

About WFO Grand Junction:

WFO Grand Junction is located at the Grand Junction Regional Airport in west central Colorado. The modernized National Weather Service office in Grand Junction “opened” in 1995. Five meteorologists, Science and Operations Officer, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, and a Service Hydrologist joined the new office and began providing weather services to the people that live in the eighteen western Colorado counties and the four eastern Utah counties. By 1999, five additional meteorologists joined the staff. The office provides forecast services that include aviation and fire weather. Terminal Aviation Forecasts (TAF) are issued routinely and amended when necessary for the airports in Grand Junction, Rifle, Aspen, Eagle, Montrose, and Vernal. Seasonal fire weather forecasts are available from April through October. In addition to forecasts, hydrological services are available for the major rivers and tributaries throughout western Colorado and eastern Utah.

Description of Grand Junction:

Grand Junction, the largest city in western Colorado, lies on the confluence of the Colorado (formerly Grand) and Gunnison River, for which the city is named. Located near the western Colorado border, Grand Junction is the largest city between Salt Lake City and Denver. Major highways include Interstate 70 and Highway 50. Grand Junction serves as the banking, the health care provider, and retail center for western Colorado and eastern Utah.

Statistics:	Population	Grand Junction: 51,631 Metropolitan area: 139,082
	Elevation	4,586 feet
	Median Household Income	\$42,596
	Sales Taxes	State: 2.9% County: 2.0% City: 2.75%
	Other Taxes	Income: 4.63% Property: 7.96%
	Real Estate	Residential (2007, median): \$220,000
	Cost of Living	101.0 (on a national scale where 100.0 is average)

Geography:

Grand Junction sits on the northeastern portion of the Colorado plateau, a land of outstanding natural beauty and ecological diversity. The high semi-arid region is a huge basin that ranges in elevation from 5000 to 11000 feet. The Colorado plateau consists of rugged terrain, slot canyons, mountains, and river gorges with whitewater rapids.

There are four national parks within the forecast area of WFO Grand Junction, Arches, Canyonlands, Black Canyon, and Mesa Verde. There are numerous national monuments, including Colorado (just outside the city limits of Grand Junction) and Dinosaur.

Recreation:

The Grand Valley offers an abundance of outdoor activities. The Colorado National Monument contains towering rock spires and majestic canyons offering panoramic views of the Grand Valley. There are many hiking trails of various lengths in the “Monument”, some of them vigorous. Adjacent to the Monument are Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness and McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area, more remote that offers natural arches (the second largest concentration of arches in the country) and unusual landscapes.

Grand Junction has become a mountain biking destination with well known challenging trails, such as the Tabeguache and Kokopelli. The terrain from desert landscapes to mountain aspen groves offers diversity for people of differing riding abilities.

Several golf courses are available throughout the Grand Valley, ranging from a 9-hole course in the downtown area to the championship course at the Redlands Mesa Golf Club.

Rising 6000 feet above the Grand Valley is the Grand Mesa, the largest flat top mountain in the world. The forested Grand Mesa has more than 200 lakes and 700 miles of hiking, biking, snowmobiling, and cross country skiing. Powderhorn ski area offers downhill skiing. The Grand Mesa is a one hour drive from Grand Junction.

The Grand Valley is the focal point of Colorado’s wine country with 17 wineries. Go on a dinosaur expedition, as eastern Utah and western Colorado has many dinosaur quarries. Raft down the Colorado River, scale red rock canyons, or go see wild horses roam the hills of the Little Bookcliffs Wild Horse Area.

Education:

All levels of school are available in school district 51 with 27 elementary, 14 middle, and 8 high schools. There are also 10 private schools in the area as an alternative choice. Mesa State College is a 4 year school that offers affordable tuition. Western Colorado Community College is a branch of Mesa State.

Economy:

In recent years, Grand Junction has a strong diverse economy compared to the rest of the country. The driving force behind the strong economy has been oil and gas. The Piceance Basin, north of the Grand Valley, is an energy rich region loaded with natural gas. Also, western Colorado has the largest concentration of oil shale in the world. In addition to energy related jobs, the major contributors to the economy include health care, tourism, agriculture, livestock and service. In 2002, Grand Junction was considered 5th in a list of “entrepreneurial hot spots”, and the metropolitan area was ranked 17th strongest in the country.

Accommodations, Eating, and Transportation:

Nearly all of the lodging chains can be found in Grand Junction, several of those within one mile of the local National Weather Service office. There are plenty of eating establishments throughout town, ranging from fast food, moderate priced diners, and fine dining.

Grand Valley Transit offers public transportation services for Grand Junction, Fruita, Clifton, Orchard Mesa, and Palisade.

Climate:

Grand Junction (1971-2000)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Average Max. Temperature (F)	37.4	46.1	56.5	65.4	75.8	87.6	93.0	90.1	80.9	67.2	49.0	39.0	65.9
Average Min. Temperature (F)	17.0	24.0	31.9	38.8	47.4	57.0	63.3	61.9	53.0	40.8	27.6	18.8	40.2
Average Total Precipitation (in.)	0.59	0.57	0.92	0.91	0.92	0.45	0.66	0.84	0.92	0.93	0.75	0.55	9.01
Average Total SnowFall (in.)	6.0	3.8	3.0	0.9	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	2.4	4.9	21.6

Links of Interest:

City of Grand Junction: <http://www.gjcity.org/>

Mesa County: <http://www.mesacounty.us/default.aspx>

Grand Junction Visitor and Convention Bureau: <http://www.visitgrandjunction.com/>

Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.gjchamber.org/index.asp>

Western Colorado Real Estate: <http://www.wcrem.com/>

Colorado National Monument: <http://www.nps.gov/colm/>

Grand Mesa National Forest: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/index.shtml>

BLM Grand Junction recreation page: <http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/gjfo/recreation.html>