

2. Environmental Factors

Environmental factors can influence a county’s agriculture, economic standing, recreation, and the quality of life of its residents. Climate is a key factor in determining what types of limitations or opportunities exist for agricultural production or recreational activities. The waste indicator is a measure of greenhouse gas emissions from landfills in a particular area. Proper waste management protects public health, safety, and the environment. This section provides information useful for making decisions concerning residential and business location.

Many state parks in mountainous El Dorado County offer a variety of recreational opportunities. Due to the mountainous geography and extreme seasonal weather changes, there are ever-changing recreational opportunities in El Dorado County. Below, the county’s eight state parks and recreation areas are listed according to acreage.

State Parks and Recreation Areas

<u>Area</u>	<u>Acres</u>
D.L. Bliss State Park	2,148.93
Emerald Bay State Park	1,464.71
Auburn State Recreation Area	42,000
Folsom Lake State Recreation Area	19,549.67
Lake Valley State Recreation Area	155.39
Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park	286.59
Sugar Pine Point State Park	2,324.46
Washoe Meadows State Park	627.73

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Climate Data

Overview

This indicator shows climate readings from selected weather stations in El Dorado County. Climate data is collected on an ongoing basis and is reported by the Western Regional Climate Center in December of each year unless otherwise noted. The data expresses an annual average calculated over the time indicated below.

It is important to know what types of weather a certain area may experience because of extremes of heat and cold, and severe storms may reduce the desirability of an area for tourists or retirees. These conditions may occur in a particular season and limit the attractiveness of an area at certain times of the year. This information can be useful for determining which particular businesses might be viable in a specific area.

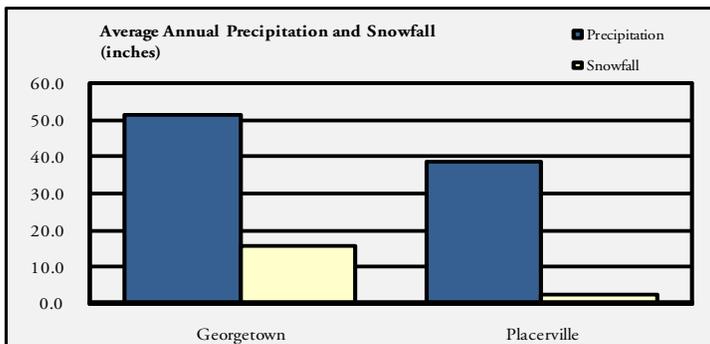
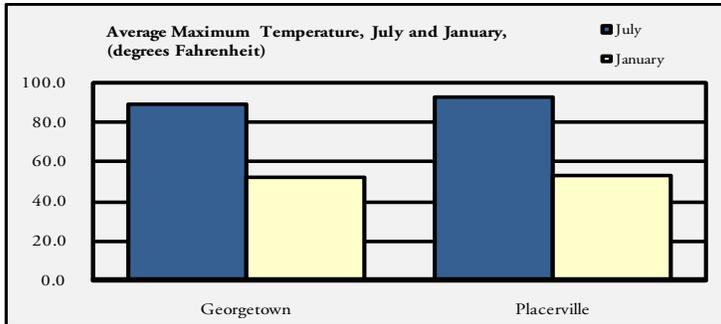
El Dorado County

The two weather stations in El Dorado County are located in Georgetown and Placerville. Of these, Georgetown reports the most precipitation with an annual average of 51.1 inches. The following figure shows the average temperatures and precipitation rates in winter and summer for each weather station in the county.

Climate Station Readings as of June 2007

	Georgetown	Placerville
Average July maximum temp. (deg.)	89.1	92.6
Average January maximum temp. (deg.)	52.2	53.3
Average July minimum temp. (deg.)	60.6	57.0
Average January minimum temp. (deg.)	34.0	32.4
Average July precipitation (in.)	0.1	0.1
Average January precipitation (in.)	10.0	7.0
Average annual precipitation (in.)	51.1	38.4
Average January snowfall (in.)	5.3	1.2
Average annual snowfall (in.)	15.9	2.7

Source: Western Regional Climate Center



Waste Data

Overview

Waste that is landfilled negatively affects our environment due to high levels of greenhouse gases that are generated and emitted into the atmosphere. Two greenhouse gases make up the majority of the pollution at every solid waste landfill: Carbon Dioxide and Methane. CO₂ and Methane are created through the anaerobic decomposition breakdown of a waste stream. Methane is an extremely potent molecule, and poses a great threat to our environment because it is 23×10^{19} times more potent than CO₂. Diversion programs such as recycling are ways to reduce the current level of GHGs that are emitted into the atmosphere. The concepts of recycle, reduce, and reuse can be implemented in every county, city, industry, and home to reduce the amount of waste that is being sent to the landfills.

This indicator includes the level of waste that was generated and sent to the landfills by El Dorado County in 2004, with additional per capita statistics. The table which follows also compares the per capita waste generated in the county with the California state average along with other counties of similar size. These comparisons show how well a county is doing to divert its waste and to suggest that there may be more opportunities available to a county.

In 2004 California sent over 38 million tons of waste to the landfills, which equates to the average person contributing about 1.07 tons of waste in that year alone.

Many counties have taken steps forward to reduce their impacts on the environment by signing on to the Mayor's Clean Air Climate Protection Agreement, which strives to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol Targets, while enacting policies that will regulate greenhouse gas and air pollution levels. Over 600 city mayors across the country have signed on to this agreement, 115 of which are from cities within California.

Over all Waste Stream Disposal in 2004

	Total Tons of Solid Waste Generated in 2004	2004 Population	Per/Cap Tons of Solid Waste 2004
California	38,789,018	36,199,342	1.07
El Dorado	186,161	169,830	1.10
Butte	220,515	212,393	1.04
Shasta	186,650	175,686	1.06
Humbolt	110,240	130,452	0.85

Source: California Integrated Waste Management Board

