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Grand County,	Utah

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This article is about the county in Utah. For the other county of the same name (in Colorado), see Grand County, Colorado.

Grand County is a county on the east central edge of the U.S. state of Utah, United States. As of the 2020 United States census, the population was 9,669.^[1] Its county seat and largest city is Moab.^[2]

Grand County is home to one of the nine statewide regional campuses of Utah State University (located in the city of Moab) and serves as a gateway to both Arches and Canyonlands National Parks.

History [edit]

Evidence of indigenous occupation up to 10,000 BCE has been previously discovered in Grand County. The present city of Moab is the site of pueblo farming communities of the 11th and 12th centuries. These groups had already vanished from the area when the first European explorers entered the country, with nomadic Ute tribes inhabiting the area at the time of contact.

The European-based settlement of the area began with the arrival of Mormon pioneers in 1847. By 1855 they had sent missionary settlers into eastern Utah Territory. An Elk Mountain Mission was established but closed after a few months due to Indian raids. For several decades after that, the future Moab area (known as "Spanish Valley") was visited only by trappers and prospectors. Permanent settlement began in 1877. These early settlers, coming in from the north, encountered the deep canyon walls of the Grand River and could not take wagons over or around the steep canyon walls.

They unloaded their supplies, dismantled the wagons, and lowered them by rope to the river valley. They then drove their oxen over a canyon rim, down deep sand dunes. After the wagons were reassembled and supplies reloaded, they made their way through the deep sand to the river. They found a place to ford the river below the present bridge in north Moab. They later established a ferry at the crossing site, which remained in use until the first bridge was built in 1921.

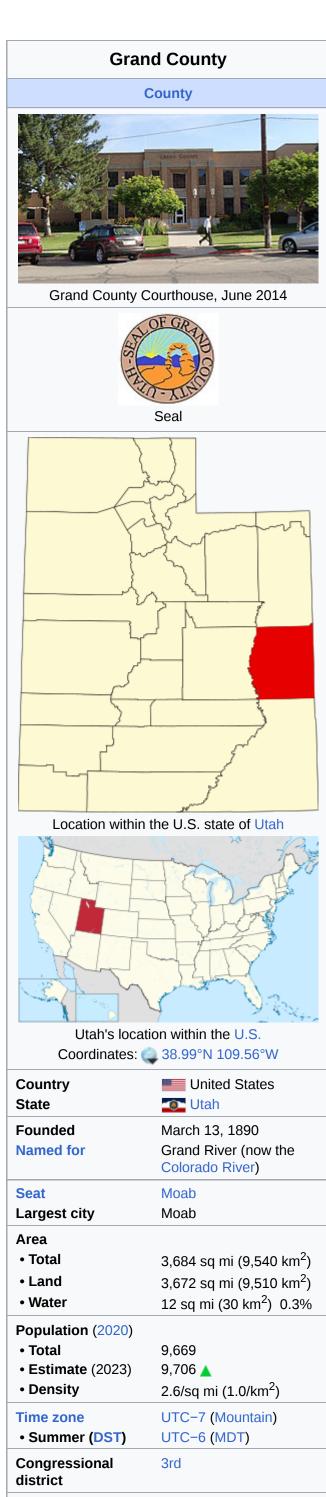
In 1881 the area was known as Grand Valley, and Moab was a "wild west" town. A 1991 visitor to Moab later said it was the toughest town in Utah because the area and surrounding country have many deep canyons, rivers, mountains, and wilderness areas, becoming a hideout for outlaws. The local economy was initially based on farming and livestock. Mining came in at the end of the 19th century, and the railroad arrived. The first school in the county was started in 1881. Mormon settlers began planting fruit trees by 1879, and by 1910 Moab was a significant fruit-production center.

Due to the distances involved, the settlers of eastern Emery County found it difficult to conduct county business in that county's seat. By March 13, 1890, their petitions caused the Utah Territory legislature to designate the eastern portion of the county as a separate entity, to be named Grand County, named for the Grand River (whose name was changed to Colorado River in 1921). The county boundaries were adjusted in 1892 and in 2003.

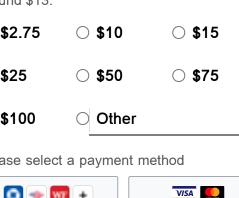
Exploration for deep petroleum deposits began in the 1920s, and this industry has significantly contributed to the economy since that time. Other significant industries include uranium mining and filmmaking.^[3]



Geography [edit]



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Coordinates: 🥥 38.99°N 109.56°W

Grand County lies on the east side of Utah. Its east border abuts the

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west border of the state of Colorado. The Green River flows southward through the eastern part of central Utah, and its meandering course defines the western border of Grand County. The Colorado River enters the east side of Grand County from Colorado, flowing southwestward toward its confluence with the Green in San Juan County, south of Grand. The Dolores River also enters Grand County from Colorado, flowing westward to its confluence with the Colorado River near Dewey.

Website

Grand County terrain is arid, rough, and spectacularly carved by water and wind erosion, exposing red rock formations that have created a solid tourist industry. The area is little used for agriculture unless irrigation is available.^[4] The terrain is filled with hills and protuberances, but generally slopes to the south and to the west. Its highest point is Mount Waas in the SE part of the county, at 12,336 ft (3,760 m) ASL.^[5] The county has a total area of 3,684 square miles (9,540 km²), of which 3,672 square miles (9,510 km²) is land and 12 square miles (31 km²) (0.3%) is water.^[6] Deserts, cliffs and plateaus make up the scenery, with few settlements apart from the city of Moab, a Colorado River oasis. Arches National Park lies in the southern part of the county, just north of Moab. A northern portion of Canyonlands National Park lies in the southwest corner of the county.

Airport [edit]

Canyonlands Field (CNY) northwest of Moab

Major highways [edit]

- United States Interstate I-70
- US-191
- Utah State Highway UT-128
- Utah State Highway UT-313

Adjacent counties [edit]

- Uintah County north
- Garfield County, Colorado northeast
- Mesa County, Colorado east
- Montrose County, Colorado southeast
- San Juan County south
- Emery County west
- Carbon County northwest

Protected areas [edit]

- Arches National Park
- Canyonlands National Park (part)
- Dead Horse Point State Park (part)
- Manti-La Sal National Forest (part)
- McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area (part)

Lakes and reservoirs [edit]

- Beaver Pond
- Big Flat Reservoir
- Blue Flat Reservoir
- Crescent Wash Reservoir
- Dead Sheep Pond
- Dons Lake
- Hidden Lake
- Holding Pond
- Jackson Reservoir
- Ken's Lake^[7]
- Mud Lake
- Oowah Lake
- Pace Lake^[8]
- Rock Corral Reservoir
- Strychnine Pond
- Tenmile Wash Reservoir
- Tie Pond
- Twin Pond
- Valley City Reservoir
- Warner Lake^[9]
- Weaver Reservoir
- Yellow Cat Reservoir

Demographics [edit]

2020 census [edit]

According to the 2020 United States census^[16] and 2020 American Community Survey,^[17] there were 9,669 people in Grand County with a population density of 2.6 people per square mile (1.0/km²). Among non-Hispanic or Latino people, the racial makeup was 7,481 (77.4%) White, 65 (0.7%) African American, 330 (3.4%) Native American, 80 (0.8%) Asian, 11 (0.1%) Pacific Islander, 62 (0.6%) from other races, and 414 (4.3%) from two or more races. 1,226 (12.7%) people were Hispanic or Latino.

There were 4,810 (49.75%) males and 4,859 (50.25%) females, and the population distribution by age was 2,047 (21.2%) under the age of 18, 5,823 (60.2%) from 18 to 64, and 1,799 (18.6%) who were at least 65 years old. The median age was 40.5 years.

There were 4,006 households in Grand County with an average size of 2.41 of which 2,416 (60.3%) were families and 1,590 (39.7%) were non-families. Among all families, 1,676 (41.8%) were married couples, 260 (6.5%) were male householders with no spouse, and 480 (12.0%) were female householders with no spouse. Among all nonfamilies, 1,206 (30.1%) were a single person living alone and 384 (9.6%) were two or more people living together. 1,123 (28.0%) of all households had children under the age of 18. 2,632 (65.7%) of households were owner-occupied while 1,374 (34.3%) were renter-occupied.

Historical population							
Census	Pop.	<u>%</u> ±					
1890	541						
1900	1,149	112.4%					
1910	1,595	38.8%					
1920	1,808	13.4%					
1930	1,813	0.3%					
1940	2,070	14.2%					
1950	1,903	-8.1%					
1960	6,345	233.4%					
1970	6,688	5.4%					
1980	8,241	23.2%					
1990	6,620	-19.7%					
2000	8,485	28.2%					
2010	9,225	8.7%					
2020	9,669	4.8%					
	US Decennial Census ^[10]						
$1790 - 1960^{[11]} 1900 - 1990^{[12]}$							

1990-2000^[13] 2010^[14] 2020^[15]

The median income for a Grand County household was \$56,639 and the median family income was \$68,216, with a per-capita income of \$30,948. The median income for males that were full-time employees was \$47,736 and for females \$36,180. 14.0% of the population and 11.5% of families were below the poverty line.

In terms of education attainment, out of the 7,137 people in Grand County 25 years or older, 442 (6.2%) had not completed high school, 1,931 (27.1%) had a high school diploma or equivalency, 2,576 (36.1%) had some college or associate degree, 1,233 (17.3%) had a bachelor's degree, and 955 (13.4%) had a graduate or professional degree.

Religion [edit]

Grand County has the lowest percentage of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) among all Utah counties. About 26% of Grand County residents identify as Latter-day Saints, significantly lower than the 62% of Utah as a whole.^[18]

Politics and government [edit]

Historically, following the period of William Jennings Bryan and Woodrow Wilson, Grand County has generally voted Republican. Between 1920 and 1988 (inclusive), it voted Democratic only four times: thrice for Franklin Roosevelt, and once for Lyndon Johnson. However, it has become a swing county recent years, voting Democratic thrice in the last nine presidential elections (for Bill Clinton in 1992, Barack Obama in 2008, Joe Biden in 2020, and Kamala Harris in 2024). The highest vote share any Republican has received in the county in the last nine elections was 51.1% (by George W. Bush in 2004); Joe Biden's 53.9% was the highest vote share for any nominee of either party since 1988, as well as the highest for a Democrat in the county since 1936.

Grand County is one of only thirteen counties to have voted for Obama in 2008, Romney in 2012, Trump in 2016, and Biden in 2020.^[a]

State elected offices					
Position	District	Name	Affiliation	First elected	
Senate	27	David Hinkins	Republican	2008 ^[19]	
House of Representatives	69	Christine Watkins	Republican	2016 ^[20]	
House of Representatives	70	Carl Albrecht	Republican	2016 ^[21]	
Board of Education	14	Mark Huntsman	Nonpartisan	2014 ^[22]	

Moab has a significant environmentalist population due to nearby Arches National Park and Canyonlands National Park.^[24]

Sagebrush Rebellion [edit]



Grand County was an epicenter of the Sagebrush Rebellion, which took place during the late 1970s and early 1980s when residents protested what they saw as overreaching Federal control of

Western US land.

An early event in the Rebellion was July 4, 1980, when 300 Grand County residents gathered behind a flagdecorated bulldozer in protest of the inclusion of Mill Creek Canyon as part of a Bureau of Land Management wilderness study area. Despite plowing nearly 200 yards up the canyon, the group did not reach the study area's boundary.

Paleontology [edit]

The Denver Museum of Natural History opened a small Cedar Mountain Formation quarry that has produced diverse dinosaur fossils including theropod, sauropod and ornithopod. An adult sauropod was designated the type specimen of the genus Venenosaurus.^[25]

Communities [edit]

Cities [edit]

- Moab (county)
- seat)

Towns [edit]

Castle Valley

Census-

designated places [edit]

 Thompson Springs

Unincorporated

communities

[edit]

- Castleton
- Cisco

Dewey

毳 日 Map of Grand County communities

1896

28

9.59%

43.19% 2,806 2020 2,248 53.91% 151 2.90% 1,975 **42.93%** 1,960 42.60% 14.48% 2016 666 5.75% 2012 1,996 **50.53%** 1,727 43.72% 227 2008 1,871 45.65% 2,067 50.43% 161 3.93% 2,130 2004 **51.14%** 1,858 44.61% 177 4.25% **50.42%** 1,158 32.04% 17.54% 2000 1,822 634 1,384 **42.57%** 1,199 36.88% 668 20.55% 1996 32.91% 1,160 34.71% 1,082 32.38% 1992 1,100 1,895 **58.34%** 1,287 39.62% 2.03% **1988** 66 0.83% **1984** 2,463 **73.15%** 876 26.02% 28 20.96% **1980** 2,362 **70.42%** 703 289 8.62% 5.01% 1976 1,781 **62.38%** 931 32.61% 143 **1972** 1,837 72.15% 560 22.00% 149 5.85% 30.00% 9.12% **1968** 1,435 60.88% 707 215 49.67% 1,145 1964 1,130 50.33% 0 0.00% 1960 1,130 58.40% 805 41.60% 0 0.00% 1956 1,044 76.09% 328 23.91% 0 0.00% 72.27% 0.00% **1952** 675 259 27.73% 0 1.09% **1948** 418 50.54% 400 48.37% 9 **1944** 428 52.64% 380 46.74% 5 0.62% 0.34% **1940** 432 49.04% 446 50.62% 3

United States presidential election results for Grand County, Utah^[23] [hide]

No. 🗢

Democratic

%

53.32%

\$

Third party(ies)

No. 🗢

144

% ♦

2.73%

Republican

No. 🗢

2,322

% ♦

43.95% 2,817

Year 🗢

2024

1936 272 33.62% 521 64.40% 16 1.98% 1932 278 34.53% 506 62.86% 21 2.61% 347 52.58% 310 46.97% 3 0.45% **1928** 1924 278 47.93% 243 41.90% 59 10.17% **1920** 306 51.17% 278 46.49% 14 2.34% **1916** 213 39.52% 306 56.77% 20 3.71% 1912 191 33.75% 212 37.46% 163 28.80% 232 45.17% 29 6.09% 1908 48.74% 215 1904 262 57.21% 165 36.03% 31 6.77% 204 52.85% 4 1.04% 1900 178 46.11%

264

90.41%

0

0.00%

- Mesa
- Richardson
- Westwater

Former

communities

- [edit]
- Agate
- Basin
- Cottonwood
- Elba
- Floy
- Harley Dome
- Sego
- Valley City

See also [edit]

- National Register of Historic Places listings in Grand County, Utah
- Greentown Gas Condensate Field
- Moab uranium mill tailings pile
- List of counties in Utah

Notes [edit]

a. ^ The other twelve are Butte County, California; Teton County, Idaho; Kent County, Maryland; Kendall County, Illinois; McLean County, Illinois; Tippecanoe County, Indiana; Kent County, Michigan; Leelanau County, Michigan; Carroll County, New Hampshire; Rockingham County, New Hampshire; Marion County, Oregon; and Albany County, Wyoming.

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Further reading [edit]

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External links [edit]

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V•T•E	Places adjacent to Grand County, Utah		[show]	
V•T•E	Municipalities and communities of Grand County, Utah, United	States	[show]	
V•T•E	State of Utah		[show]	
	Authority control databases 🖍		[show]	
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