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IFAS EXTENSION

Issues at the Rural-Urban Fringe: Florida's Population Growth, 2004-2010¹

Rodney L. Clouser and Hank Cothran²

Introduction

Florida's population growth has been phenomenal over the last 100 years. In 1900, the state's population was just under 529,000 people and by 2000 had increased to just less than 16 million. That represents a 30-fold increase in the last 100 years. To better put this increase into perspective Florida's population increase has roughly been equivalent to "importing" the state of Nebraska's 2000 population into Florida every decade for the last 100 years. Between 2004 and 2010, Florida's population is expected to increase from 17.5 million to a projected 19.7 million, or 12.2 percent, for an average yearly increase of 366,000 people per year, or 1,000 people per day, through 2010.

State population increases will impact and influence water and land allocation, state and community infrastructure needs, and demands for local goods and services. Therefore, data presented in this fact sheet can serve as a useful introduction of issues related to population growth that might arise over the next six years in Florida. The data will explain where the state's growth will occur, but also

may help identify where issues such as water and land competition, housing demand, consumer demand for goods and services, urban sprawl, changes in rural and farm land use, etc. will become increasingly important. These specific issues are not addressed in this fact sheet but left to the conjecture of the reader based on the data presented.

Population Growth History, 2000-2003

Many times the best predictor for the future is what has happened in the recent past. That may be especially true related to Florida's population growth. State population growth in percentage terms for Florida counties between 2000 and 2003 is shown in Figure 1. Some general trends evident on this map are that about 20 percent of the state's counties (13) experienced growth of about 9.7 percent or higher over the three-year period. Eight of the fast growing counties are located on the coast, a ninth (Clay) is adjacent to the St. Johns River, and the remaining four counties are near the area known as the "I-4 corridor". Slow growth or no growth counties tend to be heavily concentrated in northern Florida (11 of

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 2. Rodney L. Clouser, Professor, and Hank Cothran, Associate-In, Department of Food and Resource Economics, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL.

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14) and many of these counties have populations less than 75,000 residents (10 of 14). Of course there are exceptions, such as Pinellas County, which may be explained by already existing high urban density, a land base that is fairly well built-out, relatively expensive housing, and a higher than average cost of living index.

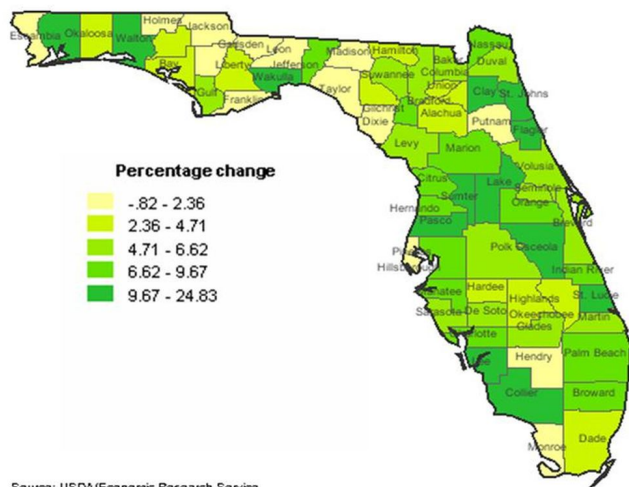


Figure 1. Florida's population growth (in percent), 2000-2003.

These trends will continue in Florida for many of these counties; however, just looking at percentage increases can be misleading. Some large Florida counties will have large increases in total population, but the percentage increase will be relatively small. Therefore, 2004-2010 growth projections should be viewed in both total growth and percentage terms.

Total Population Growth, 2004-2010

As mentioned previously, total population growth in Florida between 2004 and 2010 is expected to be approximately 2.2 million. The ten fastest and slowest growing counties in total growth (absolute numbers of people) are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

The fastest-growing counties in total population over the next six years will be relatively large urban counties. Three (Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach) are located on the southeast coast, two (Lee, Collier) are located on the southwest coast, one (Duval) on the northeast coast, and five in the general vicinity just north or south of the "I-4" corridor. These ten counties will account for 1.2 million of the state's 2.2 million expected population growth

between 2004 and 2010. This represents about 56 percent of the state's entire population growth over the next six years.

In contrast, the ten slowest-growing counties each have 2004 populations below 20,000, except for Monroe County. All of the slowest-growing counties in total population, except for Monroe and Glades, are located in north Florida. Total population growth in these ten counties over the next six years is projected to be only 7,684 people, or only three-tenths of one percent of the state's population growth from 2004-2010.

Percentage Population Growth, 2004-2010

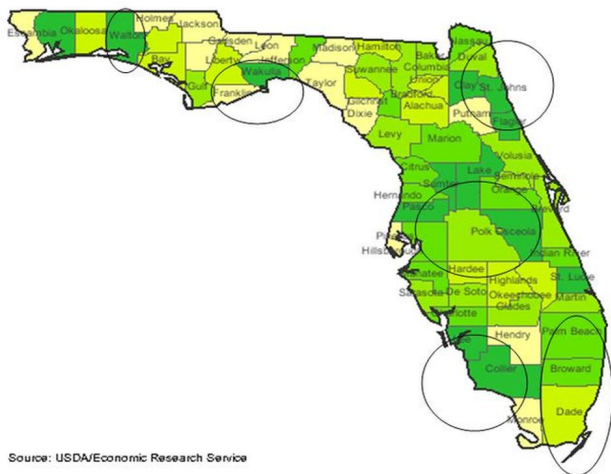
The fastest and slowest growing counties in percentage terms over the next six years represent a much different mix of counties and are identified in Tables 3 and 4.

While total population growth is dominated by large counties primarily located in south Florida and along the "I-4 corridor", the fastest-growing counties in percentage terms are more dispersed throughout the state and, in general, are smaller in size. For example, six of the fastest percentage growth counties are located in north Florida. Flagler County not only leads Florida in fastest percentage population growth over the next six years but was identified by the U.S. Census Bureau as the fastest percentage growth county in the United States. Also, five (Flagler, Wakulla, Sumter, Walton, and Franklin) are small counties, all with 2004 populations of less than 75,000.

The slowest-growing counties in percentage do not indicate the dispersion throughout the state exhibited in the fastest percentage growth counties. Only two of the slowest growing counties are located south of the state's mid-point (Pinellas and Monroe). The remaining counties are all in north Florida and none had a 2004 population exceeding 75,000. In fact, with the two exceptions previously noted, all the slowest growing counties are located north and west of Putnam County.

"Hot" Population Growth Areas, 2004-2010

A true picture of the state's "hot" growth areas requires a combination of both total population increase and percentage population increase. Combination of the data reveals six significant growth areas in Florida from 2004-2010. Those areas are presented in Figure 2.



Source: USDA/Economic Research Service

Calculated from: FLORIDA LEGISLATURE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC & DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH, March 2005

Figure 2. Hot population growth areas, 2004-2010.

Significant growth will occur on both the extreme southeast and southwest coast. Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, Lee and Collier Counties will account for 33 percent of the growth in population through 2010 based on current estimates. The area boarding the "I-4 corridor" both north and south will also have significant growth. This includes Sumter, Lake, Hillsborough, Polk, Orange and Osceola Counties. Some of these counties will grow significantly in total population while others will grow rapidly in terms of percentage population growth. This general area will account for almost 23 percent of total population growth. The third area of significant growth is along the upper northeast coast. Nassau, Duval, Clay, Flagler and St. Johns Counties will account for about eight percent of the state's total growth over the next six years. Finally, there are three panhandle counties (Walton, Franklin and Wakulla) that will have significant percentage growth in population but will only account for about one percent of statewide growth. In total, these 20 counties will account for almost two-thirds of Florida's growth in the next six years. While these counties account for

an overwhelming proportion of the state's growth over the next six years, this does not imply that other counties will not experience significant growth in percentage or total terms, but not at a rate as great as those counties identified in Figure 2.

Summary

Many counties in Florida will grow rapidly in the next six years. Two-thirds of the state's growth will be concentrated in six areas of the state, encompassing 20 counties. Projected growth numbers and percentage increases should not be considered precise. Rather, growth numbers should be considered as an indicator or rate and direction of population change. Future population change may prove helpful to assess future impacts of factors such as water and land competition, housing demand, consumer demand for goods and services, urban sprawl, and changes in rural and farm land use.

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Table 1. Florida's ten fastest-growing counties in total population, 2004-2010

County	Population Growth
Miami-Dade	196,582
Broward	196,169
Palm Beach	170,130
Orange	169,463
Hillsborough	140,065
Lee	96,747
Duval	77,426
Collier	74,714
Osceola	62,084
Polk	59,211

Source: Calculated from Florida Legislative Office of Economic and Demographic Research, March 2005.

Table 2. Florida's ten slowest-growing counties in total population, 2004-2010.

County	Population Growth
Monroe	1,164
Glades	967
Gulf	929
Madison	902
Holmes	888
Calhoun	790
Hamilton	597
Jefferson	536
Lafayette	465
Liberty	446

Source: Calculated from Florida Legislative Office of Economic and Demographic Research, March 2005.

Table 3. Florida's ten fastest-growing counties in percentage population growth, 2004-2010.

County	% Population Growth
Flagler	32.7
Osceola	27.5
Collier	24.4
Wakulla	24.3
Sumter	24.1
Walton	23.3
St. Johns	23.0
Lake	20.5
Franklin	20.2
Lee	18.6

Source: Calculated from Florida Legislative Office of Economic and Demographic Research, March 2005.

Table 4. Florida's ten slowest-growing counties in percentage population growth, 2004-2010.

County	% Population Growth
Gulf	5.7
Putnam	4.9
Holmes	4.7
Madison	4.6
Jackson	4.6
Hamilton	4.2
Gadsden	4.1
Pinellas	3.9
Jefferson	3.8
Monroe	1.4

Source: Calculated from Florida Legislative Office of Economic and Demographic Research, March 2005.