

Kane County Profile

Prepared for the:
**Dixie, Fishlake & Manti-La Sal National Forests
Forest Plan Revision
Social and Economic Assessment**

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**December
2003**

KANE COUNTY OVERVIEW



County Land Ownership

- 47.7% — *BLM-Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument*
- 14.6% — *Bureau of Land Mgt.*
- 14.5% — *Natl. Recreation Area*
- 10.1% — *Private*
- 4.7% — *Forest Service*
- 3.9% — *State Trust Lands*
- 2.8% — *Water Bodies*
- 0.7% — *Natl. Park/Monument*
- 0.2% — *Other*
- 0.8% — *Wilderness Areas*
- 20.4% — *Wilderness Study Area (within BLM total)*

source: SITLA, 2003

County Planned Uses

The County has created zoning designations for *forest/recreation, multiple-use/range, and agriculture/residential* uses.

source: Kane County

This overview contains observations drawn from the maps, economic and demographic trend data, and a review of county plans contained in this profile. In addition, it contains comments and explanations of county leaders and residents, gathered at workshops conducted to review this assessment.

Landscape

Kane County contains one of the most rugged and remote landscapes in the country, spanning the north rim of the Grand Canyon, large portions of Lake Powell and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Its landscape is typical of the Colorado Plateau—arid canyons and plateaus with water found primarily along small streams and in constructed reservoirs. Nearly ninety percent of the county's lands are publicly owned and the county has had to adjust to numerous public land use changes over the years.

Population

As Kane County's reputation as a retirement and lifestyle community grows, older segments of the population are expected to continue growing rapidly. An additional cause for the population shift is many young families leaving the County for other economic opportunities. Many recreation homes and cabins have been developed in higher elevation forests, and numerous other homes are only seasonally occupied. 75% of county property tax notices are currently sent out of the county. The State's predicted population growth rate of 2.7% may be high, according to county comments, because of water and economic infrastructure limitations that may constrain new growth. The county anticipates a growth rate closer to 2%.

Economy

Many Kane County leaders have long expressed interest in utilizing these resources on public lands for economic development. Critical water supplies and access to coal and aggregate resources are viewed as potential sources of growth, but are often limited by land-use policies beyond local control. The County is looking for industries that can add value to their natural resources. Agriculture has always been limited due to expensive and limited irrigation water. In contrast, recreation and tourism, particularly associated with the National Parks and Lake Powell, have been a substantial portion of the county's economy for many years, as has movie-making, too. The Best Friends Animal Sanctuary has become one of the county's largest employers in recent years.. Numerous service and government sector employees have helped build a relatively diverse, albeit somewhat seasonal, local economy. In the past 20 years, Kane County has outpaced

KANE COUNTY OVERVIEW

Current Issues

*second home ownership
 employment wages
 stabilizing seasonal
 employment swings
 infrastructure
 building destination tourism
 economic and cultural benefit
 from public lands*

the State in employment growth and increasing wealth. County workshop attendees noted that job growth increases are due in a large part to people taking second jobs and also note that the lack of jobs attracting new young workers to the area.

Planning

The County does not provide municipal-level services to unincorporated land. This is intended, in part, to retain the qualities of a rural setting. Kane County has established a Water Conservancy District to manage water supply, which could be a limiting factor on growth. Several studies have determined that there is no indication that current groundwater withdrawals have had any significant effect on the amount of groundwater in storage, and groundwater discharge and recharge are approximately in balance basin-wide over the long term, but there is substantial uncertainty about exactly how groundwater flows, and the effects of Lake Powell on groundwater. Affordable housing is also becoming a prominent issue, particularly for service-sector employees. Kane County Commission has expressed its intent to become a proactive partner in all public lands planning processes which impact the County land base. Planning documents reviewed, which were available at the time of this assessment, include:

- Kane County, General Plan, 1998; Kane County, Zoning & Subdivision Ordinance, 1998*
- Kane County Economic Development Strategic Plan*
- Kane County Water Conservancy District, Draft Water Resources Master Plan, 1997*
- Five County AOG, Kane County Fact Sheet, 1999*
- Utah State Historical Society, Beehive History: Utah Counties, 1988*