

## New Census Numbers Show Unprecedented U.S. Population Growth

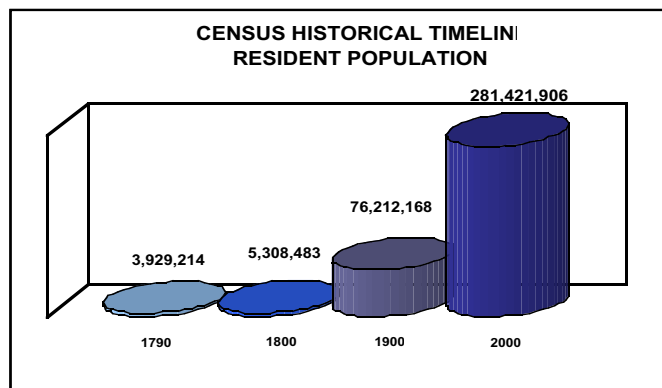
U.S. population grew over 13 percent between 1990 and 2000, the latest Census Bureau report shows. The nation's population increased by 32.7 million—from 248,709,873 to 281,421,906—exceeding projections by six million. “This was a much more robust figure than we would have expected,” said Census Bureau director Kenneth Prewitt.

Nevada logged the largest increase, with its resident population soaring by 66 percent. Arizona showed a 40 percent rise, and ten other states had increases of over 20 percent each.

Such a rise in national population has staggering implications for America's future, but most media coverage fo-

cused on the resulting reapportionment of Congressional seats. Since states with increased populations gained seats in the House of Representatives, commentators portrayed them as Census “winners.”

“States with ballooning populations aren't winners,” pointed out NPG President Donald Mann. “To the contrary, states allowing such growth are shortchanging their citizens. Where are the roads, schools, infrastructure, and housing to handle this kind of continued growth? How can these figures be reconciled with



the nation's anti-sprawl, water conservation and environmental protection priorities?”

For a copy of the 2000 Census report, visit [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) or contact NPG at (202) 667-8950.

## Most U.S. Growth Caused by Immigration, Census Shows

Most of America's recent unparalleled growth is due to post-1970 immigration, according to the latest Census.

The number of immigrants living in the U.S. has more than tripled since 1970. Immigrants who have arrived since 1990 and their children accounted for almost 70 percent of U.S. population growth in the last ten years.

In California, immigration accounted for 48 percent of the state's almost five million increase. The figure would be significantly higher if births to immigrants were included; immigration has made California's fertility rate—2.4 children per woman—the highest in the country and on par with Sri Lanka and Chile.

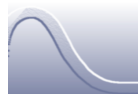
The National Research Council estimates that by 2050, present immigration policies will cause U.S. population to be 80 million larger than without immigration.

“Given immigration's role in fueling large-scale population increases, the American people deserve some say in whether this kind of staggering growth is desirable,” said NPG Executive Director Sharon Stein. “Immigration policy

must be designed within the framework of overall U.S. population goals.”

Yet Congress continues to increase immigration levels and offer amnesty to illegal immigrants. In the fall, Congress passed legislation to raise the number of visas issued to professional foreign workers and is currently considering a program that would allow millions of foreign farm workers to be employed legally as “guest workers” in the U.S. A bill offering sweeping amnesty to more than one million illegal immigrants was defeated, but the final legislation grants amnesty to about 400,000 illegal immigrants who entered the U.S. prior to 1982.

*The Christian Science Monitor* reported in January that by making migration more attractive, amnesty and guest-worker programs lead to higher levels of illegal immigration. Jorge Chabat, of the Center for Economics Investigation and Teaching in Mexico City, told the *Monitor* that the agricultural guest-worker program the U.S. operated from 1942 to 1964 actually stimulated illegal immigration.



### A Message from the Executive Director by Sharon McCloe Stein

You don't need to live in a big city anymore to feel the effects of sprawl. Communities throughout America are grappling with the ugly side effects of out-of-control expansion: traffic congestion, loss of open space, overcrowding, and overburdened infrastructures that can't keep up with growth.

With no relief in sight, more and more regions are attempting to stop sprawl through managed growth initiatives. In the last several elections, voters passed hundreds of state and local ballot initiatives designed to combat and contain sprawl through so-called "smart growth" plans. But while the media and many policymakers tout "smart growth" as a cure-all, growth-slowing measures offer only short term solutions while doing absolutely nothing to address the root cause: population growth.

In Maryland, Governor Parris Glendening has directed hundreds of millions of dollars in state funding to local jurisdictions that confine development to areas with existing infrastructure. More than a dozen California communities have adopted urban growth boundaries; land outside the boundary is protected and must remain natural landscape or farmland. Perhaps best known and most ambitious is Portland's urban growth boundary. While it's often held up as a model for other communities, Portland's boundary hasn't been the success its planners had hoped. The boundary area has required several increases of thousands of acres to accommodate the half-million new people expected in the area in the next 20 years.

"Sustainable growth" simply defies logic; growth is, by definition, eventually unsustainable. (See "New Jersey Poised to Run Out of Land," page 3.) Rather than tackling the problem at its source—a constantly increasing population—"smart growth" programs try desperately to accommodate the problem, packing more and more people into more and more crowded areas.

It's gratifying that communities are talking about the problems created by population growth, but it's time for "smart growth" proponents to take their blinders off and go

after the root cause of the problems: population growth itself.

What will it take to truly arrest sprawl? Strict controls on the rate of new residential development, new federal limits on immigration, funding priorities that improve the quality of schools rather than building new ones to accommodate a constant influx of new students, and political leadership that is willing to impose strict new controls on building and development throughout the state.

Support for these sensible measures already exists. NPG's recent studies of attitudes in Maryland and Virginia demonstrated that voters have strong concerns about the states' growing population pressures and want their elected leaders to enact policies that reduce development and slow population growth so that a high quality of life, a healthy environment, and a sound economy can be maintained. (We'll soon be releasing studies for other states as well.)

Sprawl and its attendant side effects will be alleviated only when planners and politicians recognize that the only smart growth is *no* growth.



#### Sierra Club to Vote on Population Policy

Although the Sierra Club has made curbing sprawl a top-priority campaign, the organization's literature on sprawl barely mentions population issues. Concerned about this significant omission, 16 Sierra Club chapters have passed their own resolutions urging the Club to address overpopulation as a driving factor behind sprawl. Now members led by Sierrans for U.S. Population Stabilization have placed a population measure on the Spring 2001 Sierra Club ballot.

If passed, the resolution would direct the organization to "emphasize both regional and national population stabilization as essential components in all Sierra Club sprawl materials and programs."

If you are a member of the Sierra Club, please be sure to vote "yes" on this landmark population referendum on your spring ballot. For more information, please visit [www.susps.org](http://www.susps.org).

## NPG in the News

NPG's work was highlighted recently in the *Washington Post*, *Washington Times*, *E Magazine*, *Seattle Times*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Los Angeles Daily News* and *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. Also, NPG staff appeared on radio shows across the country, including WTOP, WMAL, WAVA, and Z104 in Washington, D.C.; WRVA in Richmond, Va.; WSRF in Miami, Fla.; WJIM in Lansing, Mich.; and WNWS in Jackson, Tenn.

### New Forum Papers From NPG

NPG is pleased to announce three new papers in our *Forum* series:

*The Environmental Future*, by Gaylord Nelson: Earth Day founder, former U.S. Senator, and one of the most distinguished names in environmentalism, Nelson proposes practical steps to work towards environmental sustainability in the U.S.

*The Fate of America*, by Timothy Palmer: Palmer, the author of twelve books on the American landscape, its rivers, and the environment, describes how overpopulation is destroying America's environment and argues that the U.S. must embrace population reduction, as sixty-three other nations have done.

*Growth Management Strategies for Stopping Growth in Local Communities*, by Gabor Zovanyi: Dr. Zovanyi, professor of urban planning at Eastern Washington University and author of *Growth Management for a Sustainable Future*, presents arguments for debunking traditional pro-growth mythology, techniques for stopping growth in local communities, and suggestions for countering claims that local government actions to stop growth are illegal.

All *Forum* papers are available online at [www.npg.org](http://www.npg.org).

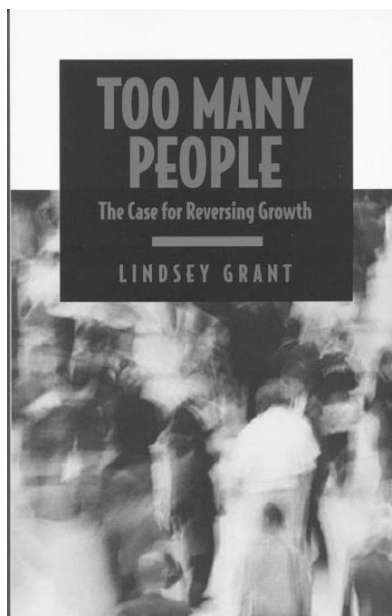
### NPG Recommended Reading

NPG highly recommends *Too Many People: The Case for Reversing Growth*, a new book by Lindsey Grant, former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Environment and Population Affairs and author of *Elephants in the Volkswagen*.

Challenging a nearly universal enthusiasm for endless growth, Grant points out that perpetual material growth on Earth is a mathematical absurdity and argues that growth is an unrecognized root of environmental and social problems, not simply a potential danger. "We are already at war with the biosphere that supports us," he writes.

*Too Many People* is published by Seven Locks Press (P.O. Box 25689, Santa Ana, CA 92799; 800-354-5348).

A limited number of copies are available to NPG members for a reduced rate. Please call for details: (202)667-8950.



## New Jersey Poised to Run Out of Land

Projections indicate that New Jersey may be the first state to use up all its land. If present trends continue, New Jersey is set to reach the limits of development as early as the 2030s.

Rutgers University's Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis compared the state's rate of growth with what land is left for legal development and concluded that, if trends continue, New Jersey will be "built out" by 2032.

New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation, with the fifth largest number of immigrants. New Jersey's population increased by 8.9 percent in the last decade.

## Highlight Population's Effects on Environment & Quality of Life

**Population Growth May Lead to Eco-Disaster:** A report from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health warns that world population growth is threatening public health and social and economic development. Because of the increasing pressure a growing population puts on natural resources, causing water shortages, soil erosion, and air and water pollution, "humanity faces a deteriorating environment and may even invite ecological disaster," the authors write. "As population and demand for natural resources continue to grow, environmental limits will become increasingly apparent ... Many countries could avoid environmental crises if they took steps now to conserve and manage supplies and demand better, while slowing population growth by providing families and individuals with information and services needed to make informed choices about reproductive health." The report urges policymakers to take immediate steps toward sustainable development.

**Water Shortages to Grow:** The number of people facing severe water shortages will more than quadruple over the next 25 years, a new report shows ("People in the Balance: Population and Natural Resources at the Turn of the Millennium," from Population Action International). By 2025, between two and three billion people will face severe or chronic water shortages, compared with 505 million affected today.

**California Sprawl Driven by Population:** A new study, "Sprawl in California: A report on quantifying the role of the state's population boom," by Leon Kolankiewicz and Roy Beck, finds that California's population growth far outweighed all other factors contributing to sprawl. Although Californians are consuming land in increasingly earth-friendly ways, there are so many new state residents each year that sprawl continues spreading outward.

## Members Corner

NPG extends our heartfelt thanks to the almost 1,000 activists and members who signed onto our anti-sprawl ad. The ad, which we placed in *Roll Call*, the Capitol Hill publication read by members of Congress and their staffs, urged policymakers to address sprawl at its roots by implementing a sensible national population policy.

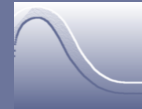
Now here's another way to help us spread the word: contact NPG for a free Earth Day kit with materials to distribute at your local Earth Day event on April 22nd.

**Please remember, NPG depends on your generosity to help us continue our valuable programs. If you haven't yet renewed your membership, or if you're not yet a member, please consider a contribution.**

## Perspectives on Population

"How will America be better off with 571 million people? What amenities that we now enjoy will be improved? What about urban congestion, open space? Will 571 million people help our educational system? What will it mean with regard to crime, and our quality of life? Are we likely to improve our social peace and political stability?"

--former U.S. Senator Alan Simpson and former Colorado Governor Richard Lamm, writing in *The Washinton Post*.



*Population and Resource Outlook* is a quarterly publication by Negative Population Growth, a national non-profit membership organization dedicated to educating Americans about the detrimental effects of overpopulation on our environment and quality of life.

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