

# Population & Resource Outlook

June/July 2002

## EASTERN WATER WARS?

We're all familiar with stories of how many areas of the water-parched West are destined to soon be waging high-level "water wars" due to massive population growth. However, up until now, the concept has been little known in the Eastern states.

That's about to change — and soon.

A recent article in the New York Times highlighted the dilemma faced by Georgia, Florida and Alabama who are under a Congressionally imposed June deadline to reach a deal on dividing up the water of the Chattahoochee River.

Alabama is siding with Florida against Georgia draining off far too much fresh water from the Chattahoochee to guarantee sufficient year-round flow into the oyster and shrimp-rich pristine estuary of Apalachicola Bay on the Gulf of Mexico.

It seems that with the population of greater Atlanta soaring nearly 40% in the last 10 years

(from 2.9 million to 4.1 million), the area is sucking more than 420 million gallons of water a day to supply the needs of residents and businesses. Current municipal water consumption in Atlanta averages about 160 gallons per person per day — higher than in Phoenix and Los Angeles.

While some Georgia officials say a real "crisis" is decades away, a recent draft report by the Army Corps of Engineers suggests that

in some months, the Chattahoochee is already being tapped near capacity.

Trying to balance the needs of uncontrolled population growth against fragile ecosystems is a political football many don't want to touch. Thus far, the only negotiated result produced by the Governors of the three states has been to extend the deadline each time it comes close. Because of the political volatility of the issue, many expect the final referee to be the U.S. Supreme Court. ■

*"The whole country is learning that we can't just keep on doing what we've always been doing when it comes to water."*

Aaron T. Wolf  
Oregon State University

## THE NEW INS?

### Fight Against Terrorism Only Adds to Burden

There is little question that President Bush has put forth a bold plan for protecting our nation by proposing a new Department of Homeland Security. This action was a follow-up to his signing into law a new border security measure on May 9th that was aimed at strengthening the ability of the Immigration and Naturalization Service to close the loopholes that foreign terrorists used in getting into our country to carry out the September 11th attacks.

The new law and the new proposal are applauded

by all Americans. But the question must be asked: Is the overburdened and inept INS up to the task of enforcing the new laws?

In the past decade the INS has doubled its personnel, more than tripled its annual budget (from \$1.5 billion to \$5.5 billion) and currently has a 2-3 year backlog of dealing with the paperwork accompanying those who are seeking to enter the country legally. When you add in the proposal of the vote hungry politicians to also grant "amnesty" to an estimated 3 million illegal Mexican immigrants

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## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

*A Message from NPG President Donald Mann*

Dear Members of NPG:

As the founding director of NPG, I thought our members might be interested in learning how and why we started in 1972, thirty years ago. With this letter and the one to follow in the next newsletter, I will also discuss briefly the major themes that are important and are still the driving force behind NPG.

In the early 70's there was a great deal of discussion and concern about the impact of population size and growth on our environment and resources. I took an active role in that debate and my thinking was greatly influenced by such influential books as Paul Erlich's *The Population Bomb*, the Meadows' splendid book, *The Limits to Growth*, and a booklet by British scientists titled, *A Blueprint for Survival*, among many others.

At the time world population was about half of what it is today. U.S. population was slightly over 200 million — about two-thirds of our present 288 million. Based on the information available, it seemed to me essential that the priority goal for our country should be to create an economy that would be sustainable indefinitely in a sound and healthy environment, with an adequate standard of living for all.

It was clear to me that the United States was already greatly overpopulated in terms of the long range carrying capacity of its environment and resources. Overpopulation was (and is) rapidly destroying our environment and resources, and our standard of living. The only cure for overpopulation, of course, is to reduce population size. That, in turn, requires a negative rate of population growth.

I saw an urgent need for a national membership organization that would work toward a smaller U.S. and world population, and advocate specific numerical goals and specific programs to achieve those goals. In 1971, with the encouragement of a few friends, I resolved to try and create such an organization.

The first step was to form a Board of like-minded people with long experience in environmental and population organizations. We drew up a set of By-laws and created NPG. With very few dollars in our treasury (advanced by true believers), we began writing and publishing a number of NPG Position Papers, in which we explained our goals and the reasoning behind them.

I should mention also that we had no difficulty in attracting many prestigious scholars and scientists (including several Nobel Prize laureates) who agreed to support NPG by serving on our Advisory Board.

After a number of news releases based on our Position Papers were picked up by the national media we made the bold move to try to attract members to our fledgling organization. The response to our initial membership solicitation was most gratifying and within a matter of weeks we had more than a thousand members. NPG was on its way!

Today, 30 years later, we have nearly 30,000 members, many who have been with us for decades. Like you, they are the heart and soul of NPG. And they understand the proposition that "whatever your cause, it's a lost cause without a substantial reduction in population."

People sometimes ask me, "What do you believe is your core mission?"

The answer is simple: I believe it is to change the way most people view population size and growth so

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# COUNTIES IN SOUTH GROWING FAST

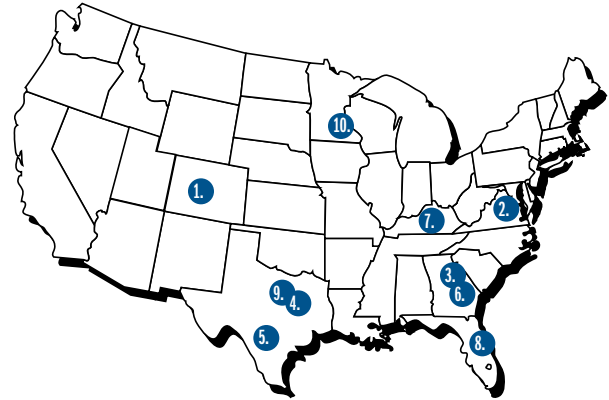
## But West is Fastest Growing Region

**N**PG's role as the nation's premier population organization demands that it focus on the extraordinary population growth that is impacting communities all across the nation. That was the logic behind our PROJECT CENSUS ALERT which we launched last year. As the U.S. Census Bureau issues interim reports on increasing population, it is our continuing objective to force state and local officials, as well as the general public, to confront the harsh realities that now is the time for action in reversing that growth.

Only fifteen months after completing the 2000 census, the U.S. Census Bureau recently released their latest statistics for the period of April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2001 and found that during that 15-month period ten counties in America grew at the striking rate of 10% or more.

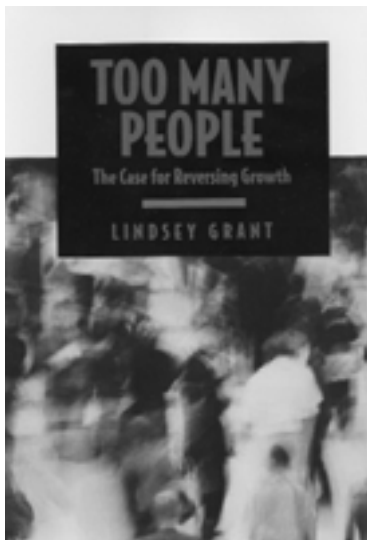
As expected the nation's fastest-growing counties are mostly in the South and near major cities. Overall however, the West is America's fastest growing region.

Douglas County, CO, outside Denver, tops the list. The only Northern County in the top 10 was Scott County, MN, outside Minneapolis. ■



The top ten counties for growth by percentage were:

1. Douglas, CO 13.6%
2. Loudoun, VA 12.6%
3. Forsythe, GA 12.1%
4. Rockwall, TX 11.4%
5. Williamson, TX 11.2%
6. Henry, GA 11.1%
7. Spencer, KY 10.8%
8. Flagler, FL 10.3%
9. Collin, TX 10.1%
10. Scott, MN 9.9%



## 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 at no charge.

**THE NEW INS?** (Continued from page 1)

already in this country (it is estimated that that number will more than double when pressure is put on to include illegal immigrants from other countries) it is totally inconceivable how this one agency could effectively carry out its mission.

In a report released May 15th, the private non-partisan Federal Performance Project gave the INS an overall grade of “D.”

What it comes down to is that far too many people are expecting “magic” from an agency that has a long history of inefficiency. Congressman Spencer Bachus was right on target when during debate on a bill to break the INS into two agencies, he stated the obvious, “We

*“As long as America cannot reach consensus on whether to welcome immigration or restrict it, immigration enforcement will be an exercise in frustration.”*

Shawn Zeller  
Author of Federal Performance Project

are wasting our time.”

The real answer to this dilemma is really right in front of us and NPG has been its most ardent advocate for decades. The only way to get a real handle on this problem - and get the INS back on track - is to limit legal immigration to not over 100,00 a year and to apprehend and deport the estimated 9 million illegal aliens now living here permanently in violation of our laws.

If people now planning to come here illegally knew that they would be promptly apprehended and deported, the annual flow of illegal immigrants would no doubt be reduced to a small fraction of its present size. ■

**THE PRESIDENT’S CORNER**

(Continued from page 2)

that they will vigorously support the concept of a substantial reduction in population. The more people we can educate about the dramatic need for action on this issue, the better our shared future.

If we can change public opinion sufficiently on this issue, and I am confident that we can succeed in doing so, it would make it politically possible for Congress to pass legislation creating a National Population Policy aimed at stabilizing our population at a far lower level than it is today.

That’s a goal worth fighting for. It won’t happen overnight, but with your continued support for NPG we can help create a healthy future for generations to come.

Sincerely,

*Donald Mann*

Note: Donald Mann’s NPG Position Paper *Why We Need A Smaller U.S. Population and How We Can Achieve It* is accessible via our website at [www.npg.org](http://www.npg.org).

**FAREWELL**

We are sorry to report that Sharon McCloe Stein, who was our Executive Director for five years, has left NPG to pursue other interests.

She has been a wonderful addition to the organization and to the debate over our issues. We wish her all the best.

**Make a Lasting Donation**

Donations of stock are a great way for you to provide important support to NPG’s work — and your donation is tax-deductible! You may also wish to consider planned giving, such as bequests and gifts from trusts. Please contact us for further information. ■

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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