

Mapping Rural Colorado

A Statistical Comparison of Colorado's Rural Regions

It's no wonder that these areas experience health barriers differently. When it comes to geography, economy and their communities, they can be miles apart.



Northwest

(Colorado numbers in parentheses)

Residents enjoy the highest rates of physical activity and lowest prevalence of obesity, thanks in part to local parks and recreation, stunning hikes, powerful rapids and world-class skiing. But health insurance and child care have big price tags.

Economics

- Median income: \$63,900 (\$59,400)
- Adult poverty rate: 11 percent (11 percent)

Residents

- Population: 214,000 (5,198,000)
- 65 and older: 11 percent (12 percent)
- Hispanic: 21 percent (22 percent)
- Obesity rate: 15 percent (20 percent)
- Problems accessing mental health care: 8 percent (9 percent)



Southwest/San Luis Valley

(Colorado numbers in parentheses)

This region is one of the largest high desert valleys in the world. It is rich with cultural history and diversity. But with the state's highest poverty rate, residents face tough financial decisions when it comes to healthy living.

Economics

- Median income: \$43,400 (\$59,400)
- Adult poverty rate: 14 percent (11 percent)

Residents

- Population: 239,000 (5,198,000)
- 65 and older: 17 percent (12 percent)
- Hispanic: 21 percent (22 percent)
- Obesity rate: 20 percent (20 percent)
- Problems accessing mental health care: 9 percent (9 percent)



Eastern Plains

(Colorado numbers in parentheses)

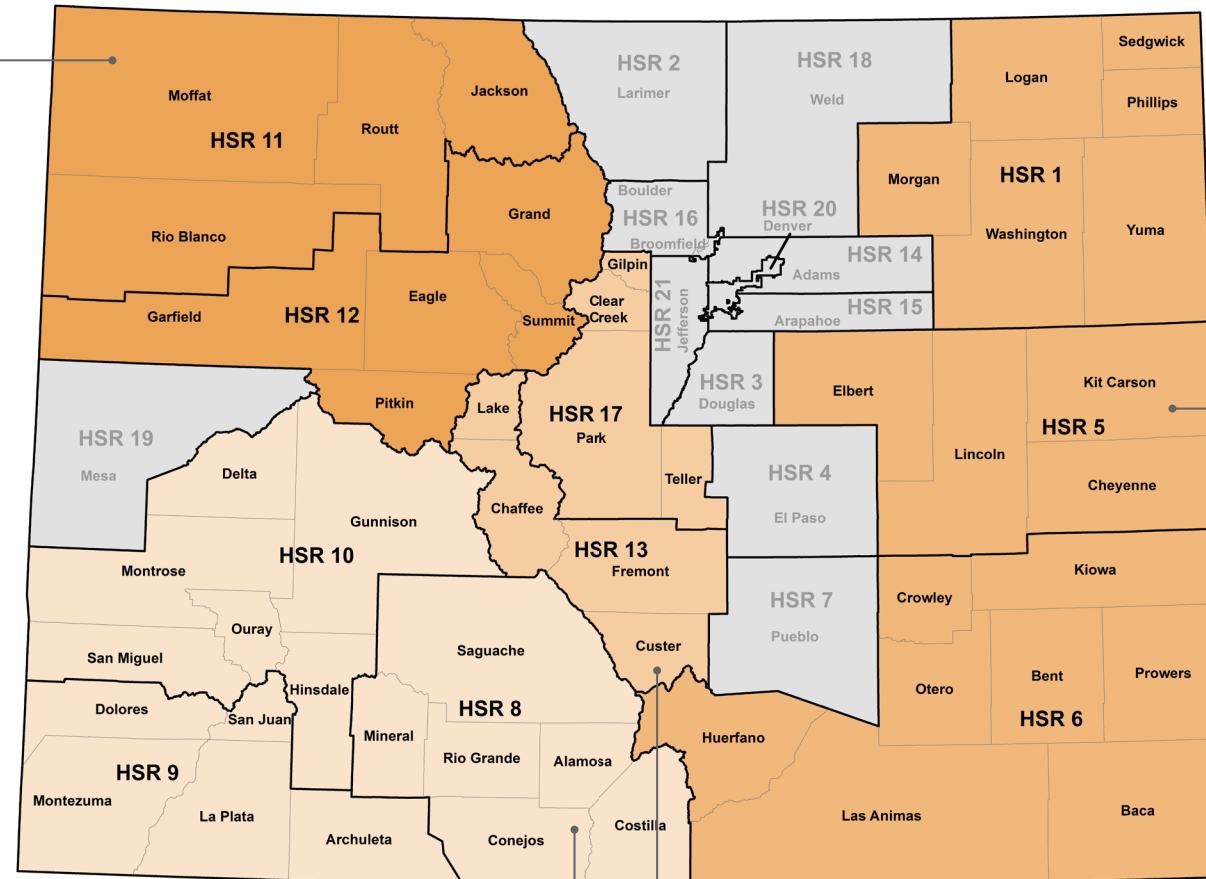
These arid plains are home to the Pawnee and Comanche National Grasslands. A third of the state's agriculture jobs are here. But residents have the lowest level of physical activity, least access to healthy foods and highest rate of obesity.

Economics

- Median income: \$42,500 (\$59,400)
- Adult poverty rate: 13 percent (11 percent)

Residents

- Population: 181,000 (5,198,000)
- 65 and older: 17 percent (12 percent)
- Hispanic: 26 percent (22 percent)
- Obesity rate: 24 percent (20 percent)
- Problems accessing mental health care: 8 percent (9 percent)



Grey box = Urban Areas



Central

(Colorado numbers in parentheses)

Some of the highest mountains in the continental U.S. rise out of this region. And health insurance rates here are the highest in the state with 94 percent of residents covered. But most residents live far from a park, which can discourage exercise.

Economics

- Median income: \$54,700 (\$59,400)
- Adult poverty rate: 9 percent (11 percent)

Residents

- Population: 131,000 (5,198,000)
- 65 and older: 19 percent (12 percent)
- Hispanic: 11 percent (22 percent)
- Obesity rate: 20 percent (20 percent)
- Problems accessing mental health care: 6 percent (9 percent)