Today the Census Bureau released their July 2016 population estimates. The US increased by 2.2 million, an increase of .7%. Colorado’s population was estimated at 5,540,545, an increase of 91,726. This ranked 8th in the US for total growth. For perspective, 91,000 is very close to the size of Longmont. Texas had the largest growth, increasing by over 432,000. There were 8 states losing population. Illinois experienced the largest losses at 37,508 followed by West Virginia at 9,900.

In percentage terms Colorado’s growth rate between 2015-2016 was 1.68 Ranked 7th in US. The faster growing states were Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Florida, Washington and Oregon. Florida and Washington were the only states larger than Colorado with faster growth rates. Utah, the fastest growing state at 2.0%, increased by 60,000. Interestingly, the 6 faster growing states also had the top fastest job growth in the US comparing BLS total non-farm June 2015 to June 2016. Colorado was also 7th in job growth.

Natural Increase (births minus deaths) accounted for 30,300 of the change or 33% where migration accounted for 60,700 of the change or 67% of the growth. Historically since 1970 Colorado has averaged 55% of its growth from migration. The factors leading to population growth in the top three growing states varied tremendously. In Texas, natural increase and net migration almost equally contribute to their growth. In Florida, almost 95% of their growth is from net migration. At the opposite end, California gets almost 90% of their growth from natural increase.

Total Population change between 2010 and 2016 is estimated at 511,221 which ranks 8th in the US behind Texas, California, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Washington, and Arizona. Colorado moved up one spot and is now the 21st largest state, inching above Minnesota. From 2010-16 CO ranks 4th in its average annual growth rate of 1.6% behind North Dakota, Texas and Utah.
The total increase of 91,000 is slightly lower than the 99,000 from last year. Natural increase is about the same and net migration slowed by about 7,000. Today’s release is on target for what we were forecasting this year. The slightly lower net migration was expected due to the slowing in job growth driven by losses in the energy sector. Jobs in energy sector were down by about 7,500. From June 2015 to June 2016 total job growth slowed by about 1% (83,000 vs 57,000). Since jobs drive most of the migration to the state, the slower job growth most likely contributed to the slower migration.

The most recent state to state migration data (2015) indicates that Colorado receives most of its in migrants from CA, TX, Florida, Illinois, and Arizona. Colorado sends most of its out migrants to: Texas, California, Arizona, and Florida. Colorado’s largest net migration is from: California, Illinois, Wisconsin, Virginia and Florida.