

DELTA COUNTY PROFILE

ENVIRONMENT

Located in west central Colorado, Delta County encompasses 1,157 square miles and ranges in elevation from 4,758 ft to 11,396 ft.

Scenically situated in the Gunnison River Valley, Delta County is rimmed by the San Juan and West Elk mountain ranges to the east and south, the Grand Mesa on the north, and the Uncompahgre Plateau to the west, with the Gunnison, Grand Mesa, San Juan, and Uncompahgre National Forests nearby,

Delta County enjoys a mild climate, averaging 300 clear days per year, and 8-10" annual precipitation. Low humidity moderates warm summer days and cold winter nights.

Served by Walker Field Airport (Grand Junction – 45 miles); Montrose Regional Airport (Montrose – 20 miles); Delta and Paonia county airports for private aircraft, and Greyhound bus service (Grand Junction, Montrose, Delta).

ECONOMIC BASE

Agriculture, coal mining, timber, government services, construction, small manufacturing, and recreation

POPULATION

Approximately 30,000 concentrated primarily in five communities.

RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

Natural and prepared areas are easily accessible for outdoor recreation of many kinds in all seasons. Delta County is home to a vibrant community of artists, craftsmen, and musicians.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

Delta County Memorial Hospital, 24-hour ambulance service, many local physicians, and frequent visiting consulting physicians from Montrose, Grand Junction, and Denver provide services.

DELTA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 50J

Since consolidation in 1950, the school district has fostered and enjoyed strong cooperative relationships among administration, faculty (represented by the Coordinating Council), Board of Education, and community. In addition to a wide variety of liberal arts, fine arts, extracurricular, and athletic programs, Delta County School District has effective programs in agriculture, business vocations, technology, Special Education, vocal music and band, and sequential learning at the elementary level in math and reading. These programs are supported by continuing curriculum research and a dedicated staff of approximately 350 classroom and Special Education instructors, and approximately 350 support staff members.

MAJOR COMMUNITIES AND THEIR SCHOOLS

Delta – The county seat and economic center of the county, the city was founded in 1882 where railroad, highways, and rivers meet. Delta enjoys over 400 acres of prepared recreation area including 256-acre Confluence Park. Known as the City of Murals, Delta is happy to be the home of a state-of-the-art recreational center, Ft. Uncompahgre Living History Museum, Sweitzer Lake State Recreation Area, public library, new hospital, medical and dental clinics, retail shopping and restaurants, and public golf course. Population for Delta and its surrounding area is approximately 12,000.

Enrollment (Fall 2009): Preschool (224 students), Garnet Mesa Elementary School (530 total students), Lincoln Elementary School (525 students), Delta Middle School (482 students), Delta High School (685 students), Delta Vision School (260 students), Delta Academy of Applied Learning (26 students), Delta Opportunity School (96 students), Delta-Montrose Technical College (300 full-time students, 2244 part-time students)

Cedaredge – Founded in 1894, Cedaredge, at 6,200 ft. elevation, is the southern gateway to Grand Mesa, the largest flattop mountain in the world. The economic and cultural center for the Surface Creek Valley, the town and surrounding area has a population of approximately 8,100. Local amenities include public library, public golf course, Pioneer Town, medical and dental clinics, and easy access to outdoor recreation, including Powderhorn Ski Area.

Enrollment (Fall 2009): Cedaredge Elementary School (422 students), Cedaredge Middle School (214 students), Cedaredge High School (281 students), Surface Creek Vision School (191 students).

Hotchkiss – Host of the annual Delta County Fair, Hotchkiss and its surrounding rural area has a population of approximately 3,400. Founded in 1882, Hotchkiss has a public library, medical and dental clinics, and is home to the Hotchkiss National Fish Hatchery. Orchards, farming, and livestock form the main economic base.

Enrollment (Fall 2009): Hotchkiss K-8 School (378 students), Hotchkiss High School (270 students), North Fork Community Montessori School (77 students)

Paonia – Founded in 1882, Paonia is the gateway to McClure and Kebler Passes, and the West Elk Mountains. Fruit orchards and coal production have made Paonia the largest town in the North Fork Valley of the Gunnison River. Paonia, including the surrounding area, has a population of approximately 3,700, at an altitude 5,675 ft. Public library, and medical and dental clinics are located in town. Paonia State Recreation Area and Paonia Reservoir offer opportunities for recreation and wildlife viewing.

Enrollment (Fall 2009): Paonia Elementary School (230 students), Paonia Junior/Senior High School (240 students), North Fork Vision School (59 students), Lamborn Vision School (36 students)

Crawford – Easy access to the Gunnison National Forest, Crawford Reservoir State Recreation Area, Needle Rock, and Black Canyon National Monument, the deepest, narrowest canyon in North America, make Crawford an attractive recreational area. Population for the town and surrounding area is approximately 1,200.

Enrollment (Fall 2009): Crawford K-8 School (127 students). High school students are transported to Hotchkiss.