

## Yuba County Individualized Traffic Safety Report

Across the nation, rural areas are experiencing tremendous growth and transformation. Where once rural roads were used mainly to transport goods to market or to move farm machinery from location to location, rural roads now must accommodate commute and leisure trips that may clash with traditional transportation patterns. This influx of nontraditional traffic presents a major safety concern for rural road users.

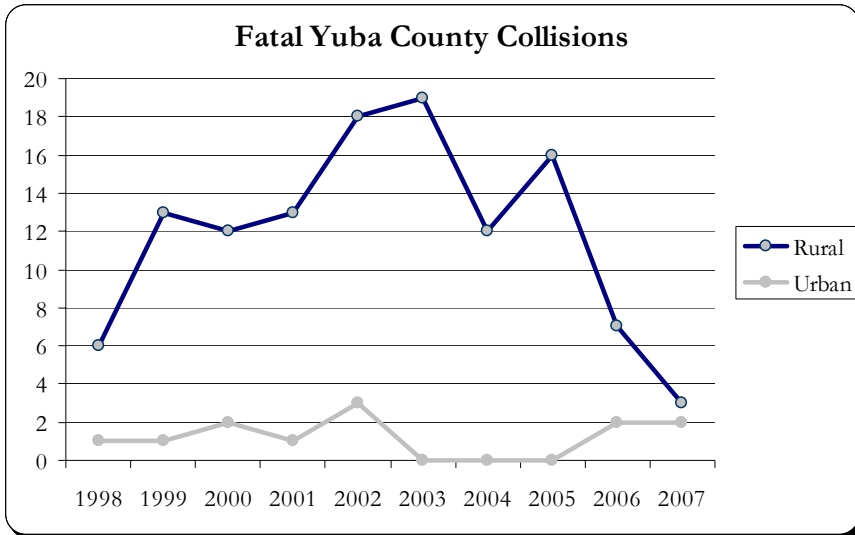
Nationally, 23 percent of the population lives in rural areas; yet, in 2006, 56 percent of the 42,642 traffic fatalities nationwide occurred in rural areas. In addition, the fatality rate in rural areas is over 4 times as high as the fatality rate (measured as deaths/100,000 persons) in urban areas. Preventing severe collisions is especially important in rural areas because statistics show that victims are more likely to die at the crash scene in rural areas than in urban areas. Of the 27,323 drivers killed in 2006, 66 percent of rural drivers and 51 percent of urban drivers died at the scene of the crash, and rural drivers represented 72 percent of drivers who died en route to the hospital. On a positive note, rural traffic fatalities did decrease 7 percent from 1997 to 2006, but the fact remains that rural areas account for a disproportionate number of fatalities. California safety statistics reflect a similar phenomenon. In 2006, only 7 percent of the population lived in rural areas, but rural areas accounted for 37 percent of the state's 4,236 traffic fatalities. See Table 1 below for more detail.

Having national and statewide data can help start discussions about roadway safety in rural areas, but more detailed safety data is necessary to find safety solutions at the local level. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments, as part of its Rural Urban Connections Strategy (RUCS) planning effort, has compiled sample safety statistics (using the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System) for each county in the region in the hopes that these "safety reports" can be further customized to help bolster grant applications and inform public policy decisions that will make our rural roadways safer.

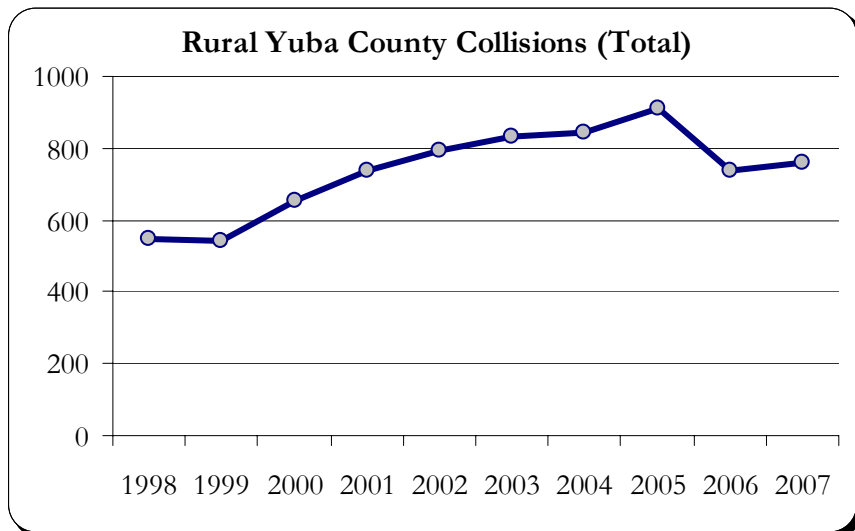
As it is part of the RUCS project, this safety report focuses on the rural areas of Yuba County. Unless otherwise stated, only fatal, rural crashes are included in the following safety statistics.

### Yuba County in Perspective

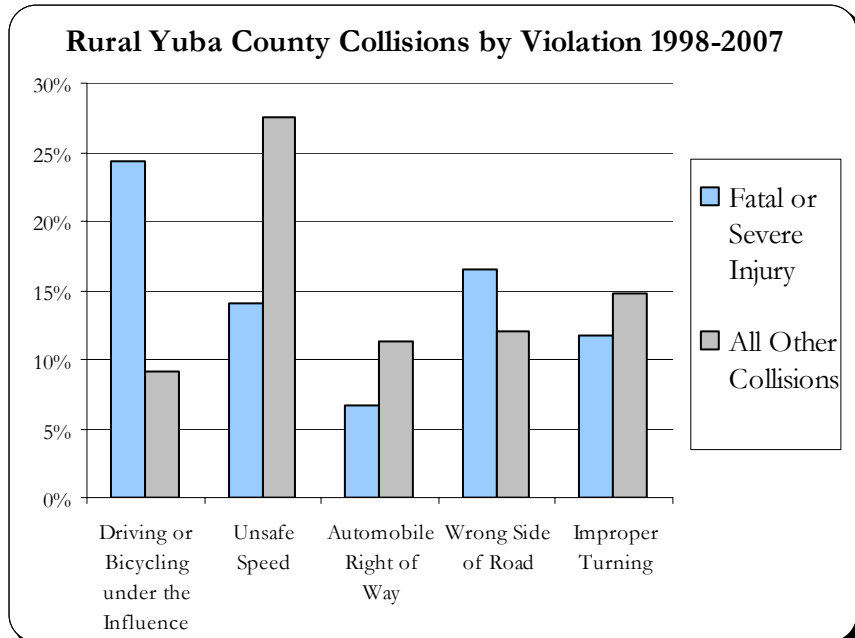
	Table 1: Summary Safety Statistics <sup>1</sup>							
	US (2006)		California (2006)		SACOG Region (2000)		Yuba County (2000)	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural <sup>2</sup>	Urban	Rural
<b>Population</b>	231,897,219	67,501,266	33,844,533	2,613,016	1,750,054	185,952	42,122	18,097
<b>% of population</b>	77%	23%	93%	7%	90%	10%	70%	30%
<b>Fatalities</b>	18,359	23,339	2,659	1,576	66	165	2	15
<b>% of fatalities</b>	44%	56%	63%	37%	29%	71%	12%	88%
<b>Fatalities/100,000 persons</b>	7.9	34.6	7.9	60.3	3.8	88.7	4.7	82.9



- In Yuba County, a much greater percentage of fatal collisions occur in rural areas when compared to California and the U.S. as a whole.
- Peaking in 2003 with 19 fatal collisions, rural Yuba County has since dropped to a 10-year low with only 3 fatal collisions in 2007.

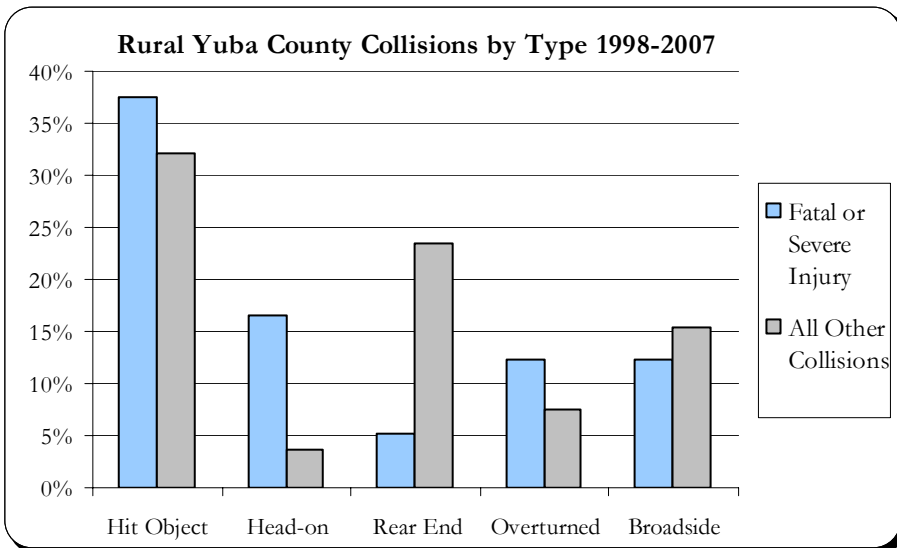
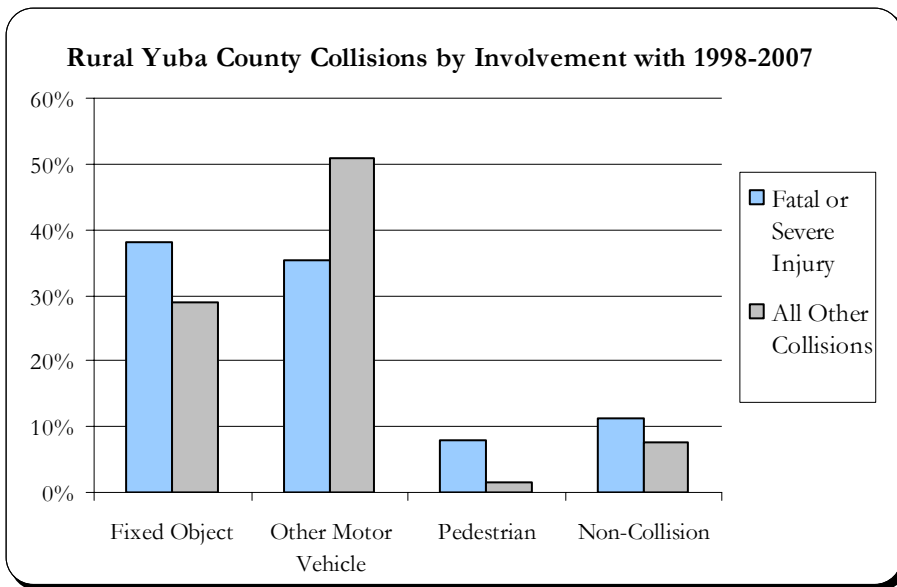


- While there were only 3 fatal collisions in 2007, there were 757 total collisions, the 5th highest total since 1998.



- In fatal and severe injury collisions, alcohol was the main violation 24 percent of the time. When looking at all other collisions<sup>3</sup>, alcohol was the main violation in only 9 percent of collisions.
- The most common violation in all collisions is unsafe speed, accounting for 14 percent of fatal or severe injury collisions and 27 percent of all other collisions.

	Table 2: Rural Yuba County Detailed Collision Data						
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Yuba Total	Region Total
<b>Total Collisions</b>	830	842	911	735	757	4,075	86,307
<i>Property Damage Only (PDO)</i>	519	526	568	481	490	2,584	55,049
<i>% PDO</i>	62.5%	62.5%	62.3%	65.4%	64.7%	63.4%	63.8%
<i>Injury</i>	292	304	327	247	264	1,434	30,447
<i>% Injury</i>	35.2%	36.1%	35.9%	33.6%	34.9%	35.2%	35.3%
<i>Fatal</i>	19	12	16	7	3	57	811
<i>% Fatal</i>	2.3%	1.4%	1.8%	1.0%	0.4%	1.4%	0.9%
<i>Pedestrian Killed</i>	3	1	2	0	0	6	116
<i>Bicyclist Killed</i>	3	0	0	0	0	3	22
<i>Motorcyclist Killed</i>	1	2	2	0	0	5	113
<b>Fatal Collisions</b>							
<i>Alcohol Related</i>	6	1	3	2	1	13	295
<i>Speeding Related</i>	3	3	2	1	0	9	95
<i>Truck Collision</i>	0	3	1	0	0	4	67
<i>Hit Object Collision</i>	4	5	7	4	2	22	278
<i>Head-On Collision</i>	3	2	4	1	0	10	117
<i>Broadside Collision</i>	3	4	2	0	1	10	141
<i>Overtaken Collision</i>	4	0	1	0	0	5	79
<i>Occurred on a Weekday (M-Th)</i>	6	7	11	3	1	28	376
<i>Occurred on a Weekend (F-Su)</i>	13	5	5	4	2	29	435
<i>Occurred during Daylight</i>	7	9	11	3	3	33	420
<i>Occurred after Dark (with or without street lights)</i>	10	3	5	4	0	22	360
<b>Fatal Collision Location</b>							
<i>Route 70</i>	6	5	4	2	0	17	*
<i>North Beale Road</i>	3	1	1	0	1	6	*
<i>Marysville Road</i>	1	0	3	0	1	5	*
<i>Route 20</i>	3	0	1	1	0	5	*
<i>Intersection Collision</i>	2	0	1	0	1	4	98
<i>State Highway</i>	10	6	5	4	0	25	335
<i>Not State Highway</i>	9	6	11	3	3	32	476



- From 1998-2007, rural Yuba County had 407 fatal or severe injury collisions. Of those collisions, nearly 40 percent were caused by collision with a fixed object, compared to less than 30 percent of “all other collisions.”
- Similarly, fatal or severe injury collisions had a relatively high percentage of pedestrian collisions when compared to “all other collisions.”
- Hit object collisions were by far the most frequent type of total collisions. Sixteen percent of fatal or severe injury collisions were caused by head-ons, whereas that number was only 4 percent for “all other collisions.”
- The opposite is true for rear end collisions, which accounted for a very high percentage of “all other collisions” but relatively few fatal or severe injury collisions.

**Further Study**

This safety report highlights only a small portion of the data available for future analysis. SACOG believes this type of detailed data can make our region’s safety projects very competitive in federal and state safety programs such as the High Risk Rural Roads (HR3) program. For more information about the data used in this report or to request technical assistance for your agency, please contact Christine Scherman at [cscherman@sacog.org](mailto:cscherman@sacog.org) or by phone at 916-340-6262.

<sup>1</sup> In Table 1, U.S. and California safety data were taken from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). NHTSA used the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) to collect the data. Population data were taken from the American Community Survey (ACS) census file 1. County-level rural/urban population data were not available for 2006, so 2000 data were used for Yuba County and the region. Yuba County and region fatalities (for year 2000) were taken from SWITRS.

<sup>2</sup> “Rural” as defined by the 2000 census is all territory, population, and housing units located outside an urbanized area or an urban cluster. An urban cluster is a densely settled area (1,000 people/sq. mile) with a population of 2,500-49,999 and any surrounding areas with 500 people/sq. mile. “Rural” as defined by the SWITRS database is any unincorporated area and areas with a population of fewer than 2,500 people.

<sup>3</sup> “All other collisions” refers to collisions resulting in complaint of pain, other visible injury, and property damage only.