Canyons of the Ancients National Monument

A Summary of Economic Performance in the Surrounding Communities

Background
The 164,000 acre Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in southwestern Colorado was created in 2000 in recognition of the area’s more than 6,000 archeological sites, containing historical and cultural artifacts that span thousands of years. Located in Montezuma County, Colorado the monument is managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

Public Access and Use of the Monument
The monument allows current existing rights-of-way, grazing, and hunting and fishing. The national monument has up to 100 archeological sites per square mile in some places, representing ancient Puebloan and other Native American cultures and is an “outdoor museum” visited by thousands of Americans each year.

Travel and Tourism
Travel and tourism are important to communities in Montezuma County, representing about 23% of total private wage and salary employment, or 1,550 jobs, in 2015. In Colorado, the Outdoor Industry Association reports that recreation contributes more than $13.2 billion annually to the state’s economy.

Summary Findings
Research shows that conserving public lands like the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument helps to safeguard and highlight amenities that draw new residents, tourists, and businesses to surrounding communities. Western counties with protected public lands, like national monuments, have been more successful at attracting fast-growing economic sectors and as a result grow more quickly, on average, than counties without protected public lands. In addition, protected natural amenities—such as the pristine scenery found at Canyons of the Ancients—also help sustain property values and attract new investment.

Economy Grows After Designation
The communities in Montezuma County, Colorado neighboring the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument experienced strong growth after the designation of the monument, continuing previous growth trends.

From 2001 to 2015, in Montezuma County:
- Population grew by 10%
- Jobs grew by 9%
- Real personal income grew by 34%
- Real per capita income grew by 22%

Services Jobs Increasing Across the Board
Services jobs—such as doctors, engineers, and teachers—account for the majority of employment growth in Montezuma County in recent decades. These jobs are increasingly mobile, and many entrepreneurs locate their businesses in areas with a high quality of life.

From 2001 to 2015, in Montezuma County:
- Services grew from 7,727 to 8,738 jobs, a 13% increase
- Non-Services grew from 2,963 to 3,075 jobs, a 4% increase
THE COMMUNITIES IN MONTEZUMA COUNTY NEIGHBORING THE NATIONAL MONUMENT EXPERIENCED STRONG GROWTH SINCE ITS DESIGNATION IN 2000.

THE INCREASES IN POPULATION, JOBS, PERSONAL INCOME, AND PER CAPITA INCOME MIRROR OTHER WESTERN COUNTIES WITH NATIONAL MONUMENTS OR OTHER PROTECTED LANDS.

METHODOLOGY
This fact sheet is part of a series that assesses the economic performance of local communities that are adjacent to national monuments. The series examines national monuments in the eleven western continental states that are larger than 10,000 acres and were created in 1982 or later.

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Series: The Economic Importance of National Monuments to Local Communities

NON-LABOR INCOME GROWS FASTEST
One of the largest and fastest growing sources of new personal income in Montezuma County is non-labor income, which is made up of investment income such as dividends, interest and rent, and government transfer payments such as Social Security and Medicare.

For people with investment income and many retirees, protected public lands and recreation provide important aspects of a high quality of life. Non-labor income already represents more than a third of all personal income in the West—and will grow as the Baby Boomer generation retires.7

From 2001 to 2015, in Montezuma County:
• Non-Labor income grew from $284 million to $465 million, a 64% increase
• As a result, in 2015 non-labor income made up 46% of total personal income

TRADITIONAL JOBS HOLD STEADY
Long before the monument’s creation, commodity industries (agriculture, mining, timber) were becoming a smaller share of the overall economy in Montezuma County. These industries remain part of the region’s economy today.

In 2015, in Montezuma County:
• Agriculture accounted for almost 8% of total employment
• Mining accounted for 3% of total private employment
• Timber accounted for 2% of total private employment

PROSPERITY ON THE RISE
As the economy has grown since designation of the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, per capita income has risen as well. This indicates growing prosperity in the region.

From 2001 to 2015, in Montezuma County:
• Real per capita income grew from $31,952 to $38,892, a 22% increase

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5 The U.S. Department of Commerce changed the way it classifies industries between 2000 and 2001. To show a continuous timeline for services and non-services employment, we subtracted non-services jobs from total private employment to derive services jobs.