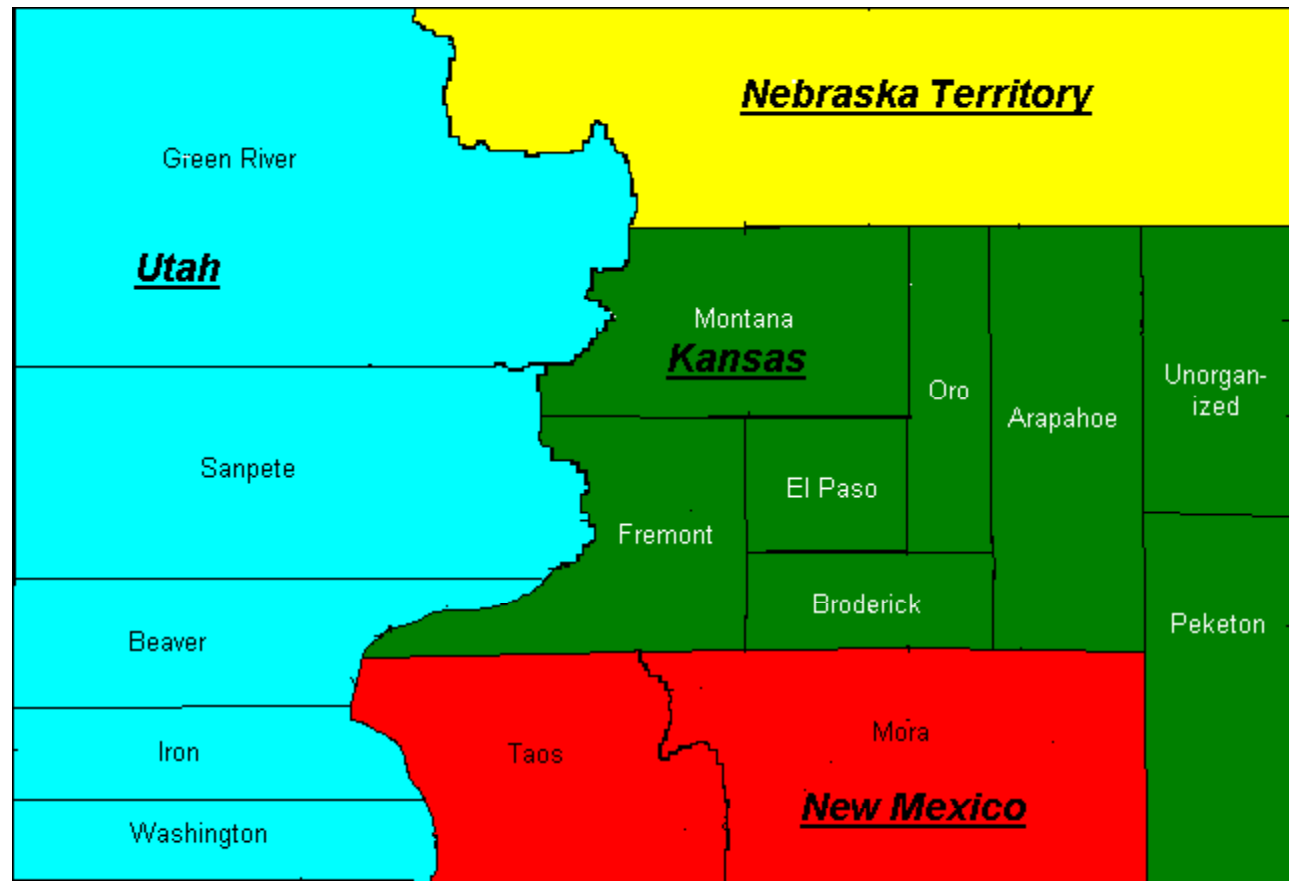


Colorado Counties

A Sesquicentennial
Celebration

When Colorado Territory was organized, other territories were already attempting to create county governments.

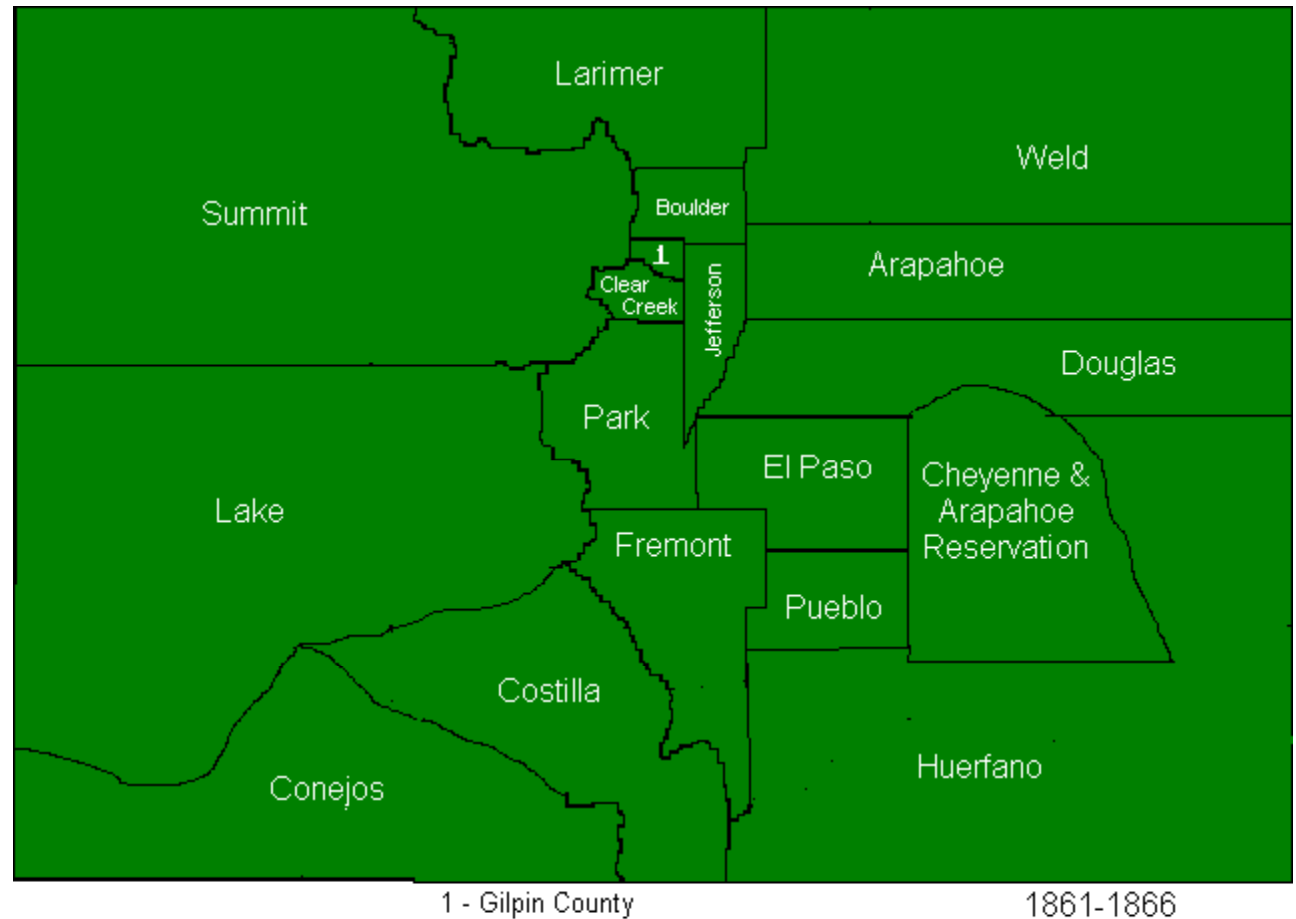
We still have documents in the vaults that use “K.T.” for Kansas Territory...



The area that became Colorado as it was 1860-1861

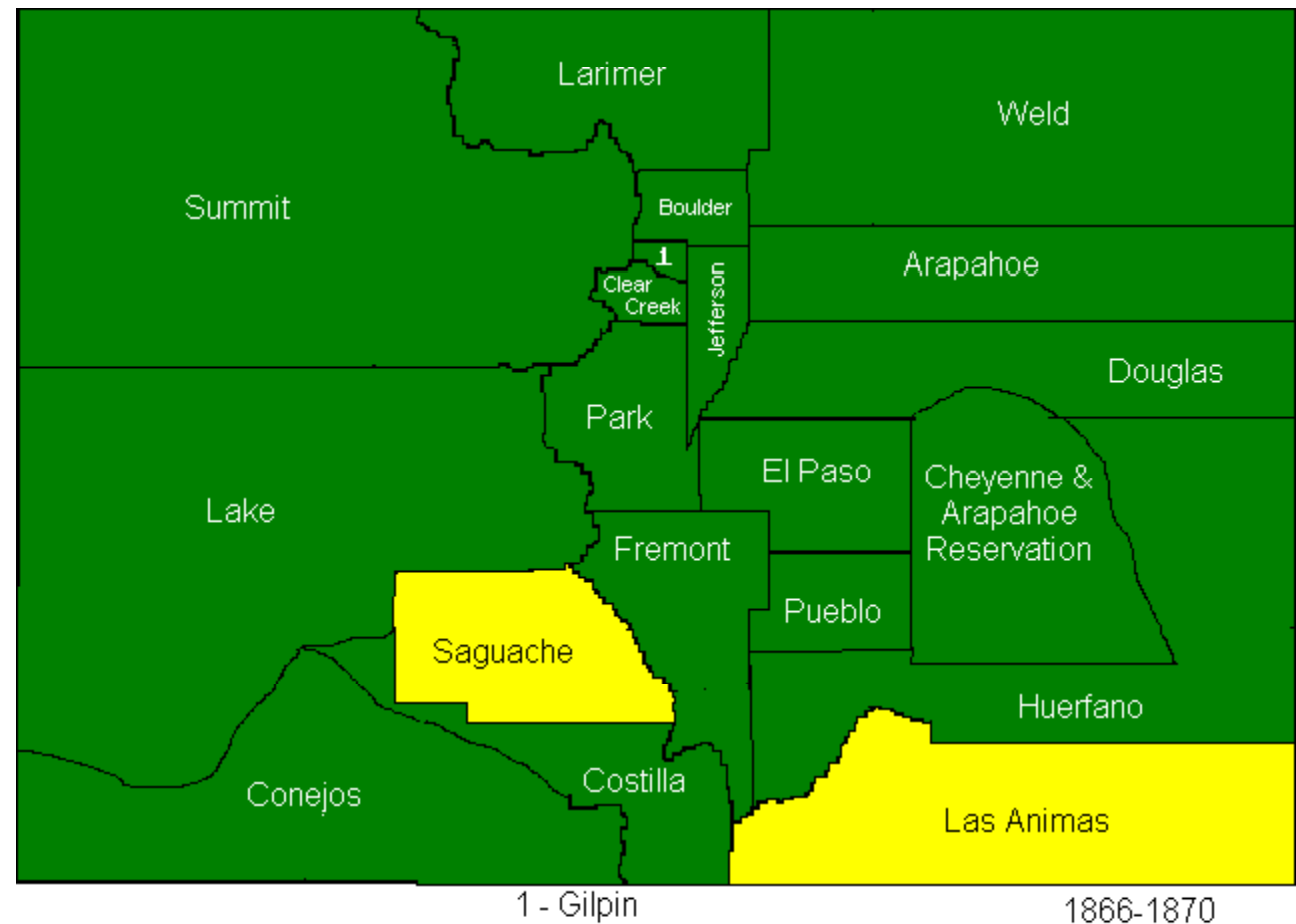
The first Colorado territorial legislature created 17 counties, effective Nov. 1, 1861.

All these counties remain today, but only two—Gilpin and Clear Creek—retain their original boundaries. Note the Indian lands, not originally part of any county.



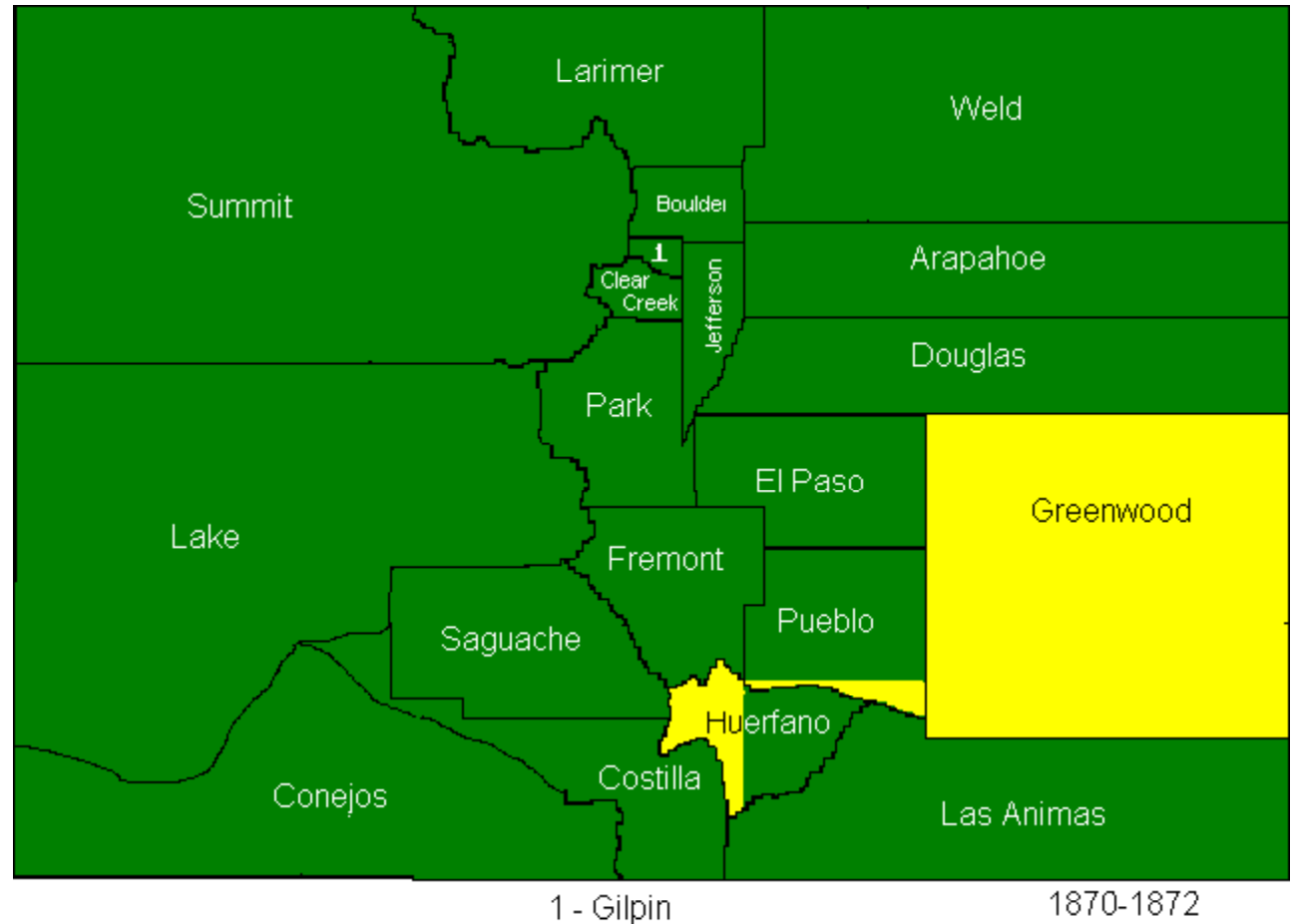
Within 5 years—by 1866—more counties were being added as populations shifted.

An even earlier change was made just five **days** after the original formation, when Guadalupe County changed its name to Conejos.



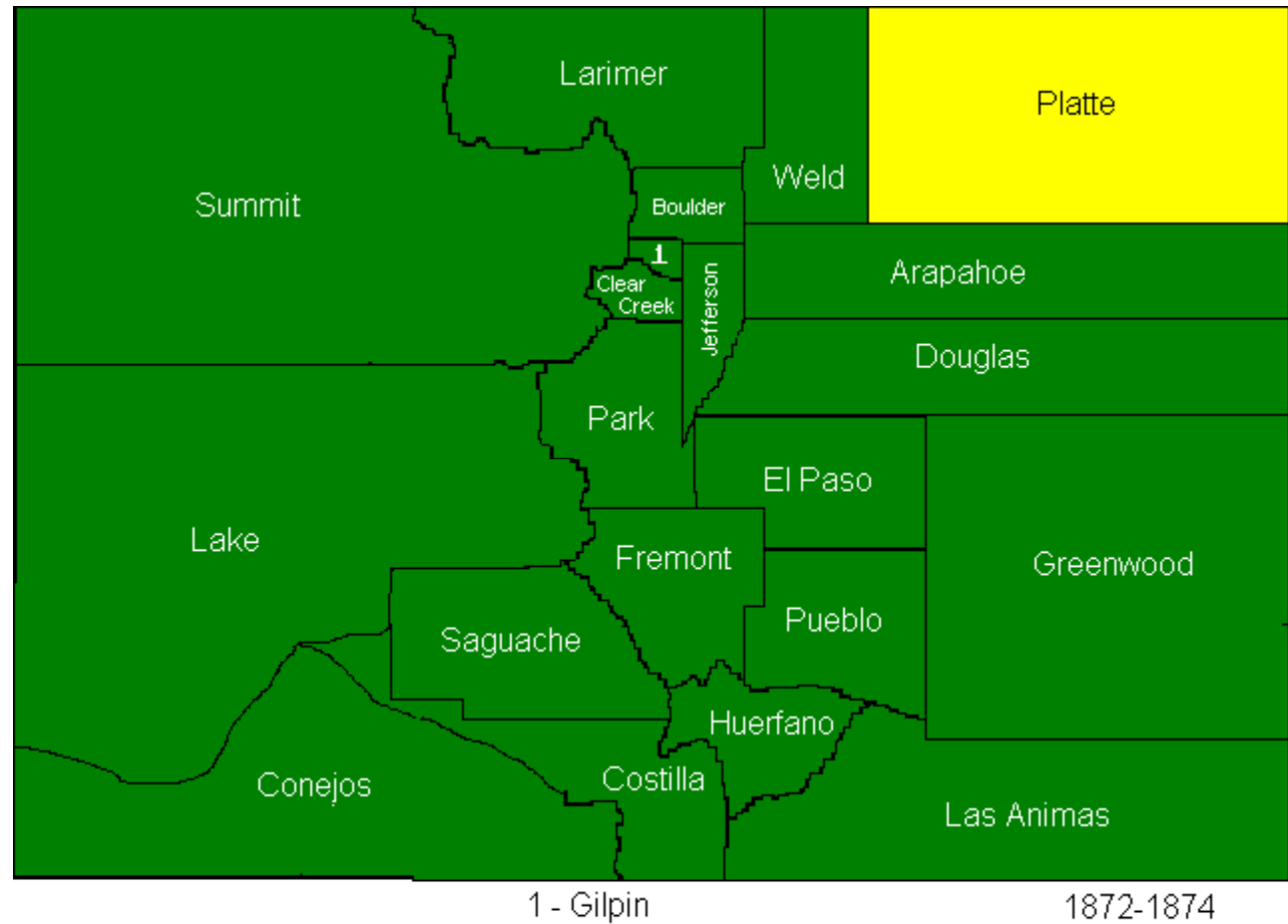
Two counties were then created that have since disappeared—first Greenwood, in 1870,

Greenwood County was mostly created from the Indian lands and a part of Huerfano County; El Paso also took some Huerfano land.



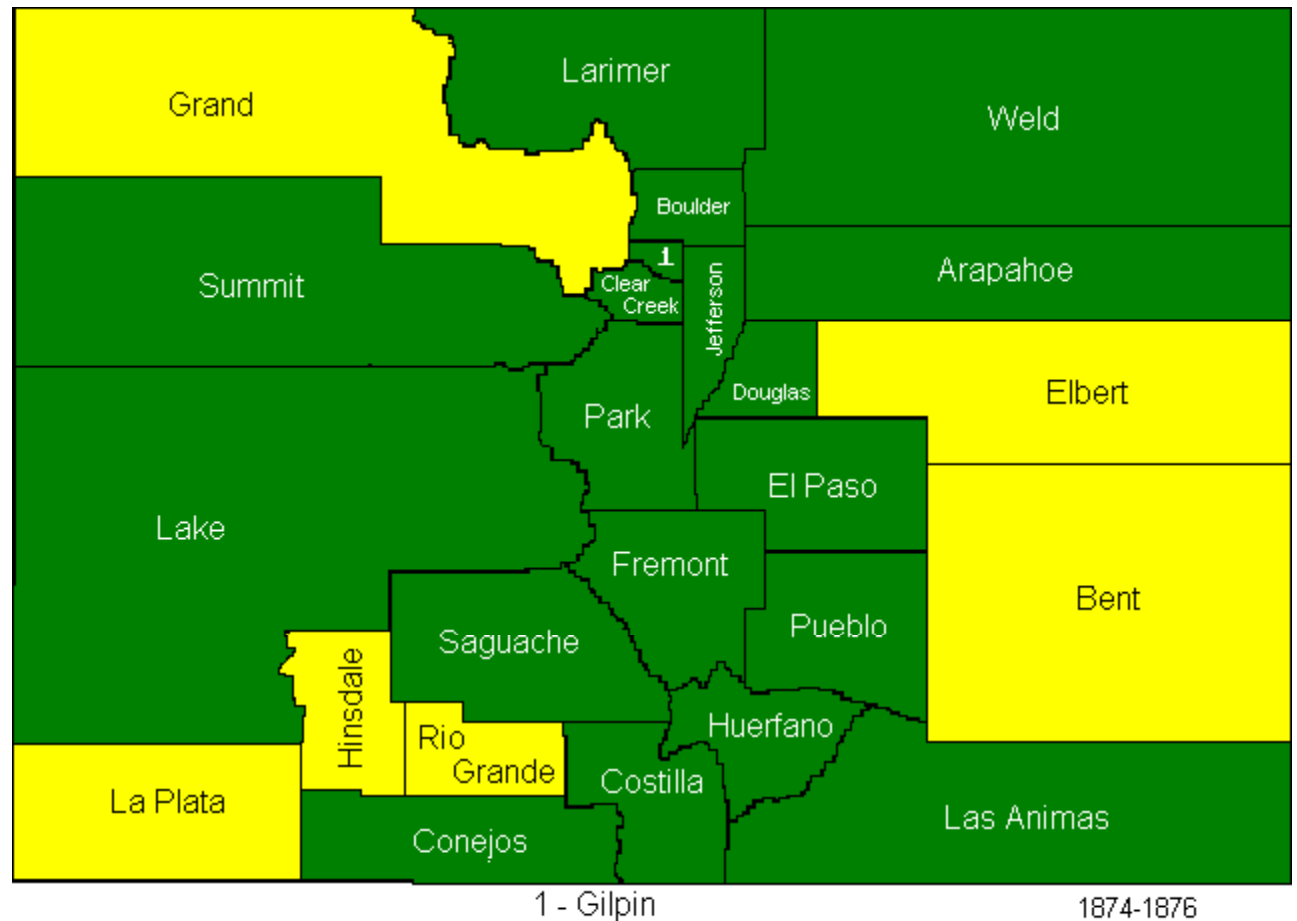
...and then Platte County, in 1872.

Platte was technically rescinded just two years later when a voter ratification measure failed; a County Seat was never established.



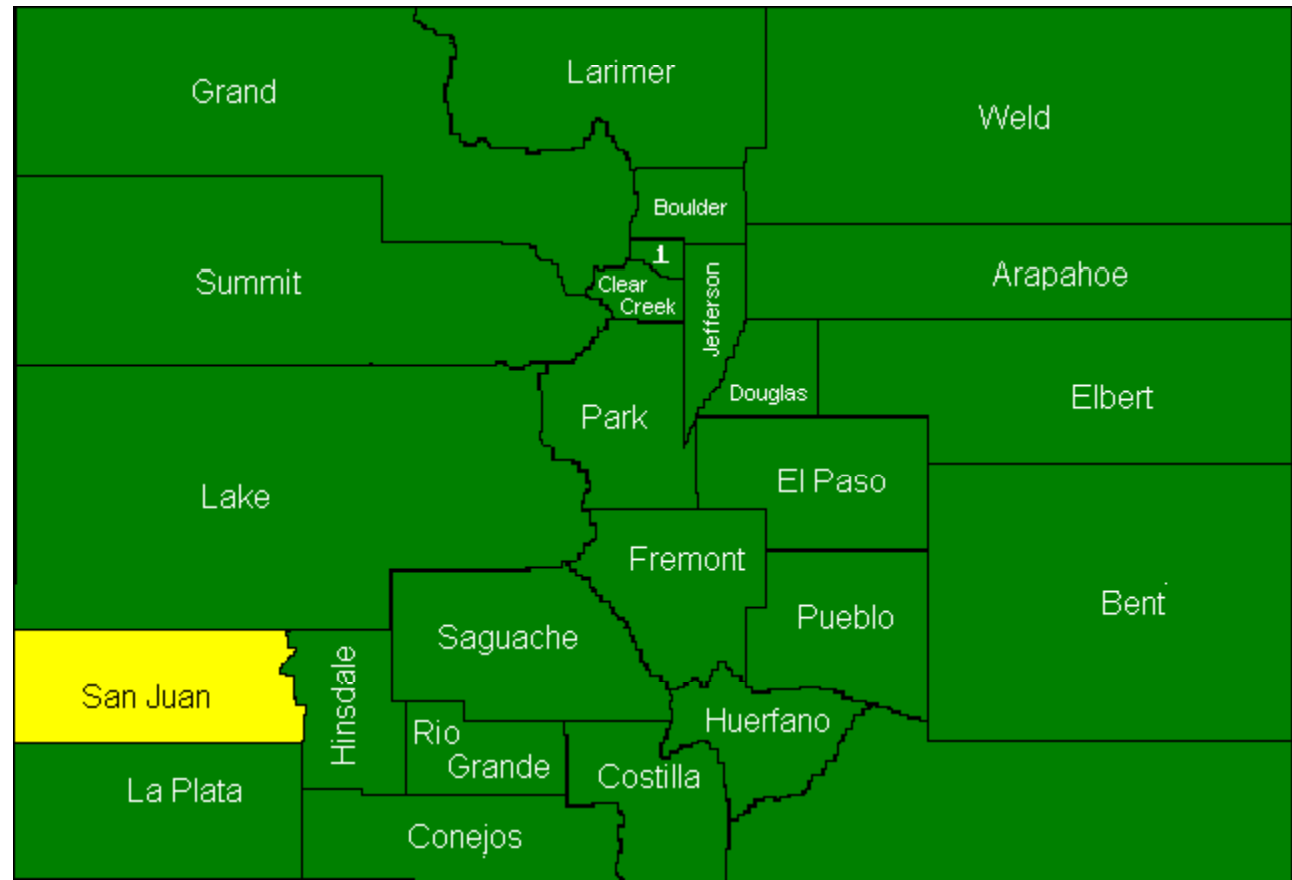
In 1874, Greenwood and Platte counties were abolished, and six new counties created.

Not one of the six counties—Grand, Elbert, Hinsdale, La Plata, Rio Grande or Bent—retains its original boundaries today.



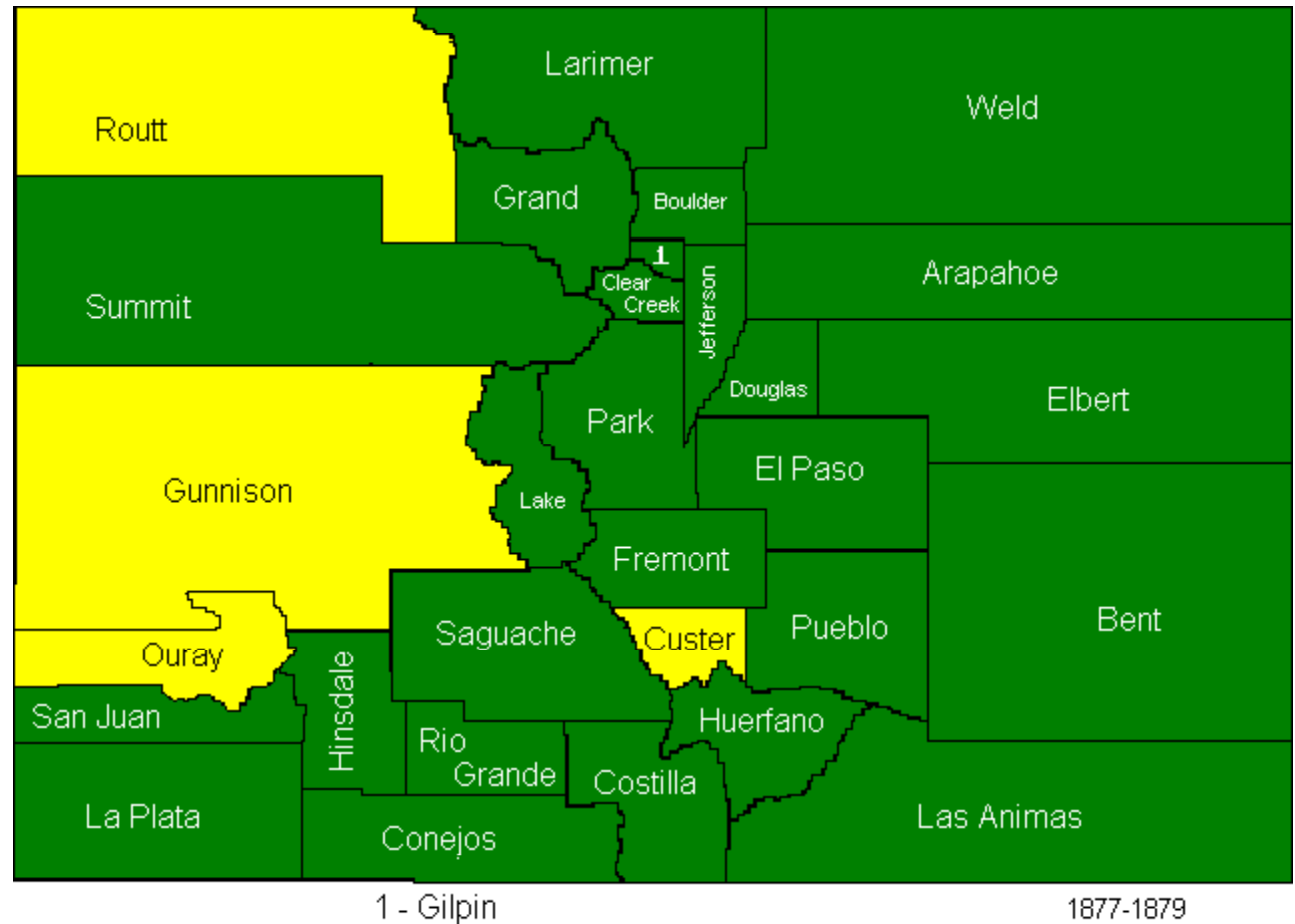
January 3, 1876, San Juan County was created, meaning Colorado had 26 counties upon achieving statehood on August 1st.

That same year the Jefferson County seat was renamed Golden, from Golden City



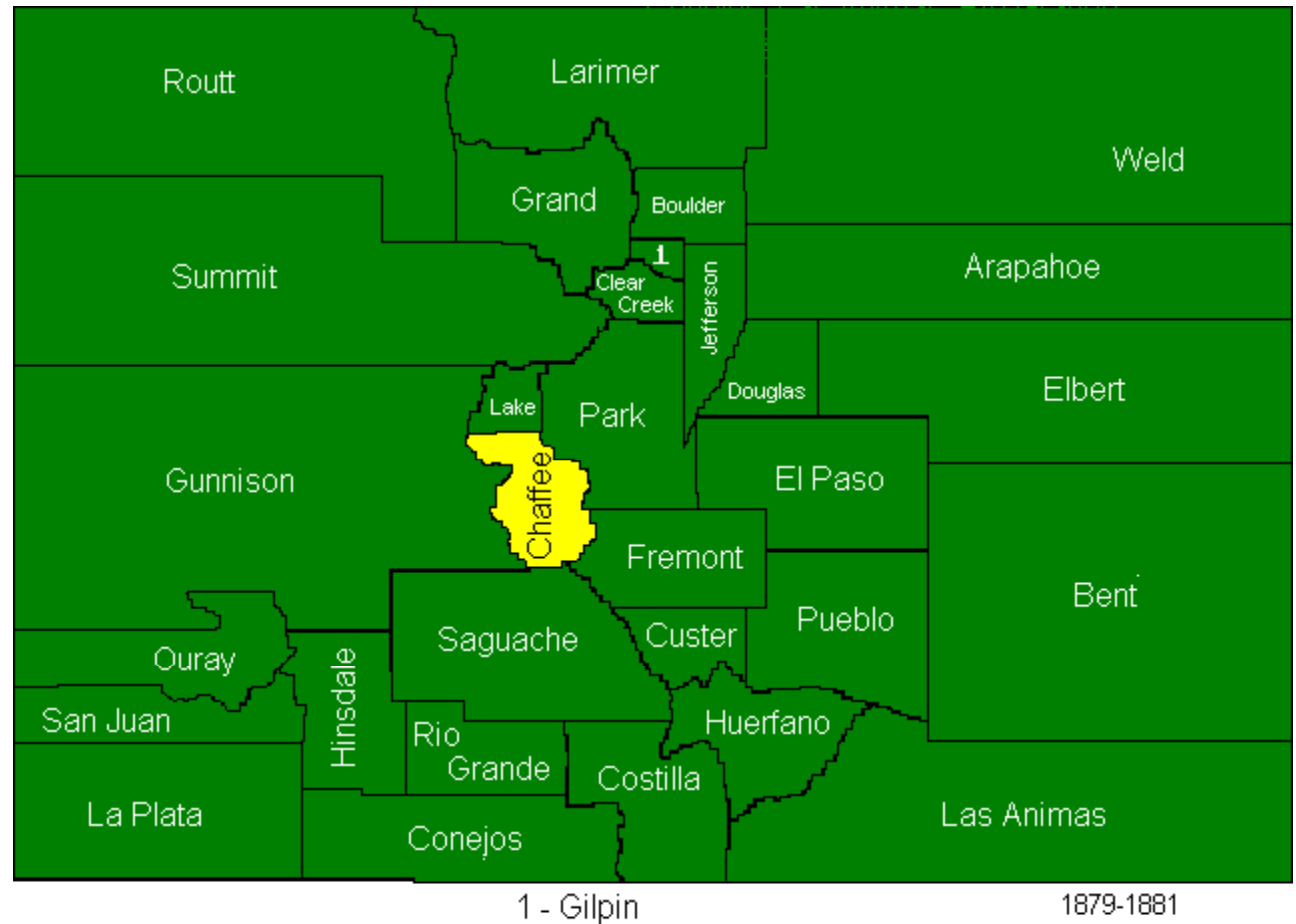
The very next year—1877—four new counties were created.

Note how much of Lake County's land went into Gunnison County!



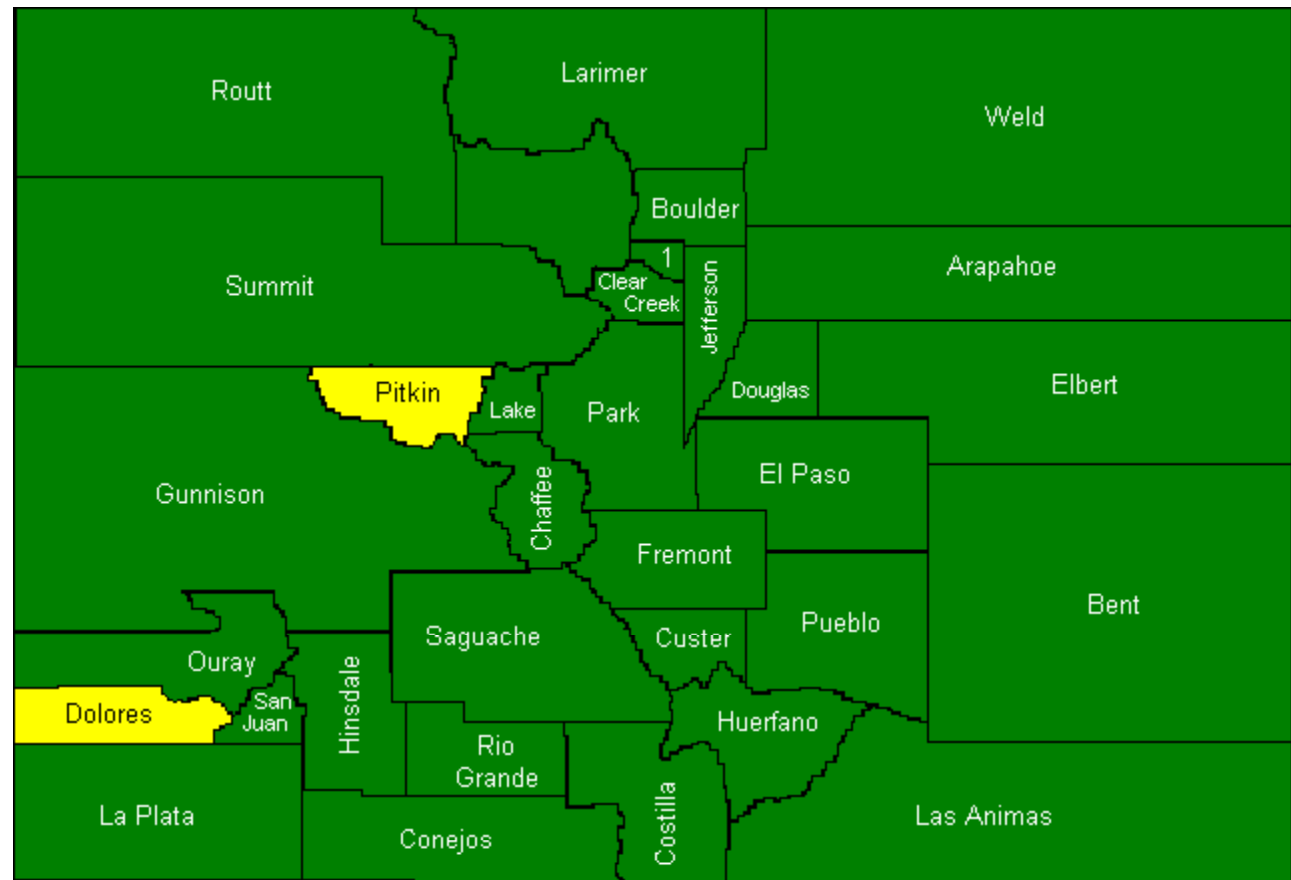
In 1879, Chaffee County was created—but not, as it would appear, from Lake County!

February 8, Lake was renamed Carbonate County. February 10, Chaffee was created from Carbonate, after which Lake was recreated from what was left of Carbonate!



Dolores and Pitkin Counties were added in 1881.

That same year, the La Plata county seat was moved to Durango from Howardsville.

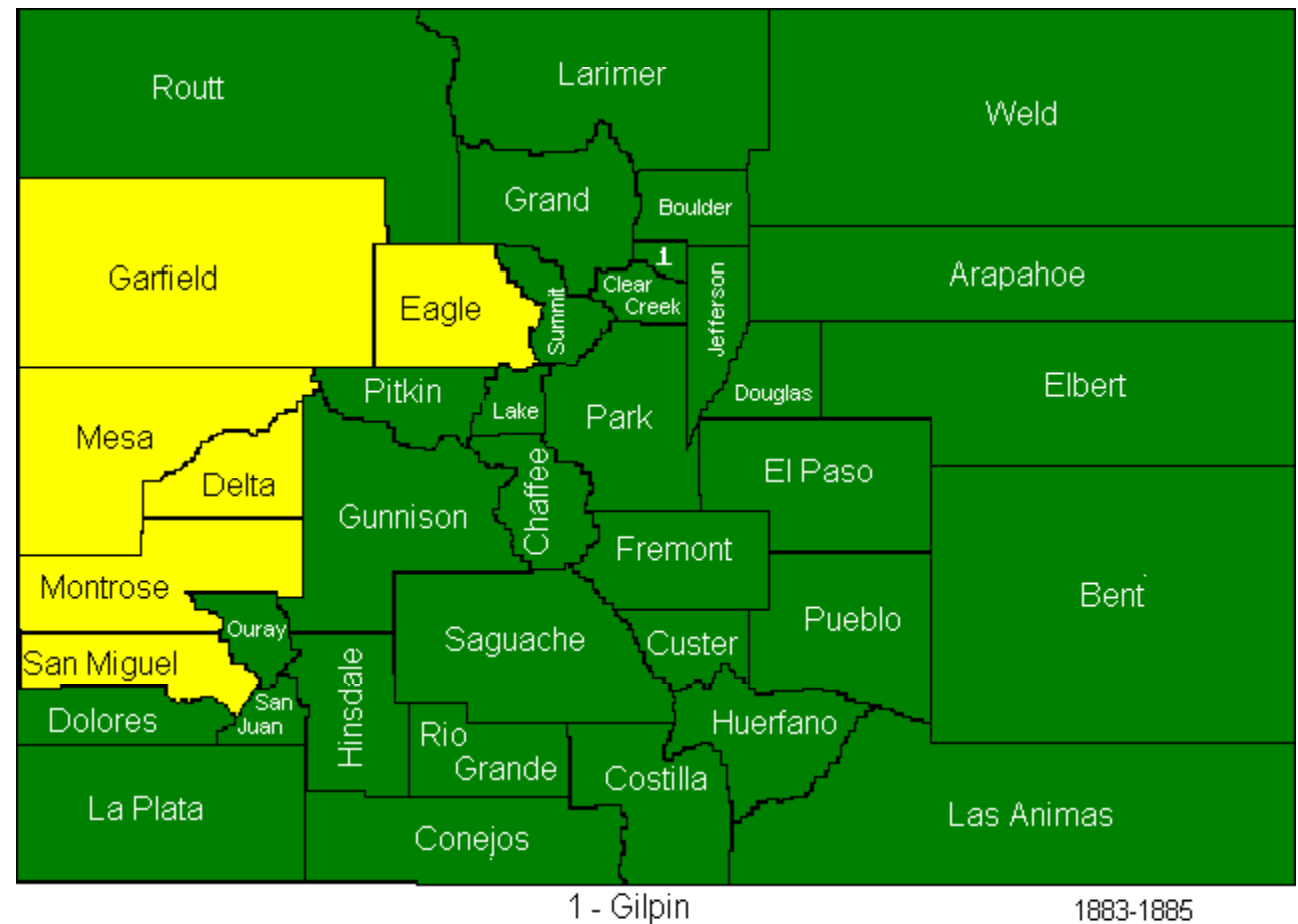


1 - Gilpin

1881-1883

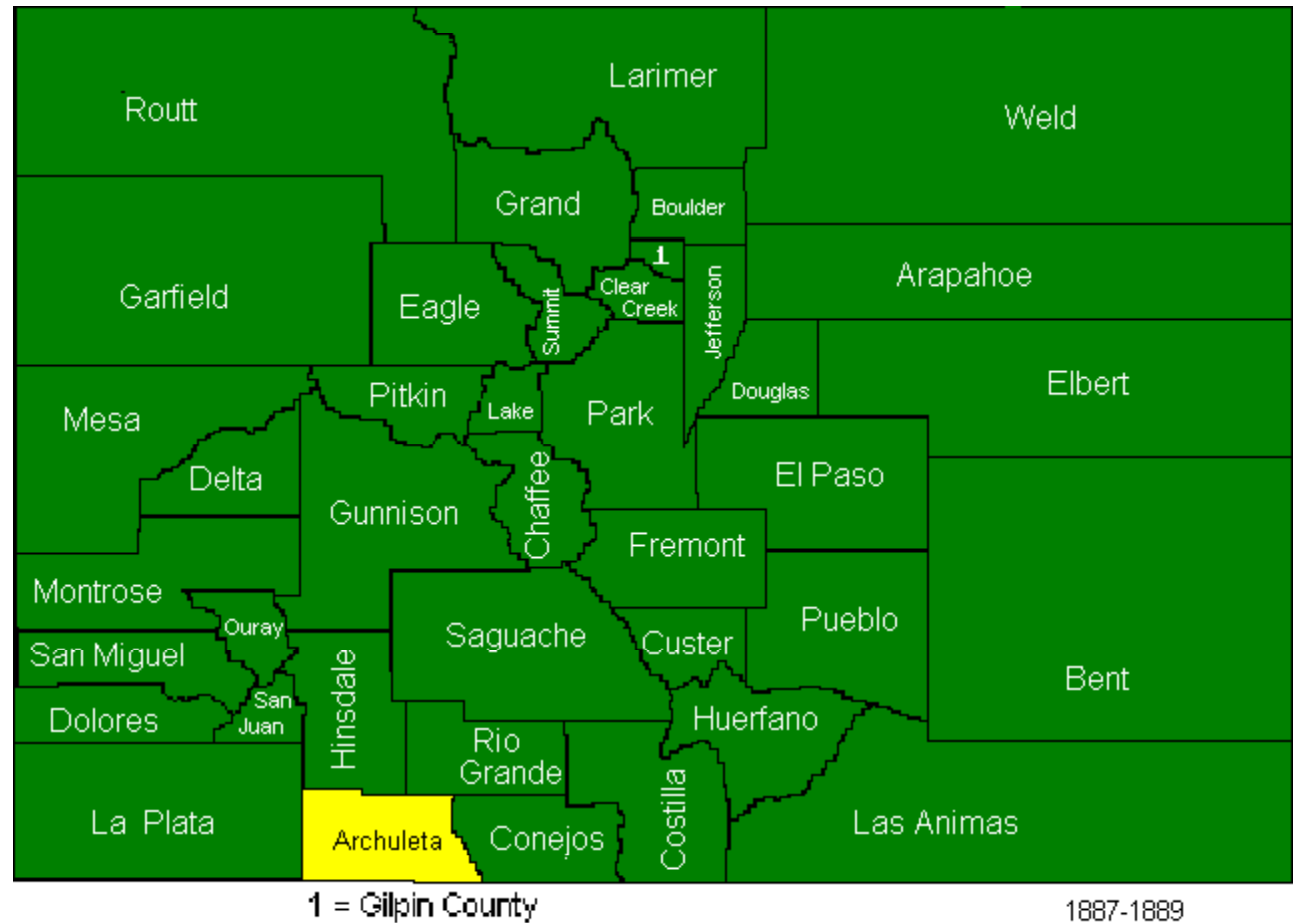
There was a major reorganization of the western slope counties in 1884.

Six counties were created, the most since 1874—and that year, two counties were abolished, so the net gain was only four.



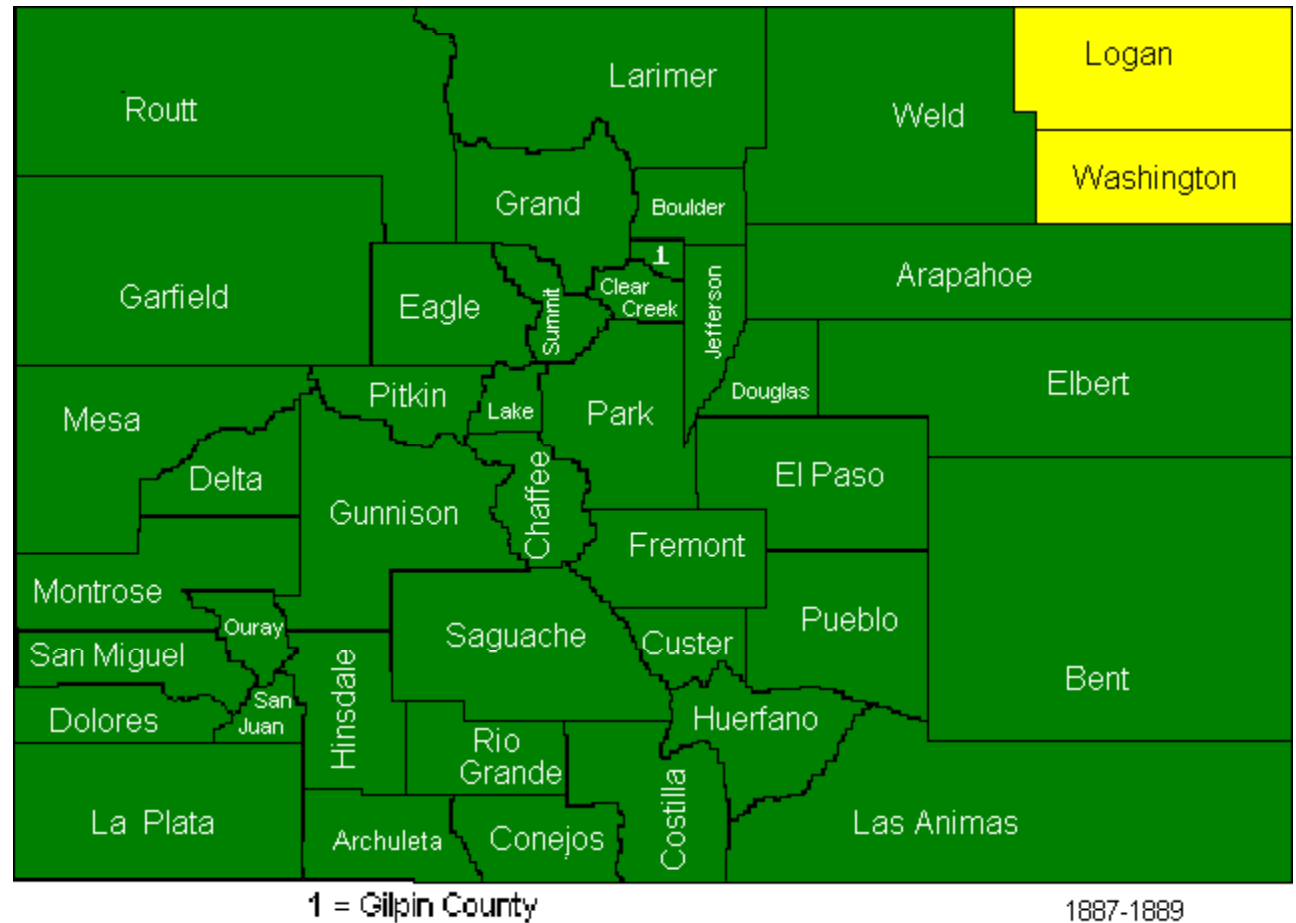
And in 1885, Archuleta County was created from part of Conejos County.

Courts often got involved to settle County boundaries; in 1886, the Colorado Supreme Court ruled that North Park is in Larimer, not Grand County.

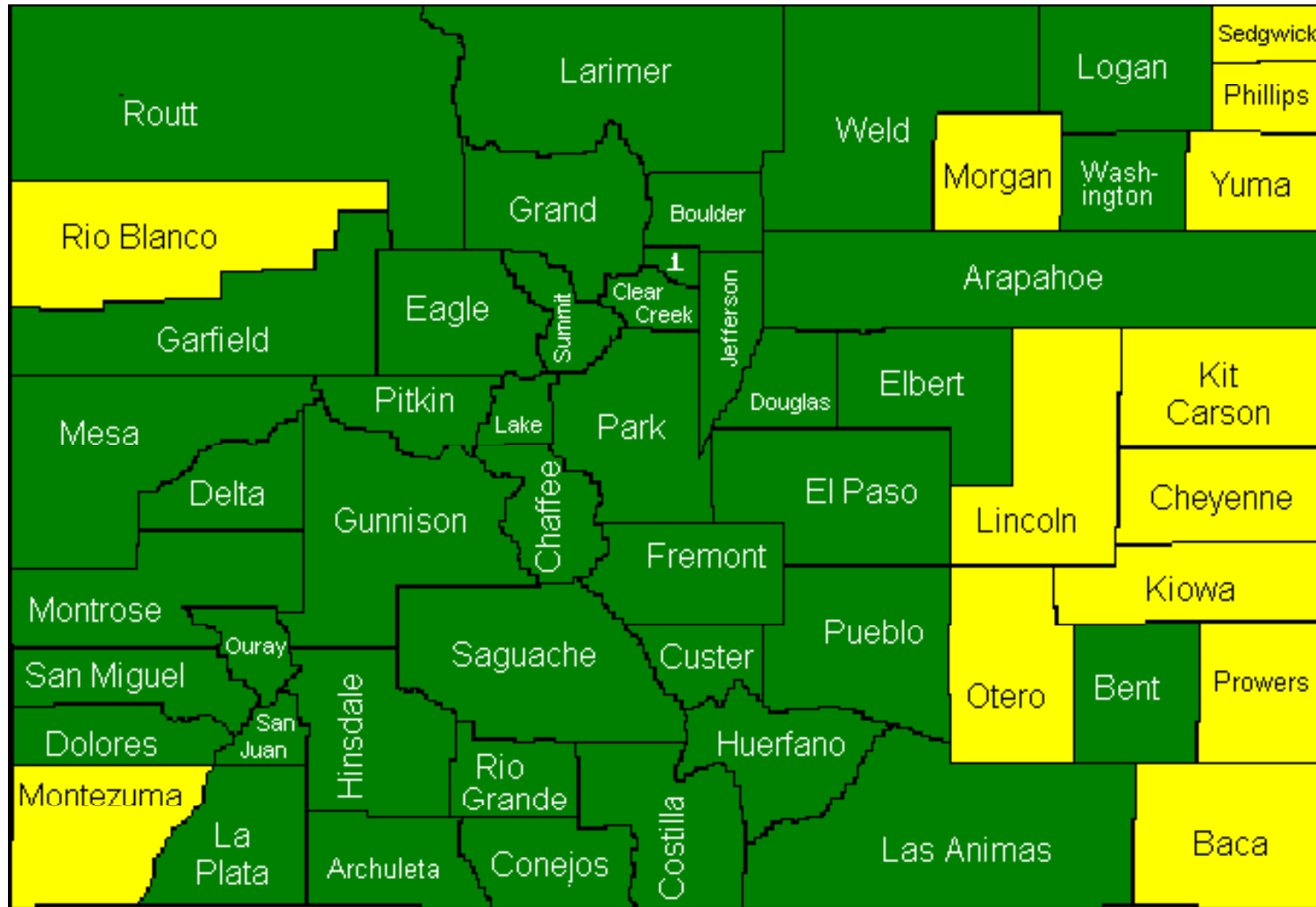


Two northeastern Colorado counties, Logan and Washington, were added in 1887.

Note that today, however, neither County extends all the way to the eastern border of the State...



In 1889, the Legislature went crazy, adding 13 new counties—the most since the original 17.

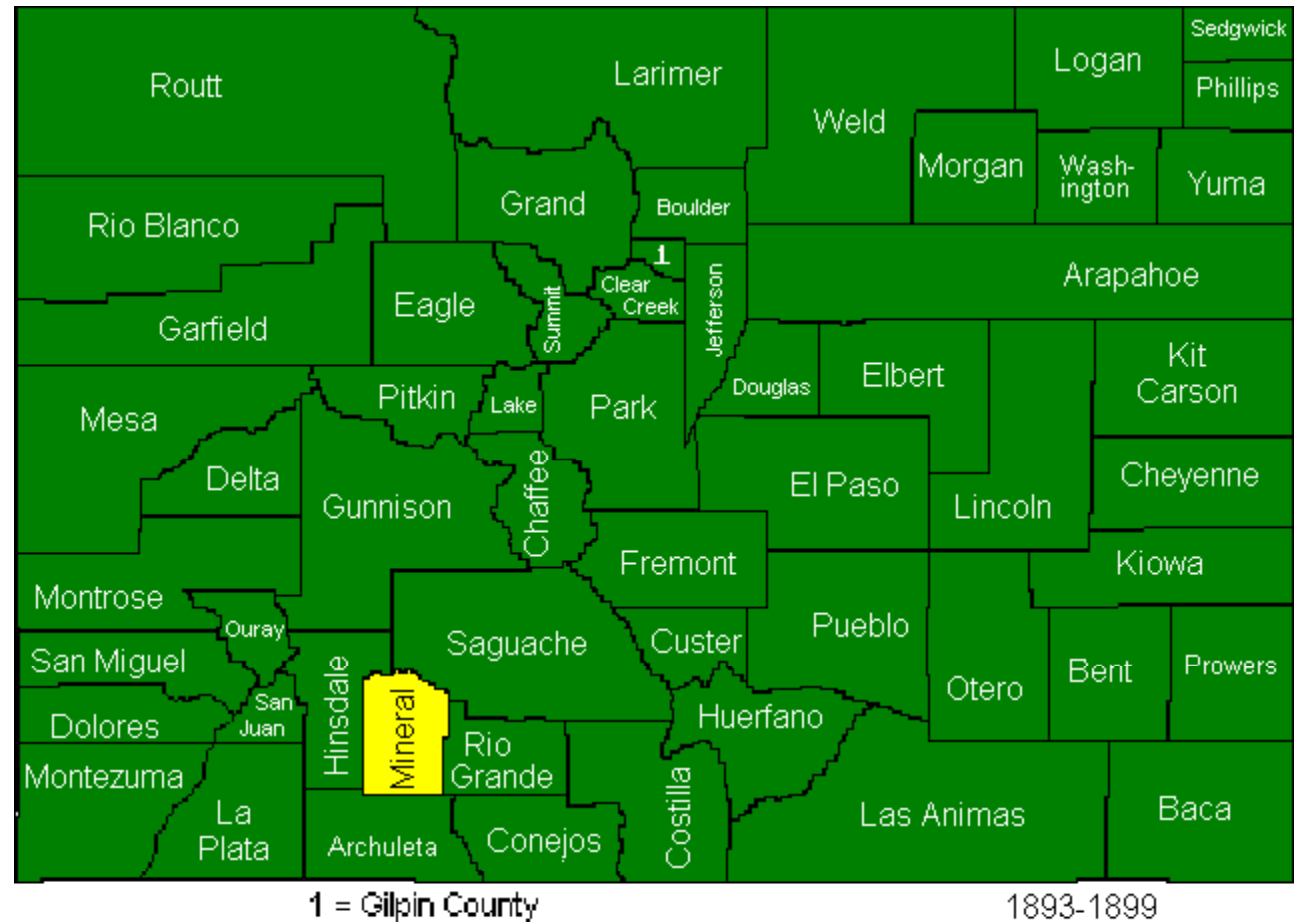


1 = Gilpin County

1889-1893

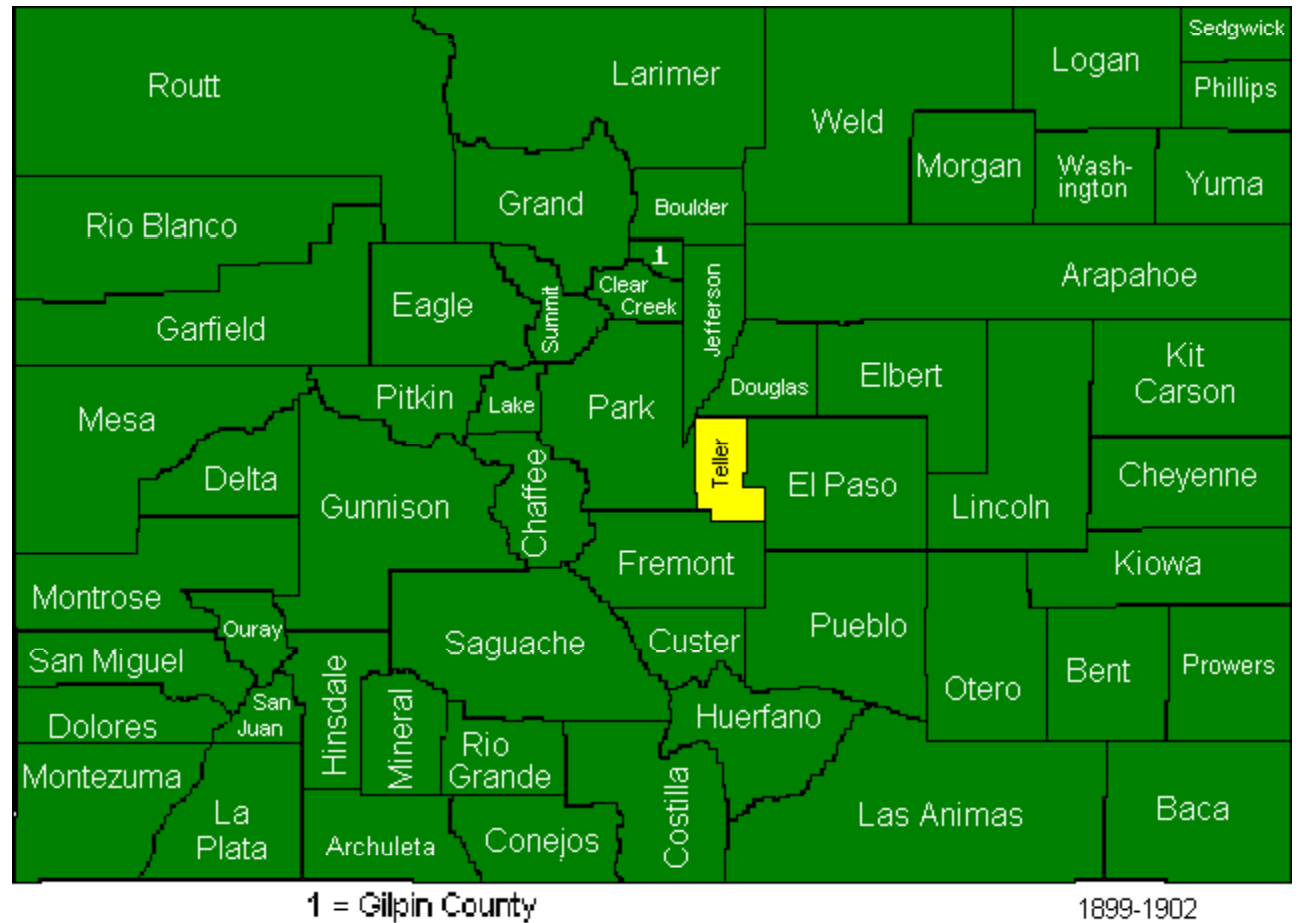
Things slowed considerably after that. In 1893, Mineral County was created...

The Mineral County seat was originally in Wason, but was moved to Creede later that year.



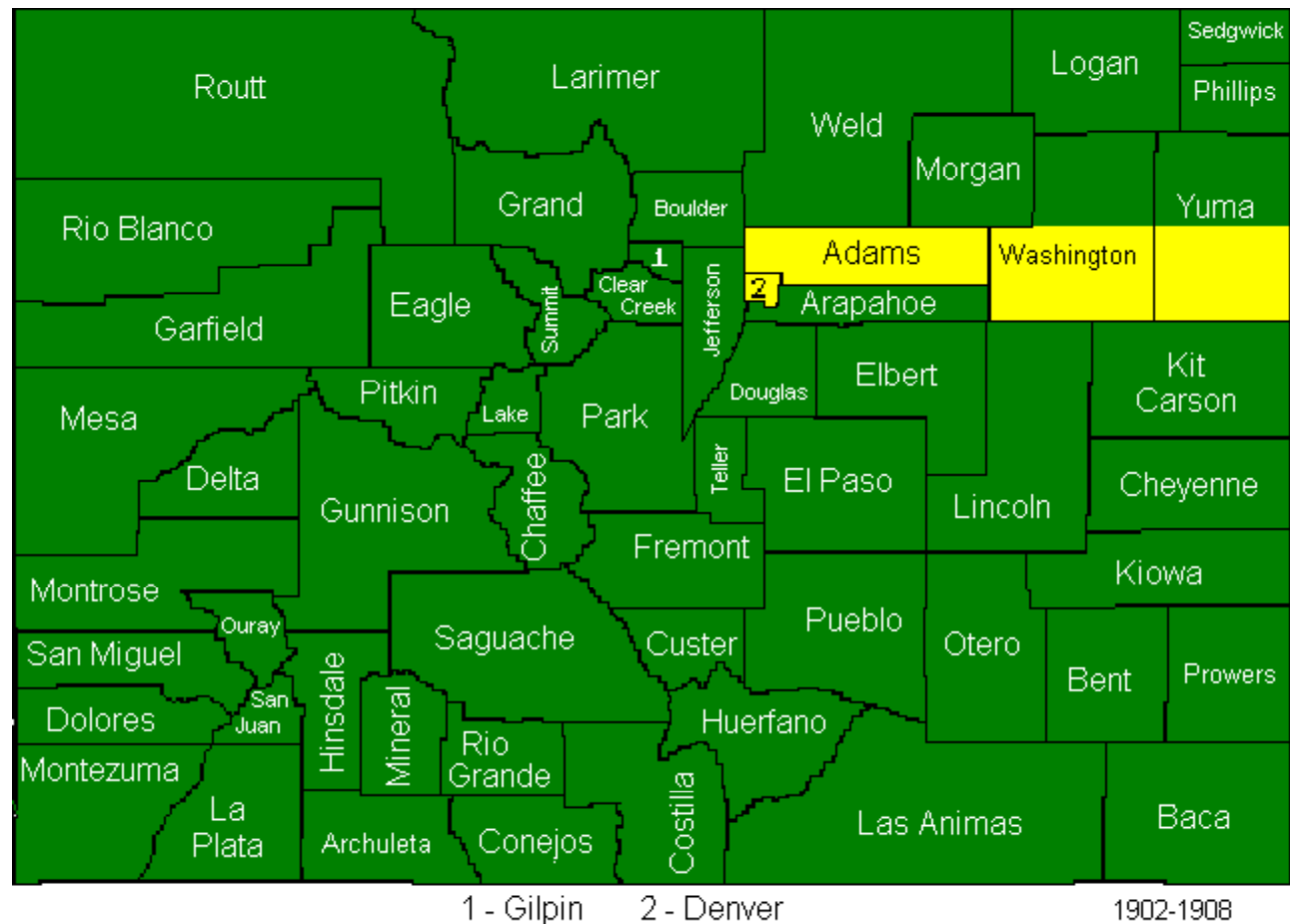
...and in 1899, Teller County.

Teller County was named after early Gilpin County attorney/politician Henry M. Teller.



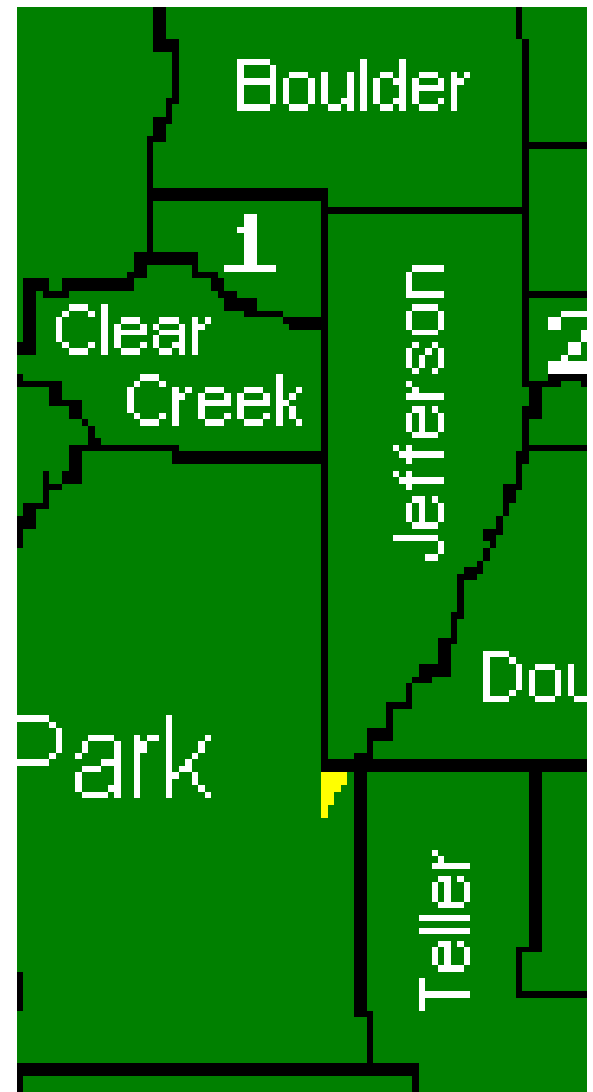
From 1901 to 1906, Arapahoe County was split, birthing Adams County, the City and County of Denver, and parts of Washington & Yuma Counties.

The first attempt to create a Denver County was declared unconstitutional in 1901; the City and County of Denver was formed in 1902.



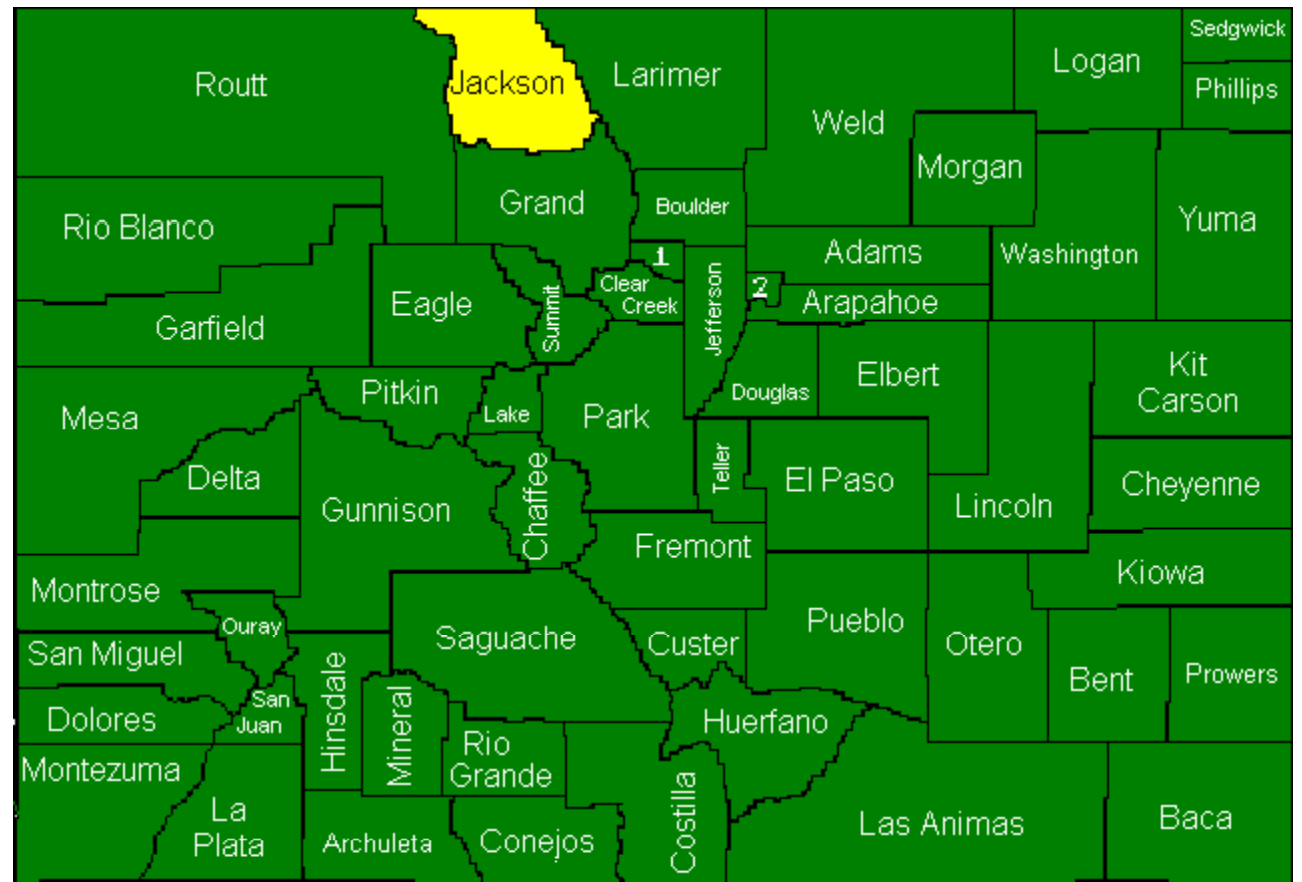
After Park County took the southernmost tip of Jefferson County in 1908...

This is why Jefferson is not listed with Gilpin and Clear Creek among the original counties with unchanged borders.



...Jackson County was added in 1909,

This effectively reversed the 1886 Supreme Court decision that had awarded North Park to Larimer County, instead of Grand.

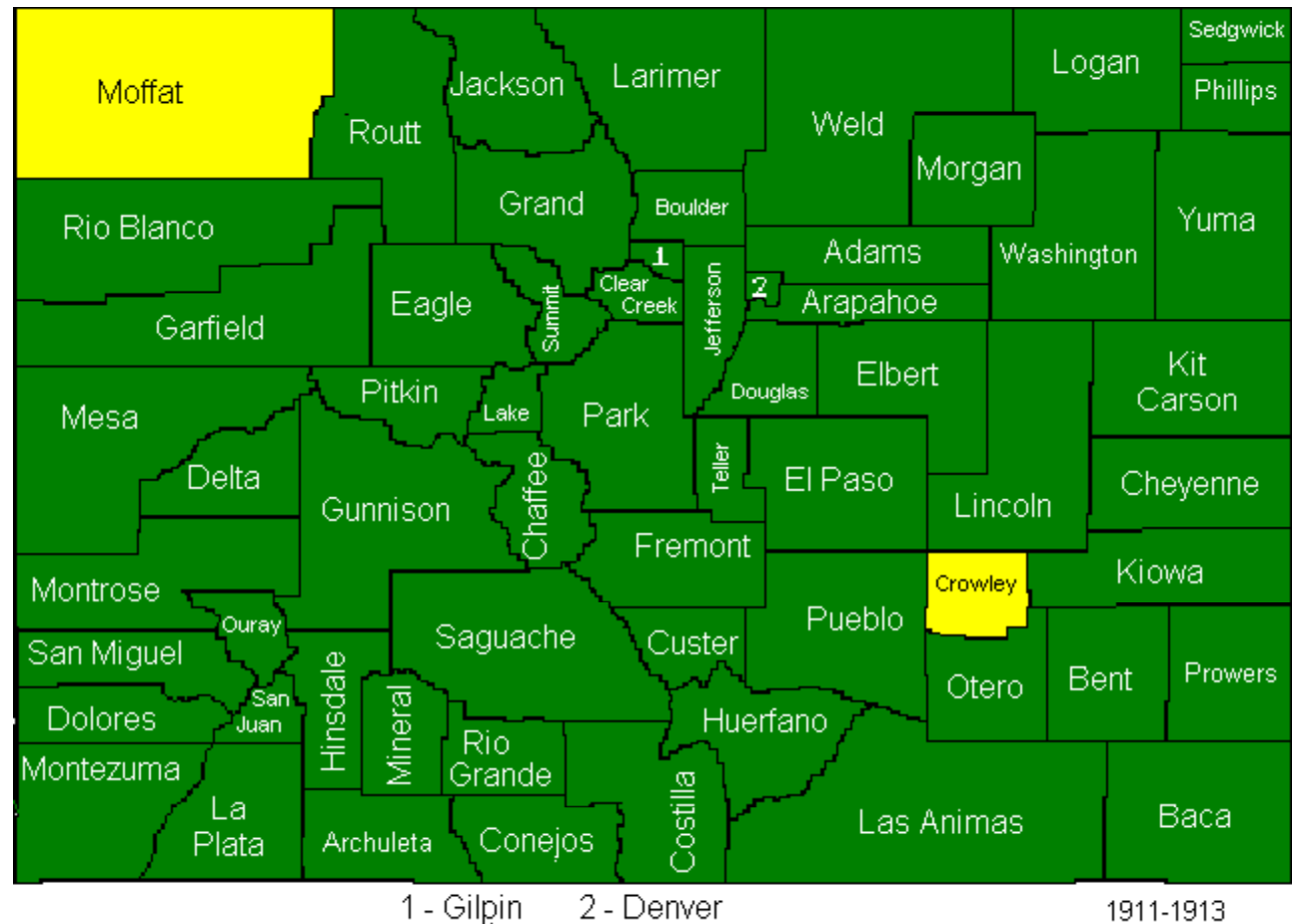


1 - Gilpin 2 - Denver

1909-1911

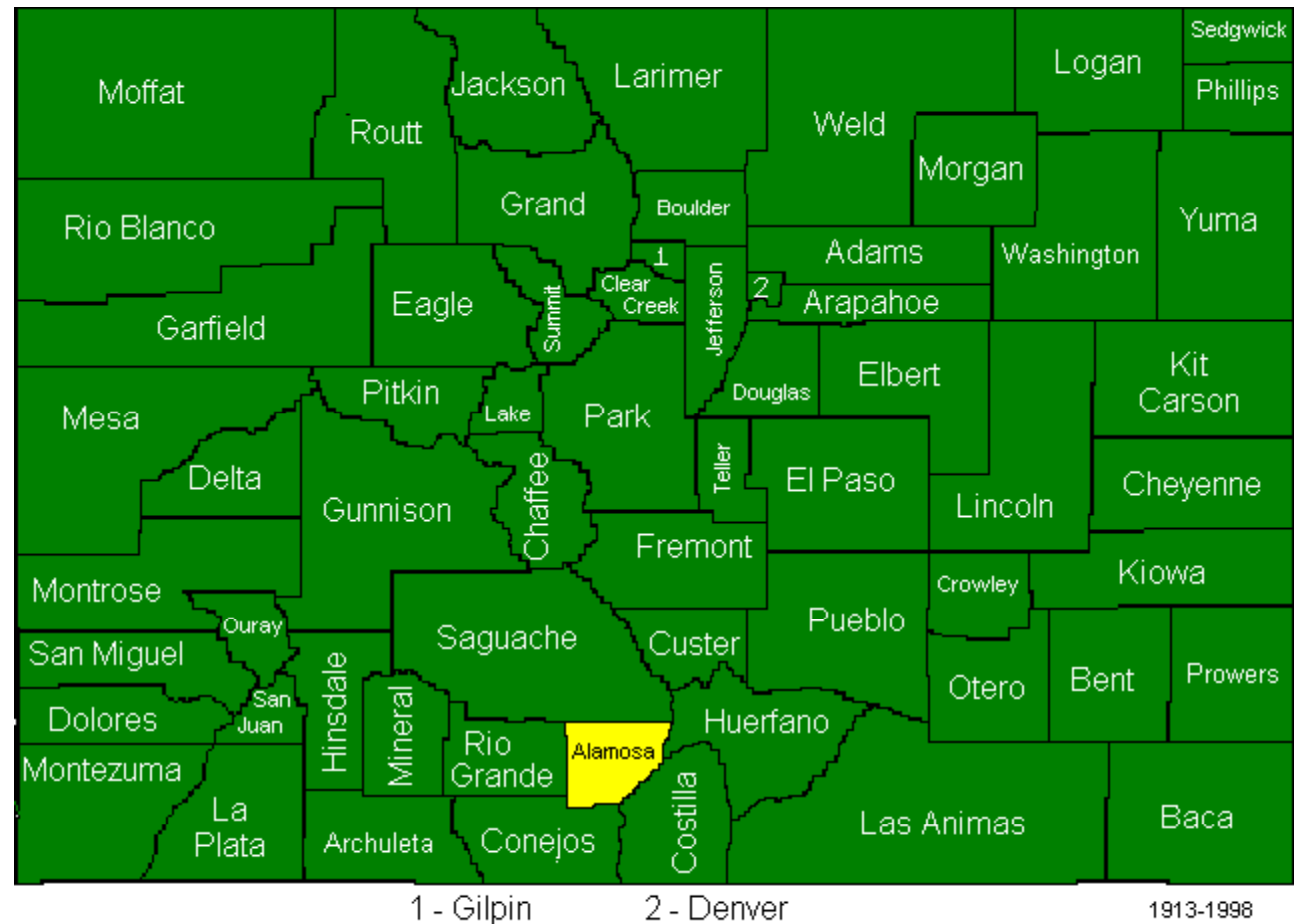
then Moffat and Crowley in 1911,

David H. Moffat, after whom Moffat County is named, is well-known. John H. Crowley was a little-known state representative at the time Crowley County was organized.



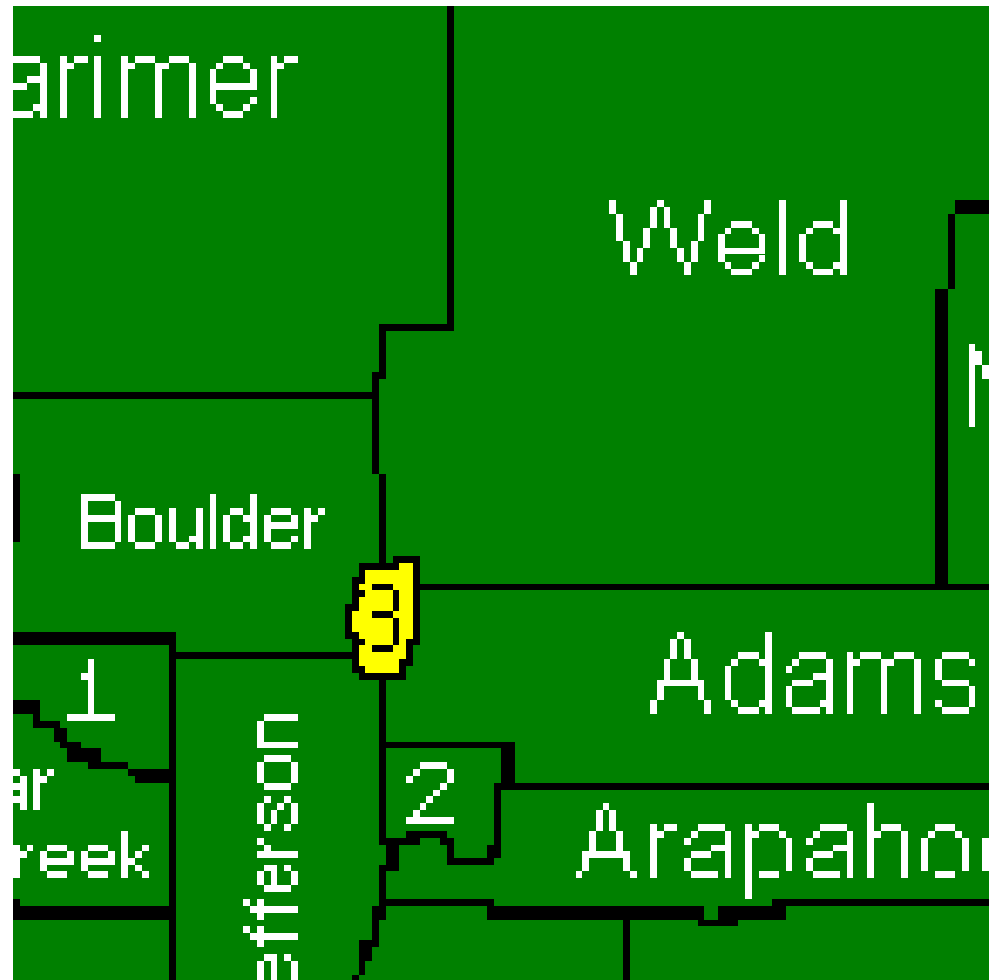
and finally Alamosa County in 1913.

Alamosa was the last “true” County formed in Colorado, before the City and County of Broomfield.



The 21st century has seen the creation of the City and County of Broomfield.

The “County” covers the corners of Jefferson, Weld, Adams and Boulder Counties—the first change to Boulder’s boundaries since its initial organization.



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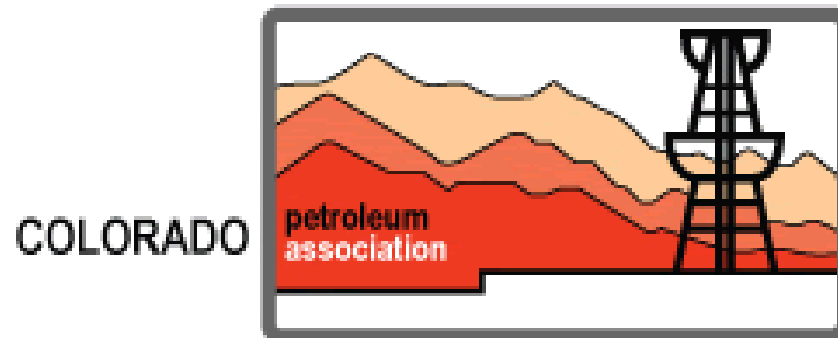
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