

Section 5. Additional Information for Puget Sound Counties

Adjusted 2007 population projections for the Puget Sound counties were developed and evaluated in a regional context. As previously indicated, most of the added state growth occurred in King and Pierce Counties. By 2007, growth in King and Pierce, combined, exceeded their mid-range population expectations by over 75,000. In contrast, the populations of other Puget Sound counties, namely Kitsap, Snohomish, and Thurston tracked considerably closer to expectations. However, a closer evaluation indicated that the pattern of growth among these counties had changed.

The Puget Sound region is characterized by relatively sharp economic expansions and contractions that make population change quite variable on a short-term basis. In such circumstances, using short-term trends are likely to result in overly high or low growth expectations. *Decade growth patterns are considered to provide the most solid basis to develop and evaluate long-term population change.* Given this perspective, births, deaths, and migration were trended forward for each county to 2010 to complete their 2010 decade experience.⁸ This provided a good basis for evaluating Puget Sound regional growth—as a part of state growth—and a better means of assessing the trends occurring among the counties.

Table 6 and Figure 3 show historical population growth and revised projections for the state and Puget Sound counties. Puget Sound counties, combined, generally show a declining share of state population growth through 2030. The share ratio of Puget Sound population change to state population change was .80 for the 1960s decade, .74 in the 1980s, and .56 in the 1990s.⁹ Growth through 2000 reflects a slight interruption of the decline, but Puget Sound's share of decade state growth is assumed to decline to .54 by 2030.

Population growth in each county, as a ratio share of the total Puget Sound population change, is also provided. Specific trends in the county projections are briefly discussed below.

King County has shown a remarkable rebound in growth since the early part of the decade and is currently tracking some 44,800 above the mid-range population in the 2002 projection. At the same time, however, King County's share of regional growth continues to show a decline. It has declined from .50 in the 1960s to .44 in the 1980s, to .40 in the 1990s, and to .38 for 2000 to 2010. This is a very consistent trend and is assumed continue through 2030.

Kitsap County growth has been notably slow from 2000 to 2007. Slower growth is partly associated with the loss of one aircraft carrier and several support vessels at the Bremerton Naval Installation—resulting in a decline of approximately 2,000 “ashore” and “afloat” naval personnel.

Expected population growth in Kitsap County has been modestly adjusted down as a share of state and regional growth. Transportation, military changes, and other issues lend uncertainty to the level of future growth in Kitsap County in relation to historical trends. Housing growth in the county has remained very strong in relation to population change. The growth range for Kitsap County should continue to reflect noted uncertainties.

⁸ Vital events and migration for each Puget Sound county were developed within the new July 2007 state forecast birth, death, and migration parameters.

⁹ The 1970s may reasonably be considered an atypical decade in terms of Puget Sound and state growth. This decade included 1) an economic recession that clearly shows in the annual population change for the Puget Sound counties; 2) a restructuring of the Ft. Lewis military installation with sharp reduction of military personnel; and, 3) a state and national surge in rural population growth.

Pierce County is showing very strong growth and is currently tracking some 30,600 above the mid-range population in the 2002 projection. Growth for the 2000 decade is expected to be .26 as a ratio share of total regional growth. This is considerably higher than in prior decades when Pierce's share ranged from .18 to .21.

Some of the present growth is due to increases in troop strength at Ft. Lewis and McChord AFB. These military installations showed a combined increase of 10,000 from 2000 to 2006. However, annual changes in active military personnel at Ft. Lewis are somewhat variable as large units are moved in and out.¹⁰ Other growth reflects the population attracted by the region's expanding economy. In the revised 2007 update, Pierce County's expected share ratio of regional growth is about .24 for 2010-20 and 2020-30.

Snohomish County shows very consistent growth and is tracking reasonably close to the 2002 GMA growth projections. Historically, Snohomish County's regional growth share ratio has been about .24 and is expected to remain at about that level through 2030. County growth is somewhat lower in the revised 2007 projections because in the 2002 projection Snohomish was assumed to draw an increasing share of regional growth (Table 7). Current trends show Snohomish County to have a more stable growth share.

Thurston County is on the edge of the Sound and buffered by a large government employment base. Thurston County does not show the degree of cyclic historical growth that characterizes the other large counties on Puget Sound. The average of alternative projection scenarios proved to be very similar to the mid-range projection developed in 2002. Thus, the 2002 growth expectations for Thurston County were retained.

¹⁰ It is very difficult to determine the number of dependents that move with changes in military strength. The ratio of dependents to active military personnel for the Army and Air Force is about 1.5 or 1.6. The extent to which dependents move with units comprised of "reservists" or with other circumstances may change this ratio. The ratio of dependents to Naval afloat or on base ashore personnel may be as small as .5 or less. There has been a marked decline in the amount and reliability of military information in recent years.

Table 6. GMA 2007 Puget Sound County Population Shares of Region and State Decade Growth (2007 Projection Figures)

Population	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
State	2,853,214	3,413,250	4,132,353	4,866,663	5,894,121	6,792,318	7,698,939	8,509,161
King	935,014	1,159,375	1,269,898	1,507,305	1,737,034	1,934,124	2,114,415	2,262,977
Kitsap	84,176	101,732	147,152	189,731	231,969	249,050	283,242	314,610
Pierce	321,590	412,344	485,667	586,203	700,820	836,688	947,923	1,050,953
Snohomish	172,199	265,236	337,720	465,628	606,024	725,963	844,541	950,066
Thurston	55,049	76,894	124,264	161,238	207,355	256,113	311,730	359,383
Total (Puget Sound)	1,568,028	2,015,581	2,364,701	2,910,105	3,483,202	4,001,938	4,501,851	4,937,989
** Approximate growth from 2007 county share of migration & natural increase in 2007 applied to GMA state forecast.								
Population Change	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-00	2000-10	2010-20	2020-30	
State	560,036	719,103	734,310	1,027,480	898,197	906,621	810,222	
King	224,361	110,523	237,407	229,741	197,090	180,291	148,562	
Kitsap	17,556	45,420	42,579	42,238	17,081	34,192	31,368	
Pierce	90,754	73,323	100,536	114,615	135,868	111,235	103,030	
Snohomish	93,037	72,484	127,908	140,396	119,939	118,578	105,525	
Thurston	21,845	47,370	36,974	46,117	48,758	55,617	47,653	
Total (Puget Sound)	447,553	349,120	545,404	573,107	518,736	499,913	436,138	
Share of Puget Sound Change	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-00	2000-10	2010-20	2020-30	
King	0.501	0.317	0.435	0.401	0.380	0.361	0.341	
Kitsap	0.039	0.130	0.078	0.074	0.033	0.068	0.072	
Pierce	0.203	0.210	0.184	0.200	0.262	0.223	0.236	
Snohomish	0.208	0.208	0.235	0.245	0.231	0.237	0.242	
Thurston	0.049	0.136	0.068	0.080	0.094	0.111	0.109	
Total (Puget Sound)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	
Share of State Change	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-00	2000-10	2010-20	2020-30	
King	0.401	0.154	0.323	0.224	0.219	0.199	0.183	
Kitsap	0.031	0.063	0.058	0.041	0.019	0.038	0.039	
Pierce	0.162	0.102	0.137	0.112	0.151	0.123	0.127	
Snohomish	0.166	0.101	0.174	0.137	0.134	0.131	0.130	
Thurston	0.039	0.066	0.050	0.045	0.054	0.061	0.059	
Total (Puget Sound)	0.799	0.485	0.743	0.558	0.578	0.551	0.538	

Note: Projections shown in this table may vary by 50 or less compared to other tables in this report. See footnote 8.

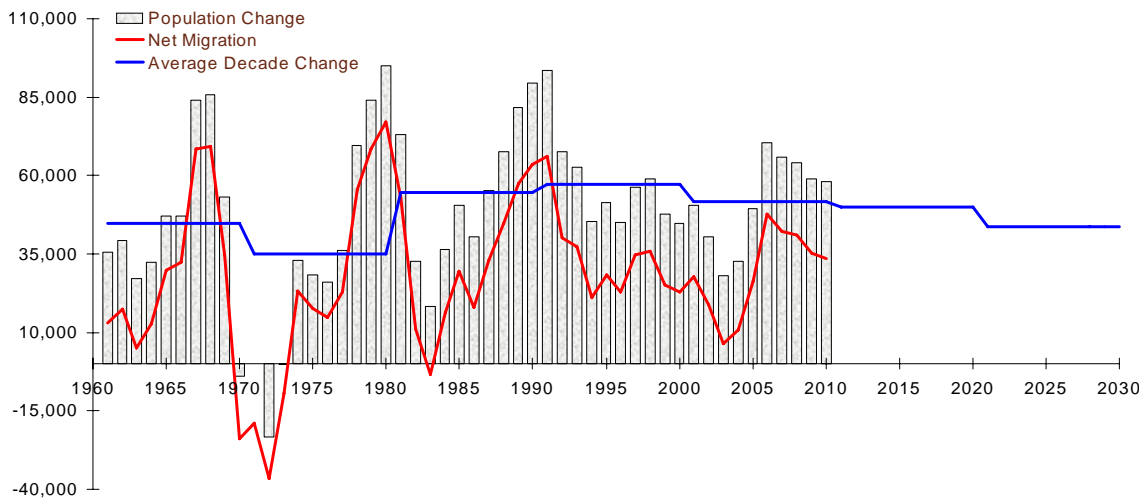
Table 7. GMA 2002 Puget Sound County Population Shares of Region and State Decade Growth (Prior 2002 GMA Release)

Population	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
State	2,853,214	3,413,250	4,132,353	4,866,663	5,894,143	6,648,112	7,545,269	8,378,813
King	935,014	1,159,375	1,269,898	1,507,305	1,737,046	1,861,042	2,018,824	2,159,035
Kitsap	84,176	101,732	147,152	189,731	231,969	257,841	307,113	354,891
Pierce	321,590	412,344	485,667	586,203	700,818	788,580	892,454	988,691
Snohomish	172,199	265,236	337,720	465,628	606,024	728,957	862,599	992,846
Thurston	55,049	76,894	124,264	161,238	207,355	258,687	312,029	360,465
Total (Puget Sound)	1,568,028	2,015,581	2,364,701	2,910,105	3,483,212	3,895,107	4,393,019	4,855,928
Population Change		1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-00	2000-10	2010-20	2020-30
State		560,036	719,103	734,310	1,027,480	753,969	897,157	833,544
King		224,361	110,523	237,407	229,741	123,996	157,782	140,211
Kitsap		17,556	45,420	42,579	42,238	25,872	49,272	47,778
Pierce		90,754	73,323	100,536	114,615	87,762	103,874	96,237
Snohomish		93,037	72,484	127,908	140,396	122,933	133,642	130,247
Thurston		21,845	47,370	36,974	46,117	51,332	53,342	48,436
Total (Puget Sound)		447,553	349,120	545,404	573,107	411,895	497,912	462,909
Share of Puget Sound Change		1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-00	2000-10	2010-20	2020-30
King		0.501	0.317	0.435	0.401	0.301	0.317	0.303
Kitsap		0.039	0.130	0.078	0.074	0.063	0.099	0.103
Pierce		0.203	0.210	0.184	0.200	0.213	0.209	0.208
Snohomish		0.208	0.208	0.235	0.245	0.298	0.268	0.281
Thurston		0.049	0.136	0.068	0.080	0.125	0.107	0.105
Total (Puget Sound)		1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Share of State Change		1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-00	2000-10	2010-20	2020-30
King		0.401	0.154	0.323	0.224	0.164	0.176	0.168
Kitsap		0.031	0.063	0.058	0.041	0.034	0.055	0.057
Pierce		0.162	0.102	0.137	0.112	0.116	0.116	0.115
Snohomish		0.166	0.101	0.174	0.137	0.163	0.149	0.156
Thurston		0.039	0.066	0.050	0.045	0.068	0.059	0.058
Total (Puget Sound)		0.799	0.485	0.743	0.558	0.546	0.555	0.555

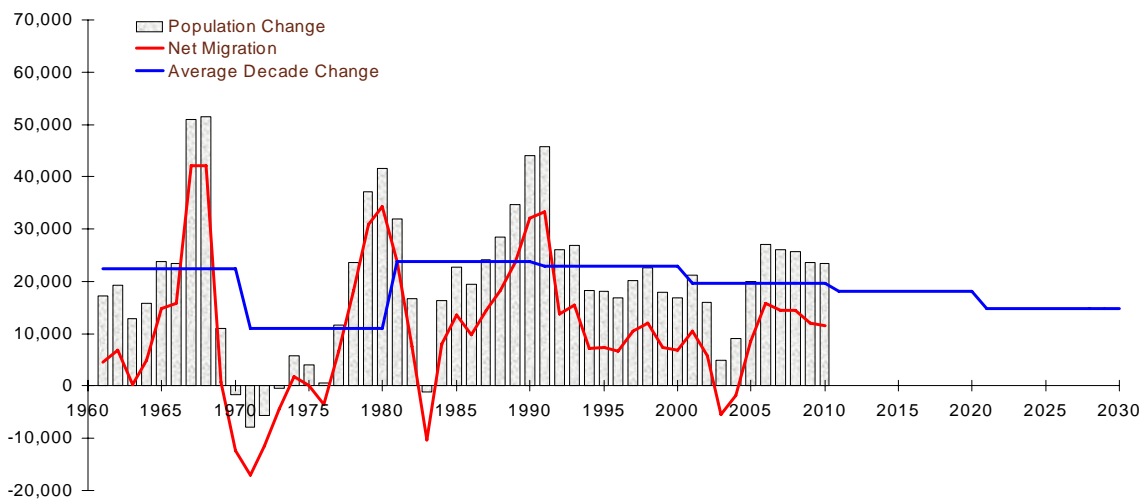
Note: Projections shown in this table may vary by 50 or less compared to other tables in this report. See footnote 8.

Figure 3. Historical and Projected Population Change for the Puget Sound Counties (2007 Projection Figures)

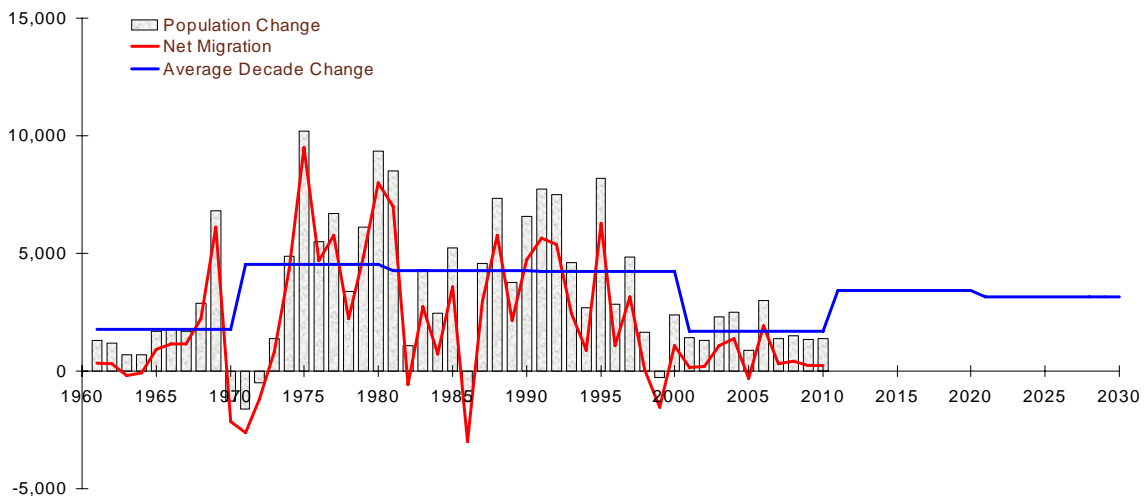
Puget Sound Counties



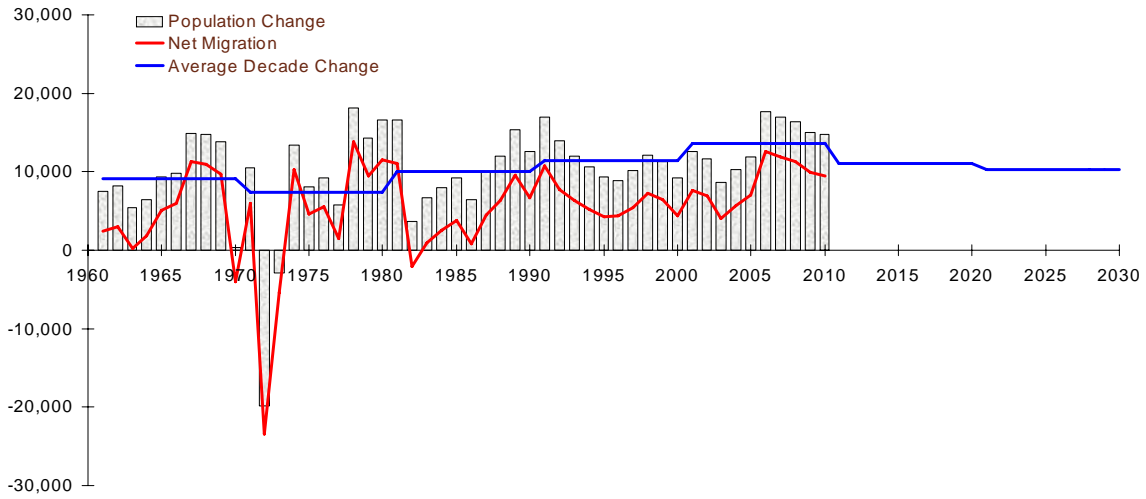
King County



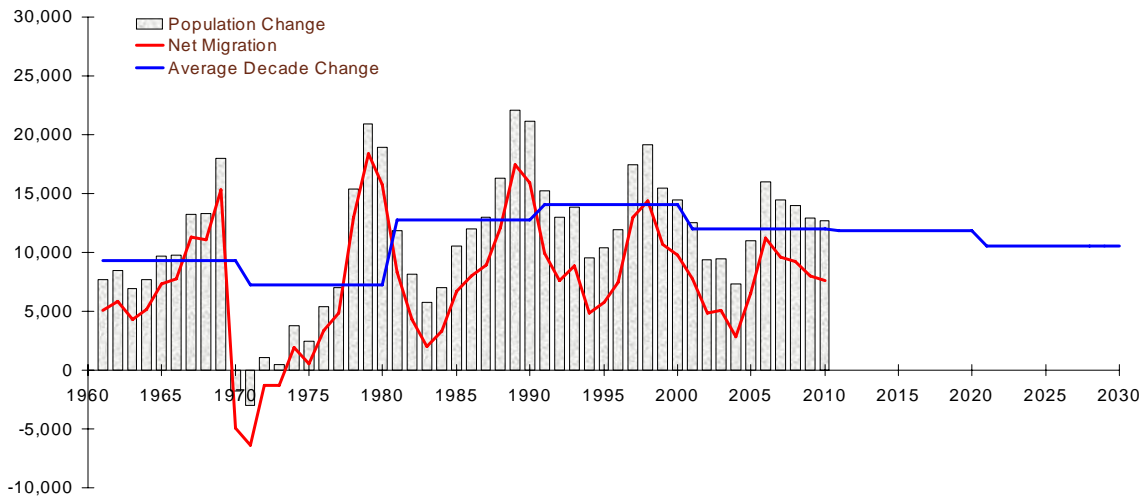
Kitsap County



Pierce County



Snohomish County



Thurston County

