

# Rio Blanco County

## Demographic and Economic Profile

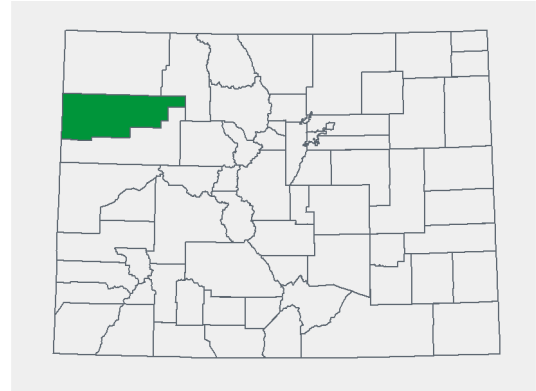


**COLORADO**  
Department of Local Affairs

### Community Quick Facts

Population (2014)	6,607
Population Change 2010 to 2014	-10
Median HH Income (ACS 10-14)	\$63,910
State Median HH Income (ACS 10-14)	\$59,448
Employment (County in 2014)	4,031
Cost of Living Index (State=100)	93.54, Low

Source: State Demography Office  
U.S. Census Bureau

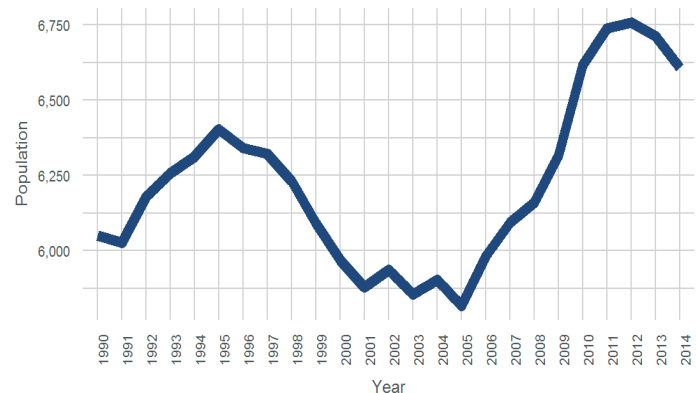


## Population

Population Estimates and Forecasts for the resident population are produced by the State Demography Office.

- Rio Blanco County's population grew rapidly in the early 1990s, followed by declines from 1995 through 2005. Rio Blanco had regained its population losses by 2010 but has experienced population decline since 2012.
- Recent declines in population have been due to out-migration as well as an aging population that encompasses fewer families.

Rio Blanco County Population, 1990 to 2014

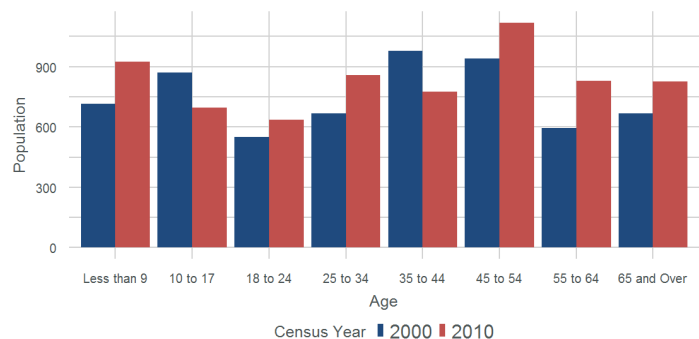


	Population		Annual Average Growth Rate (%)	
	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Rio Blanco	Colorado
1990	6,051	3,294,473		
1995	6,403	3,811,074	1.1%	3%
2000	5,969	4,338,801	-1.4%	2.6%
2010	6,617	5,050,289	1%	1.5%
2014	6,607	5,353,471	0%	1.5%

### Population By Age

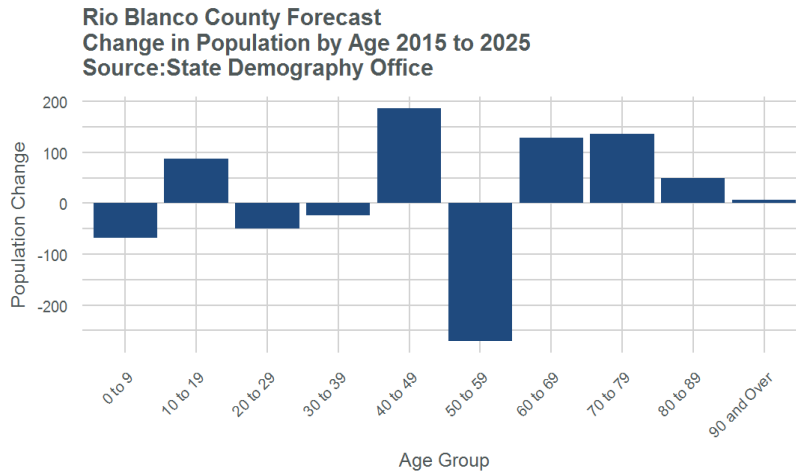
Rio Blanco's population by age is shown in the chart to the right for both 2000 (darker bar) and 2010 (lighter bar). The 45 to 54, 55 to 64 and 65 and older age groups all experienced growth last decade. Decreases in younger age groups are the result of lower levels of net in-migration of persons aged 30-40 than in previous decades. The aging population may put downward pressure on local government tax revenue due to changes in spending on taxable goods.

Rio Blanco County Population by Age  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau



## Population By Age, Continued

Rio Blanco is forecast to reach 6,700 by 2020 and 7,400 by 2040. The forecast growth rate is expected to remain below .5% per year from 2015 to 2030. Most of this growth is forecast for adults age 30-40, those most likely to move to Rio Blanco and their children. The number of residents over age 70 will also increase, the result of current older residents aging in place. The forecast growth will be dependent on housing and community services and how well Rio Blanco attracts and retains its population.

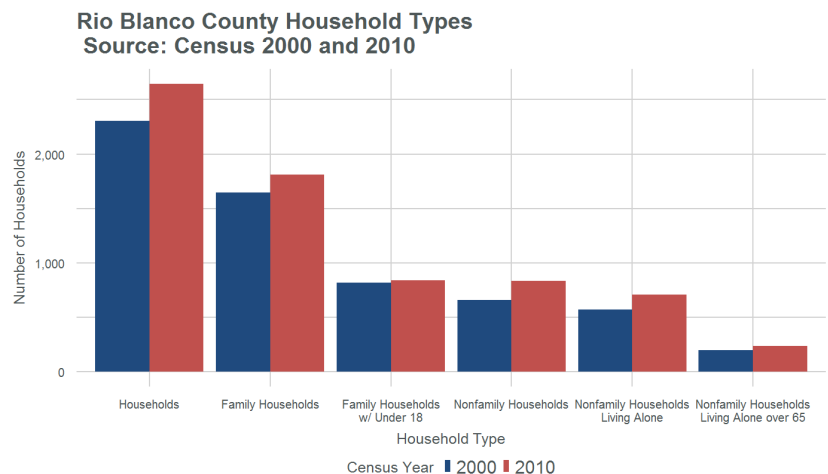


## Housing & Households

Rio Blanco County Housing Units	2000	2010	2010 %
Total Housing Units	2,855	3,309	
Occupied Housing Units	2,306	2,647	80%
Owner-Occupied Units	1,628	1,875	70.8%
Renter-Occupied Units	678	772	29.2%
Vacant Housing Units	549	662	20%
For Seasonal	229	279	42.1%
All Other Vacant	320	383	57.9%

- The overall vacancy rate was 20% in 2010.
- Nearly half of vacant units are for seasonal use (42.1%).
- Most of the units are owner occupied (70.8%) with a small rental market.

- There was an increase in households between 2000 and 2010.
- This increase can be seen across all household types, especially Nonfamily households including those living alone.
- This data is consistent with the aging of Rio Blanco County residents.



# Race & Ethnicity

Rio Blanco County Population by Race/Ethnicity

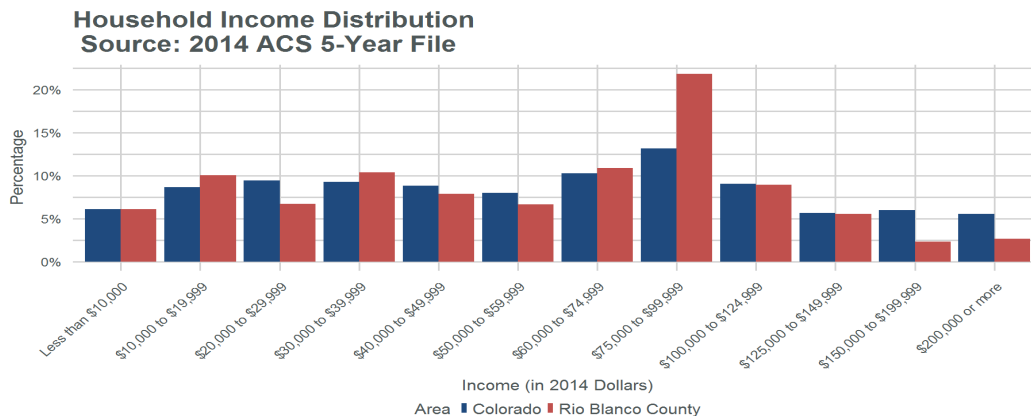
	2000	2010	2010 %	Colorado 2010 %
Total	5,986	6,666		
White	5,546	5,756	86.3%	70.0%
Black or African American	11	49	0.7%	3.8%
American Indian or Alaska Native	37	44	0.7%	0.6%
Asian	15	22	0.3%	2.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other	0	11	0.2%	0.1%
Some Other Race	6	5	0.1%	0.2%
Two or More	75	114	1.7%	2.0%
Hispanic	296	665	10%	20.7%

Source: U.S. Census 2010

- Rio Blanco is less diverse than the state as a whole but is becoming more diverse over time.
- The Hispanic population increased by 124% between 2000 and 2010, while the White population increased by just 4%. Total population growth over that period was 11%.

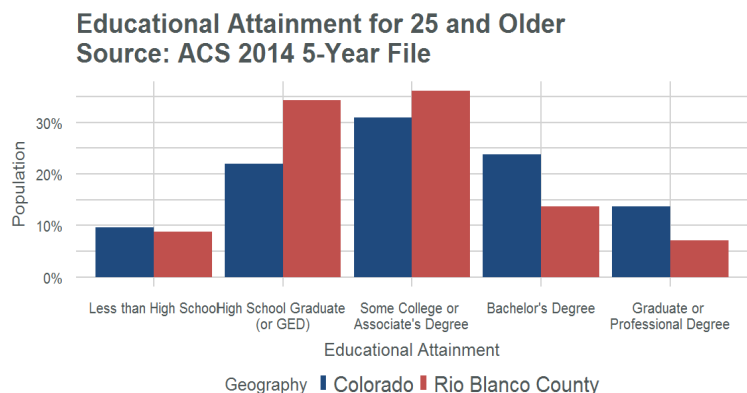
# Income

The graph below compares Rio Blanco's income distribution to the state. Rio Blanco has a higher median household income than the state, \$63,910 vs. \$59,448. The higher median is driven by the high share of households, nearly 25%, with incomes \$75,000 to \$99,999. These incomes are partially driven by the age distribution in Rio Blanco, types of jobs, and the high share of the population in the ages 45 to 64, the highest earning age group.



# Education

- The largest share of the population has some college or an associate's degree.
- Rio Blanco has a higher share of its population with only a high school education as well as some post-secondary education compared to the state.
- Occupations may not require a bachelor's or graduate degree.

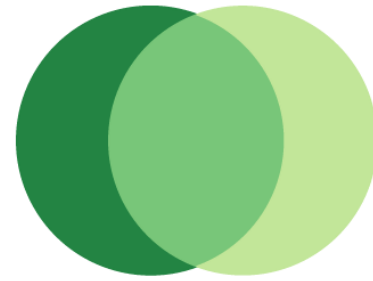


# Commuting

## Rio Blanco County Commuting Patterns, 2014

Commuting plays an important role in the economy of an area because not all workers live where they work. Commuting impacts local job growth, access to employees, and transportation infrastructure.

Rio Blanco is home to a number of oil and gas jobs that are filled by residents who live outside the county. Of the jobs in Rio Blanco (dark green), 56% are filled by residents with 44% being filled by workforce from outside of the county. Considering the resident workforce (light green), 56% works in Rio Blanco and 44% commute to neighboring counties for work.



- Jobs in Rio Blanco County
- Workforce in Rio Blanco County
- Overlap: Work and Live in Rio Blanco County

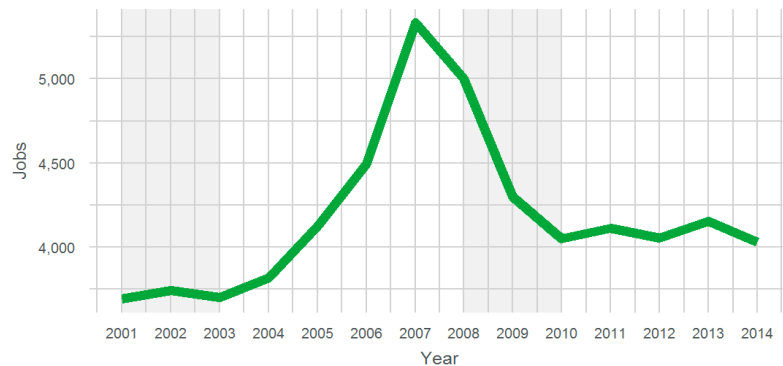
Source: LEHD On the Map, 2016

Note: Data does not include agricultural and self-employed jobs and uses administrative boundaries only.

# Jobs & the Economy

Total employment in the county was estimated to be 4,031 in 2014, down 1,300 jobs from Rio Blanco's peak employment in 2007 of 5,332. Pipeline construction in the county from 2006 through 2008 led to a large, but short-lived employment increase. Construction employment is down by 1,024 from the inflated 2007 level. Mining employment has fallen by 320 from 2008 to 2014. Since 2010 employment growth has occurred in admin and waste, agriculture, government, real estate and construction.

Rio Blanco County Total Estimated Jobs, 2001 to 2014  
Source: State Demography Office



Note: Grey shading represents beginning to bottom of U.S. recessions.

### 2015 Share of Jobs by Industry

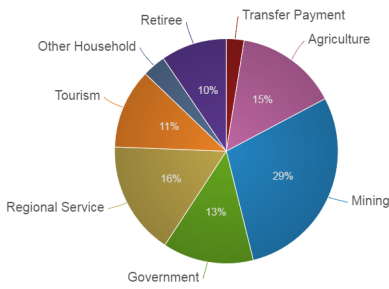
Sector Name	Rio Blanco	Colorado
Agriculture	9.6%	1.5%
Mining	15.6%	1.1%
Utilities	1.4%	0.3%
Construction	7.7%	6.5%
Manufacturing	1.3%	4.7%
Wholesale Trade	0.3%	3.5%
Retail Trade	5.5%	9.5%
Transportation & Warehousing	2.5%	2.8%
Information	0.3%	2.4%
Finance and Insurance	1.6%	4.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1.8%	3.4%
Professional and Technical Services	2.3%	9.1%
Management of Companies	0.0%	1.2%
Administrative and Waste Services	4.7%	6.0%
Educational Services	0.4%	2.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	1.8%	9.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1.3%	2.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	5.6%	8.5%
Other Services	4.3%	5.9%
Government	32.0%	15.2%

Source: State Demography Office Total Estimated Jobs

### Economic Industry Mix

The industrial mix in Rio Blanco can be seen at left; it is quite different than Colorado's. The largest industries by employment are government, mining, and agriculture, followed by accommodation and food services and retail trade.

Rio Blanco Base Industries, 2014



Source: State Demography Office

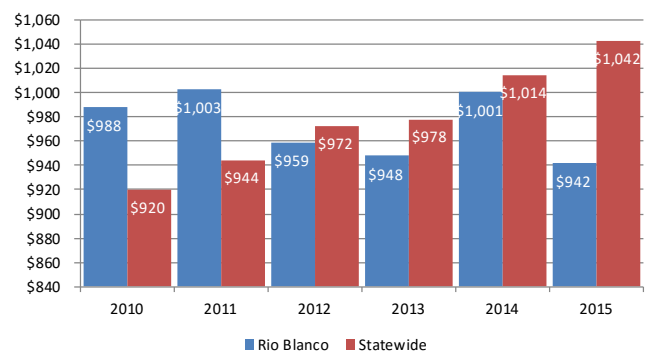
## Economic Base Analysis

The Base Industries chart shows which industries drive the economy in Rio Blanco. The chart shows the important share of economic activity driven by mining (oil & gas and coal) and agriculture. Regional services (like construction), government, tourism and retirees are also important economic drivers to the county. Retirees are a driver because they spend their savings or pensions locally. Much of the tourism is related to hunting and thus is highly seasonal.

## Average Wage Trends

- Average weekly wages Rio Blanco decreased by 5% between 2010 and 2015 compared to the state which increased by 13%.
- Weekly wages of \$942 in Rio Blanco in 2015 were 90% of the \$1,042 statewide average.
- Wages in Rio Blanco have fallen in 3 of the last 5 years, while statewide wages have steadily increased. Due to its smaller employment base and large concentration of oil and gas jobs, average wage change in Rio Blanco is much more volatile than statewide.

Average Weekly Wage



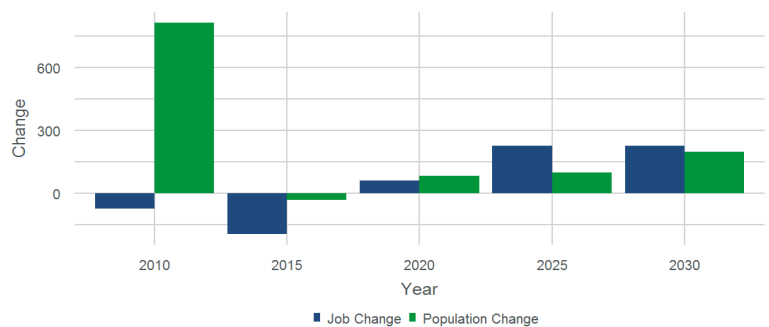
Source: Department of Labor and Employment (QCEW)

## Population and Economic Forecast

The rates of growth of both population and jobs can differ somewhat because of changes in the labor market, i.e., labor force participation rates, age, unemployment rates, multiple job holding, and/or commuting. In addition, macroeconomic conditions such as business cycle fluctuations and faster or slower periods of U.S. and Colorado economic growth can affect overall job growth in a region.

- Population growth is forecast to roughly match job growth for the period from 2015 to 2020. After 2020, job growth is expected to exceed population growth.
- Population growth after 2020 in Rio Blanco is in large part driven by the aging of the population and the need to fill jobs where people will be retiring.
- The aging of the population and need for younger workers may require additional housing and community services. Additionally, an aging population may require increased need for accessible housing and other aging services.

Rio Blanco County  
Forecast Change in Population and Jobs 2010 to 2030  
Source: State Demography Office



	Total Jobs	Population
2010	4,051	6,634
2015	3,855	6,603
2020	3,916	6,687
2025	4,141	6,786
2030	4,367	6,984