



# Climate and Tourism in La Plata County

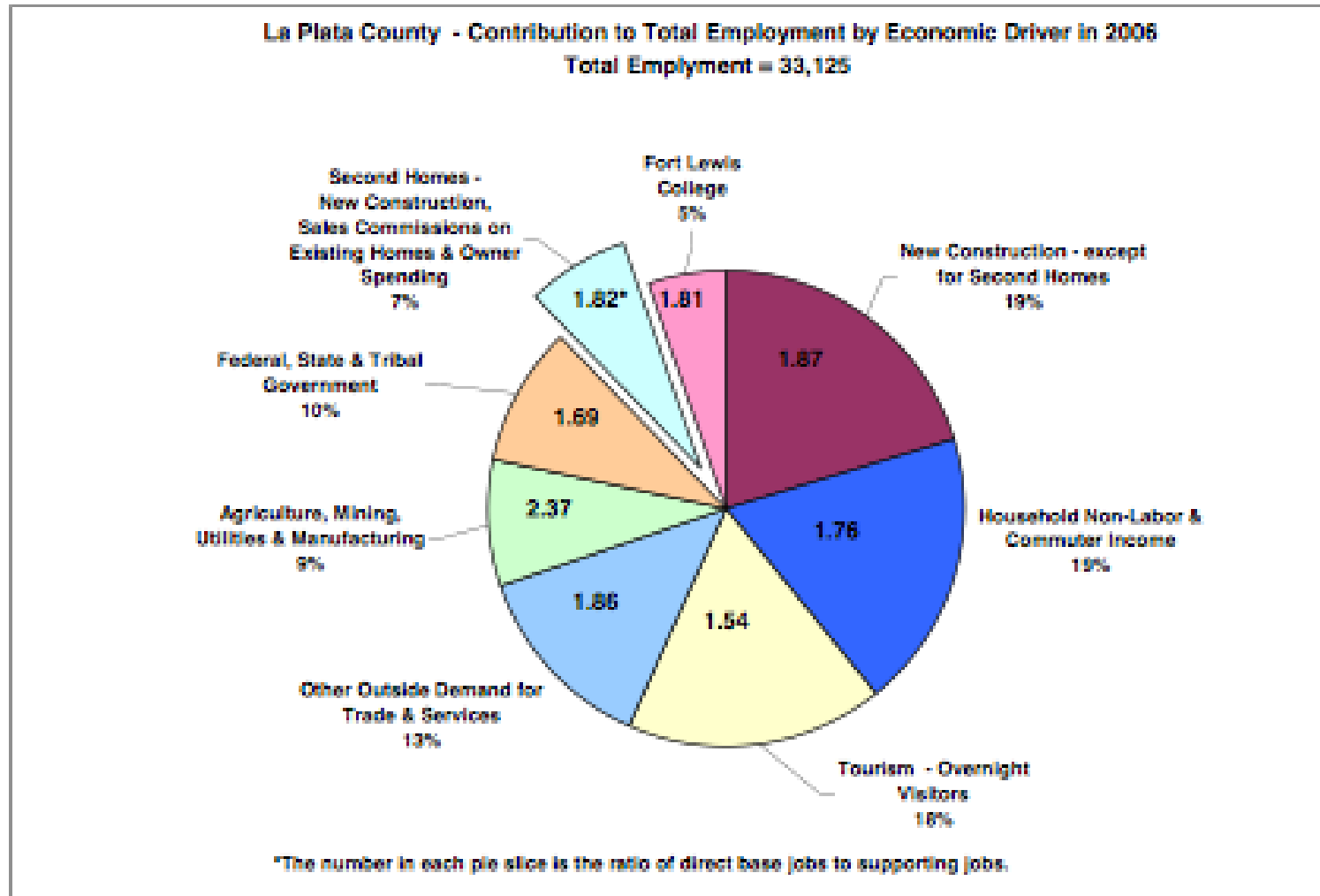


# Tourism is La Plata County's #1 Industry<sup>1</sup>

- Major role in employment, especially in service sector (restaurants, stores, lodging)
- Economic driver for 18% of local jobs<sup>1</sup>

# Economic Drivers in La Plata County<sup>1</sup>

This figure depicts the size, relative importance and total employment ratio for La Plata County's economic drivers in 2006.



# So- how can different tourism industries adapt to climate change?

- Snow sports (skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, sledding, snowshoeing etc.)
- River sports (rafting, kayaking, water skiing, fishing etc.)
- Mountain sports (hiking, mountain biking, motorcycling, four-wheeling, hunting, wildlife viewing)
- Destination events (train, Mesa Verde, Snowdown, film festival etc.)

# Tourism Activities in Southwest Colorado

- rafting/river sports
- snow sports
- biking
- golfing
- tennis
- riding the train
- archaeology
- hiking
- camping
- hunting
- fishing
- eating
- shopping
- canyoneering
- climbing
- mountaineering
- Other ideas?



# So, which activities does climate affect?

- All of them!
- *Why?*
- The World Tourism Organization claims that climatic factors are the “prime motivation for mass leisure travel.”<sup>2</sup>

# Tourism Climatic Index (TCI)

- Measures the suitability of the world's climates for tourism and recreation based on:
  - maximum daily temperature
  - mean daily temperature
  - minimum daily relative humidity
  - daily relative humidity, precipitation
  - daily duration of sunshine
  - wind speed
- The TCI then rates a given location for a specific activity from "ideal" to "impossible."

# La Plata County's TCI?

- What do you think?
- We don't have a specific TCI, but based on the prevalence of tourism in La Plata County, it can be inferred that the climate is good for recreation and tourism
- Proxy measure – Sperling's Best Places "comfort index" rates Durango as a 73/100, while the U.S. average is 44/100.<sup>3</sup>



# Works Cited

1. "La Plata County 2011." *Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado*. Southwest Colorado Access Network, 2011. Web. 09 Aug. 2012. <<http://scan.org/5%20-%20La%20Plata%20County%20Update%202011.pdf>>.
2. *1st International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism*. Proc. of Climate Change and Tourism, Tunisia, Djerba. 2003. 1-55. World Tourism Organization, 11 Apr. 2003. Web. 10 Aug. 2012. <[http://sdt.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/tunisia\\_finrep\\_en.pdf](http://sdt.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/tunisia_finrep_en.pdf)>.
3. "Climate in Durango, Colorado." *Climate in Durango, Colorado*. Sperling's Best Places, 2010. Web. 10 Aug. 2012. <<http://www.bestplaces.net/climate/city/colorado/durango>>.

# Websites for Images

Mountain Biker in autumn: <http://www.wildernesstrails.com/wtr-blog/?Tag=mountain%20biking%20durango>

Skier at Durango Mountain Resort:

<http://www.colorado.com/photo-gallery?activity=All&page=1>

Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad – train in winter

[http://www.onthesnow.com/photo\\_guide.html?id=3459877964&text=durango](http://www.onthesnow.com/photo_guide.html?id=3459877964&text=durango)

Rafting the Animas River

<http://mountainlifestyles.tripod.com/silverton.html>