

Nevada expected to gradually grow in population

Given Nevada's current levels of employment and the potential for growth, the 2013 projections are for a statewide increase of 529,322 people in the next 20 years.

The Nevada State Demographer's Office at UNR released its most recent population projections through 2032.

"As our state recovers, people should bear in mind that Nevada was hit by three economic factors in the last decade: the housing bubble, the spike in fuel prices, and the financial crisis. Even so we grew by 35 percent from 2000 to 2010," Jeff Hardcastle, state demographer, said in a statement. "Currently, we are projecting our state will continue to grow decade to decade at a rate slightly above the projected national rate. From 2010 to 2020 Nevada will grow at 9.6 percent compared to a national forecast of 8.1 percent for example."

Broken out by region the projected increases are:

- Clark County, 377,037 people
- Washoe County, 120,070 people
- Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Storey and Lyon counties, 26,808
- Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander and Pershing counties, 1,567 people
- Esmeralda, Lincoln, Mineral, Nye and White Pine counties, 3,840 people.

"In looking at Nevada compared to the rest of the country and surrounding states, Nevada lags behind in job growth," Hardcastle said. "Since the bottom of employment for Nevada (in September 2010), we have regained 27.9 percent of the jobs that had been lost. Nationally, that compares to 75 percent

and 53.4 percent in California for jobs regained as of June.”

Gaming continues to be the biggest driver for employment in Nevada.

“Educational services and health care have the most room to grow to meet our state-wide needs,” Hardcastle said. “There are good indications that there is more demand for these services compared to their availability in Nevada.”