below national and Rockies averages. Jobs in two “social” sectors exist at higher than national averages: education, health and social services as well as arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services.

Continental Divide Spine:

Agriculture and natural resource related jobs as well as construction outpace national levels and match Rockies employment proportions. Manufacturing, while significantly higher than the Eastern Plains Zone, stands at 9.6% vs. 14% for the nation. Information-based employment along the Spine, at 3.7%, exceeds

both the national and Rockies levels, again signaling the highly educated workers inhabiting the string of cities in close proximity to the Continental Divide. Similarly work in professional, scientific, management and administration industries, at 10.2%, outpace both the nation (9.3%) and the Rockies (9.8%).

West and Southern Mountains Amenity Zone:

Defying the seemingly perpetual image of the Rockies as a land of ranching, mining and lumbering, agriculture and natural resource related jobs in this fast growing region are at a minimal level of 1.5% vs. the nation at 1.9% and the Rockies Region at 2.8%. Construction jobs, to provide communities and infrastructure for rapid growth, exceed the national level

of 6.8% and the Rockies Region average of 8.6% and stand in this zone at 8.8%. Manufacturing in this Zone (8.9%) predictably lags the nation (14%) and the Rockies (9%). Jobs in FIRE, at 7.5%, exceed the other parts of the Rockies and the national average. Geographical remoteness no longer appears to hinder “white-collar” employment in professional, scientific, management and administrative work: this Zone has one in ten such jobs, exceeding both the Rockies and national averages. Driven by an abundance of environmental, recreational and cultural “amenities,” this sub-region has nearly double the proportion of jobs as the nation (15% vs. 8%) in the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services.

Table 3 - Employment: Census 2000 Data	The West and Southern Amenity Zone	Percent	The Continental Divide Spine	Percent	The Eastern Plains Ag- ricultural Heritage Zone	Percent	The Rockies	Percent	United States	Percent
OCCUPATION										
Employed civilian Pop 16+	3,097,767	100.0%	4,865,510	100.0%	445,489	100.0%	8,445,441	100.0%	129,721,512	100.0%
Management,professional,and related occs	949,047	30.6%	1,696,811	34.9%	137,251	30.8%	2,793,577	33.1%	43,646,731	33.6%
Service occupations	577,999	18.7%	721,434	14.8%	75,677	17.0%	1,380,894	16.4%	19,276,947	14.9%
Sales and office occupations	877,561	28.3%	1,314,494	27.0%	109,573	24.6%	2,312,296	27.4%	34,621,390	26.7%
Farming,fishing,and forestry occupations	17,034	0.5%	41,777	0.9%	12,525	2.8%	71,667	0.8%	951,810	0.7%
Construction,extraction,and maintenance occs	340,900	11.0%	528,144	10.9%	54,237	12.2%	928,328	11.0%	12,256,138	9.4%
Production,transport,material moving occs	335,226	10.8%	562,850	11.6%	56,226	12.6%	958,679	11.4%	18,968,496	14.6%
INDUSTRY										
Agriculture,forestry,fishing and hunting,and mining	45,189	1.5%	135,225	2.8%	53,539	12.0%	237,015	2.8%	2,426,053	1.9%
Construction	272,659	8.8%	420,172	8.6%	31,589	7.1%	727,514	8.6%	8,801,507	6.8%
Manufacturing	274,579	8.9%	468,795	9.6%	21,899	4.9%	767,368	9.1%	18,286,005	14.1%
Wholesale trade	98,560	3.2%	158,655	3.3%	13,588	3.1%	272,308	3.2%	4,666,757	3.6%
Retail trade	370,736	12.0%	592,925	12.2%	54,723	12.3%	1,023,508	12.1%	15,221,716	11.7%
Transportation and warehousing,and utilities	155,394	5.0%	233,946	4.8%	29,061	6.5%	420,249	5.0%	6,740,102	5.2%
Information	82,172	2.7%	182,192	3.7%	9,173	2.1%	274,240	3.2%	3,996,564	3.1%
Finance,insurance,real estate, rental and leasing	233,253	7.5%	325,978	6.7%	21,887	4.9%	582,828	6.9%	8,934,972	6.9%
Professional,scientific,managemt,admin,waste mgt svcs	308,484	10.0%	494,202	10.2%	23,420	5.3%	828,953	9.8%	12,061,865	9.3%
Educational,health and social services	503,334	16.2%	915,263	18.8%	95,979	21.5%	1,522,141	18.0%	25,843,029	19.9%
Arts,entertainment,recreation,accommodation,food svcs	463,760	15.0%	438,984	9.0%	37,503	8.4%	943,355	11.2%	10,210,295	7.9%
Other services (except public administration)	137,096	4.4%	228,613	4.7%	23,783	5.3%	391,532	4.6%	6,320,632	4.9%
Public administration	152,551	4.9%	270,560	5.6%	29,345	6.6%	454,430	5.4%	6,212,015	4.8%
CLASS OF WORKER										
Private wage and salary workers	2,475,987	79.9%	3,670,834	75.4%	306,152	68.7%	6,480,493	76.7%	101,794,361	78.5%
Government workers	428,434	13.8%	803,292	16.5%	86,564	19.4%	1,324,239	15.7%	18,923,353	14.6%
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business	185,156	6.0%	373,334	7.7%	49,324	11.1%	610,882	7.2%	8,603,761	6.6%
Unpaid family workers	8,190	0.3%	18,050	0.4%	3,449	0.8%	29,827	0.4%	400,037	0.3%

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis'
Regional Economic Information System (REIS)

THE ROCKIES DIVIDED:



Wages and salaries are driven by availability of jobs. This “earned” portion of personal income, however, is only part of where purchasing power emanates. What can be termed “non-work” sources of income include transfer payments and dividends, interest and rent, with both supplementing a region’s income beyond the employment base. The pattern of income for the Rockies and its sub-regions, shown in Table 4, provides a window into how people and their communities survive and thrive “out-west.”

It is “old” news by now that farming and agriculture represent very low proportions of employment even in the Rockies where only 1.4% of the land is “developed.” But worse news exists! Farming is too often a losing endeavor, as shown by the extremely low levels of total personal income derived from farming: only 0.6% for the U.S. and 0.7% for the Rockies. Only the Eastern Plains defies this reality, standing at 3.5% while the Continental Divide Spine is even below the national and Rockies levels at 0.5% and the West and Southern Mountains Zone a minuscule 0.3%. In general “farm” residents must supplement their earnings (and losses) from agriculture increasingly by working other “day” jobs and through non-work sources of income.

Net earnings can serve as a proxy for the proportion of income generated by jobs. The national proportion in 2000 stood at 68.8% while the Rockies Region was higher at near 70%. Among the Rockies zones the Continental Divide Spine has the highest proportion of net earnings (71.1%) followed by the West and

Southern Mountain Amenity Zone at 68.3% and with the Eastern Plains lagging way behind at only 61.1% of “earned” income.

Focusing for a moment on income from jobs, how high paying are they in the Rockies? Average earnings per job are one overall measure. The Rockies at \$32,401 per average job in 2000 fell below the national average of \$36,316. Within the region, the West and Southern Mountains Zone outpaced the Rockies, standing at \$34,002, while the Continental Divide Spine nearly matched the Rockies level and the Eastern Plains Zone substantially underperformed all other regions at \$25,336.

Transfer payments as well as dividends, interest and rent form the “non-work” sources of

income. Children and the elderly in the dependency portions of the population often receive transfer payments either for retirement and/or due to poverty. Many adults both during their working years and into retirement receive substantial income from returns on their assets. Combined, these supplements to job earnings partly insulate communities, counties and regions from the wildest variations of boom-bust cycles of employment. Transfer payments in the Rockies exceed national and regional levels only for the Eastern Plains, where 16.8% of income is thus generated. In contrast, the income from dividends, interest and rent outpace the national level of 18.3% throughout the Rockies (18.8%) and its sub-regions, with the West and Southern Mountains Zone standing highest at 20.5%.

Map 2: Average Earnings Per Job for the Rocky Mountains, 2001

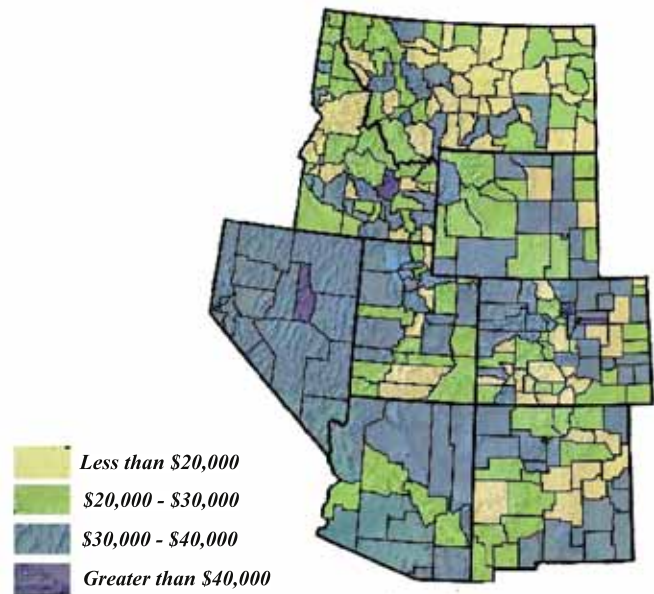


Table 4 - Income: 2000 Profile	West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone	Percent	Continental Divide Spine	Percent	Eastern Plains Agricultural Heritage Zone	Percent	The Rockies	Percent	The United States	Percent
Personal income (\$000)	\$181,421,700	100.0%	\$280,780,210	100.0%	\$22,604,475	100.0%	\$486,018,754	100.0%	\$8,314,032,000	100.0%
Nonfarm personal income (\$000)	\$180,868,423	99.7%	\$279,333,472	99.5%	\$21,821,872	96.5%	\$482,463,466	99.3%	\$8,264,187,000	99.4%
Farm income (\$000)	\$553,235	0.3%	\$1,446,761	0.5%	\$782,603	3.5%	\$3,555,288	0.7%	\$49,845,000	0.6%
Net earnings (\$000)	\$123,919,119	68.3%	\$199,544,498	71.1%	\$13,820,865	61.1%	\$339,400,608	69.8%	\$5,723,400,000	68.8%
Transfer payments (\$000)	\$20,316,127	11.2%	\$29,362,989	10.5%	\$3,800,412	16.8%	\$55,040,437	11.3%	\$1,070,231,000	12.9%
Dividends, interest, and rent (\$000)	\$37,186,454	20.5%	\$51,872,723	18.5%	\$4,983,198	22.0%	\$91,577,709	18.8%	\$1,520,401,000	18.3%
Wage and salary disbursements (\$000)	\$106,967,676	81.0%	\$164,521,851	77.8%	\$10,779,828	73.4%	\$285,103,531	79.3%	\$4,835,800,000	79.5%
Average earnings per job (\$)	\$34,002	-	\$32,607	-	\$25,336	-	\$32,401	-	\$36,316	-

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis'
Regional Economic Information System (REIS)

THREE SUB-REGIONS THAT MAKE SENSE



The Rockies, when dissected as we have done here into three sub-regions that each share distinct characteristics and conditions, become more complex than just a “region with a spine.” Certainly some local, state, regional and even national policies are suitable to all of the 280 counties. These include policies that encourage creation of new jobs, that support healthy and vibrant communities, and that provide appropriate “local” participation in resource and environmental management decisions.

But it is clear now that the Eastern Plains Agricultural Heritage Zone is challenged by slow to negative population growth, high dependency levels of the young and elderly, poverty, and diminished prosperity emanating from their shared agricultural land base. In contrast, “boom” conditions exist for the West and Southern Mountain Amenity Zone and, in different patterns, for the Continental Divide Spine. Influxes of newcomers, both seeking jobs and high quality of life in the working and retirement years, generate a different class of challenges: those of rampant growth that often outpace community infrastructure and stress the “traditional” fabric of small communities and even large metro areas.

Future Rockies Report Cards and Conferences will be focused on many of the trends identified here, for the Rockies is more complex than just an agglomeration of counties and states sharing a spectacular mountain chain as their Continental Divide spine. We will explore in depth case studies of communities facing explosive growth vs. dwindling populations and ways to earn a living. We will consider innovative experiments that connect local and regional communities to the management of federal lands and reserves. We will search out those clusters of counties within the Rockies that are taking bold steps to cope with rapid change while retaining the quality of life that acts as the glue holding people to their communities and surrounding lands. In all of this, we welcome suggestions for topics to explore, experts who can enlighten and extend the Rockies Conversation, and ideas for useful Report Card information that is insightful and stimulating.

“We will search out those clusters of counties within the Rockies that are taking bold steps to cope with rapid change while retaining the quality of life that acts as the glue holding people to their communities and surrounding lands.”



GRADING THE ROCKIES - LAND AND ENVIRONMENT

by F. Patrick Holmes and Walter Hecox

1. THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN PLAYGROUND



Scenic and outdoor recreational amenities are increasingly important contributors to economic and population growth for communities in the Rockies. High proportions of public lands, access to premier ski and four-season resorts, hunting and fishing opportunities, hiking trails and wildlife view sheds have all been shown to attract new businesses, workers, second homes, and early retirees. Indeed, these forces often take precedence over the typical business and worker location decisions based on resources to be extracted and/or low cost of living in the Rockies.



Counties were ranked based on the percentage of total housing units for seasonal or recreational use from the 2000 Census; whether or not there was a ski area located within the county; the percentage of total forested acres (public and private) from the USDA Forest Service's Forest Inventory Analysis program; the percentage of total lands that were publicly owned by either the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, or the National Park Service, and the number of 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations dedicated to recreation or environmental missions per 1,000 people. Counties were ranked for each of these amenity variables and then a composite score was created based on their average rankings as explained in the methods and acknowledgments section.

Recreation Hotspots of the Rocky Mountains

Non-Metro Counties

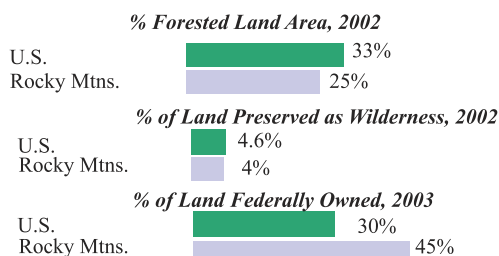
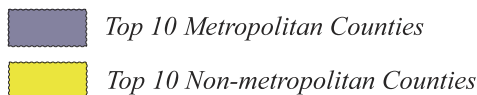
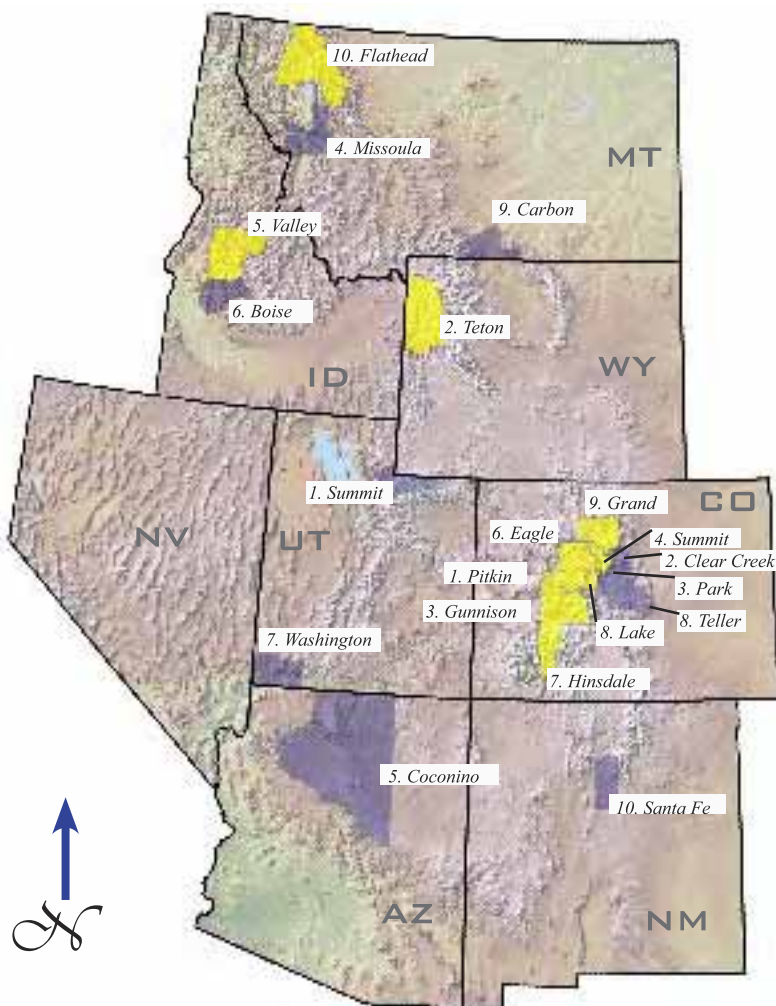
County Name	% Seasonal & Recreational Housing Units	Ski Area Located in County	% Total Forested Acres	% Wilderness	% Public Lands
1. Pitkin County, CO	28%	yes	76%	44%	85%
2. Teton County, WY	21%	yes	71%	26%	96%
3. Gunnison County, CO	35%	yes	67%	20%	77%
4. Summit County, CO	55%	yes	47%	25%	79%
5. Valley County, ID	54%	yes	44%	30%	84%
6. Eagle County, CO	27%	yes	49%	15%	77%
7. Hinsdale County, CO	61%	no	46%	46%	98%
8. Lake County, CO	18%	yes	75%	20%	72%
9. Grand County, CO	44%	yes	46%	7%	67%
10. Flathead County, MT	10%	yes	67%	19%	72%

Metro Counties

County Name	% Seasonal & Recreational Housing Units	Ski Area Located in County	% Total Forested Acres	% Wilderness	% Public Lands
1. Summit County, UT	36%	yes	59%	12%	42%
2. Clear Creek County, CO	17%	yes	67%	18%	66%
3. Park County, CO	41%	no	73%	11%	51%
4. Missoula County, MT	3%	yes	80%	8%	43%
5. Coconino County, AZ	19%	yes	42%	3%	39%
6. Boise County, ID	34%	no	72%	6%	72%
7. Washington County, UT	12%	no	55%	4%	75%
8. Teller County, CO	17%	no	73%	0%	46%
9. Carbon County, MT	19%	no	15%	12%	43%
10. Santa Fe County, NM	5%	yes	40%	6%	25%

GRADING THE ROCKIES - LAND AND ENVIRONMENT

A Look at the Top Tens



*"The economic problem that we need to be focusing upon is how to keep attractive natural environments from being destroyed by the growth they stimulate, not how to fight economic depression caused by protecting natural areas and wilderness"*¹

- Thomas Michael Power

COMMUNITY PROFILE:

Jackson, Wyoming, located within Teton County (#2), may be the supreme location for recreation in the United States. Positioned as a gateway to Grand Teton National Park and Yellowstone National Park, and at the base of the world-renowned Jackson Hole ski resort, it is difficult to imagine a better place for the outdoor enthusiast or second-home owner. And that is precisely why so many have relocated to Jackson in the past few decades.

Recently, however, the new growth has come into conflict with local recreation interests. A proposed 71 home subdivision and golf course along the Snake River threatens the habitat of 18 bald eagles, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Aaron Pruzan, chairman of the Snake River Fund and owner of the local kayaking and raft outfitter Rendezvous River Sports, claims that without the attraction of the eagles, people will be less likely to raft the river. One raft company owner says the river contributes roughly \$9 million to the valley's annual economy. At a meeting on May 13, 2002, Tom Johnson, civil engineer, put an end to the debate by concluding that an environmental impact statement was not appropriate for this project and that "We cannot deny a permit based on potential socioeconomic impacts."²

¹ Power, Thomas Michael. "Soul of Wilderness." *International Journal of Wilderness*. May, 1996.
² Dana, Tim. "Fewer Eagles = Fewer Tourist Dollars?". *JHLocal.com*. May 17, 2002.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - LAND AND ENVIRONMENT



Declining quality and size of farm and ranchland is a very visible measure of the changing economic base and quality of life for many parts of the Rockies, particularly near the region's population hubs. 10 million more people live in the Rocky Mountain region now than did 30 years ago. Population influxes, low profit margins for farmers and ranchers, uncertain commodity prices, and the burgeoning American interest in rural second homes, have all combined to create tremendous pressures on traditional land-use practices. Marlboro Cowboy-like countryside is increasingly rare in the Rockies.



Rocky Mountain counties were ranked based on indicators of high proportions of farm and ranchland converted to housing use. Data on the decline in the average size of a farm or ranch was taken from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Census of Agriculture for the years 1987 and 1997. Data on the percentage of total housing units in the county built from 1990-2000 and on new housing unit permits authorized as percentage of existing units in 2000 was taken from the U.S. Census Bureau's Census 2000. Counties in the Rockies were ranked for each of these variables individually and then a composite score was created based on their average rankings as explained in the methods and acknowledgments section.

2. SUBDIVISIONS AND "RANCHETTES" IN THE NEW ROCKIES

Counties Facing the Fastest Shifting Land-Use

Non-Metro Counties

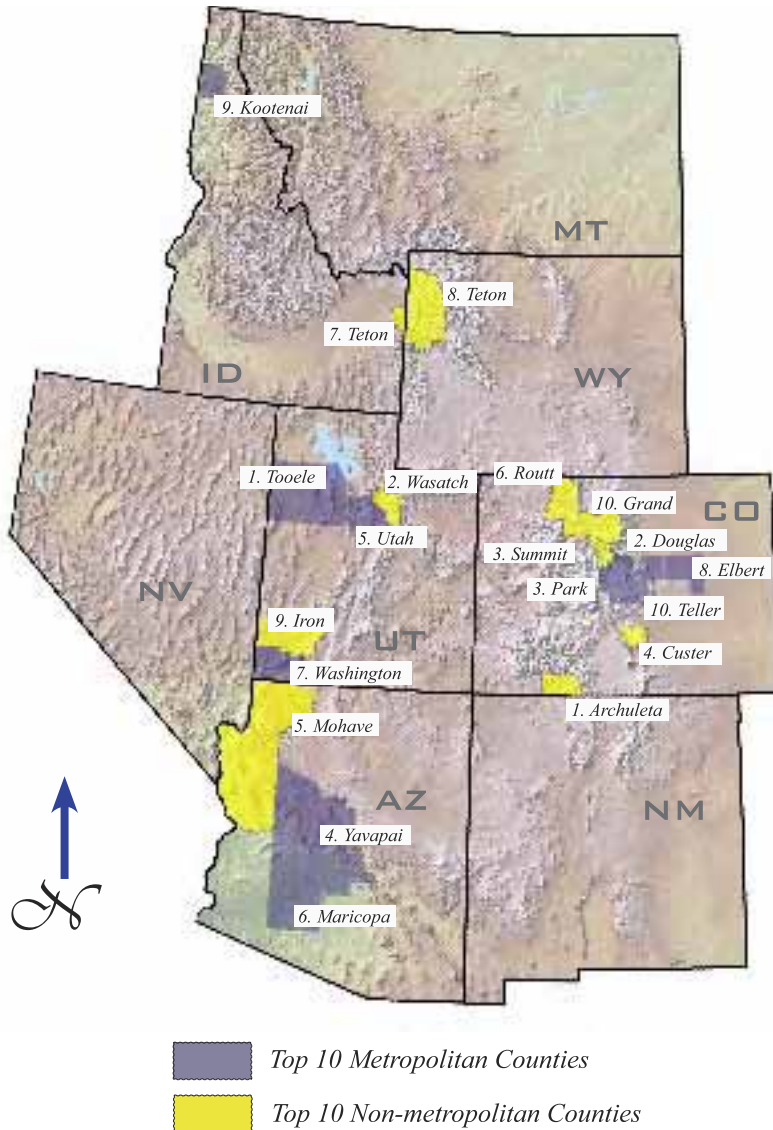
County Name	% of Total Housing Units Built 1990-2000	% Decline in the Average Size of a Farm or Ranch 1987-1997	New Housing Unit Permits Authorized as a % of Existing Units 2000
1. Archuleta County, CO	46%	-48%	6%
2. Wasatch County, UT	38%	-33%	5%
3. Summit County, CO	33%	-40%	3%
4. Custer County, CO	41%	-18%	5%
5. Mohave County, AZ	38%	-42%	2%
6. Routt County, CO	30%	-28%	5%
7. Teton County, ID	46%	-12%	8%
8. Teton County, WY	32%	-23%	3%
9. Iron County, UT	38%	-15%	3%
10. Grand County, CO	26%	-20%	5%

Metro Counties

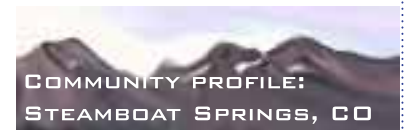
County Name	% of Total Housing Units Built 1990-2000	% Decline in the Average Size of a Farm or Ranch 1987-1997	New Housing Unit Permits Authorized as a % of Existing Units 2000
1. Tooele County, UT	36%	-46%	6%
2. Douglas County, CO	67%	-24%	10%
3. Park County, CO	38%	-31%	4%
4. Yavapai County, AZ	35%	-65%	3%
5. Utah County, UT	34%	-27%	4%
6. Maricopa County, AZ	30%	-28%	3%
7. Washington County, UT	50%	-12%	4%
8. Elbert County, CO	46%	-11%	4%
9. Kootenai County, ID	37%	-22%	3%
10. Teller County, CO	31%	-20%	4%

GRADING THE ROCKIES - LAND AND ENVIRONMENT

A Look at the Top Tens



"...if we don't get Colorado's sprawl under control, we may kill the golden goose that keeps the economy strong in our state. Sprawl is gobbling up our open space and farmlands at a rate of 10 acres per hour statewide." ¹



Steamboat Springs, located within Routt County, Colorado, (#6) is a prime example of a ranching and recreation community working to fight the pressures of subdivision and rural development on wide-open spaces. In 1995, Routt County approved 495 new building permits, nearly half of those being permits for low-density single home development, in a community that had a population of just about 16,000 people. Community leaders, conservationists, and local ranchers responded by generating a consensus-based ballot initiative called the Ranchlands and Natural Areas Initiative. A purchase of development rights (PDR) technique was proposed to secure development rights from willing ranchers in conjunction with a countywide increase in property taxes to foot the bill. The initiative passed in November 1996, making Routt County the first in the Rocky Mountains to approve a tax increase specifically for the purpose of purchasing development rights. To date, the county has funded the preservation of roughly 5,000 acres on 12 different ranch parcels.²

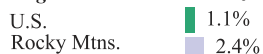
% of Total Homes Built between 1990-2000



Change in Average Farm Size 1987-1997



New Housing Unit Permits Authorized as a % of Existing Units 2000



¹ Jones, Elise. "Amendment 24 Should Pass". *Denver Business Journal*. September 22, 2000.

² Trust For Public Land. Case Study Archive. <http://www.tpl.org>. 2002.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - LAND AND ENVIRONMENT

Clements Mountain - Glacier National Park



3. THE JEWELS OF THE ROCKIES

Top Quality Public Lands in the Rockies

Non-Metro Counties

County Name	Acres of Land Preserved as Wilderness	Acres of Land Owned by the Forest Service	Acres of Land Owned by the National Park Service	Acres of Land Owned by the Bureau of Land Management
1. Teton County, WY	705,635	1,370,506	1,222,951	10,656
2. Hinsdale County, CO	317,516	558,718	0	117,797
3. Pitkin County, CO	269,651	491,783	0	26,417
4. Idaho County, ID	2,178,860	4,423,495	1,298	91,897
5. Mineral County, CO	195,848	524,299	0	0
6. Valley County, ID	715,982	2,013,677	0	3,133
7. Park County, WY	997,632	1,699,791	1,093,009	561,566
8. Flathead County, MT	618,499	1,778,109	632,302	0
9. Summit County, CO	96,918	310,219	0	3,226
10. Park County, MT	496,168	833,746	103,427	8,323

THE ISSUE

Acting in tandem with the region's recreational assets, the unique ecology of the Rockies is increasingly helping to generate and retain economic activity and financial capital in the region. Certain areas of the Rockies are more prone than others to preserve ecological integrity: meaning a good mix of native species, habitat landscapes, and dynamic ecological services. Such healthy ecosystems are now seen in some locations as essential to the long-term viability of the region's social and economic health. Areas with high natural amenities and the existence of an intricate fabric of premium public lands are more likely to possess these tenants.

ABOUT THE INDICATORS

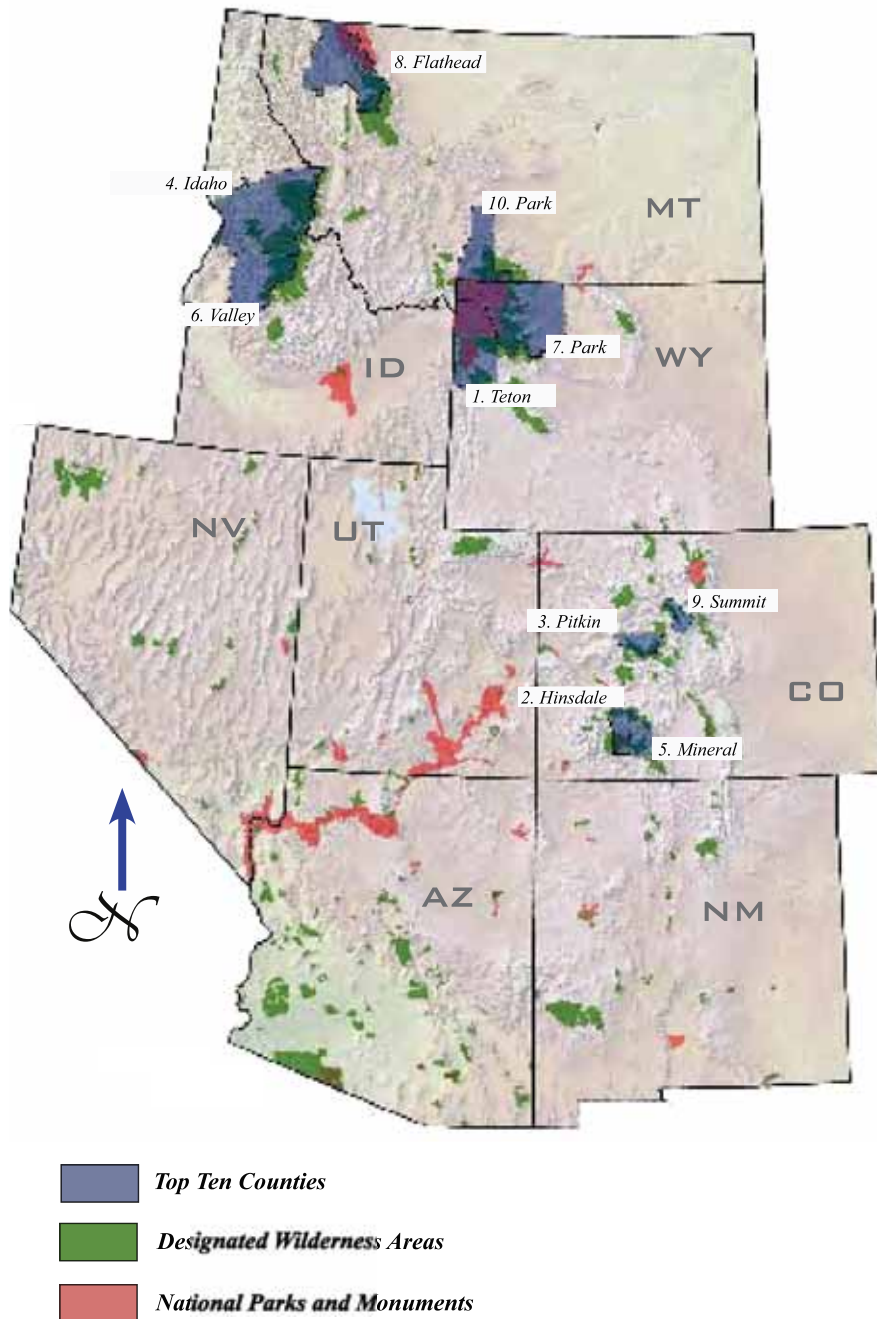
The size of counties' public lands were weighted such that National Park Service and designated wilderness lands were worth four times more than Bureau of Land Management lands and two times more than Forest Service lands. Counties were then ranked based on their weighted acreage as a percentage of total land area. In addition, counties required a score of five or higher on the USDA natural amenities index (a ranking from 1-8 that measures the climate, topography, and percentage water area of each county in a weighted natural amenity index).



Colorado River - Grand Canyon National Park

GRADING THE ROCKIES - LAND AND ENVIRONMENT

A Look at the Top Tens



The country that surrounds Yellowstone National Park, including Park County – WY (#7), Park County – MT (#10), and Teton County – WY (#1), comprises a huge region known as the Greater Yellowstone eco-region. The headwaters of three major river systems, the Yellowstone, the Snake, and the Green, bolster a wide array of plant and animal life ranging from micro-organisms that thrive in scalding hot springs, to some of the last remaining populations of grizzly bears and wolves left in the lower 48 states. The inherent attractiveness of the region, and the urgency to adequately protect it for future generations, has created a fiery discourse about the proper way to manage the park's and surrounding region's resources.

The Yellowstone Business Partnership was formed to address the needs of businesses throughout the region to have a voice in this discourse. The group's mission is to promote community vitality, a prosperous economy and a sustainable environment throughout the Yellowstone region. This is enhanced by the partnership serving as a progressive voice for businesses that value each of these elements in making decisions about the region's long-term natural viability. "There needed to be a business voice for stewardship, a moderate voice," said Janice Brown, executive director of the partnership. Recently, the group took part in the 2004 Greater Yellowstone Power of Place conference to ponder how to live well in such a beautiful place without loving it to death. The group urged participants to be more aware of how the entire world is looking at the GYE's natural resources, since literally the world has come to the doorstep of Yellowstone through ownership of land and businesses, including utilities, in the area.¹

¹ Laden, Elizabeth. "Gathering looks at keeping dream from becoming a Nightmare" *Island Park News*. January 30, 2004.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL



The Coffee Cowboy, Telluride, CO



THE ISSUE

Migration patterns in the Rockies have dramatically changed the economic and cultural base of many communities. Changing cultural views of the landscape and its proper use have accompanied these patterns of migration. While some continue to go about their business tout-ing little more than a “Native” bumper sticker on their SUV, other old-time residents have quarreled with newcomers and their associated values. Whether you refer to these folks as “tenderfoots,” “urban refugees,” or like we do: “cappuccino cowboys,” the changing demographic face of newcomers and their relationships with those who came before are shaping much of the future for this unique region.



ABOUT THE INDICATORS

Counties were ranked based on data from the 2000 census for having a high percentage of people age five and older who were living in a different state in 1995, a high percentage of housing units built for seasonal or recreational use, and a high percentage of total housing units built since 1995. Counties were ranked for each variable individually, and then composite scores were developed based on their average rankings, as explained in the methods and acknowledgments section.

1. NATIVE BORN OR “CAPPUCINO COWBOY?”

Rocky Mountain Counties with High Proportions of Newcomers

Non-Metro Counties

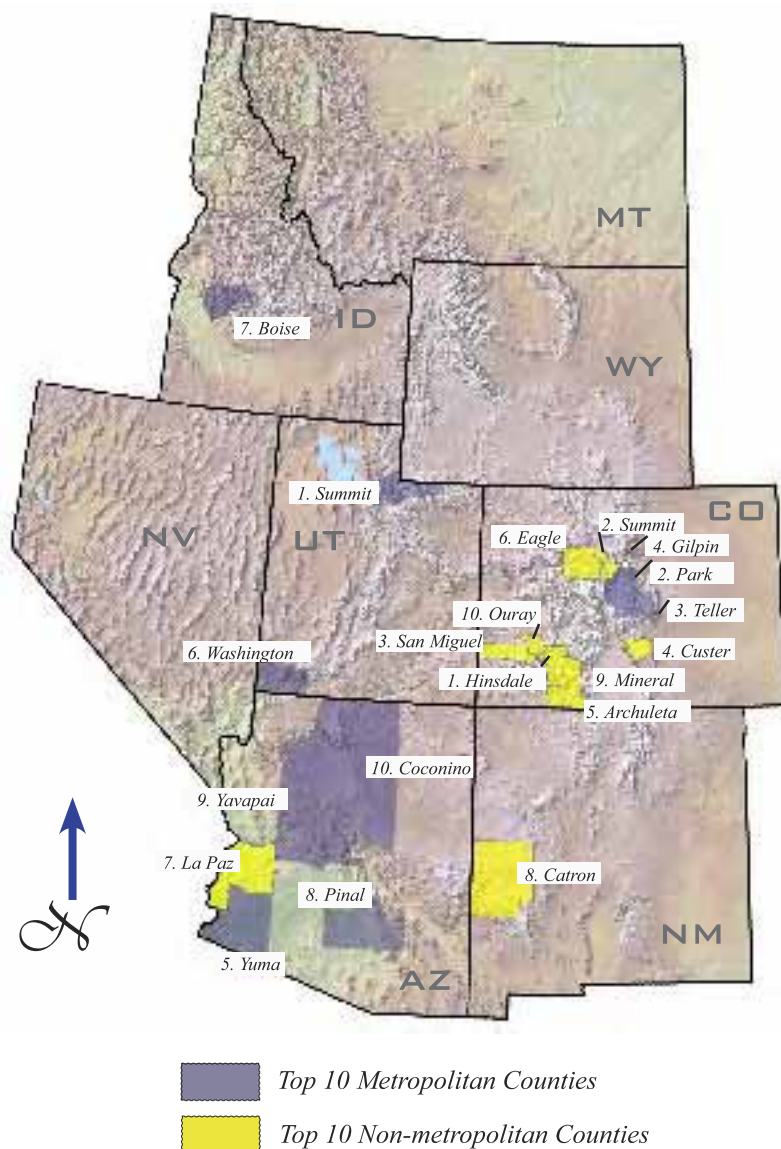
County Name	% Age 5 and Older Living in a Different State in 1995	% of Total Housing Units for Seasonal or Recreational Use	% of Total Housing Units Built since 1995
1. Hinsdale County, CO	23%	61%	33%
2. Summit County, CO	30%	55%	26%
3. San Miguel County, CO	27%	35%	24%
4. Custer County, CO	21%	44%	30%
5. Archuleta County, CO	27%	26%	28%
6. Eagle County, CO	22%	27%	24%
7. La Paz County, AZ	22%	36%	19%
8. Catron County, NM	23%	25%	21%
9. Mineral County, CO	27%	60%	16%
10. Ouray County, CO	23%	15%	24%

Metro Counties

County Name	% Age 5 and Older Living in a Different State in 1995	% of Total Housing Units for Seasonal or Recreational Use	% of Total Housing Units Built since 1995
1. Summit County, UT	21%	36%	31%
2. Park County, CO	19%	41%	28%
3. Teller County, CO	22%	17%	22%
4. Gilpin County, CO	16%	24%	25%
5. Yuma County, AZ	19%	17%	20%
6. Washington County, UT	17%	12%	30%
7. Boise County, ID	15%	34%	20%
8. Pinal County, AZ	15%	15%	28%
9. Yavapai County, AZ	20%	8%	21%
10. Coconino County, AZ	15%	19%	18%

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

A Look at the Top Tens



% of Population Age 5 and Older Living in a Different State in 1995

U.S.	8%
Rocky Mtns.	16%

% of Total Housing Units Built Since 1995

U.S.	10%
Rocky Mtns.	17%

*"Newcomers who settle within existing towns, while arguably having somewhat less environmental impact than those who live in the country, can nevertheless disrupt the socioeconomic fabric of formerly isolated communities."*¹

- Ray Rasker and Dennis Glick



In April 2000, John Stokes purchased Kalispell, Montana's KGEZ radio station, filling the Flathead County airwaves with a "shock-jock" media frenzy proclaiming environmentalists as Nazis, and the Flathead county land-use plan a direct act of war. This was not the first time Stokes had lashed out against community land-use initiatives. Stokes earlier spearheaded a county secessionist movement in Washington State in 1994 aimed at creating free counties capable of circumventing land-use codes. Nowadays at KGEZ, supporters of Stokes can purchase bumper stickers that read "Have you bitch-slapped an environmentalist lately?" and they can call in and voice their support for Stokes' anti-government, anti-newcomer, anti-environmental mentalities.²

Stokes is motivated in the extreme by a sentiment felt in varying degrees by many old-time residents throughout the Rockies; namely that newcomers are pushing an agenda that constrains certain civil liberties and freedoms that used to be afforded to the region's residents. The ensuing "us vs. them" mentality has created communities where civic discourse has been largely abandoned. Communities cannot afford to separate into warring camps and engage in the age-old debate over whose relationship to the landscape is ordained. Rather, proactive efforts to discuss the types of communities places would like to become should be the focus of attention, discourse, and resolution.

¹ Rasker, Ray and Dennis Glick. "Footloose Entrepreneurs: Pioneers of the New West?" *Illahee*. Vol 10. No.1, 1994.

² Ring, Ray. "The West's Biggest Bully. *High Country News*, November 15, 2003.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL



A growing Latino population is sprouting up throughout the Rockies exerting powerful change on communities, local economies, and small businesses. Economies of the Rockies have come to depend on immigrant labor, legal and otherwise, for much of their low-wage labor and productivity. This has spurred new business creation where predominantly Latino businesses catering to Latino tastes have become integral parts of small-business-driven economies in Idaho, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico.

Still, in other parts of the Rockies, Latino and other immigrant populations are forced to live outside the communities in which they work. Housing supply shortages for low-income workers result in “cold bed” resort communities, where workers and their families share little cultural interaction with seasonal upper-income residents. These low-wage workers are forced to commute great distances to work everyday, leaving their families in distant, often poor towns “down-river.” Communities are increasingly faced with the decision of whether or not to provide basic services to meet the needs of their essential employment base.



To be included in this category, counties had to have had more than 2 percent of their population enter the U.S. between the years of 1990 and 2000. Counties were then ranked based on data from the 2000 Census for the percentage of the population being non-U.S. citizens, the percentage of the population commuting to a county other than their residence for work, the number of housing units for existing migrant workers, and whether or not there was a migrant health center located in the community. Counties were ranked for each individual variable separately and then a composite score was developed based on their average rankings as explained in the methods and acknowledgments section.

2. MANAGING IMMIGRATION IN THE ROCKIES

Counties Meeting the Needs of Migrant Workers and Immigrants

Non-Metro Counties

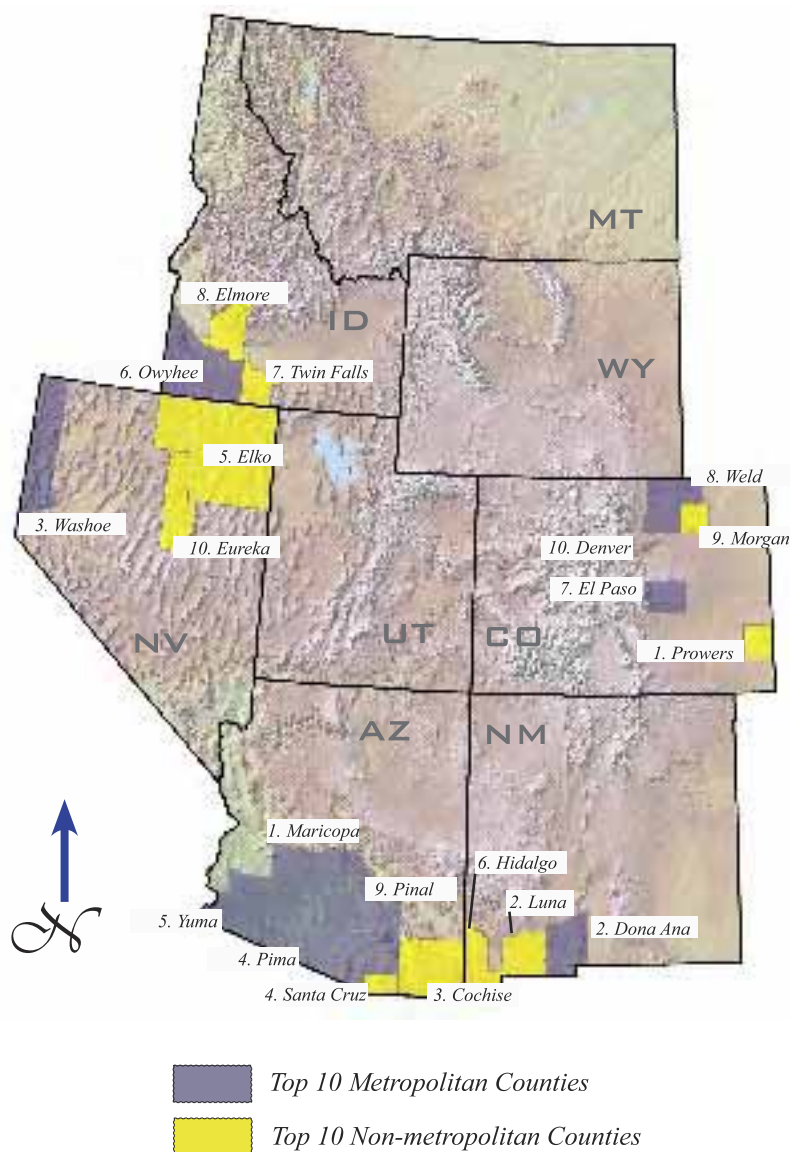
County Name	# of Housing Units For Migrant Workers	% of Population Working outside the County of Residence	Community or Migrant Health Center in County	% of Population Not U.S. Citizens
1. Prowers County, CO	27	4%	yes	9%
2. Luna County, NM	27	7%	yes	15%
3. Cochise County, AZ	97	5%	yes	6%
4. Santa Cruz County, AZ	28	9%	yes	20%
5. Elko County, NV	58	8%	yes	7%
6. Hidalgo County, NM	26	5%	yes	7%
7. Twin Falls County, ID	91	9%	yes	4%
8. Elmore County, ID	70	16%	yes	5%
9. Morgan County, CO	0	10%	yes	12%
10. Eureka County, NV	24	10%	yes	6%

Metro Counties

County Name	# of Housing Units For Migrant Workers	% of Population Working outside the County of Residence	Community or Migrant Health Center in County	% of Population Not U.S. Citizens
1. Maricopa County, AZ	305	1%	yes	11%
2. Dona Ana County, NM	63	2%	yes	12%
3. Washoe County, NV	55	3%	yes	9%
4. Pima County, AZ	7	2%	yes	7%
5. Yuma County, AZ	183	1%	no	18%
6. Owyhee County, ID	94	48%	yes	9%
7. El Paso County, CO	36	4%	yes	3%
8. Weld County, CO	38	33%	yes	7%
9. Pinal County, AZ	65	39%	yes	7%
10. Denver County, CO	16	36%	yes	13%

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

A Look at the Top Tens



*"In Idaho, discrimination was rampant. There were many signs in the windows of community businesses that said 'No Mexicans or dogs allowed.' We (the Idaho Migrant Council) were able to defeat that issue and bring some change."*¹

- Humberto Fuentes, Founder of the Idaho Migrant Council



When asked what the biggest issue facing the Hispanic community was, recent Idaho Third District Court appointee Judge Sergio Gutierrez replied, "There's the issue of political power. But to me, it's so connected with education, because what I see is that as technology sort of dominates our life, you cannot either self-empower as a people, as a group, create a life, create an environment that is good for you unless you are able to get engaged and involved."² The Idaho Migrant Council, Inc., located in Twin Falls County, ID (#7), provides employment and training services for low-income families and low-income migrant and seasonal farm workers, primarily of Hispanic background. Further, to combat the immense educational needs the council has provided classroom and on-the-job training, English-as-a-second-language courses, and job placement services to migrant workers in Southwestern Idaho.

¹ Mills, Joel. "Friend speaks fondly of Chavez." *Lewiston Morning Tribune*. April 1, 2004.
² Gutierrez, Sergio. Interview. *Focus West*. July, 2003.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL



3. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Counties with High Per-Capita Numbers of Community-Oriented 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organizations

Non-Metro Counties

County Name	# of Human Services Non-profit Orgs	# of Civil Rights, Social Action, Advocacy Orgs	# of Community Improvement, Capacity Building Orgs	# of Philanthropy, Voluntarism, and Grantmaking Foundations	# Of Public Society Benefit Orgs
1. Pitkin County, CO	7	0	2	8	1
2. Sheridan County, WY	15	0	1	2	1
3. Taos County, NM	12	0	6	2	1
4. Routt County, CO	9	0	0	3	2
5. Alamosa County, CO	7	1	1	1	0
6. Lewis and Clark County, MT	12	5	9	8	2
7. Park County, WY	13	0	1	1	0
8. Teton County, WY	6	0	1	3	0
9. Albany County, WY	11	0	1	4	0
10. Summit County, CO	6	0	3	2	1

Metro Counties

County Name	# of Human Services Non-Profit Orgs	# of Civil Rights, Social Action, Advocacy Orgs	# of Community Improvement, Capacity Building Orgs	# of Philanthropy, Voluntarism, and Grantmaking Foundations	# Of Public Society Benefit Orgs
1. Denver County, CO	166	15	72	59	18
2. Missoula County, MT	35	1	4	8	3
3. Santa Fe County, NM	31	2	10	12	1
4. Natrona County, WY	15	1	4	7	1
5. Yellowstone County, MT	28	2	9	11	0
6. Nez Perce County, ID	8	0	1	2	0
7. Laramie County, WY	16	1	3	2	1
8. Cascade County, MT	14	1	5	2	0
9. Mesa County, CO	20	0	4	6	1
10. Bernalillo County, NM	90	4	22	22	6

THE ISSUE

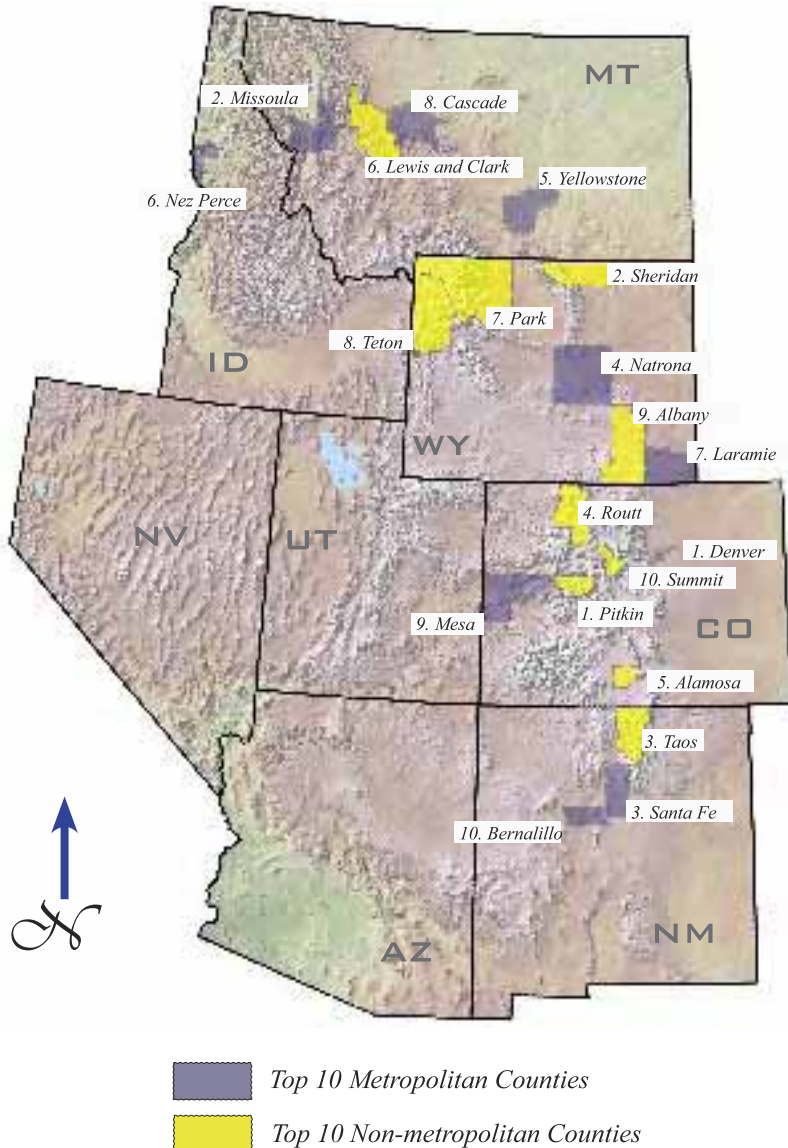
A desirable place to live and work is one in which the citizens of the community take a vested interest in its well-being. Communities with the greatest and most diverse citizen participation are often resilient and strong. Engaging citizens through philanthropy, volunteerism, and other mechanisms in order to address common issues is essential for educated decision-making and community vitality.

ABOUT THE INDICATORS

Counties were ranked based on the number of 501(c)(3) organizations focused on human services, civil rights, social action and advocacy, community improvement and capacity building, philanthropy, volunteerism, and public/society benefit adjusted to an overall per-capita measure. Communities had to have a minimum of 20 total non-profits in any sector to be included in the analysis.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

A Look at the Top Tens



In Taos County, NM (#3), there are a number of organizations operating to preserve a sense of community. The Taos County Neighborhood Association serves as a grass-roots forum to exchange information and discuss issues of concern to neighborhoods that had been previously isolated from each other. The Taos Internet User's Group holds classes on Internet use, design, and literacy at the Telecommunity Learning Center, an online Taos community site maintained by La Plaza organization. In addition, the community has free services for AIDS resources, clothing assistance, counseling services, crisis intervention, day care - preschool, economic development, education, environmental services, and financial advice.¹

¹ Northern New Mexico's Online Community Network, www.laplaza.org.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL



A healthy environment in which to live and work is essential for many who are making a decision to relocate to a community. Such healthy communities include areas that decrease the risk of environmentally-induced illness, or any health condition that is caused or exacerbated by exposure to toxic chemicals. They are also places where low work stress conditions and a comfortable atmosphere lead people to live longer, happier lives.



To be included in the analysis, counties had to have met EPA toxic chemical release standards for carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter and lead. Counties designated as community health professional shortage areas were removed from the analysis as well. Counties were then ranked based on having low per-capita pounds of toxic chemicals released, a low self-rated proportion of adults in poor to fair health, and a high average life expectancy. Counties were ranked for each individual indicator and a composite score was developed based on their average rankings as explained in the methods and acknowledgments section.

4. HEALTHY PLACES TO LIVE AND WORK

The Healthiest Counties in the Rockies

Non-Metro Counties

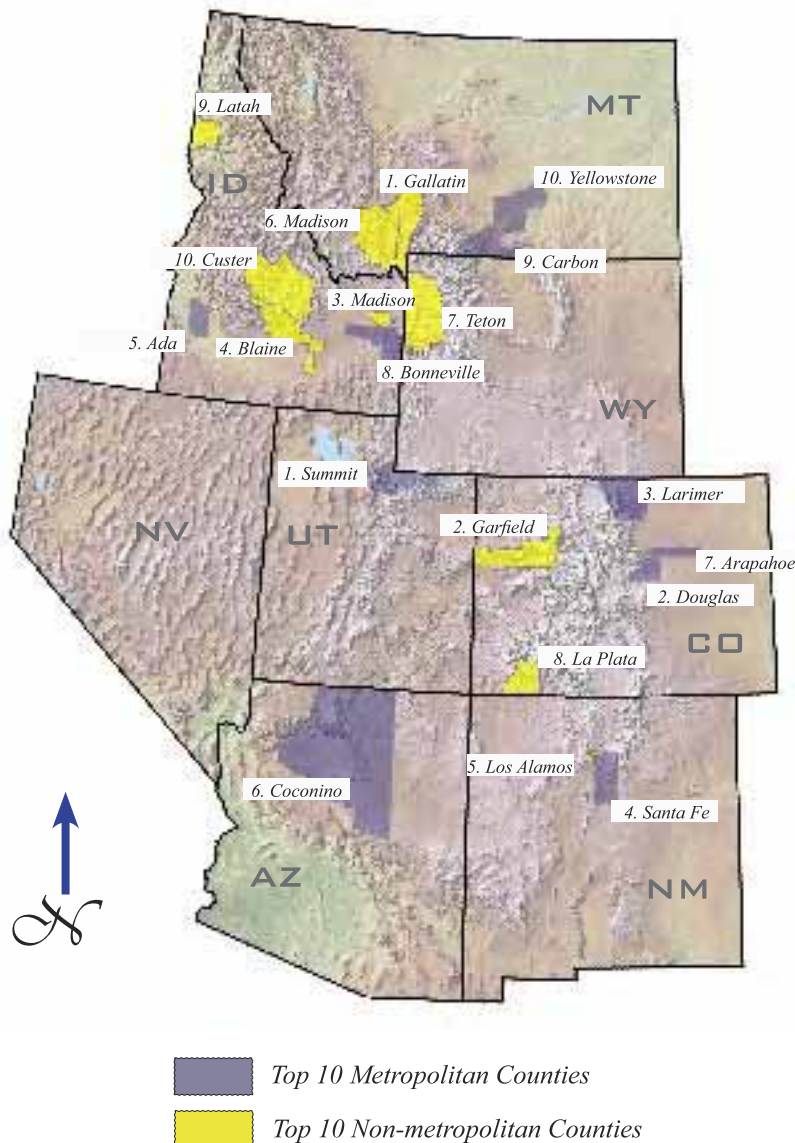
County Name	Per Capita Lbs. of Toxic Chemicals Released	Self Rated Health Status (% of Adults in Poor to Fair Health)	Average Life Expectancy
1. Gallatin County, MT	0	7.1%	78.9
2. Garfield County, CO	0	6.9%	77.4
3. Madison County, ID	.0276	6.4%	78.5
4. Blaine County, ID	0	4.6%	76.8
5. Los Alamos County, NM	.0399	5.7%	77.6
6. Madison County, MT	0	5%	76.1
7. Teton County, WY	0	4%	75.7
8. La Plata County, CO	0	8.8%	77.5
9. Latah County, ID	0	9.4%	78
10. Custer County, ID	0	8.5%	76.8

Metro Counties

County Name	Per Capita Lbs. of Toxic Chemicals Released	Self Rated Health Status (% of Adults in Poor to Fair Health)	Average Life Expectancy
1. Summit County, UT	0	4.1%	78.1
2. Douglas County, CO	.0139	8.2%	79.1
3. Larimer County, CO	.0166	7.8%	78.4
4. Santa Fe County, NM	0	8.9%	77.6
5. Ada County, ID	0	9.6%	77.4
6. Coconino County, AZ	.0225	8.4%	76.9
7. Arapahoe County, CO	.1694	8.3%	78
8. Bonneville County, ID	.0031	10%	77.2
9. Carbon County, MT	0	9.9%	76.7
10. Yellowstone County, MT	0	10.7%	76.8

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

A Look at the Top Tens



“Healthy communities have many different components...” writes the Gallatin Valley Land Trust of Gallatin County, MT (#1), “...including opportunities for recreation, alternative transportation, scenic greenways, and access to nature.” That’s why the GVLТ formed the “Main Street to Mountains” Initiative in Bozeman. The trail system will one day unite downtown Bozeman with the Bridger Mountains to the northeast and the Gallatin Range south of town. Trails that wind down old railway corridors, atop scenic ridgelines and through the valley’s remaining open spaces, allow residents and visitors alike to explore Bozeman by foot, bicycle, or cross-country skis. The trust maintains that their cooperative trail system is a great way to preserve a sense of community while providing opportunities for quick escape and a nurtured sense of place.¹

¹ The Gallatin Valley Land Trust, www.gvlt.org.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL



Education attainment is one important indicator of social prosperity and economic vitality for communities in the Rockies. A highly educated population expresses the demand for skills and knowledge in the workforce. The U.S. Census Bureau has reported that higher educational attainment levels are strongly correlated with higher average earnings per worker and lower unemployment rates. By placing a premium on attracting and retaining highly educated workers, communities increase the capacity of their workforce to remain competitive in an increasingly global marketplace.



Counties were ranked based on the percentage of the total population age 25 and higher with a bachelor's degree and the percentage age 25 and higher with a graduate degree. An average rank of both indicators was used to score counties as explained in the methods and acknowledgements section.

5. EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

The Most Educated Places in the Rockies

Non-Metro Counties

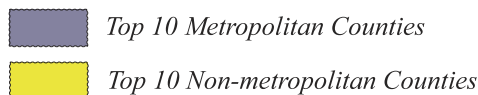
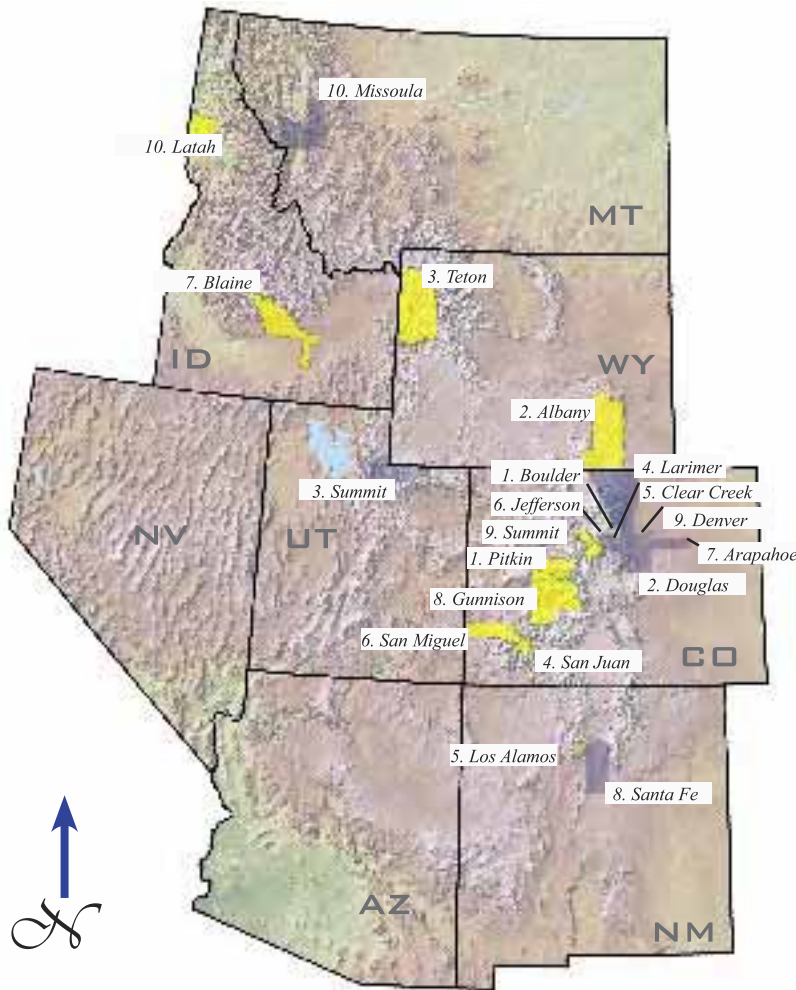
County Name	% of Population Age 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree	% of Population Age 25 and Older with a Graduate Degree
1. Pitkin County, CO	40%	17%
2. Albany County, WY	26%	19%
3. Teton County, WY	32%	14%
4. San Juan County, CO	28%	16%
5. Los Alamos County, NM	24%	36%
6. San Miguel County, CO	37%	12%
7. Blaine County, ID	30%	13%
8. Gunnison County, CO	32%	12%
9. Summit County, CO	36%	12%
10. Latah County, ID	23%	18%

Metro Counties

County Name	% of Population Age 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree	% of Population Age 25 and Older with a Graduate Degree
1. Boulder County, CO	31%	21%
2. Douglas County, CO	27%	15%
3. Summit County, UT	31%	15%
4. Larimer County, CO	25%	14%
5. Clear Creek County, CO	25%	14%
6. Jefferson County, CO	24%	12%
7. Arapahoe County, CO	25%	12%
8. Santa Fe County, NM	20%	17%
9. Denver County, CO	22%	12%
10. Missoula County, MT	22%	11%

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

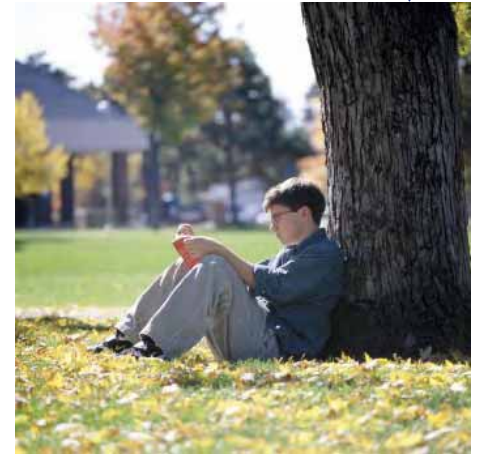
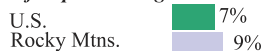
A Look at the Top Tens



% of Population Age 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree



% of Population Age 25 and Older with a Master's Degree or Higher



With the University of Colorado as its prime asset, Boulder County, CO (#1) boasts the most educated workforce of any metropolitan county in the Rockies, with an astounding 21 percent of the population attaining a graduate degree or higher as compared to the Rockies region average of 9 percent. Furthermore, with the CU division of Continuing Education, the Naropa Institute, Front Range Community College, and a wide array of adult education classes ranging from yoga to photography to real estate, there exists a wealth of opportunity in Boulder to improve upon the city's already strong educational assets.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL



Rocky Mountain National Park



Recognizing what makes a community unique culturally and then celebrating that distinction may be the most overlooked tenet of strategies to pursue economic development and vibrant communities. Local organizations for the arts, culture, and humanities provide communities with an enriching atmosphere conducive to community vitality. The information industries (book, software, news, and magazine publishers), scientific and technical services industries (architecture, engineering, design, computer services, and advertising), and the arts, entertainment, and recreation industries (theatre, dance, music, fine arts, museums, and sports) all require a highly-skilled, highly-specialized workforce. These industries constitute a “creative class” core group that many have said is essential to creating a high quality of life necessary for attracting a first-rate workforce in all industries.



To be included in this analysis, counties had to have at least 3,000 people employed in the county, and had to have employment shares in the creative class industries exceeding the Rockies region’s average of 11 percent. Counties were then ranked based on the percentage of total non-profits located within the county dedicated to arts, culture, and humanities.

6. ARTS, CULTURE, AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE “CREATIVE CLASS”

The Best Places for Arts and Culture in the Rockies

Non-Metro Counties

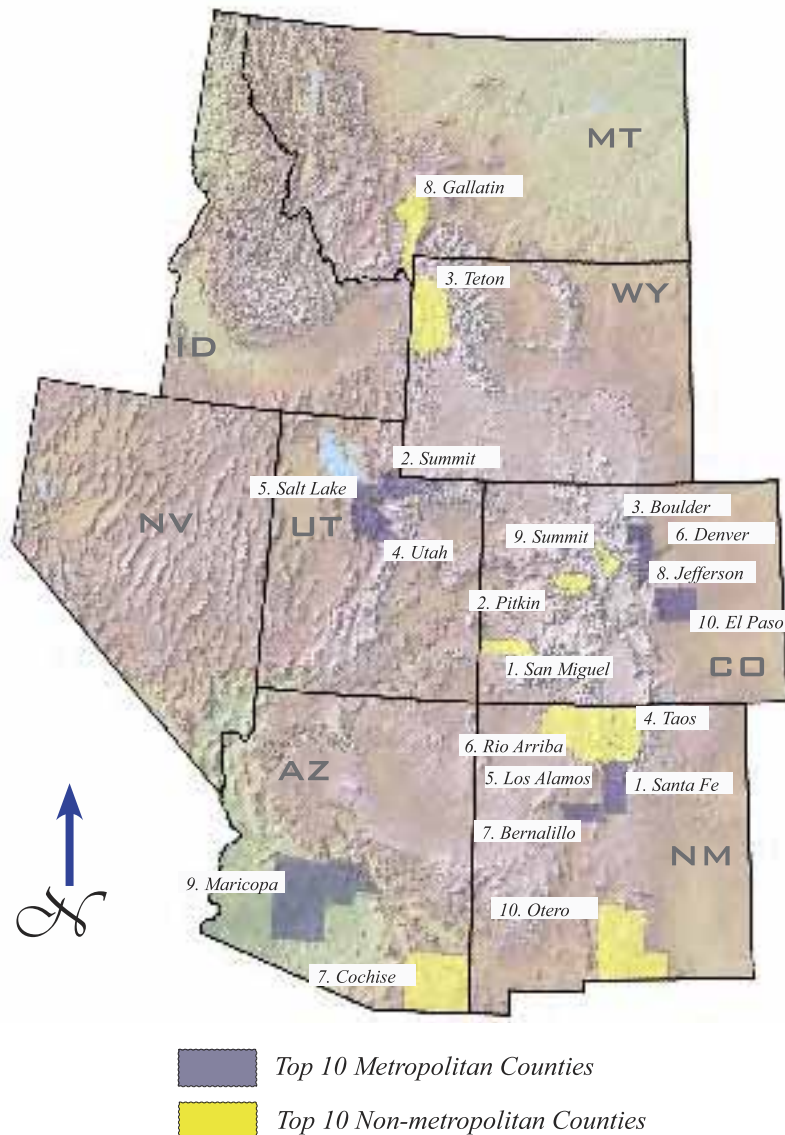
County Name	# of Arts, Culture, and Humanities Non-Profit Organizations	Arts, Culture and Humanity Orgs as % of total Non-profits	% Employment in the “Creative Class” Industries
1. San Miguel County, CO	12	23%	34%
2. Pitkin County, CO	19	21%	24%
3. Teton County, WY	15	18%	23%
4. Taos County, NM	15	14%	22%
5. Los Alamos County, NM	6	16%	19%
6. Rio Arriba County, NM	8	14%	19%
7. Cochise County, AZ	14	14%	19%
8. Gallatin County, MT	22	12%	17%
9. Summit County, CO	6	16%	15%
10. Otero County, NM	6	14%	14%

Metro Counties

County Name	# of Arts, Culture, and Humanities Non-Profit Organizations	Arts, Culture and Humanity Orgs as % of total Non-profits	% Employment in the “Creative Class” Industries
1. Santa Fe County, NM	69	12%	23%
2. Summit County, UT	7	26%	14%
3. Boulder County, CO	47	23%	14%
4. Utah County, UT	14	12%	13%
5. Salt Lake County, UT	80	12%	13%
6. Denver County, CO	120	17%	12%
7. Bernalillo County, NM	65	13%	11%
8. Jefferson County, CO	47	14%	10%
9. Maricopa County, AZ	165	12%	9%
10. El Paso County, CO	47	16%	9%

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

A Look at the Top Tens



% of Total Employment in the "Creative Class" Industries

U.S.	18%
Rocky Mtns.	18%

¹ Aguilar, Louis. "Mayor sees city's future in nurturing creativity." *Denver Post*, November 2, 2003.
² Yamnitz, Jennifer. "Telluride Summer Festivals Provide One-of-a-Kind Group Meeting Activities." Press Release, April 9, 2003.

*"It used to be all about offering businesses cheap land and cheap takes. Now most cities are trying to carve out economic strategies based on attracting great people."*¹

-Carol Coletta
 Host of Public Radio's "Smart City" program



In Telluride, Colorado, located within San Miguel County (#1), the festival season, as it's called, begins in late May with the Mountain Film Festival, a celebration of the natural environment in film and photography. Balloon Rally and Wild West Fest begin in early June with hot air balloons lining Main Street, and Boys and Girls Clubs from around the nation coming to Telluride to explore the arts and culture of the ole' West. Telluride Bluegrass happens every year in June, where many festiversians make an annual pilgrimage to soak in string music during the summer solstice. Other highlights include the annual jazz festival, the world-renowned Telluride Film Festival, and the annual Blues and Brews Festival in early September.

Telluride Mountain Village's marketing program loves the festival season for bringing in businesses for annual meetings and conferences from around the Rockies. "Packaging meetings with festivals and special events is a great enticement for your attendees," says Heather Knox Rommel, Telluride Conference Center director. "At a time when everyone is looking to save money, access to free entertainment can make a meeting more cost effective for planners while giving attendees memorable recreation opportunities."²

Maybe the most interesting festival of the season for locals is the Nothing Festival, scheduled this year for July 18-20. Local Dennis Wrestler petitioned Telluride's commission for the arts and events to sanction this official occurrence for locals to catch a break in the heated festival season. The non-festival has an official T-shirt too. It costs \$15 if you have a sense of humor, \$20 if you don't.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

7. THE "GRAYING" OF THE ROCKIES

Top Retirement Havens in the Rockies

Non-Metro Counties

County Name	Acres of U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service Lands	# Of Primary Care Providers Per 100,000 People	Sonoran Institute Housing Affordability Index	Growth in Retirement Income 1970-2001
1. Apache County, AZ	492,814	63.3	198	3,063%
2. Fremont County, WY	980,919	100.3	129	2,185%
3. Teton County, WY	1,370,506	186.7	53	3,463%
4. Park County, WY	1,699,791	85.7	118	1,979%
5. Duchesne County, UT	727,949	62.3	135	2,780%
6. Valley County, ID	2,013,677	86.4	93	2,977%
7. Gila County, AZ	1,704,511	57.9	109	3,677%
8. Grant County, NM	885,585	73.4	117	2,261%
9. Idaho County, ID	4,423,495	79.6	118	1,646%
10. Lewis and Clark, MT	980,135	110.8	118	1,570%

Metro Counties

County Name	Acres of U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service Lands	# Of Primary Care Providers Per 100,000 People	Sonoran Institute Housing Affordability Index	Growth in Retirement Income 1970-2001
1. Maricopa County, AZ	657,706	77.9	124	3,201%
2. Pima County, AZ	800,649	99.3	114	2,614%
3. Clark County, NV	889,442	65.7	113	6,424%
4. Sandoval County, NM	489,809	55.9	138	6,831%
5. Coconino County, AZ	4,096,117	87.9	95	2,499%
6. Summit County, UT	510,155	139.8	78	2,794%
7. Yavapai County, AZ	1,968,065	57.5	90	3,778%
8. Washington County, UT	514,212	54.7	94	7,534%
9. Douglas County, CO	141,835	49.9	124	10,541%
10. Santa Fe County, NM	247,579	102.6	79	2,624%



Zion National Park



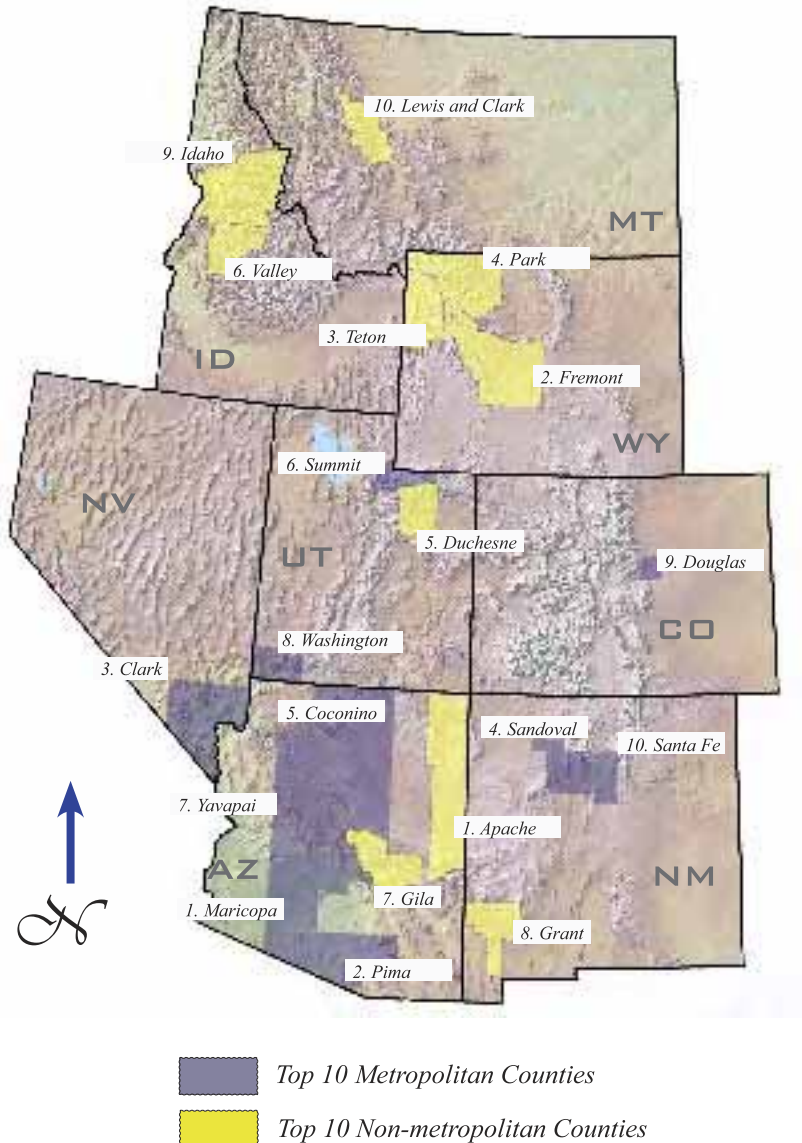
Some have noted that attracting a large pool of the retiree population to the community can be a valuable economic development tool. Retirees tend to own homes, pay property taxes, spend locally, and bring with them a huge influx of non-labor income sources. Still, these retirees require affordable housing, an increase in community services – particularly medical services – and low taxes to succeed.



Counties were ranked based on the number of primary-care physicians per 100,000 people, the Sonoran Institute housing affordability index (an index that measures whether the median-income family in a region can afford the median-value home with monthly mortgage payments, an assumed down-payment of 20 percent of the home's value, and an interest rate of roughly 8 percent), growth in income earned from retirement payments from 1970-2001, and the total acres of land owned by the Forest Service and National Park Service. Counties were excluded from the analysis if they had lower than a five on the USDA Economic Research service natural amenity rank (a ranking from 1-8 that measures the climate, topography, and percentage water area of each county in a weighted natural amenity index), or if they were a designated health professional shortage area. Counties were ranked for each individual indicator and a composite score was then developed based on their average rankings as explained in the methods and acknowledgments section.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

A Look at the Top Tens



"One of the things we need to do is expand how we think about our economy to include an incredibly viable work force that for a large part is looking for something to do,"¹

- Wyoming Governor Dave Freudenthal



By the year 2020, Wyoming is expected to replace Florida as the state with the largest share of its residents being age 65 or older according to the latest Census Bureau projections. One out of every two people in the state will be age 60 or older. City council member Nancy Webber of Lander, WY (Fremont County, #2) is incredulous as to whether this is a good thing for the future of her community. "People tell me, 'We don't want more retirees. We want young people.'" Webber explained to the *Wall Street Journal*. Governor Dave Freudenthal wants to move beyond the discussion of whether or not this is a good thing for the state to look towards opportunities associated with the changing demographics. That's why he helped create the workshop called "Ahead of the Curve: Economic Planning for Wyoming's Retirement Boom," in conjunction with AARP Wyoming. Nearly 100 leaders gathered to explore the best ways to tap a burgeoning population of retirees. Workshop participants said they will incorporate the needs of boomers into their economic and community planning; many said they saw an emerging boom of retirees as an opportunity to reap from their wealth of experience and intellect in community building and volunteer service.

¹ Associated Press. "Governor Says Elderly a Resource for Wyoming." November 6, 2003.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL



Many businesses and individuals will relocate to a community with better schools to provide increased opportunities for their children, often times succumbing to increased commute times to work as a result. A look at the amount of funding per student and student-to-teacher ratios can be indicative of the quality of schools in a community. Low levels of crime and a healthy environment are also essential for a place to be kids-friendly.



To be included in this analysis, counties had to have more than 2,000 students and a poverty rate below the Rocky Mountain average of 15 percent. Counties were ranked on their average student-to-teacher ratio, average expenditure per student, low per-capita violent crime rate, low per-capita recent drug use, and the number of non-profit organizations based in youth education and youth development. Counties were ranked for each individual indicator and a composite score was developed based on their average rankings as explained in the methods and acknowledgments section.

8. A GOOD PLACE TO RAISE KIDS

The Best Places for Kids in the Rockies

Non-Metro Counties

County Name	Average Student to Teacher Ratio	Average Expenditure Per Student
1. Carbon County, WY	11.3	\$6,498
2. Fergus County, MT	13.2	\$5,709
3. Los Alamos County, NM	13.9	\$6,290
4. Routt County, CO	13.9	\$5,743
5. Blaine County, ID	14	\$5,428
6. Park County, MT	14.3	\$5,316
7. Sheridan County, WY	11.4	\$5,752
8. Teton County, WY	13.4	\$5,738
9. Albany County, WY	13.4	\$5,542
10. Eagle County, CO	14.4	\$5,840

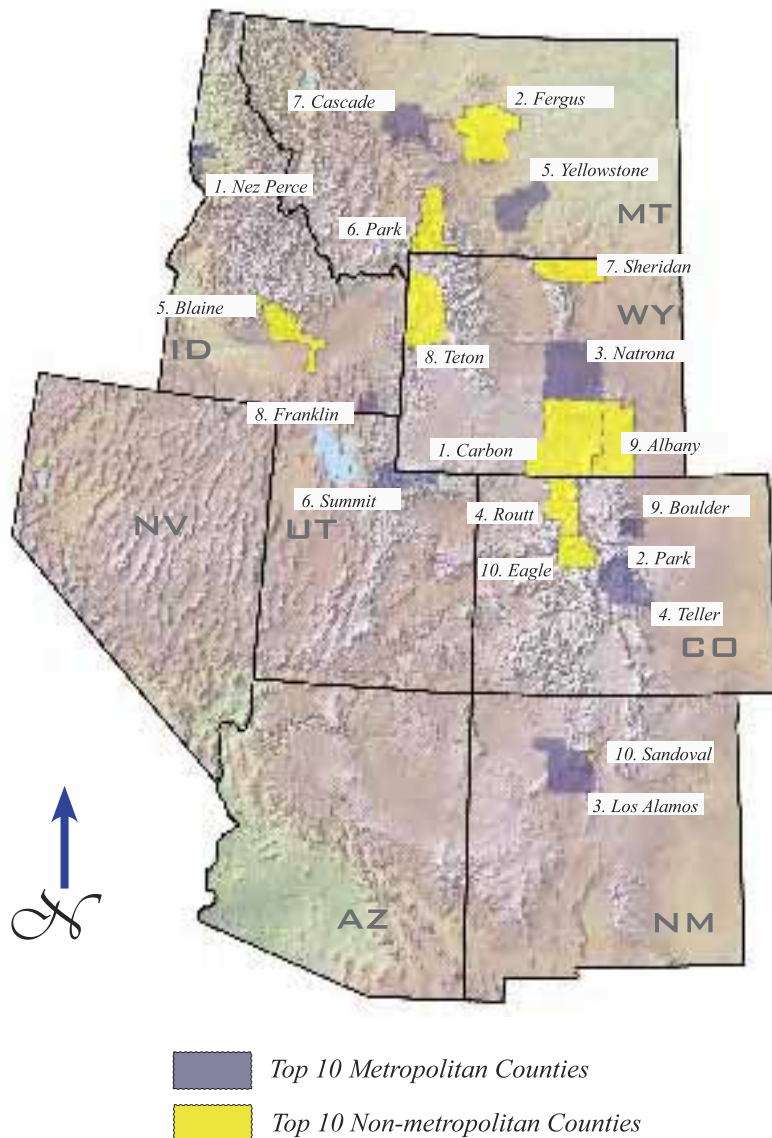
Metro Counties

County Name	Average Student to Teacher Ratio	Average Expenditure Per Student
1. Nez Perce County, ID	16.1	\$5,335
2. Park County, CO	15.4	\$4,995
3. Natrona County, WY	14.8	\$5,352
4. Teller County, CO	17.6	\$4,705
5. Yellowstone County, MT	16.5	\$4,929
6. Summit County, UT	17.9	\$4,387
7. Cascade County, MT	15.5	\$4,529
8. Franklin County, ID	19.5	\$3,606
9. Boulder County, CO	17	\$4,898
10. Sandoval County, NM	15.9	\$4,342

GRADING THE ROCKIES - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

"Every parent knows that education improves when class size shrinks."¹

A Look at the Top Tens



Los Alamos County, NM (#3) has been rated before as one of the top places for youth development. *The Wall Street Journal's* "Offspring" magazine rated the Los Alamos Public School system as the #1 public school system in the Southwestern United States in its Sept-Oct 2000 issue. Annually, more than 80 percent of Los Alamos high school graduates go on to four-year colleges. SAT scores have historically exceeded national averages by more than 30 percent. Furthermore, over half of the teachers at the Los Alamos Public School District hold master's degrees.

¹ Sullum, Jacob. *Reason*. Vol. 34 Issue 11, April, 2004.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND EQUITY

1. BALANCED EMPLOYMENT COMPOSITION

Counties Whose Employment Composition is Most Like the Rocky Mountain Average Employment Composition



A particularly daunting challenge for communities in the Rockies is diversifying the local employment base. Historically, these communities' economies were generally organized around the income derived from a single resource extraction industry. Today, many of these communities still remain reliant on a single industry. For some, that base is still mining, logging, or oil and gas extraction, while for others the shift has been towards tourism and the so-called "quality of life" industries. Balanced employment is essential to reducing a community's vulnerability to economic downturns.

Non-Metro Counties

	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Mining	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale Trade	Retail Trade	Finance Insurance and Real Estate	Information	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	Education	Other Services	Public Administration	
1.Flathead County, MT	4%	9%	12%	3%	15%	5%	2%	6%	7%	18%	12%	5%	3%
2.Wasatch County, UT	2%	13%	9%	3%	12%	5%	2%	7%	8%	16%	15%	4%	4%
3.La Plata County, CO	4%	10%	4%	2%	12%	5%	2%	6%	9%	22%	14%	4%	4%
4.Gallatin County, MT	4%	11%	8%	3%	13%	3%	2%	5%	9%	21%	14%	5%	3%
5.Iron County, UT	4%	10%	11%	2%	13%	4%	2%	5%	9%	22%	10%	3%	4%
6.Churchill County, NV	6%	9%	8%	2%	13%	6%	3%	3%	7%	17%	10%	5%	10%
7.Lyon County, NV	5%	10%	12%	3%	14%	6%	2%	5%	6%	14%	12%	4%	8%
8.Ravalli County, MT	7%	11%	9%	3%	13%	4%	2%	6%	7%	21%	8%	7%	3%
9.Chaves County, NM	10%	7%	10%	3%	13%	4%	2%	5%	6%	21%	8%	5%	5%
10. Washakie County, WY	14%	6%	8%	3%	12%	5%	2%	5%	6%	19%	10%	5%	5%

Metro Counties

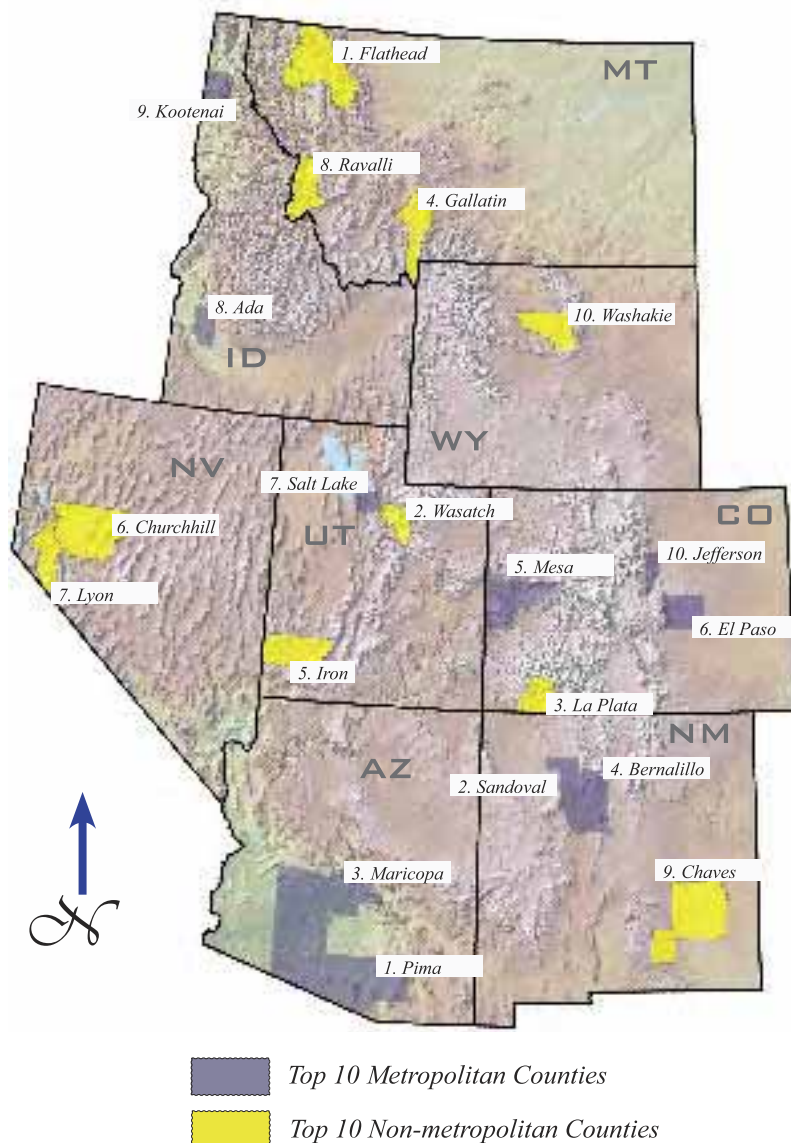
Metro Counties													
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Mining	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale Trade	Retail Trade	Finance Insurance and Real Estate	Information	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	Education	Other Services	Public Administration	
1. Pima County, AZ	1%	8%	9%	2%	12%	4%	3%	6%	10%	23%	10%	5%	3%
2. Sandoval County, NM	1%	8%	13%	3%	12%	5%	3%	6%	10%	17%	9%	5%	4%
3. Maricopa County, AZ	1%	9%	12%	4%	12%	5%	3%	9%	12%	16%	9%	5%	4%
4. Bernalillo County, NM	0%	7%	8%	3%	12%	4%	3%	7%	13%	21%	10%	5%	3%
5. Mesa County, CO	3%	10%	7%	4%	13%	6%	3%	6%	8%	21%	10%	5%	4%
6. El Paso County, CO	1%	8%	11%	2%	13%	4%	5%	7%	12%	18%	9%	6%	10%
7. Salt Lake County, UT	1%	8%	11%	4%	12%	6%	4%	9%	10%	17%	8%	5%	8%
8. Ada County, ID	1%	8%	14%	4%	13%	4%	3%	7%	10%	17%	8%	5%	3%
9. Kootenai County, ID	3%	11%	12%	3%	16%	4%	3%	6%	7%	18%	10%	5%	5%
10. Jefferson County, CO	1%	8%	9%	4%	12%	5%	5%	9%	13%	16%	8%	5%	5%



Data from the 2000 census was used to calculate employment composition by industry sector for the region and each county within the region. Counties having the least absolute difference from the Rockies region's employment make-up in composition by sector were ranked highest.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND EQUITY

A Look at the Top Tens



Cedar City, Utah, located within Iron County (#5), has built an enticing economic development strategy that emphasizes location and incentives to attract new business to southwest Utah. Cedar City has taken some progressive steps to encourage a clean, well-planned, but industry-friendly community. A substantial manufacturing base processes products ranging from aircraft parts to soymilk. Businesses have been attracted to the community for its unique location along I-15, just a day's trucking to any major city in the American West. Industrial development bonds, a local commuter airport, and the Southern Utah University Small Business Development Center, which can assist with market strategy, tax issues, management training, and assessments of existing businesses, all contribute to Cedar City's non-metropolitan economic development success. As Phillip O'Connor, vice chairman and chief financial officer of North American Packaging Corporation put it, "The courageous commitment of local government combined with a great distribution point and excellent workforce made Cedar City our first choice."¹

¹ Cedar City Economic Development Office, <http://www.cedarcity.org/mag2004.html>. January, 2004.

	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Mining	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale Trade	Retail Trade	Finance Insurance and Real Estate	Information	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	Education	Public Administration	Other Services
The United States	2%	7%	14%	4%	12%	5%	3%	7%	9%	20%	8%	5%
The Rocky Mountains	3%	9%	9%	3%	12%	5%	3%	7%	10%	18%	11%	5%

GRADING THE ROCKIES - INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND EQUITY

2. SMALL BUSINESS VITALITY

Counties Generating the Most Small Businesses 1980-2001

Non-Metro Counties

County Name	Growth in Businesses with less than 10 employees, 1980-2001	Total New Businesses with less than 10 employees, 1980-2001
1. Gallatin County, MT	179%	1,807
2. Mohave County, AZ	177%	1,666
3. Flathead County, MT	128%	1,489
4. Summit County, CO	312%	1,156
5. Garfield County, CO	150%	1,007
6. La Plata County, CO	120%	902
7. Teton County, WY	176%	849
8. Douglas County, NV	195%	716
9. Routt County, CO	184%	713
10. Pitkin County, CO	131%	681

Metro Counties

County Name	Growth in Businesses with less than 10 employees, 1980-2001	Total New Businesses with less than 10 employees, 1980-2001
1. Maricopa County, AZ	128%	28,938
2. Clark County, NV	227%	14,767
3. Salt Lake County, UT	83%	8,381
4. Jefferson County, CO	138%	7,348
5. Arapahoe County, CO	144%	7,072
6. Pima County, AZ	81%	5,982
7. El Paso County, CO	107%	5,303
8. Boulder County, CO	151%	5,104
9. Bernalillo County, NM	65%	4,323
10. Ada County, ID	131%	4,226



Bozeman, MT



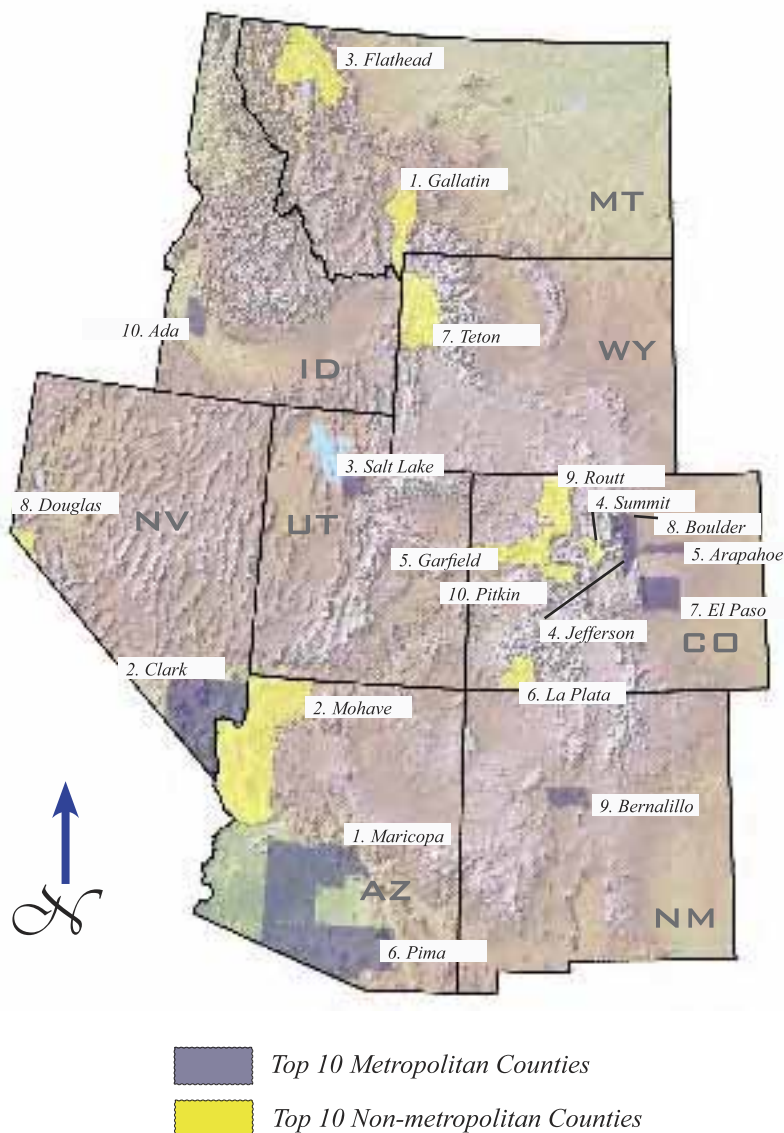
Oftentimes, the best way for a community in the Rockies to diversify its economic base is to create a telecommunications and financial services environment conducive to small businesses. The advent of advanced telecommunications like the Internet and fax equipment, and the creation of efficient shipping services like UPS and Federal Express have enabled small business owners to work where they want to live. Creating access to cheap health insurance, commuter air travel destinations, and telecommunications infrastructure are some of the ways in which a community can position itself to attract small business.



Data from the Census Bureau's County Business Patterns data set was used to calculate the percentage growth in businesses with less than 10 employees for the period from 1980 to 2001. Counties were ranked based on the highest growth in small business creation during this time period.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND EQUITY

A Look at the Top Tens



COMMUNITY PROFILE:

The Northern Nevada Development Association, the Gardnerville Business Association, and local chambers of commerce in Douglas County, NV (#8), have all banded together to promote business growth at the eastern foot of the Sierra Mountains. Activities like the Douglas County Business Showcase Event at the local fairgrounds, which provides free food and drink for locals to find out about local business, and the new Gardnerville downtown revitalization plan, which hopes to create a more livable community through establishing downtown parks, are generating new opportunities for non-metropolitan northern Nevada.

The nearby Community Business Resource Center (CBRC) is making strides as well. CBRC recently won national recognition as a Top 100 Best Practice organization by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Over the last five years, the CBRC has made significant improvements in the delivery of small business lending and counseling programs by partnering and facilitating four “alternative” lending programs serving Rural Nevada. Services currently available vary from entrepreneurial training to financial literacy and include small business counseling services as part of the Small Business Development Center.¹

% Growth in Businesses with Less than 10 Employees, 1980-2001

U.S.	54%
Rocky Mtns.	98%

¹ www.cbrc.org.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND EQUITY

3. BALANCED INCOME DISTRIBUTION



An equitable distribution of income ensures that low-wage workers can afford community services like low-income housing. In this sense, income distribution ensures that the community remains intact, allowing for all community stakeholders to have a say in civic discourse and address collective community problems. A look at the ratio between the highest income portion of the population and the poorest portion of the population can reveal how access to purchasing power is distributed throughout the community. Inequitable distributions of income force low income workers to live outside the community where they work, creating huge disparities between the cultures of adjacent communities, and thus their ability to adequately address regional problems.



Data on income distribution by income bracket was taken from the 2000 Census and was used to calculate the ratio between those making greater than \$75,000 to those making less than \$20,000. The absolute difference between each county's ratio and the Rocky Mountain region's average of 1 was used to rank counties.

Counties

Non-Metro Counties

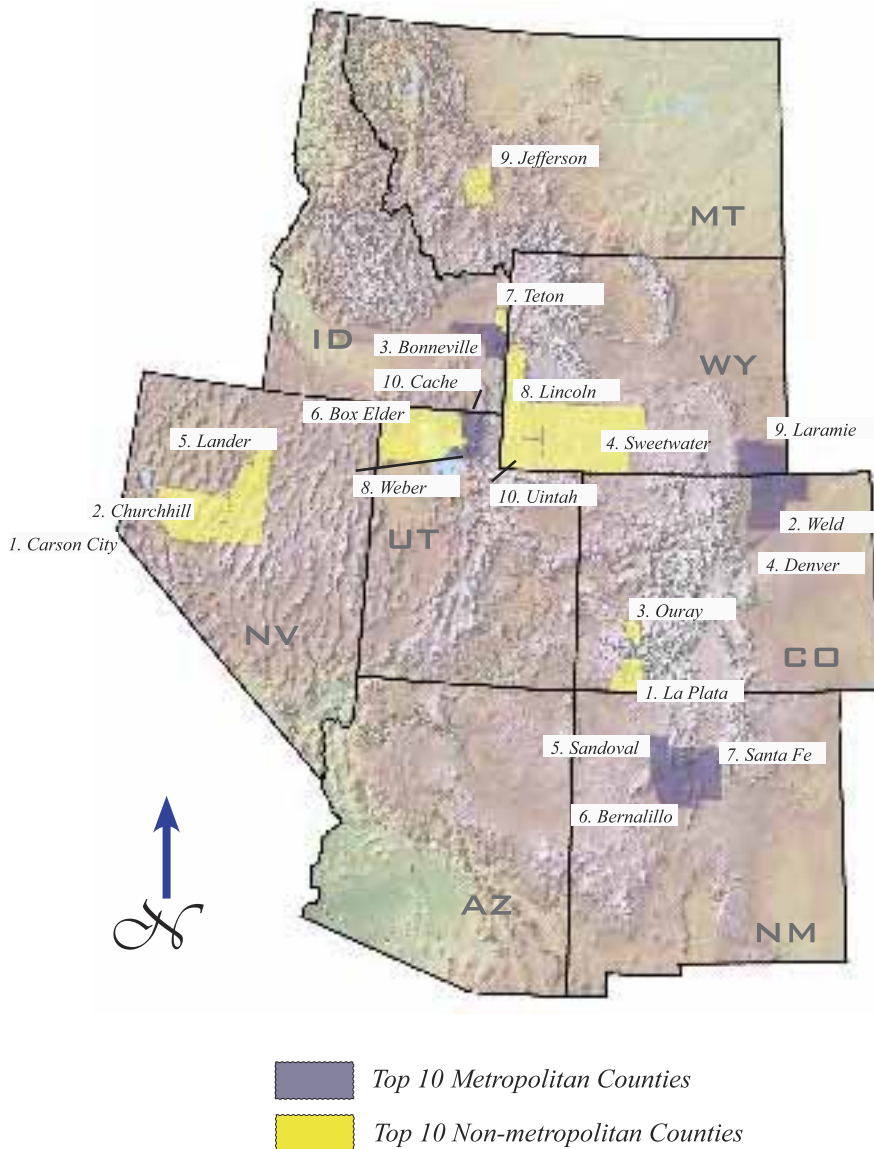
County Name	% of Households Earning Total Income of Less than \$20,000	% of Households Earning Total Income of more than \$75,000
1. La Plata County, CO	22%	21%
2. Churchill County, NV	19%	16%
3. Ouray County, CO	19%	20%
4. Sweetwater County, WY	19%	21%
5. Lander County, NV	19%	16%
6. Box Elder County, UT	15%	18%
7. Teton County, ID	17%	14%
8. Lincoln County, WY	19%	16%
9. Jefferson County, MT	22%	17%
10. Uinta County, WY	20%	16%

Metro Counties

County Name	% of Households Earning Total Income of Less than \$20,000	% of Households Earning Total Income of more than \$75,000
1. Carson City (Independent City), NV	20%	20%
2. Weld County, CO	20%	20%
3. Bonneville County, ID	21%	19%
4. Denver County, CO	23%	21%
5. Sandoval County, NM	18%	20%
6. Bernalillo County, NM	24%	20%
7. Santa Fe County, NM	21%	24%
8. Weber County, UT	17%	20%
9. Laramie County, WY	21%	16%
10. Cache County, UT	20%	16%

GRADING THE ROCKIES - INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND EQUITY

A Look at the Top Tens



"The more income is unevenly distributed, the more problems a community can suffer, from crime to poor health"¹

*-Andrew Welsh Higgins
AP writer*



In Pitkin County, Colorado, home of Aspen and the Roaring Fork Valley, the gap between the wealthy and the poor could not be more extreme. Second homes in Aspen have created a "cold bed" community where workers must migrate from places like Carbondale to "serve" (working primarily in low-wage service industries) a community of seasonal strangers. Latinos currently represent 30 percent of the Roaring Fork's population, and as the Aspen Valley Community Foundation points out, this is creating huge language barriers, cultural misunderstandings, and prejudices between adjacent communities in the Roaring Fork. Staggering dropout rates exist among local Latino high school students, who comprise about one-third of the overall Roaring Fork School District. Only 45 percent of these Latino students graduate. 72 percent of the Latino families enrolled in the Aspen Valley Community Foundation's program earn less than \$15,000 a year. Because Aspen largely imports wealth to the community seasonally, there is little incentive for upper-income, occasional residents to take a stake in community concerns. For Aspen, the result has developed into a reputation as an empty shell of a community, largely dislocated from the inequities that it creates "down-valley." Efforts to ameliorate this lack of affordable housing in Aspen include a portion of the city sales tax and a real estate transfer tax, both focused on making the town more affordable to modest income families.²

¹ Higgins, Andrew Welsh. *The Associated Press*. November 22, 2003.

² The Latino Family Investment Initiative Program Summary. 2002-2003 AVCF.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND EQUITY



4. DISTRESSED COUNTIES

Counties with the Lowest Per Capita Income levels and Highest Poverty and Unemployment Rates

Non-Metro Counties

County Name	Per Capita Personal Income 2001	Percent of Population in Poverty 2000	Unemployment Rate 2000
1. McKinley County, NM	\$13,896	37.7%	9.16%
2. Apache County, AZ	\$14,802	39.4%	10.07%
3. Big Horn County, MT	\$14,998	32.2%	8.71%
4. San Juan County, UT	\$13,108	28.3%	8.04%
5. Mora County, NM	\$13,426	30.4%	6.45%
6. Luna County, NM	\$15,565	34%	7.99%
7. Navajo County, AZ	\$14,934	29%	6.20%
8. Roosevelt County, MT	\$17,786	31.3%	9.77%
9. Blaine County, MT	\$16,715	27.3%	6.82%
10. Glacier County, MT	\$17,982	35.4%	9.47%

Metro Counties

County Name	Per Capita Personal Income 2001	Percent of Population in Poverty 2000	Unemployment Rate 2000
1. Yuma County, AZ	\$16,839	26.5%	5.74%
2. Dona Ana County, NM	\$17,984	28.9%	5.35%
3. Pinal County, AZ	\$15,028	21.7%	3.87%
4. San Juan County, NM	\$19,361	22.5%	5.47%
5. Owyhee County, ID	\$17,251	21.7%	4.17%
6. Torrance County, NM	\$17,471	23.1%	3.52%
7. Coconino County, AZ	\$23,238	20.3%	4.76%
8. Valencia County, NM	\$20,123	18%	3.78%
9. Canyon County, ID	\$18,690	14.8%	3.89%
10. Franklin County, ID	\$16,893	12.1%	3.60%



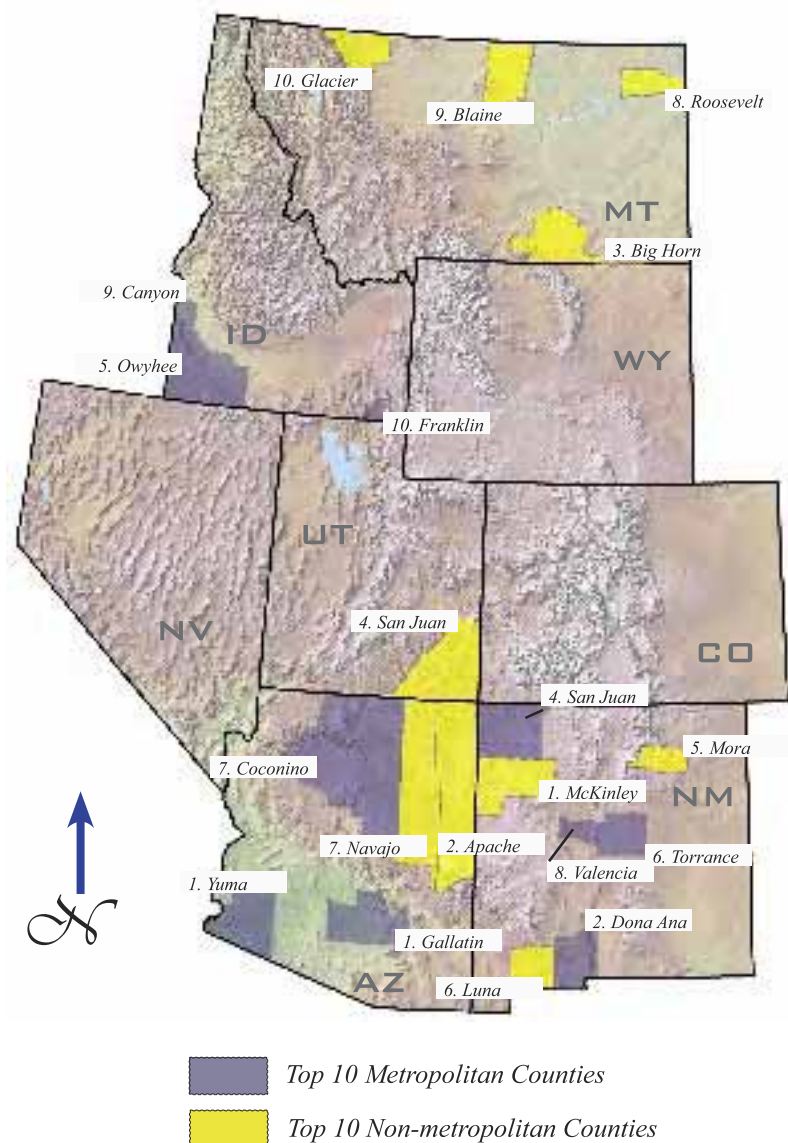
Economic decline has historically been part of a “boom-bust” cycle in the American West and confronts many communities in the Rockies today. Counties with high poverty and unemployment rates and low per-capita income levels are faced with a different set of development needs than counties that are experiencing high levels of growth. Such distressed communities are in desperate need of innovative ways to improve their social capital base and revitalize their economies.



Counties were ranked based on low per-capita income levels in 2001 and high poverty and unemployment rates. Counties were ranked for each individual indicator and a composite score was developed based on their average rankings as explained in the methods and acknowledgments section.

GRADING THE ROCKIES - INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND EQUITY

A Look at the Top Tens



While high poverty and unemployment on the Navajo Nation has been a long-term development challenge for the region (Navajo County, AZ - #7, McKinley County, NM - #1, Apache County, NM - #2, San Juan County, NM - #4), innovative efforts are providing momentum for change. The new Navajo Technology Empowerment Center (NAVTEC) is a \$1.75 million telecommunications and information technology project. Among the significant features of this multi-faceted project is the potential for the Navajo Nation to become the first nation in the world to conduct all its election activities in an e-environment and provide a model for other civic administrative bodies. NAVTEC will focus on e-commerce development, e-training, and government management technologies. The center will apply these technologies to delivering interactive, user-friendly instruction on economic development, career training, educational opportunities and health advisories to 18 communities throughout the Navajo Nation.¹

Percent of Population in Poverty, 2000

U.S.	11%
Rocky Mtns.	15%

Per Capita Personal Income, 2001

U.S.	\$30,413
Rocky Mtns.	\$25,878

Unemployment Rate, 2000

U.S.	4%
Rocky Mtns.	3.6%

¹ Digital Empowerment Campaign. http://www.digitalempowerment.org/yourstate/show_details.asp?oeam=046001058. January, 2004.

GRADING THE ROCKIES: FINAL GRADES



GRADING THE MOST “LIVABLE” COUNTIES IN THE ROCKIES

Where amongst 280 counties and numerous communities in the 8 state Rockies Region are people achieving “vibrancy and vitality?” What does it mean to be “winning” in a region faced with the numerous challenges highlighted by the 15 indicators this report card has used to assign individual “subject” grades around the region? Which counties and the people that reside in them earn highest “overall GPAs” for livability throughout the Rockies? These are questions we answer in this final grading exercise to identify the most “livable” counties. But just as our children in school may be grouped together by age, ability and maturity, we divide counties around the Rockies into three groups within which we seek top performers: Metropolitan, Micropolitan, and Rural. Please see the methods section on page 63 for a complete definition of these classifications.



Faced with the reality that nature has not been equally generous to every county in the Rockies, there are a few basic indicators that can be accurate gauges of relative prosperity for all areas of the region. Often the efforts of residents to form and maintain vibrant communities more than offset any deficiencies nature may have “dealt” areas around the West. In this final grading exercise, “county-students” receive a letter grade based on their average score from nine different requisites for community vibrancy and vitality. The individual indicators comprising an overall “GPA” are of a diverse mix; some are clear performance indicators, while others are location-based assets; some “county-students” bring their God-given talent to the classroom, others have truly earned the marks that they receive. The nine indicators developed by the Rockies Project to judge overall vibrancy and vitality are:

Employment Distribution: A good employment mix is critical to local economic vitality as it ensures resiliency against downturns in particular industries or sectors of the economy. Data for employment composition for the year 2000 was taken from the decennial census. For an explanation of how the employment distribution figure was measured please see page 45.

Income Distribution: An equitable distribution of income ensures that low-wage workers can afford community services like low-income housing. In this sense, income distribution ensures that the community remains intact, allowing for all community stakeholders to have a say in civic discourse and address collective community problems. Data on income levels was taken from the decennial census. Please see the income distribution indicator on page 49 for an explanation of how the figure shown here was calculated.

Unemployment Rate: Low unemployment rates are a frequently used gauge of economic vibrancy in a community. Together with the employment growth indicator explained below, low unemployment ensures that the community is generating enough jobs to match the pressures of an expanding workforce. Unemployment rate data was taken for the year 2000 from the decennial census.

Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job: Real (adjusted for inflation) growth in average earnings per job depicts the degree to which earned income is creating prosperity for a community. It is a rough measure of whether job growth in the community is generating higher quality (higher paying) jobs. Average earnings per job can be in decline in a community due to a number of factors including an increase in the role of part-time employment in the community and/or a shift to jobs in lower-paying industries. Growth in earnings per job was calculated for the period from 1970-2001, the longest given data availability, from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis’ Regional Economic Information System (REIS).

Total Employment Growth: Simply stated, employment growth is important for community vitality to prevent economic contraction. Employment data was taken for the period from 1970-2001, the longest given data availability, from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis’ Regional Economic Information System (REIS).

USDA Natural Amenity Rank: High natural Amenity levels have been shown to be some of the principal drivers of economic and

demographic growth in the Rockies. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service developed a weighted natural amenity rank of 1 (lowest) through 8 (highest) for all counties in the U.S. The natural amenities scale takes into account favorable winter and summer climate conditions, topographic variation, and high levels of county water area. High natural amenities are a unique bonus for community vibrancy and livability and are indicative of the natural capital present in each county.

Poverty Rate: A measure of low poverty levels complements the income distribution component of the grading exercise. Having a low poverty rate is an essential component of community vibrancy. Data on poverty levels was taken from the decennial census of population and housing.

The Percent of the Population age 25+ with a Bachelor’s Degree or Higher: As explained earlier in the Report Card, high education attainment levels ensure that a community can continue to compete in an increasingly global marketplace. This measure of vitality indicates the quality of the human capital in each county.

Growth in the Share of All Businesses with fewer than 10 employees: Small business growth is a good measure of improved entrepreneurship in the community. With the advent of advanced telecommunications, small business brings new opportunities for places to capitalize on assets that are not necessarily location based. Data on business growth by establishment size was taken from the U.S. Census Bureau’s County Business Patterns dataset.

Counties throughout the Rockies were ranked on their performance in each of these nine indicators. A score of 100 was assigned to the top community in each indicator category, with each succeeding county scoring a point lower down to zero and then minus scores. Counties that tie on a given indicator received the same score for that indicator. An average score was then calculated such that each indicator was worth an equal share of the composite score in evaluating the county’s

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performance. Counties were then sorted into three major categories in order to compare communities of like size: Metropolitan, Micropolitan (non-metropolitan counties that contain aggregate urban populations of greater than 2,500), and Rural (non-metropolitan counties containing urban concentrations below 2,500 people). Finally, within each of these urban-size categories of counties, an even distribution of grades from A+ to F- was

assigned to counties based on their composite numerical score. The Colorado College Vibrancy and Vitality score should be considered a relative, rather than absolute, measure of community prosperity.



Metropolitan Counties (counties containing an urban population of 50,000 +)

	Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job, 1970-2001	Total Employment Growth, 1970-2001	Unemployment Rate, 2000	Income Distribution	Employment Distribution	Percent of Pop. Age 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Poverty Rate, 2000	USDA Natural Amenities Rank	Growth in Businesses with Under 10 Employees	Colorado College Composite Score	Grade
<i>Gilpin, Colorado</i>	42%	124	1.7%	17%	1962%	7	5.2%	31.2%	27.9%	52.9	<i>A+</i>
<i>Douglas, Colorado</i>	38%	128	1.4%	8%	3073%	6	1.9%	51.9%	4.3%	50.1	<i>A+</i>
<i>El Paso, Colorado</i>	16%	55	3.1%	22%	199%	6	9.9%	31.8%	3.6%	47.8	<i>A+</i>
<i>Larimer, Colorado</i>	20%	64	3.0%	20%	377%	6	9.1%	39.5%	2.3%	47.3	<i>A+</i>
<i>Ada, Idaho</i>	16%	53	2.8%	15%	312%	4	8.6%	31.2%	-0.9%	41.6	<i>A</i>
<i>Utah, Utah</i>	28%	45	3.2%	5%	302%	6	10.8%	31.5%	1.5%	41.3	<i>A</i>
<i>Arapahoe, Colorado</i>	28%	177	2.4%	46%	692%	5	5.9%	37.0%	1.8%	40.5	<i>A</i>
<i>Washoe, Nevada</i>	22%	44	3.4%	9%	260%	6	9.4%	23.7%	1.5%	39.8	<i>A</i>
<i>Santa Fe, New Mexico</i>	25%	16	3.1%	7%	268%	5	12.4%	36.9%	-0.2%	39.3	<i>A-</i>
<i>Maricopa, Arizona</i>	15%	37	3.0%	10%	347%	6	13.8%	25.9%	1.3%	38.1	<i>A-</i>
<i>Sandoval, New Mexico</i>	14%	15	3.9%	26%	920%	5	13.2%	24.8%	0.8%	36.4	<i>A-</i>
<i>Washington, Utah</i>	26%	35	3.2%	-13%	926%	5	11.4%	21.0%	2.9%	34.0	<i>A-</i>
<i>Jefferson, Colorado</i>	17%	234	2.3%	22%	294%	6	5.3%	36.5%	0.1%	31.1	<i>B+</i>
<i>Yavapai, Arizona</i>	19%	44	2.7%	-20%	471%	6	13.6%	21.1%	4.6%	27.3	<i>B+</i>
<i>Teller, Colorado</i>	18%	136	2.9%	-11%	752%	6	8.2%	31.7%	4.0%	25.4	<i>B+</i>
<i>Summit, Utah</i>	23%	406	2.2%	15%	855%	6	4.8%	45.5%	-3.7%	25.1	<i>B+</i>
<i>Weber, Utah</i>	31%	18	4.1%	1%	128%	5	10.3%	19.9%	3.7%	25.0	<i>B</i>
<i>Boulder, Colorado</i>	32%	147	3.2%	34%	346%	6	8.0%	52.4%	0.5%	24.9	<i>B</i>
<i>Pima, Arizona</i>	13%	29	3.2%	-3%	208%	5	16.9%	26.8%	1.9%	24.1	<i>B</i>
<i>Weld, Colorado</i>	22%	1	3.7%	-3%	188%	4	13.3%	21.6%	1.9%	24.0	<i>B</i>
<i>Cache, Utah</i>	43%	23	3.6%	1%	235%	5	10.0%	31.9%	-3.7%	23.8	<i>B-</i>
<i>Adams, Colorado</i>	27%	58	3.3%	7%	298%	5	10.5%	17.4%	1.6%	22.5	<i>B-</i>
<i>Laramie, Wyoming</i>	26%	21	3.0%	1%	91%	5	10.4%	23.5%	-1.2%	22.5	<i>B-</i>
<i>Bernalillo, New Mexico</i>	15%	16	3.8%	2%	189%	5	15.5%	30.5%	0.8%	22.4	<i>B-</i>

GRADING THE ROCKIES: FINAL GRADES

Metropolitan Counties (counties containing an urban population of 50,000 +)

	Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job, 1970-2001	Total Employment Growth, 1970-2001	Unemployment Rate, 2000	Income Distribution	Employment Distribution	Percent of Pop. Age 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Poverty Rate, 2000	USDA Natural Amenities Rank	Growth in Businesses with Under 10 Employees	Colorado College Composite Score	Grade
Carson City, Nevada	29%	0	2.8%	-2%	385%	7	8.9%	18.5%	1.2%	22.3	C+
Elbert, Colorado	27%	584	1.8%	-8%	408%	4	5.3%	26.6%	0.8%	21.9	C+
Bonneville, Idaho	23%	5	3.4%	-9%	136%	4	11.1%	26.1%	-0.8%	20.6	C+
Kootenai, Idaho	16%	32	5.1%	-7%	390%	5	11.0%	19.1%	2.2%	17.4	C+
Yellowstone, Montana	22%	41	3.1%	-9%	127%	4	11.9%	26.4%	-0.8%	16.1	C
Clark, Nevada	40%	29	4.2%	-5%	567%	6	11.2%	17.3%	1.1%	14.3	C
Salt Lake, Utah	16%	89	3.2%	11%	210%	5	8.8%	27.4%	-0.1%	14.0	C
Mesa, Colorado	15%	41	3.7%	-3%	213%	4	12.5%	22.0%	-1.8%	12.1	C
Nez Perce, Idaho	28%	44	2.9%	-6%	80%	4	11.4%	18.9%	0.6%	9.0	C-
Denver, Colorado	21%	7	3.8%	47%	45%	5	17.0%	34.5%	-0.2%	5.3	C-
Park, Colorado	19%	130	2.0%	-51%	710%	7	6.1%	30.3%	0.5%	4.8	C-
Davis, Utah	19%	218	3.1%	-20%	207%	6	6.4%	28.8%	2.0%	4.3	C-
Juab, Utah	28%	52	2.3%	-16%	83%	4	9.1%	12.2%	5.0%	3.5	D+
Missoula, Montana	19%	51	4.3%	-10%	174%	4	16.3%	32.8%	2.2%	1.3	D+
Bannock, Idaho	23%	39	4.7%	-11%	103%	4	13.2%	24.9%	1.6%	0.3	D+
Coconino, Arizona	34%	23	4.8%	-12%	253%	6	20.3%	29.9%	0.1%	-6.3	D+
Natrona, Wyoming	23%	39	3.5%	-3%	78%	5	12.8%	20.0%	-3.2%	-6.3	D
Clear Creek, Colorado	24%	125	1.5%	-46%	161%	7	5.4%	38.8%	-8.0%	-16.1	D
Jefferson, Idaho	31%	40	2.9%	-22%	91%	4	13.8%	15.2%	0.2%	-16.8	D
Canyon, Idaho	29%	48	3.9%	1%	135%	4	14.8%	14.9%	-2.1%	-18.8	D
Pueblo, Colorado	17%	55	3.7%	-12%	54%	4	18.3%	18.3%	3.2%	-20.5	D-
Carbon, Montana	36%	61	3.0%	-32%	85%	5	15.0%	23.3%	0.5%	-21.9	D-
Tooele, Utah	25%	24	3.8%	-17%	47%	5	9.5%	15.9%	-2.4%	-22.3	D-
Storey, Nevada	37%	89	3.5%	-11%	227%	6	4.4%	18.0%	-6.5%	-22.4	D-
Power, Idaho	53%	56	3.1%	-11%	34%	4	15.4%	14.3%	3.7%	-26.0	F+
Dona Ana, New Mexico	25%	64	5.4%	-13%	183%	6	28.9%	22.3%	2.9%	-26.5	F+
Morgan, Utah	32%	136	2.6%	-27%	127%	5	4.2%	23.3%	-12.9%	-26.6	F+
San Juan, New Mexico	32%	53	5.5%	0%	244%	5	22.5%	13.5%	1.4%	-28.9	F+
Boise, Idaho	35%	33	4.7%	-34%	126%	5	10.8%	19.9%	-11.2%	-32.3	F
Torrance, New Mexico	27%	71	3.5%	-7%	183%	5	23.1%	14.4%	0.9%	-32.6	F
Yuma, Arizona	32%	55	5.7%	1%	137%	5	26.5%	11.8%	4.9%	-33.6	F
Pinal, Arizona	24%	47	3.9%	-16%	99%	5	21.7%	11.9%	3.8%	-34.8	F
Franklin, Idaho	47%	39	3.6%	-19%	72%	4	12.1%	13.6%	-3.7%	-37.5	F
Cascade, Montana	24%	60	3.8%	-18%	32%	4	13.8%	21.5%	-3.6%	-41.1	F-
Valencia, New Mexico	22%	52	3.8%	-20%	101%	5	18.0%	14.8%	-2.2%	-44.8	F-
Owyhee, Idaho	60%	70	4.2%	-3%	41%	4	21.7%	10.2%	8.3%	-51.0	F-
Gem, Idaho	34%	53	3.0%	-21%	45%	5	15.1%	11.4%	-4.4%	-55.1	F-

VIBRANCY AND VITALITY

Micropolitan Counties (non-metro counties containing an urban population of greater than 2,500 people)

	Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job, 1970 -2001	Unemployment Rate, 2000	Income Distribution	Employment Distribution	Percent of Pop. Age 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Growth in Businesses with Under 10 Employees	Colorado College Composite Score	Grade	USDA Natural Amenities Rank	Poverty Rate, 2000	Total Employment Growth, 1970 -2001
La Plata, Colorado	20%	1.9	4.0%	6.2%	318.3%	6	11.3%	36.4%	2.6%	44.9	A+
Garfield, Colorado	28%	67.8	1.9%	-5.4%	397.6%	5	8.6%	23.8%	2.1%	39.3	A+
Teton, Wyoming	41%	169.5	2.3%	3.9%	584.4%	6	4.7%	45.8%	2.0%	36.9	A+
Churchill, Nevada	21%	9.1	3.6%	-3.7%	226.0%	6	9.7%	16.7%	7.9%	35.8	A+
Los Alamos, New Mexico	88%	1184.8	1.4%	20.7%	129.6%	5	2.1%	60.5%	4.3%	35.4	A+
Blaine, Idaho	32%	105.0	3.1%	22.4%	425.8%	5	6.6%	43.1%	2.6%	34.6	A+
Box Elder, Utah	50%	15.8	3.5%	10.9%	116.4%	5	7.7%	19.5%	2.2%	32.5	A+
Lewis and Clark, Montana	30%	35.9	3.5%	-4.9%	125.7%	5	12.6%	31.6%	1.9%	22.8	A+
Campbell, Wyoming	50%	53.2	3.4%	14.3%	316.2%	4	7.9%	15.7%	1.3%	22.8	A+
Elko, Nevada	61%	27.1	4.0%	-3.1%	240.7%	4	6.9%	14.8%	6.8%	21.4	A
Gallatin, Montana	20%	28.1	4.5%	-5.9%	293.8%	5	11.7%	41.0%	-0.2%	20.9	A
Pitkin, Colorado	45%	243.6	2.5%	30.7%	388.4%	6	3.8%	57.1%	-5.9%	17.8	A
Montrose, Colorado	25%	51.1	3.2%	-0.0%	178.0%	5	12.1%	18.7%	1.1%	17.4	A
Kane, Utah	42%	59.4	3.3%	-4.4%	282.9%	5	15.4%	21.1%	7.4%	17.0	A
Routt, Colorado	35%	129.6	2.5%	3.7%	522.3%	6	6.7%	42.5%	-4.1%	16.3	A
Archuleta, Colorado	38%	26.2	3.1%	-39.9%	467.5%	6	12.8%	29.0%	1.2%	15.6	A
Eagle, Colorado	52%	420.2	2.6%	9.3%	984.3%	5	5.0%	42.6%	-5.4%	13.8	A
Sweetwater, Wyoming	34%	13.0	4.0%	17.6%	185.1%	5	8.0%	17.0%	-3.0%	11.9	A
Millard, Utah	51%	51.2	3.6%	32.9%	82.3%	5	13.7%	16.8%	13.8%	11.3	A-
Humboldt, Nevada	51%	36.6	5.4%	4.3%	188.4%	5	8.2%	14.2%	4.3%	10.3	A-
Summit, Colorado	56%	350.2	2.4%	-4.7%	2415.3%	7	3.8%	48.3%	-7.1%	9.4	A-
Elmore, Idaho	28%	53.3	3.1%	-1.3%	60.1%	5	12.1%	17.3%	3.6%	8.6	A-
Lincoln, Wyoming	38%	17.0	2.4%	-19.1%	87.9%	6	9.3%	17.2%	0.2%	8.3	A-
Chaffee, Colorado	28%	44.0	2.5%	-19.4%	209.3%	6	12.5%	24.3%	-2.4%	8.3	A-
Gunnison, Colorado	38%	25.0	3.9%	-15.1%	318.8%	6	12.2%	43.6%	-3.0%	8.3	A-
Park, Wyoming	27%	48.6	3.2%	-10.0%	108.1%	5	11.8%	23.7%	-1.8%	4.8	A-
Ravalli, Montana	24%	56.7	3.5%	-9.6%	252.7%	4	16.0%	22.5%	1.8%	4.5	A-
Caribou, Idaho	53%	49.6	2.8%	-19.9%	58.7%	5	9.2%	15.9%	6.3%	2.1	B+
Uinta, Wyoming	41%	20.0	4.6%	-5.9%	269.7%	5	9.3%	15.0%	-0.4%	1.9	B+
Lander, Nevada	63%	15.6	5.2%	-2.8%	111.6%	5	7.8%	10.8%	10.7%	1.3	B+
Douglas, Nevada	28%	96.7	3.8%	-14.9%	262.2%	7	6.3%	23.2%	2.4%	0.8	B+
Lincoln, New Mexico	30%	46.6	2.2%	-25.4%	229.7%	5	19.8%	22.8%	0.8%	0.4	B+
Sevier, Utah	32%	48.1	3.8%	5.6%	126.1%	5	14.3%	15.2%	2.5%	-0.4	B+
Yuma, Colorado	56%	59.6	1.6%	-11.1%	52.3%	4	12.2%	15.5%	3.2%	-2.5	B+

GRADING THE ROCKIES: FINAL GRADES

Micropolitan Counties (non-metro counties containing an urban population of greater than 2,500 people)

	Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job, 1970 -2001	Total Employment Growth, 1970 -2001	Unemployment Rate, 2000	Income Distribution	Employment Distribution	Percent of Pop. Age 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Poverty Rate, 2000	USDA Natural Amenities Rank	Growth in Businesses with Under 10 Employees	Colorado College Composite Score	Grade
<i>Lyon, Nevada</i>	23%	28.4	4.3%	-25.7%	384.8%	6	10.6%	11.3%	10.8%	-2.6	B+
<i>Iron, Utah</i>	20%	54.7	3.5%	-14.5%	269.0%	5	14.9%	23.8%	-1.4%	-3.1	B+
<i>Latah, Idaho</i>	49%	55.6	4.9%	-16.2%	118.3%	4	13.3%	41.0%	3.0%	-4.8	B
<i>Wasatch, Utah</i>	17%	107.4	2.9%	-25.4%	212.3%	6	7.3%	26.3%	-0.1%	-5.0	B
<i>Sheridan, Wyoming</i>	33%	47.4	2.9%	-11.7%	98.6%	4	11.7%	22.4%	-5.8%	-5.1	B
<i>Fremont, Colorado</i>	28%	57.1	1.9%	10.3%	179.9%	6	15.8%	13.5%	-2.1%	-6.0	B
<i>Gooding, Idaho</i>	52%	64.0	2.1%	60.5%	97.8%	4	15.1%	12.0%	1.8%	-6.1	B
<i>Morgan, Colorado</i>	38%	54.5	2.6%	-4.2%	78.6%	4	14.8%	13.5%	2.9%	-9.1	B
<i>Flathead, Montana</i>	17%	51.5	4.1%	-19.1%	221.0%	5	14.4%	22.4%	-0.4%	-10.3	B
<i>Moffat, Colorado</i>	48%	25.7	3.8%	0.0%	156.1%	5	10.7%	12.5%	-2.4%	-10.5	B
<i>Hot Springs, Wyoming</i>	52%	63.4	1.1%	-23.6%	50.4%	4	12.1%	17.9%	1.4%	-11.9	B
<i>Cochise, Arizona</i>	30%	57.2	3.4%	-12.4%	92.6%	7	20.7%	18.8%	5.0%	-14.0	B-
<i>Albany, Wyoming</i>	42%	66.2	3.7%	-9.3%	100.2%	6	15.1%	44.1%	-1.5%	-14.3	B-
<i>Converse, Wyoming</i>	50%	43.9	3.2%	-8.7%	154.7%	5	11.4%	14.7%	-5.9%	-14.4	B-
<i>Madison, Idaho</i>	36%	62.8	4.3%	-16.5%	212.1%	4	15.3%	24.4%	0.9%	-15.3	B-
<i>Platte, Wyoming</i>	49%	53.4	2.9%	-4.3%	80.7%	5	13.6%	15.2%	-1.5%	-16.1	B-
<i>Washakie, Wyoming</i>	25%	47.1	5.5%	-11.4%	54.0%	4	11.6%	18.7%	0.9%	-19.1	B-
<i>Jerome, Idaho</i>	41%	50.8	3.8%	28.5%	118.6%	4	14.7%	14.0%	-2.2%	-19.9	B-
<i>Twin Falls, Idaho</i>	28%	55.0	3.9%	-11.1%	103.5%	4	13.6%	16.0%	-0.2%	-22.1	B-
<i>Montezuma, Colorado</i>	30%	58.4	4.4%	1.5%	163.1%	5	16.5%	21.0%	-3.3%	-22.4	B-
<i>Sanpete, Utah</i>	40%	60.7	3.9%	-9.3%	104.5%	5	16.0%	17.3%	1.6%	-23.5	C+
<i>Delta, Colorado</i>	29%	59.3	3.1%	-14.2%	136.8%	5	16.6%	17.6%	-2.8%	-24.3	C+
<i>Mohave, Arizona</i>	35%	61.2	3.7%	-21.0%	507.3%	6	16.4%	9.9%	5.6%	-24.4	C+
<i>Johnson, Wyoming</i>	44%	53.7	3.7%	-26.1%	89.1%	5	11.6%	22.2%	-2.2%	-24.4	C+
<i>Lake, Montana</i>	29%	71.3	4.8%	-6.9%	183.1%	5	22.8%	22.2%	1.5%	-27.8	C+
<i>Park, Montana</i>	33%	67.5	3.3%	-22.1%	88.4%	5	15.2%	23.1%	-1.9%	-29.8	C+
<i>Alamosa, Colorado</i>	31%	68.3	5.8%	0.1%	136.2%	4	22.3%	27.0%	-1.2%	-30.0	C+
<i>Bonner, Idaho</i>	26%	63.2	4.3%	-24.5%	276.9%	5	15.1%	16.9%	0.3%	-30.1	C+
<i>Logan, Colorado</i>	31%	61.9	2.3%	-4.0%	43.8%	4	13.4%	14.6%	-6.2%	-30.9	C+
<i>Greenlee, Arizona</i>	92%	50.3	3.8%	-16.0%	2.6%	6	10.2%	12.2%	6.5%	-31.1	C
<i>Eddy, New Mexico</i>	31%	64.1	3.9%	3.4%	60.9%	6	19.7%	13.5%	3.9%	-31.5	C
<i>Grand, Utah</i>	42%	63.2	6.1%	-37.5%	113.1%	4	15.7%	22.9%	5.4%	-31.9	C
<i>Silver Bow, Montana</i>	31%	67.5	4.2%	-9.1%	14.6%	4	16.0%	21.7%	2.2%	-33.0	C
<i>Carbon, Utah</i>	39%	50.6	5.5%	-13.6%	96.3%	5	15.1%	12.3%	4.7%	-33.0	C

VIBRANCY AND VITALITY

Micropolitan Counties (non-metro counties containing an urban population of greater than 2,500 people)

	Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job, 1970-2001	Unemployment Rate, 2000	Income Distribution	Employment Distribution	Total Employment Growth, 1970-2001	USDA Natural Amenities Rank	Poverty Rate, 2000	Growth in Businesses with Under 10 Employees	Colorado College Composite Score	Grade	
Weston, Wyoming	47%	57.1	3.3%	-11.8%	64.4%	3	9.6%	14.5%	-5.4%	-33.0	C
Bingham, Idaho	31%	43.2	3.8%	-15.2%	59.3%	4	15.2%	14.4%	0.5%	-33.3	C
Las Animas, Colorado	37%	76.4	3.1%	-10.0%	53.4%	5	23.6%	16.2%	5.2%	-34.9	C
Socorro, New Mexico	39%	74.1	5.2%	-2.7%	124.0%	5	30.9%	19.4%	3.5%	-35.1	C
Kit Carson, Colorado	46%	54.3	1.3%	-36.4%	38.4%	3	12.8%	15.4%	-3.3%	-36.4	C-
Cassia, Idaho	45%	61.8	3.2%	-6.8%	49.4%	4	15.5%	13.9%	-0.6%	-38.6	C-
Nye, Nevada	40%	42.1	3.7%	-40.5%	93.4%	6	11.0%	10.1%	-0.6%	-40.1	C-
Carbon, Wyoming	39%	51.9	3.3%	-21.0%	35.9%	6	11.9%	17.2%	-10.1%	-41.0	C-
Powell, Montana	57%	73.5	2.6%	-6.9%	38.0%	4	19.6%	13.1%	2.8%	-41.3	C-
Lake, Colorado	51%	41.3	4.4%	-41.1%	-29.2%	7	8.5%	19.5%	-0.7%	-41.6	C-
Sierra, New Mexico	38%	84.4	2.9%	-10.9%	101.8%	6	23.3%	13.1%	3.7%	-42.0	C-
White Pine, Nevada	47%	51.0	3.8%	-8.3%	-9.0%	5	11.4%	11.8%	-0.9%	-43.3	C-
Colfax, New Mexico	32%	68.3	3.7%	-18.8%	69.9%	5	19.0%	18.5%	-0.5%	-45.8	C-
Rio Grande, Colorado	30%	68.0	3.7%	-8.2%	75.3%	6	23.8%	18.8%	-2.8%	-46.5	D+
Santa Cruz, Arizona	30%	61.3	4.0%	0.8%	168.3%	6	26.7%	15.2%	-7.4%	-47.1	D+
Fergus, Montana	41%	69.4	3.3%	-29.0%	33.7%	5	14.6%	19.1%	-0.6%	-47.8	D+
Toole, Montana	48%	80.0	2.5%	-34.1%	14.5%	4	15.2%	16.8%	3.1%	-48.0	D+
Taos, New Mexico	31%	75.1	5.7%	-20.2%	222.7%	5	26.8%	25.9%	-0.6%	-48.1	D+
Beaverhead, Montana	49%	74.4	2.4%	-25.1%	74.1%	5	17.7%	26.4%	-1.3%	-48.4	D+
Curry, New Mexico	37%	70.5	3.8%	2.3%	21.1%	4	19.4%	15.3%	-0.3%	-49.3	D+
Uintah, Utah	41%	55.7	4.9%	-14.0%	178.2%	5	15.3%	13.2%	-3.2%	-49.5	D+
Payette, Idaho	42%	67.8	3.8%	-5.3%	113.5%	4	17.5%	10.6%	-1.7%	-50.9	D+
Huerfano, Colorado	32%	79.3	4.2%	-23.3%	87.8%	6	23.4%	16.1%	8.1%	-51.4	D
Prowers, Colorado	36%	72.0	2.6%	16.7%	36.8%	4	21.3%	11.9%	-3.3%	-51.4	D
Rio Arriba, New Mexico	36%	68.7	4.8%	-16.2%	146.3%	6	23.7%	15.4%	-0.1%	-53.5	D
Minidoka, Idaho	49%	69.7	4.2%	-12.3%	40.4%	4	16.2%	10.1%	6.2%	-54.3	D
Bent, Colorado	66%	78.7	2.6%	-5.5%	1.6%	5	22.3%	11.5%	3.5%	-54.8	D
Washington, Idaho	44%	68.3	4.7%	-18.4%	54.2%	4	18.4%	12.7%	6.0%	-55.1	D
San Miguel, New Mexico	43%	77.7	4.8%	-15.2%	112.5%	5	28.7%	21.2%	-0.3%	-55.3	D
Otero, New Mexico	25%	70.8	4.2%	-17.9%	42.1%	5	17.4%	15.4%	1.2%	-55.4	D
Navajo, Arizona	35%	70.6	6.2%	-14.4%	197.5%	4	29.0%	12.3%	2.7%	-55.6	D
Chaves, New Mexico	25%	69.8	5.0%	9.0%	65.1%	5	24.4%	16.2%	-2.5%	-55.6	D-
Goshen, Wyoming	47%	71.8	4.0%	-13.2%	38.5%	4	17.6%	18.6%	-1.5%	-56.4	D-
Roosevelt, New Mexico	45%	78.1	4.8%	13.5%	34.2%	4	27.2%	22.6%	-3.0%	-58.4	D-
Custer, Montana	47%	73.1	3.4%	-22.2%	28.1%	3	17.6%	18.8%	-1.9%	-58.9	D-

GRADING THE ROCKIES: FINAL GRADES

Micropolitan Counties (non-metro counties containing an urban population of greater than 2,500 people)

	Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job, 1970 -2001	Total Employment Growth, 1970 -2001	Unemployment Rate, 2000	Income Distribution	Percent of Pop. Age 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	USDA Natural Amenities Rank	Poverty Rate, 2000	Growth in Businesses with Under 10 Employees	Colorado College Composite Score	Grade	
Fremont, Wyoming	39%	62.7	5.7%	-17.1%	79.1%	5	17.8%	19.7%	-4.9%	-59.5	D-
Dawson, Montana	51%	69.7	2.8%	-18.1%	1.9%	3	14.5%	15.1%	-6.1%	-59.6	D-
Grant, New Mexico	46%	75.0	4.2%	-33.8%	79.9%	6	20.2%	20.5%	0.7%	-59.8	D-
Lemhi, Idaho	36%	73.0	4.9%	-14.5%	80.3%	4	15.5%	17.9%	-4.5%	-60.5	D-
Fremont , Idaho	35%	61.6	3.3%	-23.6%	33.2%	5	14.5%	12.0%	-2.6%	-60.6	D-
Duchesne, Utah	46%	72.3	4.7%	-3.8%	162.0%	5	20.7%	12.7%	-3.9%	-62.1	F+
Gila, Arizona	31%	64.9	4.8%	-29.5%	96.6%	7	19.4%	13.9%	0.8%	-62.3	F+
Richland, Montana	44%	71.4	3.9%	-24.6%	34.4%	3	16.2%	17.2%	-0.7%	-63.9	F+
Glacier, Montana	62%	72.8	9.5%	-9.3%	44.1%	6	35.4%	16.5%	2.4%	-66.6	F+
Quay, New Mexico	46%	79.6	2.8%	-11.8%	1.3%	4	27.0%	13.7%	0.1%	-67.1	F+
Bear Lake, Idaho	46%	65.8	4.2%	-25.7%	44.3%	5	13.6%	11.7%	-1.0%	-68.4	F+
Graham, Arizona	47%	74.5	5.7%	-28.2%	120.7%	6	23.6%	11.8%	4.4%	-70.4	F+
Lea, New Mexico	48%	70.8	5.0%	-8.4%	43.3%	4	22.4%	11.6%	1.1%	-70.6	F+
Benewah, Idaho	39%	69.3	8.0%	-13.9%	110.6%	5	14.6%	11.4%	-5.9%	-71.4	F+
Pondera, Montana	55%	69.9	4.2%	-50.8%	15.4%	5	19.8%	19.8%	0.2%	-71.9	F
Valley, Montana	51%	71.6	3.3%	-26.0%	-18.5%	3	17.4%	15.7%	-1.9%	-72.8	F
McKinley, New Mexico	40%	79.5	9.2%	-18.6%	90.5%	5	37.7%	12.0%	5.2%	-74.9	F
Otero, Colorado	36%	73.2	4.8%	-8.3%	13.3%	4	23.5%	15.4%	-2.2%	-76.0	F
Hill, Montana	47%	72.4	6.5%	-26.4%	25.3%	3	20.2%	20.0%	-1.6%	-79.1	F
Boundary, Idaho	35%	72.9	5.9%	-28.9%	134.0%	5	16.7%	14.7%	-6.8%	-79.4	F
Guadalupe, New Mexico	53%	88.2	3.6%	-25.7%	13.2%	5	30.0%	10.3%	11.0%	-80.3	F
Idaho, Idaho	31%	75.3	5.5%	-34.6%	56.9%	5	15.7%	14.4%	-2.0%	-82.4	F
Mineral, Nevada	38%	67.3	7.6%	-15.5%	-20.2%	6	13.6%	10.1%	-2.5%	-84.3	F
Luna, New Mexico	29%	88.9	8.0%	-2.3%	100.8%	5	34.0%	10.4%	-2.1%	-84.4	F
Deer Lodge, Montana	45%	81.8	5.7%	-22.1%	-29.3%	4	19.8%	14.7%	2.5%	-85.5	F
Hidalgo, New Mexico	45%	80.8	5.3%	-12.6%	30.4%	5	22.5%	9.9%	1.8%	-85.8	F-
Big Horn, Montana	69%	79.0	8.7%	-16.1%	46.6%	4	32.2%	14.3%	-2.3%	-97.3	F-
Roosevelt, Montana	61%	79.8	9.8%	-22.7%	18.2%	2	31.3%	15.6%	-0.8%	-98.8	F-
Clearwater, Idaho	48%	71.2	6.0%	-36.4%	-15.0%	4	13.1%	13.4%	-7.9%	-99.0	F-
San Juan, Utah	44%	77.7	8.0%	-24.6%	91.8%	5	28.3%	13.9%	-12.1%	-101.0	F-
Apache, Arizona	59%	83.0	10.1%	-17.7%	134.4%	5	39.4%	11.3%	-5.1%	-101.9	F-
Lincoln, Montana	34%	82.1	7.4%	-40.4%	23.2%	4	18.3%	13.7%	-2.1%	-103.1	F-
La Paz, Arizona	43%	79.2	3.5%			0	24.4%	8.7%		-112.9	incomplete
Shoshone, Idaho	34%	78.7	6.5%	-29.6%	-32.4%	5	21.4%	10.2%	-6.4%	-121.1	F-
Cibola, New Mexico	41%	78.7	6.1%			0	25.8%	12.0%		-124.4	incomplete

VIBRANCY AND VITALITY

Rural Counties (non-metro counties with aggregate urban populations of less than 2,500 people)

	Grade	Colorado College Composite Score	Growth in Businesses with Under 10 Employees	Poverty Rate, 2000	USDA Natural Amenities Rank	Percent of Pop. Age 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Total Employment Growth, 1970-2001	Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job, 1970-2001	Unemployment Rate, 2000	Income Distribution	Employment Distribution
San Miguel, Colorado	A+	47.9	7.6%	48.5%	6	7.3%	854.3%	-11.1%	2.2%	68.6	53.4%
Eureka, Nevada	A+	41.1	16.7%	13.6%	4	10.1%	680.4%	46.1%	2.4%	44.8	80.2%
Jefferson, Montana	A+	35.1	8.4%	27.7%	4	9.5%	157.9%	-17.3%	3.5%	19.1	36.6%
Wayne, Utah	A+	33.3	16.1%	20.9%	4	13.4%	149.3%	19.1%	2.1%	61.8	56.8%
Custer, Colorado	A+	30.9	6.7%	26.7%	6	13.3%	433.8%	-31.8%	2.1%	41.9	45.4%
Grand, Colorado	A	30.1	-1.9%	34.5%	7	6.7%	451.7%	-0.4%	2.5%	69.0	43.7%
Ouray, Colorado	A	28.1	-0.6%	36.8%	6	7.8%	171.7%	-26.5%	2.2%	10.3	35.1%
Stillwater, Montana	A	19.6	4.0%	17.8%	5	11.5%	198.3%	15.9%	4.5%	40.3	48.4%
Beaver, Utah	A	16.4	15.7%	12.1%	5	12.3%	82.1%	52.2%	1.3%	60.7	48.8%
Crook, Wyoming	A	13.5	6.5%	17.5%	5	9.7%	75.3%	-19.2%	2.1%	46.8	52.4%
Teton, Idaho	A	12.3	-3.6%	28.1%	4	10.1%	186.4%	-27.2%	2.4%	16.6	39.8%
Hinsdale, Colorado [08053]	A-	11.1	-7.2%	34.9%	7	10.1%	562.9%	-51.6%	1.5%	33.1	48.3%
Mineral, Colorado	A-	5.4	-4.9%	31.2%	6	6.6%	136.3%	-58.3%	1.7%	43.5	40.4%
Emery, Utah	A-	4.8	4.6%	11.6%	4	11.7%	153.1%	13.9%	3.9%	39.3	45.2%
Camas, Idaho	A-	2.6	8.2%	22.2%	5	7.9%	27.2%	-46.8%	2.7%	48.0	43.1%
Cheyenne, Colorado	A-	-3.8	8.8%	14.2%	3	9.5%	36.1%	-25.6%	0.7%	54.5	61.3%
Custer, Idaho	B+	-4.6	3.0%	17.4%	4	12.0%	115.4%	-2.2%	3.9%	65.3	58.8%
Phillips, Colorado	B+	-5.4	7.8%	19.9%	3	11.8%	42.3%	-27.6%	1.7%	67.9	58.1%
Lincoln, Nevada	B+	-8.3	-0.1%	15.1%	5	13.6%	114.3%	3.3%	2.5%	68.1	46.0%
Sublette, Wyoming	B+	-9.5	-4.0%	21.6%	6	8.4%	107.9%	-25.8%	3.3%	30.1	52.1%
Valley, Idaho	B+	-14.5	-3.7%	26.3%	5	12.6%	190.0%	-29.5%	3.8%	42.3	31.6%
Sweet Grass, Montana	B	-15.4	-4.7%	23.6%	5	12.3%	71.0%	-23.7%	1.5%	56.4	47.7%
Pershing, Nevada	B	-18.1	6.7%	8.7%	5	11.5%	99.4%	-19.2%	3.6%	46.2	61.5%
Crowley, Colorado	B	-21.6	9.1%	11.9%	5	31.0%	76.1%	48.3%	1.8%	76.1	52.1%
Madison, Montana	B	-23.0	-3.6%	25.5%	5	14.6%	77.7%	-7.9%	3.2%	68.4	44.8%
Rich, Utah	B	-23.4	-4.8%	22.0%	6	11.3%	18.0%	-31.8%	2.6%	26.2	53.0%
Lincoln, Colorado	B	-23.6	2.9%	13.2%	4	16.1%	53.6%	-20.4%	1.2%	55.8	45.3%
Granite, Montana	B-	-24.3	4.1%	22.1%	4	19.4%	61.7%	-18.2%	3.2%	69.6	43.8%
Rio Blanco, Colorado	B-	-24.4	-6.3%	19.5%	5	9.5%	82.9%	-12.3%	4.0%	48.8	54.5%

GRADING THE ROCKIES: FINAL GRADES

Rural Counties (non-metro counties with aggregate urban populations of less than 2,500 people)

	Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job, 1970-2001	Total Employment Growth, 1970-2001	Unemployment Rate, 2000	Income Distribution	Employment Distribution	Percent of Pop. Age 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Poverty Rate, 2000	USDA Natural Amenities Rank	Growth in Businesses with Under 10 Employees	Colorado College Composite Score	Grade
Washington, Colorado	55.5%	52.8	1.0%	-32.9%	11.0%	4	13.3%	14.3%	2.8%	-25.5	B-
Big Horn, Wyoming	46.5%	64.9	3.8%	-4.7%	44.2%	5	13.0%	15.9%	-0.4%	-32.6	B-
Lincoln, Idaho	44.7%	62.7	2.5%	-2.0%	35.5%	3	15.0%	13.0%	-1.6%	-33.4	B-
Broadwater, Montana	40.6%	59.5	2.8%	-14.4%	98.5%	5	15.8%	15.0%	-2.6%	-33.9	C+
Dolores, Colorado	42.9%	70.9	3.5%	24.6%	52.6%	5	12.0%	13.5%	-3.0%	-34.6	C+
Jackson, Colorado	61.6%	53.6	2.9%	-64.6%	66.9%	6	10.7%	19.9%	-4.8%	-35.4	C+
Daggett, Utah	72.3%	58.2	4.3%	-8.0%	103.0%	5	6.8%	11.9%	-3.4%	-37.5	C+
Garfield, Utah	51.3%	60.7	5.2%	-8.6%	102.6%	5	14.7%	20.3%	-3.9%	-38.4	C+
Butte, Idaho	44.6%	66.0	3.5%	40.8%	57.1%	4	13.8%	13.0%	-5.7%	-39.8	C
Rosebud, Montana	70.0%	57.7	5.5%	14.0%	130.4%	3	19.6%	17.6%	-4.3%	-40.5	C
Kiowa, Colorado	74.3%	68.0	1.8%	-29.4%	3.6%	4	10.0%	16.1%	-2.4%	-40.8	C
Daniels, Montana	65.7%	74.4	1.8%	-43.0%	1.1%	2	12.4%	14.1%	4.0%	-43.3	C
Prairie, Montana	78.0%	81.1	2.3%	-5.2%	-17.8%	3	14.5%	14.8%	0.9%	-44.8	C
Judith Basin, Montana	78.5%	76.7	1.5%	-60.3%	-2.8%	4	15.7%	23.6%	1.3%	-45.9	C
Garfield, Montana	89.3%	86.5	2.1%	-47.7%	-12.5%	4	13.4%	16.8%	7.9%	-47.0	C-
Oneida, Idaho	68.3%	75.0	2.6%	-41.8%	29.2%	4	12.7%	15.0%	2.1%	-47.8	C-
Saguache, Colorado	52.9%	80.7	3.6%	-24.0%	111.8%	6	28.9%	19.6%	2.6%	-48.9	C-
Fallon, Montana	63.8%	76.6	2.0%	-22.7%	3.8%	3	12.1%	14.4%	-0.4%	-48.9	C-
Liberty, Montana	66.6%	74.0	1.9%	-64.4%	-1.0%	4	12.8%	17.6%	-0.2%	-50.4	C-
Baca, Colorado	66.9%	78.8	1.4%	-29.0%	5.1%	4	17.1%	14.0%	4.1%	-50.6	D+
Union, New Mexico	56.7%	76.0	1.1%	-32.7%	10.1%	4	20.7%	13.0%	8.4%	-51.4	D+
McCone, Montana	67.7%	74.0	1.5%	-43.8%	-17.3%	4	14.2%	16.4%	0.7%	-51.4	D+
Clark, Idaho	84.2%	84.0	4.0%	-45.6%	78.4%	3	9.9%	12.6%	21.4%	-52.5	D+
Sheridan, Montana	55.5%	71.2	2.1%	-36.2%	-9.7%	3	11.8%	18.4%	-8.2%	-54.5	D+
Golden Valley, Montana	84.5%	80.0	1.3%	-57.7%	13.2%	4	21.5%	16.2%	6.3%	-54.9	D
Teton, Montana	54.2%	71.6	2.1%	-46.5%	25.9%	5	17.2%	20.8%	-2.8%	-55.8	D
Esmeralda, Nevada	71.6%	53.0	1.8%	-23.8%	18.3%	5	12.4%	9.6%	-64.6%	-57.0	D
Chouteau, Montana	67.8%	72.5	3.5%	-63.2%	5.5%	3	13.6%	20.5%	0.0%	-58.9	D
San Juan, Colorado	53.8%	82.8	2.1%	-41.2%	17.1%	7	16.3%	43.7%	-12.0%	-59.8	D

VIBRANCY AND VITALITY

Rural Counties (non-metro counties with aggregate urban populations of less than 2,500 people)

	Real Growth in Average Earnings Per Job, 1970-2001	Total Employment Growth, 1970-2001	Unemployment Rate, 2000	Income Distribution	Employment Distribution	Percent of Pop. Age 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Poverty Rate, 2000	USDA Natural Amenities Rank	Growth in Businesses with Under 10 Employees	Colorado College Composite Score	Grade
<i>Adams, Idaho</i>	37.7%	74.5	4.2%	-49.9%	69.1%	5	14.0%	14.9%	2.1%	-60.3	<i>D</i>
<i>Sedgwick, Colorado</i>	53.6%	75.7	0.9%	-22.9%	-11.8%	4	12.9%	13.4%	-6.1%	-62.4	<i>D-</i>
<i>De Baca, New Mexico</i>	58.4%	82.3	2.9%	-17.8%	4.4%	5	21.9%	16.2%	0.8%	-62.5	<i>D-</i>
<i>Petroleum, Montana</i>	114.7%	79.8	1.3%	-52.3%	-12.2%	4	16.0%	17.4%	0.0%	-62.6	<i>D-</i>
<i>Niobrara, Wyoming</i>	66.5%	69.3	2.1%	-22.9%	8.9%	3	16.5%	15.3%	-6.3%	-63.5	<i>D-</i>
<i>Piute, Utah</i>	63.5%	79.7	3.5%	34.0%	-7.9%	5	17.8%	14.4%	-7.1%	-68.5	<i>D-</i>
<i>Carter, Montana</i>	107.7%	82.2	0.4%	-43.6%	-11.2%	3	18.5%	13.6%	1.6%	-70.0	<i>F+</i>
<i>Mineral, Montana</i>	27.9%	75.6	4.4%	-31.8%	71.0%	4	20.0%	12.3%	2.3%	-73.0	<i>F+</i>
<i>Meagher, Montana</i>	59.8%	79.8	3.4%	-31.0%	30.6%	5	19.7%	18.7%	-2.5%	-75.1	<i>F+</i>
<i>Harding, New Mexico</i>	79.4%	82.3	1.8%	-50.7%	-3.0%	4	14.6%	18.1%	-22.7%	-75.5	<i>F+</i>
<i>Wibaux, Montana</i>	70.0%	73.8	3.1%	-41.9%	-1.9%	3	19.5%	16.0%	-0.6%	-75.8	<i>F+</i>
<i>Mora, New Mexico</i>	53.8%	81.5	6.5%	-52.4%	75.2%	6	30.4%	15.5%	11.1%	-78.8	<i>F</i>
<i>Costilla, Colorado</i>	46.0%	89.1	6.0%	-5.1%	51.4%	6	32.1%	12.8%	1.7%	-79.4	<i>F</i>
<i>Phillips, Montana</i>	63.0%	80.0	2.7%	-39.6%	21.0%	4	18.1%	17.1%	-6.8%	-79.9	<i>F</i>
<i>Catron, New Mexico</i>	52.7%	84.2	4.2%	-41.2%	58.5%	6	23.8%	18.4%	0.2%	-80.3	<i>F</i>
<i>Powder River, Montana</i>	81.2%	79.8	2.5%	-51.0%	-12.6%	3	14.6%	16.0%	-7.6%	-82.9	<i>F</i>
<i>Blaine, Montana</i>	72.6%	79.3	6.8%	-22.5%	5.1%	4	27.3%	17.4%	2.4%	-83.0	<i>F</i>
<i>Lewis, Idaho</i>	39.4%	71.0	4.9%	-46.4%	16.7%	4	15.1%	14.8%	-2.1%	-84.3	<i>F</i>
<i>Wheatland, Montana</i>	76.3%	84.9	3.7%	-38.0%	-14.6%	5	19.3%	13.5%	3.7%	-84.4	<i>F-</i>
<i>Conejos, Colorado</i>	48.2%	80.0	3.3%	-20.9%	44.9%	6	29.2%	14.4%	-5.9%	-86.6	<i>F-</i>
<i>Treasure, Montana</i>	79.0%	82.2	2.9%	-58.3%	-17.0%	3	16.0%	18.2%	-13.9%	-89.8	<i>F-</i>
<i>Sanders, Montana</i>	35.6%	80.1	5.2%	-28.3%	90.1%	4	20.6%	15.5%	-6.9%	-90.6	<i>F-</i>
<i>Musselshell, Montana</i>	53.6%	79.1	4.4%	-42.1%	20.7%	4	19.7%	16.7%	-4.6%	-96.8	<i>F-</i>

METHODS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



In order to produce county rankings, data was obtained from a variety of sources. In most instances, counties were ranked for each indicator and then were scored based on an average ranking of several indicators. A score of 100 was assigned to the top county in each indicator category, with each succeeding county scoring a point lower down to zero and then minus scores. Counties that tied on a given indicator received the same score for that indicator. An average score was then calculated such that each indicator was worth an equal share of the composite score in evaluating the county's performance.

All U.S. counties and county equivalents are grouped according to their official metro-non-metro status announced by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in June 2003, when the population and worker commuting criteria used to identify metro counties were applied to results of the 2000 Census. This classification was used to group counties into either metropolitan

or non-metropolitan categories for ranking purposes. Metropolitan counties either have an aggregate urban population of 50,000+ or are adjacent to these counties. Further classification of county size was done using the USDA Economic Research Service's Rural-Urban Continuum Codes, for the Vibrancy and Vitality overall rank. In these codes, metro counties are distinguished by population size of the Metropolitan Statistical Area of which they are part. Non-metro counties are classified according to the aggregate size of their urban population. Within the three urban size categories, non-metro counties are further identified by whether or not they have some functional adjacency to a metro area or areas. For our analysis, non-metro counties were divided into two sub categories of micropolitan and rural. Micropolitan counties are non-metro counties whose aggregate urban population is greater than 2,500 people. Rural counties are non-metro counties whose aggregate urban population does not exceed 2,500 people.

There are a number of benefits and shortcomings to using this approach. Firstly, a composite average enables several variables to influence a county's overall ranking. This is critical because it is often insufficient to evaluate a county for a given issue based on one indicator. As in the many examples, there are a variety of conditions that need to be met for a county to excel (or to fail) in any given category. However, because there is no way to accurately weight separate indicators such that one indicator is more influential than another in ranking the counties, a composite average must be taken. This leaves a great deal of subjectivity to the authors in choosing the "elemental" variables that are indicative of a county's success (or failure) for a given issue facing the Rocky Mountain West. The authors have made every effort to utilize an essential list of variables for each section based upon the constraints of consistent data availability for all counties in the Rockies study region.

Throughout the report card shorthand explanations of data sources are used. The full citation for these sources follow:

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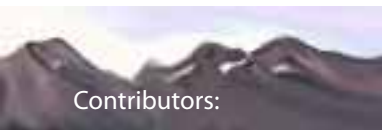
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F. Patrick Holmes is program coordinator of the Rockies Project at Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado. He was research assistant at the Sonoran Institute in Montana during the summer of 2003 and involved with the Colorado College Sustainable Development Workshop. Patrick is co-author of the article “Smart Growth: What Measures Can Local Governments Use?” and “Does Wilderness Impoverish Rural Regions?: Research on Economic Conditions in Rural Counties in the American West Containing Designated Wilderness” to be included in the *International Journal of Wilderness*, August 2004.



Daniel Kemmis is director of the Center for the Rocky Mountain West and Regional Policy associate in Missoula, Montana. He has served as mayor of Missoula and Speaker of the Montana House of Representatives. He is the author of “Community and the Politics of Place” and “The Good City and the Good Life.” His most recent book, published by Island Press in 2001, is “This Sovereign Land: A New Vision for Governing the



Ed Marston has founded, published and edited newspapers in a small, western Colorado coal-mining and fruit-growing community for the past 30 years. His most recent stint was as publisher of *High Country News* (1983-2002), an environmental newspaper covering the one million square-mile interior West. He and his wife Betsy founded his town’s weekly, *North Fork Times*, in 1975 and ran it for six years. They also founded a regional newspaper, *Western Colorado Report*. He is currently a free-lance writer and a re-developer of his town’s two-block downtown. In his 30-year journalism career, he wrote extensively about ranching, forestry, water, wilderness, mining and life in small rural communities. He served from 1983-2002 on the board of his local rural electric co-op, Delta-Montrose Electric Association, including two years as board president. Ed has written or edited several books, including “The Dynamic Environment” (Wiley, 1975), “Western Water Made Simple” (Island Press, 1987), and “Ranching West of the 100th Meridian” (Island Press, 2002). His 35,000-word memoir appears in “Colorado: 1870-2000,” by photographers W.H. Jackson and John Fielder (Westcliffe Press, 2000).



Ray Rasker is the director of the Sonoran Institute’s SocioEconomics Program in Bozeman, Montana. Before joining Sonoran Institute, Ray was an economist for The Wilderness Society, also based out of Bozeman. He has written numerous articles on public land management, wildlife economics, and the changing economy of the West; he frequently lectures on these topics at universities and conferences. Ray conducts workshops to help communities produce their own socioeconomic profiles, understand economic realities and identify opportunities for environmentally compatible forms of economic development. He also holds adjunct position at Montana State University in the Earth Science Department. Ray also serves on the board of the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative.



George Sibley is a writer and teacher living in the Upper Gunnison River valley in Gunnison, Colorado. Since 1988 he has taught journalism and regional studies at Western State College, and he coordinates special projects for the college, including the college’s annual fall Headwaters Conference, the summer Water Workshop, and the spring Environmental Symposium. He spent most of his early years in Western Pennsylvania, but returned to Colorado after graduating from the University of Pittsburgh. As a writer, he has had one book published nationally, “Part of a Winter,” an account of life in the Upper Gunnison valley, and has also written or co-written local histories of Crested Butte and Crawford, Colorado. His essays and articles have appeared in *Harper’s* magazine, *Technology Illustrated*, *The High Country News*, *New Age Journal*, *Mountain Gazette*, *Colorado Central*, and a number of other local and regional publications.



Ellen R. Stein became the first executive director of the Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) in June 2002, a mountain research and education institution based in Silverton, Colorado. Ellen came to MSI from Steamboat Springs where she served as the first executive director of the Community Agriculture Alliance. Her recent work experience also includes serving as a land stewardship and fundraising consultant to the Western Governors’ Association; and as a program associate with the Ford Foundation’s Community and Resource Development unit of the Asset-Building and Community Development program. She currently lives along the Animas River in Silverton, Colorado.



Stephen G. Weaver is an award winning photographer with over 30 years experience making images of the natural world and serves as Technical Director for the Colorado College Geology Department, Colorado Springs, Colorado. Educated as a geologist, Steve combines his scientific knowledge with his photographic abilities to produce stunning images that illustrate the structure and composition of the earth and its natural systems. As an undergraduate geology student he first visited the Rocky Mountains where he fell in love with the mountain environment and the wide-open grand landscapes of the West. Steve currently photographs throughout North America with a major emphasis on mountain and desert environments. His use of a 4x5 large format view camera allows him to capture images with amazing clarity and depth.



THE 2004 COLORADO COLLEGE STATE OF THE ROCKIES REPORT CARD

MEASURES MANY ECONOMIC, DEMOGRAPHIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS THROUGHOUT THE EIGHT STATE ROCKIES REGION TO ASSESS TRENDS, ASSIGN GRADES AND IDENTIFY VIBRANT, AND VITAL COUNTIES

- ♦ Challenge Essay by Ed Marston on “Home and Hope in the Rockies”
- ♦ Rockies Perspectives Essays from Four Exciting Community Organizations
- ♦ Overview: What Makes the Rockies Unique?
- ♦ **Analysis:** The Rockies Divided: 3-sub Regions That Make Sense
- ♦ **Grading the Rockies:** County Performance on 15 Measures and Overall Vibrancy and Vitality

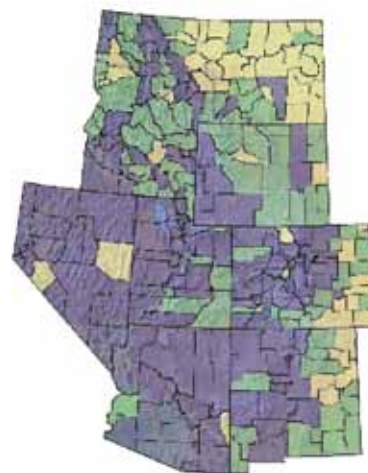


Glacier National Park

What's your perception of the Rockies?

Myth	Reality
Rural	Only 3% of the population lived in completely rural counties in 1970 and only 1.7% did in 2000.
Agricultural and Natural Resource-Based	Only 4.2% of the employment base of the region was in these industries.
Less Educated	25% of the region holds a bachelor's degree or higher. That's a percent higher than the U.S. average.
Caucasian	Roughly 20 percent of the population in the Rockies is of Latino ethnic background.
Large Number of Government Workers	In actuality, only 16% of the population works for the government in the region and only a fraction of that works in matters concerning the public domain. Most government employees work for the military.

Map 2: Population Growth in the Rocky Mountains, 1970-2000



Population Decline
 1 - 50 % Growth
 Greater than 50 % Growth

Chart 1: Personal Income Components in the Rockies, 2001



COLORADO COLLEGE
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