

Colorado's Changing Population



PROJECTED CHANGES IN COLORADO'S POPULATION

CPW is watching trends in state demographics and positioning ourselves to respond to changing demands and needs. Colorado's population is growing rapidly. In 2017, it was the 9th fastest growing state in the country, growing at a rate of 1.4% annually, and it is projected to continue to grow by over 20% between 2020 and 2040 (Figure 1).

The highest growth rates will occur along the Front Range, especially in Northern Colorado, and on the Western Slope (Figure 2).¹ Increased growth primarily in urban areas will present challenges in managing outdoor recreation resources, but also opportunities to engage new users.

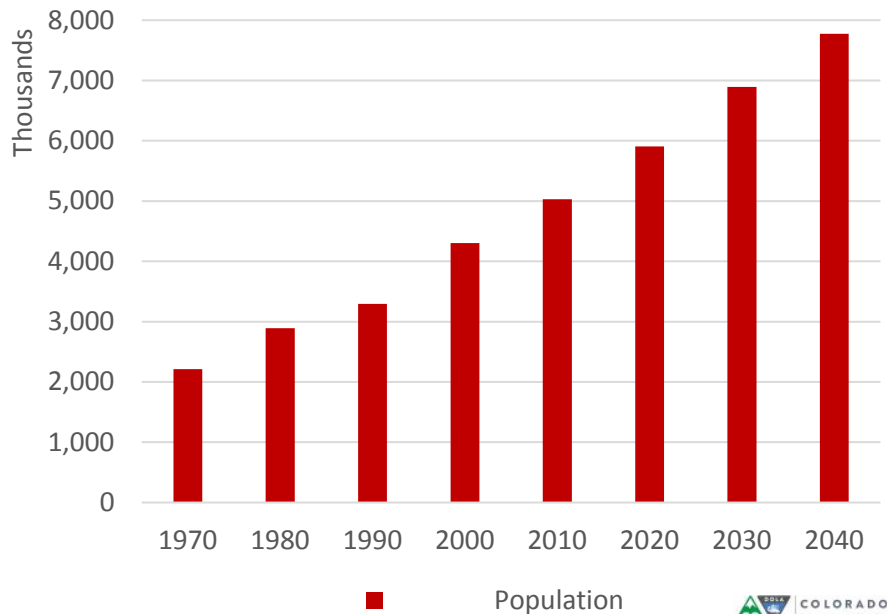


Figure 1: Growth in Colorado's Population, 1970-2040

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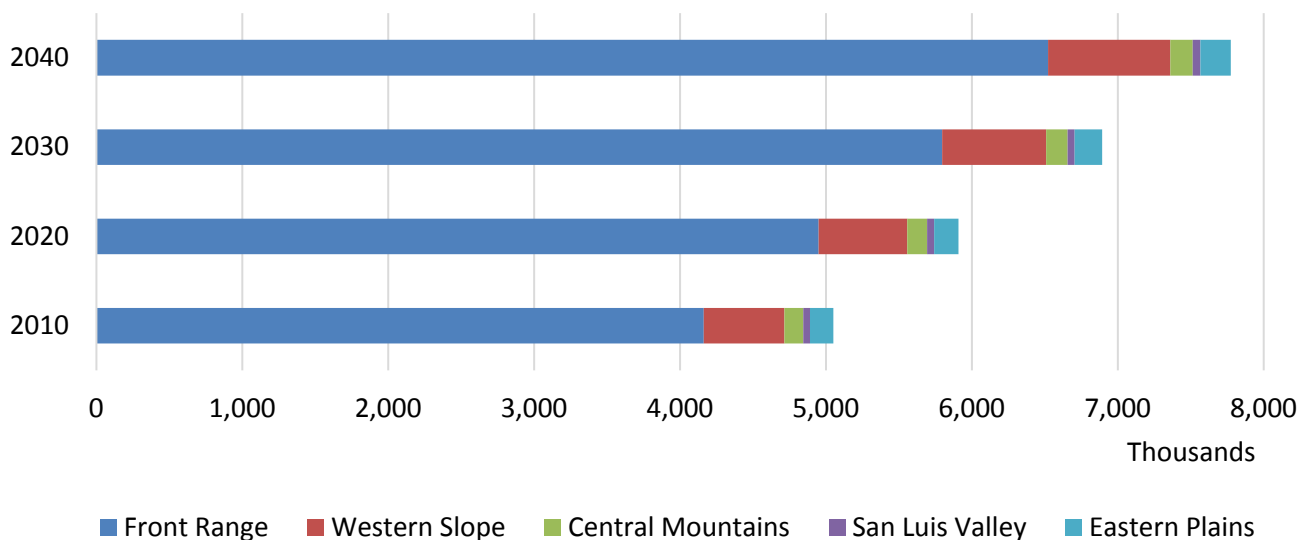


Figure 2: Location of Colorado's Population Growth, 2010-2040

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¹ Svaldi, Aldo. "What Colorado regions will grow fastest through 2050? The answer is not metro Denver." The Denver Post, November 7, 2017

Although Colorado's population is younger than most states, the proportion of those 55 years-of-age and older is increasing and projected to grow dramatically in coming years (Figure 3). The aging of the population will affect how and where Coloradans choose to recreate.

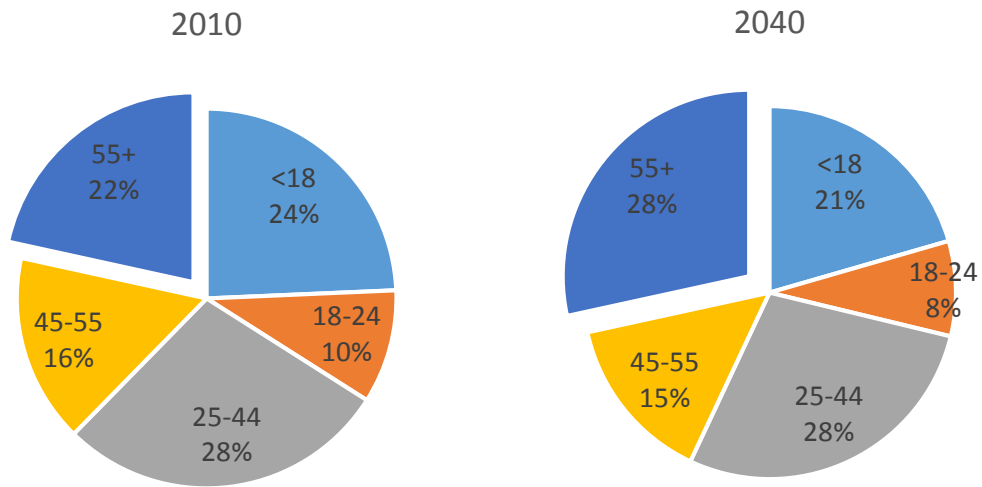


Figure 3: Proportion of Population by Age in 2010 and 2040

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Finally, Colorado is becoming more diverse. In 2000, only 25% of the state's population was non-white. In 2040, almost half of Coloradans will be non-white. Hispanics are the largest minority group in Colorado and are projected to make up one-third of the population by 2040 (Figure 4).

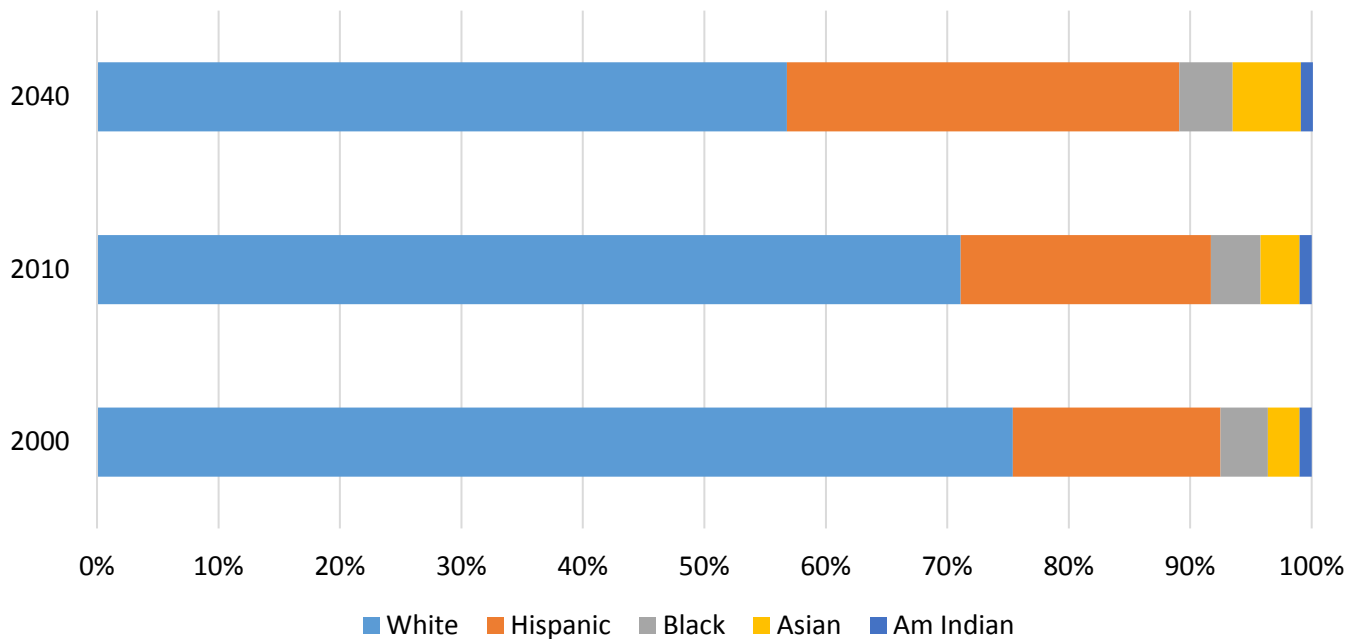


Figure 4: Changes in Diversity of Population, 2000-2040

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