

2.0 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS continued

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percent. Between 1970 and 1975 the population of Lea County increased from 49,554, at the time of the 1970 Census, to 51,200 for mid-1975.

Thus, both counties sustained population decreases in the 1960 decade precipitated principally by depressed conditions in the mining sector, the basic industry supporting the economy in both counties. The decrease in the potash mining activity was caused by Canadian potash dumping on national and international markets.

Eddy County contains four municipalities: the Cities of Artesia and Carlsbad, and the Villages of Loving and Hope. The largest of these is Carlsbad which recorded a population of 21,297 in 1970. The estimates prepared for this study show that the population in mid-1976 has grown to 25,000-- still below the population of 25,541 achieved in 1960. Artesia, the second largest municipality, recorded a 1970 population of 10,300. Again, this was down from a 1960 population of 12,000. Both the Villages of Hope and Loving are small. In 1970 Hope registered a population of 90, and Loving had a population of 1,192.

In Eddy County some 97.1 percent of the population is white by race, while only 2.2 percent are black by race, with an additional 0.7 percent of racial minority groups other than black. The Spanish ethnic group is fairly large; 25.4 percent of the population is of Spanish origin or descent.

Lea County has five municipalities: the Cities of Hobbs, Lovington, Eunice and Jal, and the Town of Tatum. In 1970 these municipalities had respective populations of 26,025, 8,915, 2,641, 2,602, and 982. In Lea County 93.7 percent of the population is white, while 5.3 percent of the population