Redistricting, the Census, and Drawing the Lines in Colorado

League of Women Voters of Colorado

2020

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF COLORADO

Independent Commissions to Draw Fair Maps for Colorado

Commission Membership

- Equal number of Independents, Republicans and Democrats
- Independents are chosen by lottery and retired or senior judges
- Republican and Democratic members chosen by a combination of judges, lottery, and parties

Criteria for Drawing Maps

- As close as possible to equal population
- Non-partisan professional staff draw initial maps
- Compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act
- Protect communities of interest, including minorities and rural communities
- Keep jurisdictions together as much as possible
- Contiguous
- Shortest boundary possible
- Competitive

Independent Commissions to Draw Fair Maps for Colorado

Decision Making
- Require a super-majority, including at least two of the Independent members, to pass any maps

Transparency
- Commissioners subject to Sunshine Laws
- All communication subject to open records requests
- No backroom deals to present last minute maps that aren't subject to the public process
- All meetings held in public forums

LIMITS ON COMMISION MEMBERSHIP

A person **cannot serve** on an independent commission **if they are or have been:**

AMENDMENT Y - Congressional	AMENDMENT Z - Legislative
A candidate in a federal election in last 5 years	A candidate for the legislature in the last 5 years
Paid by a congressional campaign in last 5 years	Paid by a legislative campaign in the last 3 years
An elected party official or party employee within the last 3 years	
An elected official at the federal, state, county or municipal level within the last 3 years	
A current member of the other independent commission	
A registered professional lobbyist within the last 3 years	

LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION TIMELINE

By Nov 10
- Applications from interested parties due and approved

By Jan 25
- 3-retired-judge panel randomly selects from approved applicants initial pools of 300 Rs, 300 Ds and 450 Us

TBD
- 3-judge panel hold at least 1 public meeting before reducing pools to 50 Rs, 50 Ds and 50 Us by Jan. 18

LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION TIMELINE

By Feb 15

- First 6 commissioners (2 Rs, 2Ds and 2 Us) picked at random from 50-applicant pools [No more than 1 per CD]

By Feb 16

- Senate Majority Leader, Senate Minority Leader, House Majority Leader, and House Minority Leader each submit 10 names from initial pools of 300 applicants (20 Rs and 20Ds)

By Mar 16

- Final 6 (2 Rs, 2 Ds and 2 Us) picked: 3-judge panel unanimously selects 2 Us from initial pool of 450 and 1 name from each leader's list (2Ds and 2Rs) to ensure at least 1 member from each CD (no more than 2 from a CD) and reflects Colorado geographically and demographically.

Public Hearings/Transparency

- One or more public hearings by August 10 prior to the redistricting year (2021) concerning the application form

- One or more public hearings by February 15 of the redistricting year regarding the 150 applicants in the pool at this point

- All proposed rules are subject to at least 72 hours of advance public notice and may be amended during commission deliberations without notice of specific related amendments

- Three hearings in each Congressional District – at least one west of the Continental Divide, at least one east of the Continental Divide and south of El Paso County or east of Arapahoe County – with at least 10 commissioners present electronically or in person

Public Hearings/Transparency

- Website for public use
- Access to public hearings
- Open meetings requirements
- Communication between public and staff only during public meetings
- Lobbyists must disclose activities to Colorado Secretary of State

Ensure compliance with the following drawing of district line requirements:
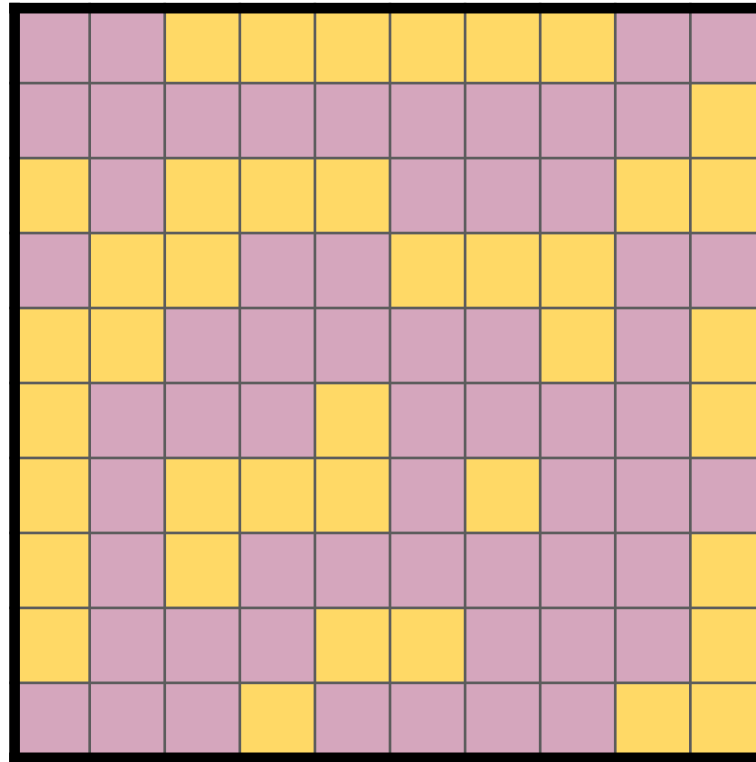
- Make a good faith effort to achieve mathematical population equality
- Preserve whole communities of interest and whole political subdivisions to the extent possible (counties, cities, and towns)
- Minimize the number of split subdivisions
- Ensure districts are compact
- Thereafter, maximize the number of politically competitive districts
- No protection of incumbents or political parties
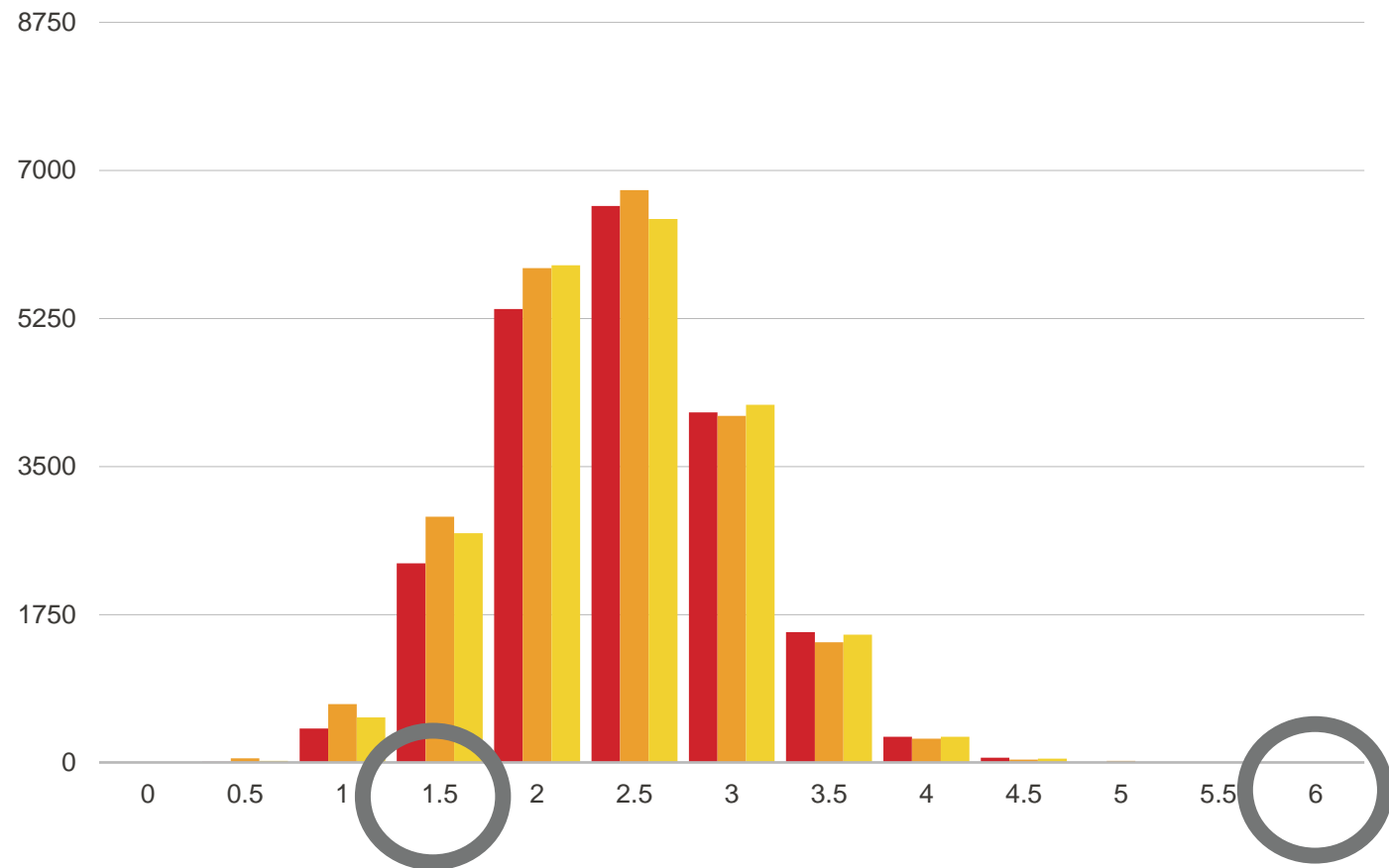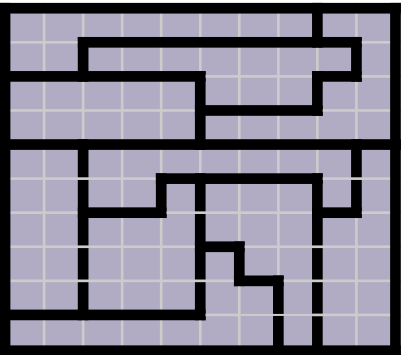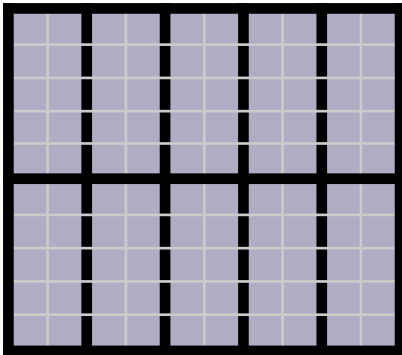- No denial or abridgement of any citizen's right to vote

Drawing the Maps

OrangePink Land is a 10×10 grid with 40 orange voters.
They want to make 10 equal population districts.

How many "should" orange win?

Produce 100,000 random districting plans.
How many orange seats in each?

Based on slide by Moon Duchin

How math detects gerrymandering

- Make a data-rich map of precinct boundaries, population, and real voting data.

- Create an ensemble of millions of random maps that create viable districts with equal population.

- Use real voting data to determine outcome of elections with these random district lines.

- Create a bar chart showing how often different outcomes occur.

- Gives a picture of what is likely for districts drawn without partisan bias.

- If a map is an outlier in this world, it's very unlikely to have been drawn without bias. Evidence of gerrymandering!

Also a new and powerful tool to understand the distinctive political landscape of a state.

The accuracy of this analysis depends on the quality of the 2020 Census!!!