



To: Members of the RCRC Board of Directors
From: Maggie Chui, Senior Governmental Affairs Coordinator/Clerk of the Board
Paul A. Smith, Senior Vice President Governmental Affairs
Date: January 5, 2021
Re: Recent Population Shifts in RCRC Counties - **Informational Item**

Summary

This memo highlights recent population changes in RCRC member counties, and other population changes over the past year.

Background

The California Department of Finance (DOF) tracks and provides estimates of California's population and breaks it down by county. This data is measured against prior years to provide growth projections, as well as anticipate various caseloads for state services.

Since the 2010 Census, the state population has increased at an annualized rate of 0.64 percent. It is expected that information from the 2020 Census will be included in forthcoming 2021 datasets.

Issue

In December 2020, the DOF released their "California County Population Estimates and Components of Change." This document provides population changes between July 1, 2019, and July 1, 2020.

Based on the findings, California's population grew by 21,200 to a total of 39.78 million, which represents a growth rate increase of 0.05 percent. It should be noted that the 0.05 percent growth rate is down from 0.23 percent for the prior 12 months – another lowest recorded growth rate since 1900. According to the DOF, reasons for the recent decline in population growth include fewer births, increased deaths associated with an aging population and the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, lower international migration, and higher domestic out-migration. While deaths increased due to an aging population, this is much higher than the 3-year average death increase of 4,800 persons per year from 2017 to 2020. Some of the above average deaths are due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Continuing a trend that started in 2016, inland counties experienced higher population growth rates. Several urban coastal counties gained population at a slower pace as compared to the previous year, whereas most coastal counties lost population. With the exception of areas surrounding Butte County as a result of the 2018 Camp Fire, smaller

counties in more remote areas either lost population or grew very little. A total of thirty-two California counties experienced population losses.

Leading the increase with the highest rates of growth are El Dorado (1.69 percent), Glenn (1.50 percent), Yuba (1.32 percent), San Benito (1.19 percent), Merced (1.13 percent), and San Joaquin (1.06 percent) Counties. Each of these counties had the largest percentage increases in population - growing by 1.06 percent or more.

Of importance to RCRC member counties are the following observations:

- Recorded as the most destructive wildfire in state history, the Camp Fire destroyed more than 14,600 housing units and displaced an estimated 35,700 people. Most people impacted by the fire relocated to nearby cities or surrounding counties. While four counties (Colusa, Plumas, Sutter, and Tehama) have returned to their pre-Camp Fire population growth trends, two counties (Glenn and Yuba) continued to experience a significant population increase. Still, Butte County lost population, but at a much slower rate.
- Twenty-five RCRC member counties lost population in the past year;

COUNTY	JULY 2019	JULY 2020	TOTAL POPULATION LOSS / %
Butte	214,532	206,362	-8,170/-3.81%
Sutter	102,808	101,160	-1,648/-1.60%
Plumas	18,450	18,246	-204/-1.11%
Mono	13,585	13,447	-138/-1.02%
Humboldt	133,820	132,706	-1,114/-0.83%
Napa	139,874	138,711	-1,163/-0.83%
Sonoma	495,058	491,134	-3,924/-0.79%
Mendocino	88,125	87,491	-634/-0.72%
Alpine	1,123	1,115	-8/-0.71%
Trinity	13,374	13,291	-83/-0.62%
Lake	64,080	63,771	-309/-0.48%
Monterey	443,397	441,290	-2,107/-0.48%
Siskiyou	44,000	43,792	-208/-0.47%
Imperial	188,962	188,090	-872/-0.46%
Modoc	9,458	9,416	-42/-0.44%
San Luis Obispo	277,276	276,151	-1,125/-0.41%
Amador	37,724	37,577	-147/-0.39%
Tuolumne	52,557	52,353	-204/-0.39%
Nevada	97,808	97,439	-369/-0.38%
Mariposa	17,842	17,778	-64/-0.36%
Lassen	28,972	28,872	-100/-0.35%
Sierra	3,127	3,117	-10/-0.32%
Calaveras	44,403	44,286	-117/-0.26%
Inyo	18,463	18,429	-34/-0.18%
Del Norte	27,207	27,193	-14/-0.05%

- For the past nine consecutive years, five RCRC member counties have experienced a decline in population;

COUNTY	2011 - 12	2012 - 13	2013 - 14	2014 - 15	2015 - 16	2016 - 17	2017 - 18	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	TOTAL / %
Alpine	-4	-2	-3	-7	-3	-5	-11	-12	-8	-55/-4.68%
Calaveras	-103	-179	-103	-107	-144	-107	-84	-169	-117	-1,113/-2.44%
Mariposa	-17	-67	-22	-49	-20	-74	-89	-61	-64	-463/-2.54%
Siskiyou	-24	-111	-41	-169	-122	-185	-106	-127	-208	-1,093/-2.44%
Trinity	-1	-46	-59	-70	-67	-35	-69	-11*	-83	-441/-3.20%

*Trinity County has been reinstated based on 2018-2019 revised population data provided by the DOF.

- Eleven RCRC member counties exceeded the statewide average growth rate of 0.05 percent: El Dorado (1.69 percent); Glenn (1.50 percent); Yuba (1.32 percent); San Benito (1.19 percent); Merced (1.13 percent); Placer (0.72 percent); Madera (0.70 percent); Tulare (0.64 percent); Yolo (0.45 percent); Tehama (0.16 percent); and, Colusa (0.14 percent). As noted above, Glenn and Yuba Counties continued to experience significant population increases as a result of the Camp Fire;
- Although natural increase (births minus deaths) was a significant source of growth in the state, eighteen counties (all of which were RCRC member counties) experienced natural decreases: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Del Norte, El Dorado, Inyo, Lake, Humboldt, Mariposa, Mendocino, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Trinity, and Tuolumne Counties;
- The total aggregate population of the thirty-seven RCRC member counties is 4,725,177, representing just 11.88 percent of the state's population (as of July 1, 2020, the state had 39,782,419 residents). In contrast, Los Angeles County's population of 10,171,593 represents 25.57 percent of the state's population.

Staff Recommendation

Information Only.

Attachment

- Data from the Department of Finance