

✓ County growth higher than average

Study puts Santa Cruz at number 18 on state's fastest-growing list

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8-9-90

SANTA CRUZ — Santa Cruz County was the 18th fastest-growing county in California during the 1980s, edging out its counterpart in Silicon Valley — Santa Clara County, which ranked 23rd.

The just-released study by the Palo Alto-based Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy determined the 10-year growth rate by looking at five specific criteria — not simply population growth, center spokeswoman Aviva Bernstein said Wednesday. While that criteria included growth, it also looked at retail

sales, per capita income, jobs and assessed valuations of property.

In all five categories, the growth in Santa Cruz County was above that of the state average.

In terms of straight population growth, Santa Cruz County grew 25 percent during the 1980s, ranking 32nd in the state. Bernstein said the local population went from 188,000 in January 1980 to 235,000 in January 1990. The 25 percent increase was slightly above the state's average of 24½ percent.

Santa Cruz County ranked ninth statewide in per capita income with a figure of \$19,936 per person. That was an 81 percent increase from the \$11,031 income figure 10

years ago. Statewide, per capita income increased 69 percent.

The county was 16th in jobs, increasing from 64,000 to 90,000 for a 40 percent jump. The statewide average was 26 percent. In retail sales, the county was 17th with \$1.3 billion in 1990 compared to \$654 million in 1980. That translates to a 93 percent increase compared to 87 percent statewide. In assessed valuation, the county was 24th, having increased 236 percent from \$4.6 billion to \$10.8 billion. The statewide average was 144 percent.

The study also looked at the 10-year growth trend of 451 California cities, ranking the top 100, Bernstein said. She could not give a

ranking for any of Santa Cruz County's four cities since all were far down the list. Most of the decade's growth occurred in Southern California, according to the report.

Twenty of the 25 fastest-growing cities were in Southern California, according to the report. Pleasanton in Alameda County was the sixth fastest-growing city, Vacaville was 10th and Suisun City was ranked 15th.

Riverside and San Bernardino counties were the two fastest-growing counties of the state's 58 counties.