

Wisconsin SCORP

Regional Demographic Profile

Southern Gateways



Applied Population Lab and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

The following is a demographic profile of the Southern Gateways SCORP Region completed by the Applied Population Laboratory, University of Wisconsin- Madison. This profile was created to inform the 2005-2010 SCORP planning process by providing demographic background information for understanding the context within which outdoor recreation occurs. Similar demographic profiles are provided for each of the eight SCORP Regions, and one summary profile for the state of Wisconsin compares Region to Region.

The profile includes current, past and projected information on population demographics and housing within the Southern Gateways Region. Data are displayed in maps, tables, and charts and summarized briefly in text. We begin by painting a demographic picture of the current conditions in the Region using data from Census 2000 and from the Wisconsin Department of Administration's Population Estimates (2004). Next, we address historical trends that have shaped the Southern Gateways Region over the past several decades. We include information on how the population has been changing over time, where housing development has been rapidly occurring, and the impact that natural amenities may have on these changes. Finally, we use population projections from the Wisconsin Dept. of Administration to discuss how the population of the Southern Gateways Region might change over the next several years.

It is important for planners to consider demographic information when planning for outdoor recreation because characteristics of the population impact demand for different types of outdoor recreation. For instance, areas with growing populations may experience increasing demand for recreational resources, and areas with aging populations may demand different types of resources than those with young populations. Similarly, income, education, race, and sex have all been shown to affect preferences for outdoor recreation.

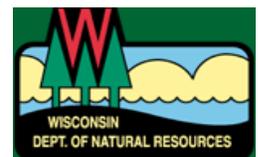
Starting in 1999, the Wisconsin DNR initiated a three-year study to identify, with considerable input from the public and non-profit groups, places in the state that will be critical in meeting Wisconsin's long-term conservation and recreation needs. The resulting 229 "Legacy Places" collectively are the special places that "make Wisconsin Wisconsin." The WDNR only represents the Legacy Places as points because specifically identifying which lands and waters associated with each place are most appropriate to maintain and protect is most appropriately left to a locally-focused planning process. The Legacy Places are represented on many of the maps that you will see in this report. The points noted with a star in the center are Legacy Places that the WDNR has determined to have particularly high recreation potential. The Land Legacy information helps to bring cultural and environmental meaning to the demographic data that we present.

The principal author of this report is Richelle Winkler (rwinkler@ssc.wisc.edu) of the Applied Population Laboratory, with direction provided by Jeff Prey (Jeff.Prey@dnr.state.wi.us) of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. With appreciation and thanks, the author would like to acknowledge the insight and assistance provided by Chris Whelpley, David Long, Bill Buckingham, Dan Veroff, Nick Fisher, and Don Field. Each lent their skills and talents in preparing data, constructing tables and charts, formatting, and editing text. For more information about this report, the authors can be contacted via email.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Southern Gateways Region is located in the south-central part of the state and encompasses Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Richland, Rock, and Sauk Counties. The Region is influenced by the Madison and Janesville metropolitan areas in Dane and Rock Counties. Otherwise, the Region is mostly rural.

- In 2004, the Southern Gateways Region had an estimated population of 979,295 residents. The population of the Region is concentrated around the City of Madison and to a lesser extent the City of Janesville. Approximately 62% of residents live in Dane or Rock Counties.
- The population of the Southern Gateways Region is mostly urban (about 68%). The majority of population growth and housing development over the last fifty years has been occurring on the outskirts of Madison in Dane County. Subsequently, Dane County's countryside has largely been urbanized.
- 91% of the population is Non-Hispanic and White. African Americans and Hispanics each make up about 3% of the Region's total population.
- Wisconsin Dells attracts seasonal residents and tourists to the Southern Gateways Region and to Sauk County in particular. While seasonal housing is relatively unimportant in the Southern Gateways Region (less than 2% of all housing units are for seasonal use), it is important to understanding demand for outdoor recreation in Sauk and Richland Counties. Tourism-related employment in the Southern Gateways Region is concentrated around Wisconsin Dells.
- In-migrating young adults and out-migrating retirees produce a relatively young population structure in the Region. Median age for the Southern Gateways Region in 2000 was about 35 years. The youngest county was Dane, with a median age of 33 years. The oldest county was Richland, with a median age of 39 years.
- In comparison with the rest of the state, people in the Southern Gateways Region are more educated, have higher income, and have relatively high housing values. Dane County has a particularly high rate of education, a high median income, and a high median housing value. Richland and Lafayette Counties have the lowest incomes, housing values, and college education rates.
- Population in this Region has been growing since at least 1950, increasing by 90% between 1950 and 2004. Dane County has grown at a particularly quick pace.
- Housing development has been occurring at a faster rate than population growth. Between 1950 and 2004, the number of housing units in the Region increased by 175%. Historically, housing development has occurred particularly fast in Dane County. Between 2000 and 2004, Sauk County experienced the fastest rate of housing development in the Region.
- According to Johnson and Beale's recreation county classifications, Sauk County has many recreation-based resources and high demand for recreation. Because of these resources, Sauk County might be expected to experience population growth and housing development at a disproportionately fast pace.
- Population is projected to continue to increase in the Southern Gateways Region over the next several years, especially in Dane, Jefferson, and Sauk Counties. Dane County is expected to add 76,804 residents between 2004 and 2020, for an increase of 17%.



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