

City of Raton: Labor Force, Employment, and the Future

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The University of New Mexico



RATON'S STRENGTHS

Rural community with low crime, good lifestyle, good schools...[Slide 2](#)

[Slide 2](#) Natural amenities, mountains, outdoor recreation opportunities

Water

Transportation access

I-25, main road between Albuquerque & Denver

Rail – passenger (Amtrak) and freight (Burlington Northern)

[Slide 5](#) Visual and performing arts (Shuler Theater)

Whittington Center, Philmont Ranch, etc.

Stolar, Clerke International Arms

The Learning Center – to broker higher education/training

Employees with certain mechanical/technical know-how

Energetic group of citizens working for the community [Slide 4](#)



City of Raton Cost of Living Index

Component	Component Index
Grocery Items	92.5
Housing Index	75.3
Utilities Index	98.6
Transportation Index	87.8
Health Care Index	97.2
Misc. Goods & Services Index	97.8
Composite Index	89.6
National Average	100.0

UNM Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 2004.



- 3, 2004
- Favorite
- 40 U.S.
- Whitewater
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DESTINATIONS

Ten Best in the U.S. Campgrounds Valle Vidal New Mexico

By Suzanne Dow

There is a corner in northeastern New Mexico where the land is as it was 100, 200, or more years ago. It is an expanse of land where the wide open space is filled with tall grass and thick patches of pine and spruce. Here, elk roam free with deer, turkeys, bears, and mountain lions, much as they did 100 years. This place, called Valle Vidal Wildlife Management Unit of [Carson National Forest](#), is a special treasure to those who want to experience the West as it once was.



Valle Vidal

Pennzoil Company, the petroleum corporation, once owned this magnificent 100,000-acre parcel of land. Fortunately, Pennzoil discovered there was little worth exploiting beneath the lush grassland. In 1982, it donated

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New Mexico



SUGARITE CANYON

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Park Map

Regional
Facilities

Weather

Gate Hours
24 hoursPark Manager
Robert Dye
505-445-5607Address
R. 63, Box 386
Cannonville, NM 87740

Butterflying Through Sugarite Canyon

 Text and photos by [Steven J. Cary](#), New Mexico State Parks

Butterfly diversity is greatest where different habitats, life zones and plant communities interdigitate. In the West, one of the longest and widest such ecotones occurs along the eastern base of the Front Range. Paul Opler identified this region – where Great Plains prairies meet Rocky Mountain mixed woodlands – as one of the four top areas for butterfly diversity in the United States. [Sugarite Canyon State Park](#), just off I-25 near Raton, in northeastern New Mexico, offers an excellent opportunity to see some of the unique habitat juxtapositions that make this area so special.

Natural History

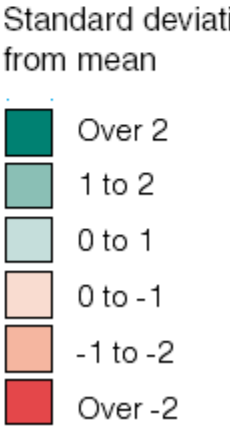
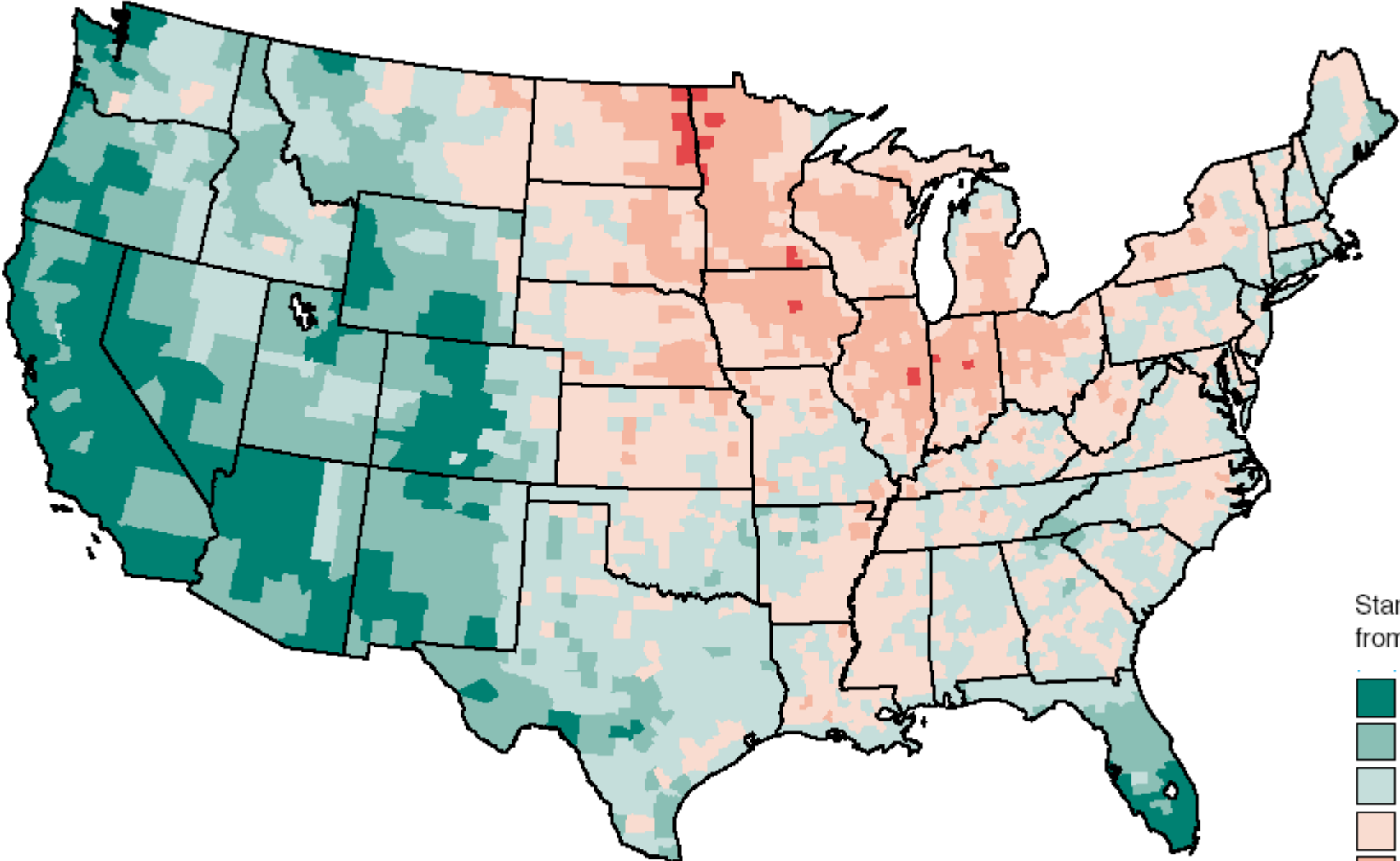
Sugarite Canyon State Park is located in the mesa country east of Raton, in Colfax County, New Mexico. Nearby is Capulin Volcano National Monument. Are you curious about these place names? “Capulin” (pronounced kah-poo-**leen**) is the local Spanish word for the native chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), a shrub-sized plant whose



fruits are made into a tasty jam. Capulin grows commonly in canyons and on rocky slopes in the region and is an important larval host plant for the Western Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio [Pterourus] rutulus*), Two-Tailed Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio [Pterourus] multicaudata*) and Coral Hairstreak (*Satyrrium titus*). “Sugarite” (pronounced **sugar-eef**) is an anglicized version of “chicorica” – a Comanche word



Amenity scale by county, 1970-96



David A. McGranahan, *Natural Amenities Drive Rural Population Change*, AER-781, Economic Research Service US Department of Agriculture, 1999.

Raton, New Mexico

HOME	VISITOR INFO	LODGING	DINING	RELOCATION
REAL ESTATE	AREA ATTRACTIONS	CALENDAR OF EVENTS	BUSINESS LISTINGS	AREA WEATHER

Shuler Theater

Old-world splendor

An abiding southwest treasure



Taking in a performance in the Shuler Theater is like taking a trip back to the turn of the last century, when artists performed in theaters that were even more elaborately appointed than the performances themselves.

Completed in 1915 with seating for 443 on two levels, the grand project created not a little local controversy. At one point during construction, city officials were forced by angry citizens to flee to Trinidad, just over the Colorado border. Yet by the time of its opening, the Shuler Auditorium, as it was then called, was a source of civic pride with its opera house, fire station and city offices.

The Shuler Theater truly is a highlight of any tour of Raton. The building is known for its European Rococo style and near-perfect acoustics. Today it is host to a wide array of stage presentations and top performers, encompassing everything from Broadway, ballet and opera to jazz, folk music and magic. The 2003-2004 performance season brings to Raton "A Streetcar Named Desire," "Boomers," "The Unsinkable Molly Brown," and "Ain't Misbehavin'," as well as two-time Grammy-winners Riders in the Sky and the mysterious dance and musical stylings of the Somie Yoshimo Taiko Ensemble.

The color, the pageantry, the memories. It's all part of the Shuler experience.



RATON'S WEAKNESSES

Small town in a remote location

Listless economy

Lack of opportunities for youth; population aging as young leave

Population with low educational attainment, lacking basic skills

Public schools K-12 (?) [Slide 6](#)

Most jobs low skill, low wage, with limited opportunities for advancement

Lack of educational and training opportunities

Limited raw land for development

Limited high speed internet access

Lack of political clout

Nae-sayers [Slide 7](#)

RATON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT PERFORMANCE, 1996 - 2001

	<u>School Year</u>				
	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01
Number Entering Grade 12			84	94	87
Number of Graduating Seniors			80	88	84
Graduation Rate			95%	94%	97%
Rank*			31	50	28
Drop Out Rate ¹	3.2	3.6	3.6	6.3	
Rank*	36	38	45	76	
Seniors Applying to 4 Year College**			46%	41%	54%
Seniors Applying to 2 Year College**			18%	30%	10%
High School Competency Scores ²			92%	89%	66%
Rank*			16	22	45
ACT Composite Scores			18	19.2	20.2
Rank*			63	39	20

1 -Grades 9-12. 2 -Percent of grade 10 students passing all subtests on the first attempt.

*Rank out of 88 Districts. **This is a list of the number and percentage of New Mexico graduating seniors, by district, who applied to two and four-year post-secondary institutions. Seniors who applied to both two-year and four-year institutions are counted twice. The list was compiled from data submitted by districts on the Annual District Reported Data Sheet for the New Mexico Public School Accountability.

Source: <http://www.sde.state.nm.us/div/ais/data/>

UNM Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 2004.

Of great concern, employers report employees lack basic educational competencies as well as basic employment skills. Slide 5



THREATS

Closure of Pittsburgh Midway mine, loss of high paying jobs, increased unemployment

Loss of youth; inability to recruit

Further loss of retail activity and associated gross receipts taxes [Slide 8](#)

Loss of 0.5% municipal credit on locally imposed will push gross receipts tax rate in the City to 7.5625%

Gas exploration & drilling -- adverse impact on environment

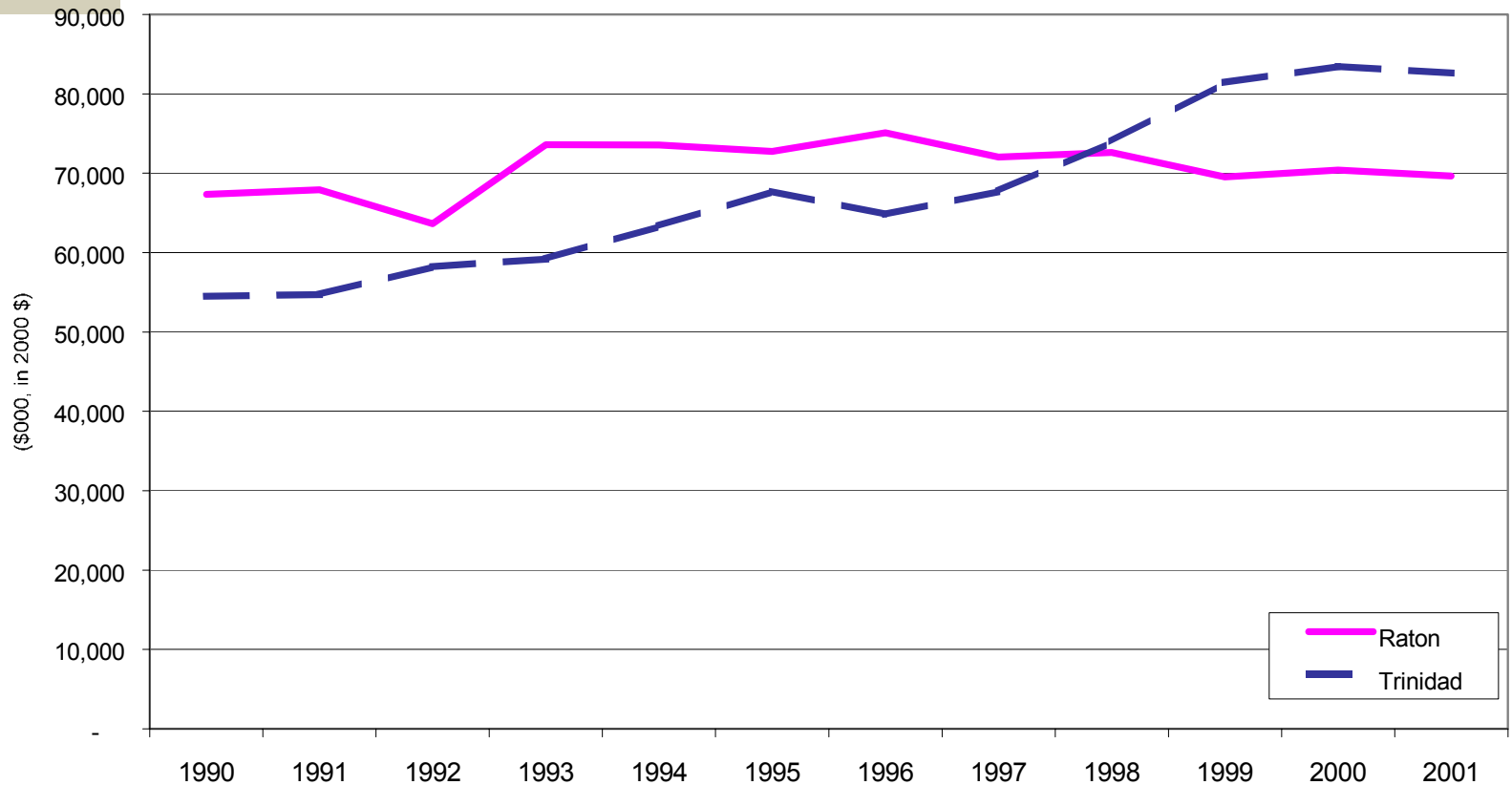
Existing workforce production and mechanical skills but...

More and more US production is moving offshore

New technology (microchips) transforming production & jobs

Workers need to be "agile", possessing basic education and employment skills, ready to retrain as necessary [Slide 12](#)

TOTAL RECEIPTS* FOR RETAIL SECTOR, RATON AND TRINIDAD, 1990 TO 2001 (2000 DOLLARS)



*Total receipts includes all sales less sales from automobiles and gasoline.

Source: NM Taxation and Revenue Department, Rpt. 80 and Colorado Department of Revenue.

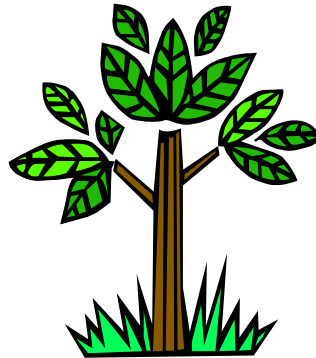
UNM Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 2003.

A SIMPLIFIED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

INCREASE INJECTIONS

FILL LEAKAGES

FOSTER LINKAGES WITHIN LOCAL ECONOMY
GROW THE ROOTS





OPPORTUNITIES

Tourism – Make Raton a tourist destination -- not just a stop for travel services; not just hospitality industry jobs
Gateway to outdoor/recreational opportunities
Center for visual and performing arts...

But need...

to advertise [Slide 12](#)

to get people downtown and have something for them to do, places to stay...

Build on existing strengths (“Gun Valley”?)

Self-employment/entrepreneurship, but ...

Need to promote and encourage entrepreneurship

Serving markets elsewhere (internet)

Meeting local needs

Buy local campaign



OPPORTUNITIES

BBER business survey finds **substantial vacancies** for jobs requiring special certifications or baccalaureate and higher degrees, but need....

- to educate and train/retrain the Raton workforce

- to focus attention on K-12

- to promote computer literacy and computer use

- to offer GED courses, various certificate programs...

There is no silver bullet. There is no limit to what an organized and focused community can achieve.

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Welcome to the web site for one of New Mexico's favorite year-round recreation spots. While visiting Grants, you can explore the many attractions of northwestern New Mexico, including Indian cultures, ancient ruins, lava flows, towering mountains, and year-round recreation opportunities.



[La Ventana, El Malpais National Monument](#)



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