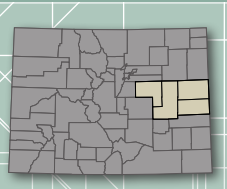


Colorado's Central Plains is the fastest growing wind energy development region in the state

COLORADO BLUEPRINT

A bottom-up approach to economic development

30 60

Regional Data

Examples of Largest Employers

- Lincoln Community Hospital Nursing Home
- Kit Carson County Memorial Hospital
- Stratton Equity Coop
- Colorado Lining International
- Keefe Memorial Hospital

Top 5 Key Industries by Employment

1. Food & Agriculture
2. Financial Services
3. Transportation & Logistics
4. Infrastructure Engineering
5. Energy & Natural Resources

Top 5 Regional Assets

- Transportation systems providing access to domestic and international markets
- Collaborative business climate
- Quality education system
- Access to urban markets and international airports
- Abundant natural resources for energy and agriculture production

Where the Region would like to be in 5 years

- Hub for production and innovation in agriculture and energy
- Leader in transportation logistics for domestic and global markets

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Colorado's Central Plains region (Region 5) is comprised of Lincoln, Elbert, Kit Carson and Cheyenne Counties. Agriculture is the base economic driver in each of the four counties, but the 8,000 square-mile region has a very diverse geography. The population of the region in 1990 was 23,712. The State Demography Office's 2011 population estimate for the region was 38,578. However, 95% of that growth was concentrated in 3% of the geographical area within the region (the very northwest corner of Elbert County continues to experience high residential growth, with much of that population commuting to jobs in Denver).

Throughout the region opportunities exist to capitalize on renewable energy resources; value-added agriculture, oil and gas development/production, transportation, tourism, and entrepreneurial business expansion/attraction services.

VISION

Residents of Colorado's Central Plains region will continue to live here for generations because it is where technology allows competitive, thriving businesses that result in the creation of new jobs, while supporting existing jobs in our transportation, tourism, agriculture, renewable energy, oil/gas, and other industries. A supportive entrepreneurial environment will thrive as a result of the strong work ethic and creativity found in the region.

MISSION

Colorado's Central Plains region will:

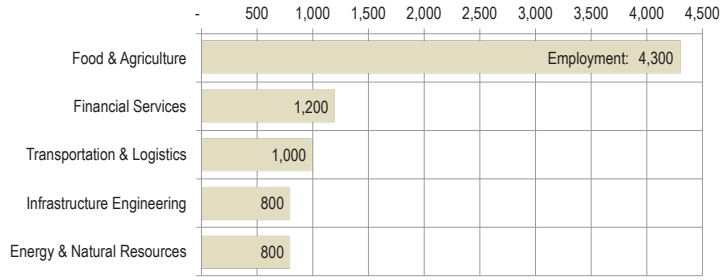
- Develop strategies and programs to promote and support agricultural producers and businesses
- Create additional opportunities for heritage tourism and recreation
- Market the strong cooperative spirit among the communities that results in numerous partnerships "doing together what we cannot do alone"
- Support additional opportunities involving all energy production and the continued development of various transportation corridors
- Support strategies and collaborations in order to maintain a competitive and innovative workforce

QUICK WINS

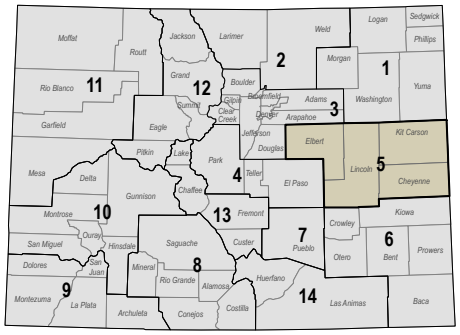
- Promoted tourism opportunities such as the expanded Our Journey Tourism Program, the Elizabeth Arts and Music Festival, and the Karval Mountain Plover Festival on Front Range radio and television
- Continued a micro-loan program for businesses/farms/ranches affected directly or indirectly by the 2012 drought. Made 11 loans totaling $123,000
- Lincoln and Cheyenne Counties continued to expand oil and gas development ranking 3rd statewide (41) and 5th (32) well starts, respectively
- Developed a coalition of seventeen counties, state agencies and elected officials, and federal elected officials supporting a Foreign Trade Zone Application including three of the four Central Plains counties
- ECHO and Health and Wellness Sector Developed and distributed a video and career curriculum for exploring career in rural health care for Middle School students
- Awarded $2.1 million from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Energy/Mineral Impact Assistance Grant
- Awarded $250,000 in Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Program Grants, which will help to create 12 jobs and $720,000 Capital Investment

REGION 5

TOP 5 KEY INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYMENT



Source: EMSI, 2013.2



State of Colorado, Region 5

CORE OBJECTIVES

1 Build a Business-Friendly Environment

GOALS

- Maintain current enterprise zone boundaries to the greatest extent possible
- Encourage dialogue among local government to examine existing regulations in regard to impacts on business retention, expansion, and attraction
- Educate elected officials and citizens on the value of energy development

DELIVERABLES

- A Colorado Oil and Gas Association sponsored workshop/educational session on energy development value and environmental safety
- Develop and distribute to Central Plains local governments a workbook containing sample Best Practice land use regulations for counties and communities of various sizes as well as copies from selected towns and counties within the four-county region
- Participate in State-wide EZ Boundary Meeting throughout 2014 (implementation of boundary changes has been moved back to 2015 with effective date of 1-1-16)

2 Recruit, Grow and Retain Business

GOALS

- Work with the SBDC's to assist existing businesses with the challenges of today's economy
- Continue marketing resources to promote Colorado's Central Plains for investment and business growth
- Market state and local incentives including the Enterprise Zone Program to prospective new, existing and expanding businesses
- Encourage and support community and downtown improvement efforts
- Complete the process of submitting the Application for the Establishment of a Foreign-Trade Zone under the Alternative Site Framework to the Foreign-Trade Zones Board
- Encourage the development of home-based businesses
- Begin update and revision of Regional CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy)

DELIVERABLES

- Maintain consulting work of three East Small Business Development counselors
- Formal submission of Application for the Establishment of a Foreign-Trade Zone under the Alternative Site Framework to the Foreign-Trade Zones Board
- Host a regional home-based business workshop
- Partial Completion of revised CEDS for 2015-2020

3 Increase Access to Capital

GOALS

- Develop mitigation alternatives that can assist agricultural producers and businesses affected by natural and economic events
- Continue to expand use of Prairie Development Corporation Loan fund to encourage business expansion and/or startup

DELIVERABLES

- Work with each bank located physically within the region to develop partnership lending opportunities for existing and new business
- Promote and expand DIB (drought impacted business loan program) and initiate promotion of ABE (agricultural business entrepreneur loan program)

4 Create and Market a Stronger CO Brand

GOALS

- Promote eco-tourism, signature community events, and the cultural heritage of the Colorado Central Plains through joint branding and promotional marketing
- Encourage local business and industry to promote the state business image and branding

DELIVERABLES

- Update the Colorado Central Plains website
- Schedule OEDIT Marketing Staff to present joint branding materials at a Blueprint Meeting

5 Educate and Train the Future Workforce

GOALS

- Encourage partnerships and cooperative efforts between the business community and education
- Advocate for continued existence of the Community College "mini-campuses" for the Colorado Central Plains

DELIVERABLES

- Engage workforce centers in a collaborative regional process
- Participated in 2014 State Sector Conference

6 Cultivate Innovation and Technology

GOALS

- Explore opportunities in innovation and technology that can be applied to economic development efforts within Colorado Central Plains

DELIVERABLES

- Recruit entrepreneurs through Home Sweet Prairies Program
- Partial Completion of Regional Broadband Plan

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

- Recapitalize RLF dollars
- Foreign Trade Zone initiative for Eastern Plains
- Healthcare sector partnership

STAKEHOLDERS

Burlington Economic Development
Burlington Workforce Center
Cheyenne Wells Growth Committee
East Central Council of Local Governments
Elbert County
Elizabeth Workforce Center
Kit Carson Rural Development
Limon Workforce Center
Lincoln County Economic Development
Morgan Community College
Ports-to-Plains Alliance
Prairie Development Corporation
Small Business Development Centers
Town of Limon

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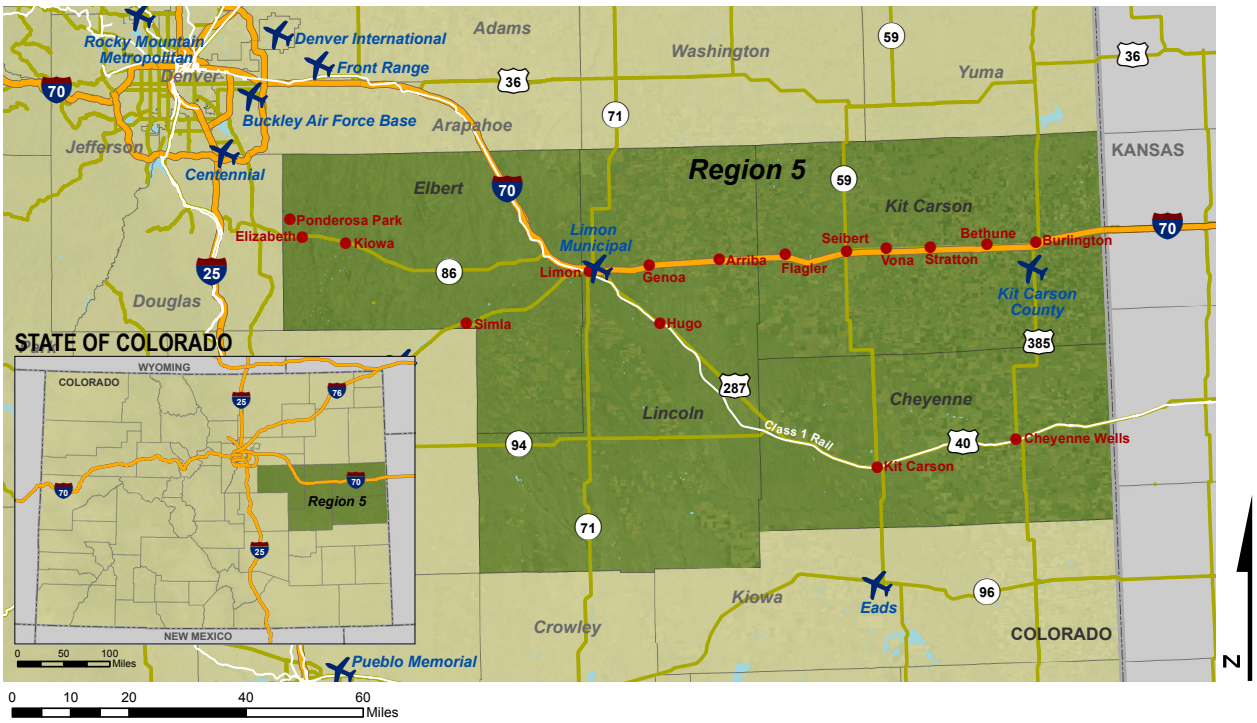
COLORADO - REGION 5: Economic Profile



Employment by Key Industry

	Establishments	Employment	Average Annual Wage
Food and Agriculture	110	**4,300**	$27,500
Financial Services	60	**1,200**	$35,900
Transportation and Logistics	90	**1,000**	$48,200
Infrastructure Engineering	80	**800**	$40,700
Energy and Natural Resources	70	**700**	$55,900
Health and Wellness	60	**600**	$27,900
Tourism and Outdoor Recreation	40	**600**	$19,800
Creative Industries	40	**400**	$25,800
Advanced Manufacturing	40	**400**	$45,300
Technology and Information	50	**200**	$53,500
Defense and Homeland Security	N/A	**100**	$32,600
Electronics	10	**30**	$64,300
Bioscience	10	**30**	$46,700
Aerospace	5	**20**	$49,700

*Key Industry Employment Statistics

Total Employment	9,368
Total Establishments	518
Average Annual Wage	$32,192
2009 - 2013 Employment Change	6.4%

**Statistics are based on OEDIT's Key Industry definitions so data may overlap.*

Total Employment Statistics

Total Employment	18,948
Total Establishments	1,117
Average Annual Wage	$30,368
2009 - 2013 Employment Change	3.6%

SOURCE: Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade and EMSI, 2013.2

Top Employers by Employment

Sectors*	Business or Organization	Jobs
■	Lincoln Community Hospital Nursing Home	120
■	Kit Carson County Memorial Hospital	120
■	Stratton Equity Coop	80
■	Colorado Lining International	70
■	Keefe Memorial Hospital	70
■	Parker AG Services, LLC	70
■	Plains Medical Center, Inc.	60
■	Midwest Farms, LLC	60
■	Eastern Colorado Bank	30
■	4M Feeders, Inc.	30

Note: Table does not include establishments that are primarily classified as Public Administration, Educational Services, and/or Retail Trade

** Sectors represented by business and establishment locations*

■ Agriculture
■ Manufacturing
■ Wholesale Trade
■ Finance and Insurance
■ Health Care and Social Assistance

About Top Employers by Employment

Lincoln Community Hospital Nursing Home - a 35 bed nursing home located in Hugo, Colorado and an affiliate of Centura Health. This affiliation enables them to provide health care services similiar to what is offered in larger communities. This hospital is one of Centura's seven hospitals that stricly serve Colorado and Kansas rural areas.

Kit Carson County Memorial Hospital - is a health care facility located in Burlington, Colorado and serves eastern Colorado. The hospital is a 19 bed Critical Access facility, providing acute care and has a 24 hour Emergency Room. They are classified as a Trauma Level IV facility.

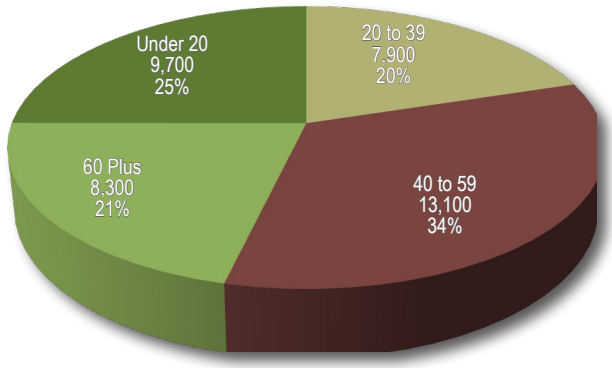
Stratton Equity Coop - a company owned by members of the community, they provide general freight and petroleum, fertilizers, grain marketing services, through its purchasing power to area farmers and ranchers.

Colorado Lining International - a geosynthetics contractor, offering factory geomembrane fabrication and installation. Such impermeable membranes are used for secondary containment; landfills; floating covers for algae and methane collection; oil and gas production pits; tank liners; evaporation ponds; waste lagoons; and water storage reservoirs.

Keefe Memorial Hospital - a medical and surgical Level IV Trauma hospital located in Cheyenne Wells, Colorado. They have 11 beds and provide swing beds, rehabilitation, inpatient care, IV therapy, and home health care. In addition, they provide specialty care services including anesthesia, cardiology, dermatology, obstetrics and gynecology, and general surgery.

SOURCE: Dun & Bradstreet, Equifax, Local Economic Development Groups, Corporate Websites, and Other Sources

Population by Age Groups



SOURCE: EMSI, 2013.2

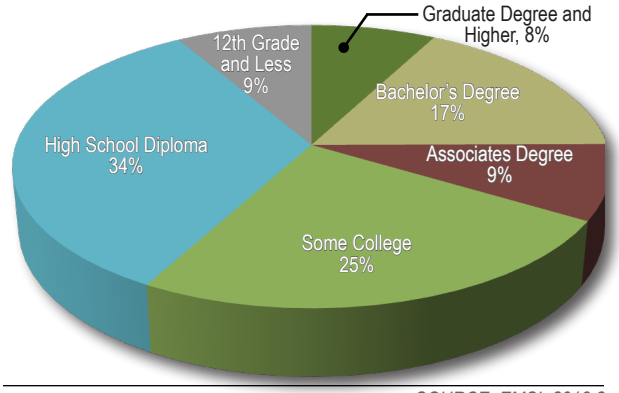
Top Occupation Categories by Employment

	Jobs	Median Wage	Annual Wage*
Management	3,800	$13.36	$27,800
Sales and Related	2,800	$13.34	$27,700
Office and Administrative Support	1,700	$14.45	$30,100
Construction and Extraction	1,300	$15.60	$32,400
Business and Financial Operations	1,000	$23.28	$48,400
Food Preparation and Serving Related	1,000	$9.47	$19,700
Transportation and Material Moving	900	$15.10	$31,400
Personal Care and Service	800	$10.34	$21,500
Education, Training, and Library	800	$18.28	$38,000
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	600	$16.57	$34,500

** Annual wage is based on a 40 hour work week*

SOURCE: EMSI, 2013.2

Educational Attainment



SOURCE: EMSI, 2013.2

Population and Households

Population	38,659
Total Households	14,152
*Median Age	42
*Median Household Income	$53,300
*Mean Household Income	$66,500
*Median Family Income	$67,900
*Per Capita Income	$24,900

** Average of median or mean values of all counties in region*

SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2010 and ACS 2007-2011 5 Year Estimate

COLORADO
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