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County population down in 2017

According to estimates by Arizona's Office of Economic Opportunity, Cochise County's population decreased by 757 residents (-0.6 percent) from 2016 to 2017. The countywide population dropped from 129,140 to 128,383. Since Census 2010, Cochise County has lost 2,963 residents (-2.3 percent), according to OEO estimates.

OEO projects the countywide population will grow by an average of 0.9 percent annually in the short term (2017 to 2022) and 0.6 percent in the long term (2017 to 2050) reaching 134,391 in 2022 and 157,897 in 2050.

All areas of Cochise County saw their population decrease from 2016 to 2017 except Willcox, which saw the population stabilize at 3,612. OEO projects the Willcox population will grow by an average of 0.2 percent annually in both the short- and long-term, hitting 3,647 in 2022 and 3,840 in 2050.

Benson's population decreased by 19 residents (-0.4 percent) falling from 5,013 to 4,994 between 2016 and 2017. OEO projects Benson's population will grow by an average of 1.8 percent per year between 2017 and 2022 and 1.2 percent annually between now and 2050, reaching 5,449 in 2022 and 7,482 in 2050. OEO long-term projections for Benson and countywide could change drastically depending on the success of the planned 'The Villages at Vigneto' development in Benson, which would add 28,000 homes and nearly 60,000 residents to Benson and Cochise County by 2035, according to current plans.

Bisbee lost 25 residents (-0.5 percent), according to OEO estimates. Bisbee's population in 2017 was 5,320 (down from 5,345 in 2016). OEO projects Bisbee's population will decline by an average of 0.1 percent annually in both the short and long term, falling to 5,306 in 2022 and 5,104 in 2050.

The population of Douglas fell from 16,990 to 16,588 from 2016 to 2017, for a decrease of 402 residents (-2.4 percent). OEO projects the Douglas population will increase by an average of 0.7 percent per year in the short term and 0.4 percent in the long term, hitting 17,192 in 2022 and 18,784 in 2050. The population of Douglas includes inmates at the state prison complex, which Douglas annexed in the early 2000s. Since then, inmates are counted as residents of the city. Prison inmates account for approximately 15 percent of the Douglas population.

Huachuca City saw its population decline by 10 people (-0.6 percent) between 2016 and 2017, decreasing from 1,793 to 1,783. According to OEO projections, Huachuca City's population will fall by an annual average of 0.3 percent in the short term and 0.2 percent in the long term, dropping to 1,753 in 2022 and 1,642 in 2050.

The population of Sierra Vista dropped by 199 residents (-0.5 percent) in 2017, coming in at 43,824 (down from 44,023 in 2016). OEO projects Sierra Vista's population will grow by an average of 1.1 percent annually between now and 2022 and 0.6 percent per year from now to 2050, reaching 46,219 in 2022 and 53,229 in 2050.

Tombstone's population was down by 0.5 percent, or 7 residents, from 2016 to 2017, falling from 1,332 to 1,325. OEO projects Tombstone's population will remain essentially unchanged in both the short and long term, stabilizing at 1,333 residents to both 2022 and 2050.

The population residing in Cochise County's unincorporated areas fell by 95 (-0.2 percent) in 2017. In 2016, 51,032 people resided in the combined unincorporated areas of Cochise County. This dropped to 50,937 in 2017, according to OEO estimates. OEO projects the population of the countywide unincorporated areas will grow by an average of 1 percent in the short term and 0.8 percent in the long term, climbing to 53,492 in 2022 and 66,483 in 2050.

Statewide, Arizona's population grew 1.5 percent from 2016 to 2017, according to OEO. The statewide population was 6.97 million in 2017, up from 6.87 million in 2016. According to OEO projections, Arizona's population will grow by an annual average of 1.7 percent in the short term and 1.3 percent in the long term, reaching 7.59 million in 2022 and 10.82 million in 2050.

POPULATION				
	2017	2016	Change	% Change
Arizona	6,965,897	6,866,195	99,702	1.5%
Cochise County	128,383	129,140	-757	-0.6%
Benson	4,994	5,013	-19	-0.4%
Bisbee	5,320	5,345	-25	-0.5%
Douglas	16,588	16,990	-402	-2.4%
Huachuca City	1,783	1,793	-10	-0.6%
Sierra Vista	43,824	44,023	-199	-0.5%
Tombstone	1,325	1,332	-7	-0.5%
Willcox	3,612	3,612	0	0.0%
Unincorporated Areas	50,937	51,032	-95	-0.2%
Source: Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity				

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