

Estimates: Lake Co. population grew 2.54% from 2015 to 2016

'The U.S. Census Bureau is bullish on Lake County'

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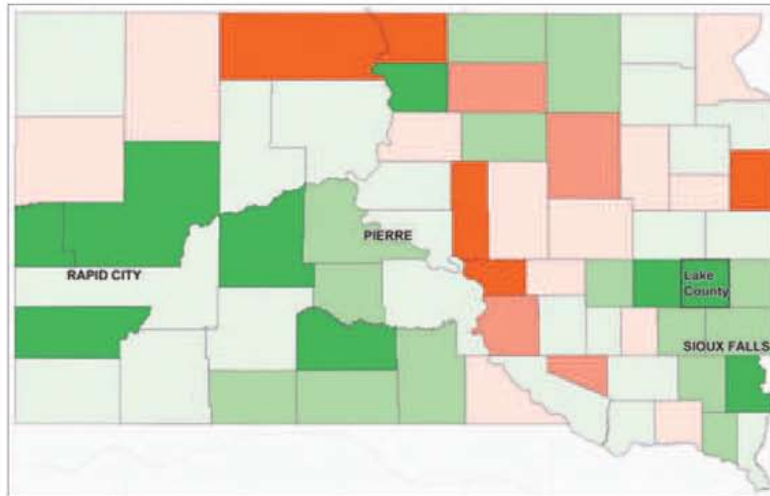
Based on U.S. Census Bureau estimates released Thursday, between 2015 and 2016, Lake County's population grew by 320 people — from 12,589 to 12,909. That's a 2.54 percent increase.

And since 2010, when the last actual census count took place, Lake County is estimated to have grown by 1,709 people — from 11,200 to 12,909, which is a 15.26 percent increase.

That makes Lake County's population picture more positive than most other places in South Dakota. Of the state's 66 counties, 21 were estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau to have actually lost population between 2015 and '16. Percentage-wise, the greatest loss in population came in Hyde County, in the middle of the state, where the estimated decrease of 45 people translated into a 3.22 percent loss.

And of the 45 South Dakota counties with estimated population gains over the last year, Lake County showed the second-highest percentage-wise gain. Only Lincoln County, two counties to the south of Lake County and just south of Sioux Falls, showed a higher estimated increase — 3.11 percent, from 52,826 to 54,469. Lincoln County also led South Dakota counties in estimated population increase since 2010 — gaining an estimated 9,641 additional people, which is 21.52 percent more than seven years ago.

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Map by the Daily Leader with data from U.S. Census Bureau

2015-16 POPULATION LOSS-GAIN — This map of South Dakota is colored by county — red for estimated population loss from 2015 to '16 and green for estimated gain during that period. Shading reflects the percentage of estimated gain or loss. Light color: up to .75 percent gain/loss | Medium color: between .75 percent and 1.5 percent gain/loss | Dark color: more than 1.5 percent gain/loss.

Estimates: Lake Co. population

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Lake and Lincoln counties are part of a wedge of counties in the southeast corner of the state that showed increased estimates in population from 2015 to '16.

After the most recent U.S. Census Bureau estimates were released, the *Daily Leader* spoke to Steve Griesert of Community Partners Research, based in Fairbault, Minn., about the significance of the annual figures. Why Griesert? The housing study that Community Partners completed in early 2016 for the city of Madison indicated a bit of skepticism that growth in Madison and Lake County was as robust as U.S. Census Bureau estimates were suggesting at that time. From the report: "This level of growth does not match other statistical data that exist, including changes in the housing stock or growth in the available labor force."

But this week, Griesert explained that the U.S. Census Bureau estimates were the best information available. And Griesert concluded, "The

U.S. Census Bureau is bullish on Madison and Lake County!"

Griesert pointed out that the estimates were based on an analysis of births and deaths, IRS and Medicaid records, visas, building permits and demolition permits.

The figures cited by the U.S. Census Bureau as factoring into its estimates for Lake County's growth over the last year included 129 births compared to 116 deaths, for a natural increase of 13 people. In addition to that baker's dozen, the Bureau analyzed an increase of an additional 263 people due to migration — 19 from international places and 244 domestically.

What accounts for the other 44 people who are needed to arrive at the estimated increase of 320? The footnote in the Bureau's table provides this explanation: "Total population change includes a residual. This residual represents the change in population that cannot be attributed to any specific demographic component."