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## **Population Growth in High-Amenity Rural Areas: Does it Bring Socioeconomic Benefits for Long-Term Residents?\***

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### **Abstract**

**Objective.** A widely noted concern with amenity-driven rural population growth is its potential to yield only low-wage service-sector employment for long-term residents, while raising local costs of living. This research examines change in socioeconomic status during the 1990s for long-term residents of high-amenity, high-growth rural counties in the United States.

**Methods.** Using longitudinal data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, in combination with county-level information, we estimate growth-curve models to examine the extent to which the socioeconomic status of long-term residents is associated with amenity-related in-migration.

**Results.** We find that, on average, residents in high-growth, amenity-rich rural areas have higher income growth over time and higher levels of initial occupational prestige compared to those from other rural areas, but that socioeconomic gains are primarily for individuals with low baseline prestige.

**Conclusions.** The socioeconomic gains made by long-term residents of high-growth, amenity-rich rural areas associated with net in-migration may be limited to individuals with low initial prestige and growth may be due to low-skill service-sector jobs.