

# CONVERSE COUNTY

## DEMOGRAPHICS

The Census Bureau's intercensal estimates indicate that Converse County's population increased from 12,052 in 2000 to 13,267 in 2008 or by 10.08 percent. This compares to a statewide population growth of 7.88 percent over the period.<sup>64</sup> The number of people from 15 to 24 years of age increased by 13.31 percent, and the number of people from 25 to 44 years of age decreased by 2.56 percent. The white population increased by 9.39 percent, while the black population increased by 127.78 percent. The Hispanic population shifted from 660 to 788 people between 2000 and 2008, an increase of 19.39 percent. These data are presented in Table II.5.1, below.

Subject	Wyoming			Converse County		
	Census 2000	July 2008	% Change	Census 2000	July 2008	% Change
<b>Population</b>	493,782	532,668	7.88	12,052	13,267	10.08
<b>Age</b>						
Under 14 years	103,443	106,195	2.66	2,720	2,519	-7.39
15 to 24 years	75,358	76,242	1.17	1,555	1,762	13.31
25 to 44 years	138,619	137,338	-0.92	3,392	3,305	-2.56
45 to 54 years	74,079	82,508	11.38	1,943	2,269	16.78
55 to 64 years	44,590	64,771	45.26	1,113	1,739	56.24
65 & over	57,693	65,614	13.73	1,329	1,673	25.88
<b>Race</b>						
White	469,423	500,001	6.51	11,746	12,849	9.39
Black	3,942	6,884	74.63	18	41	127.78
American Indian and Alaskan Native	11,410	13,555	18.80	116	165	42.24
Asian	2,904	3,828	31.82	32	35	9.38
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	329	512	55.62	3	3	0.00
Two or more races	5,774	7,888	36.61	137	174	27.01
<b>Ethnicity (of any race)</b>						
Hispanic or Latino	31,669	41,162	29.98	660	788	19.39

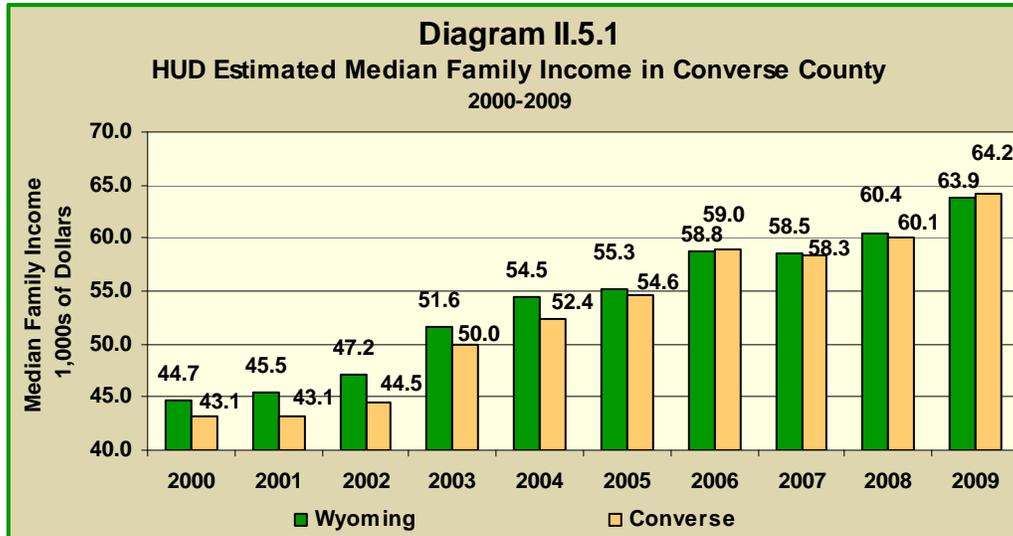
The Wyoming driver's license exchange data indicate a net increase of 96 persons during 2009. The driver's license total exchanges for the last ten years for Converse County are presented in Table II.5.3, which indicate a net increase of 994 persons over the time period.

Year	In-Migrants	Out-Migrants	Net Change
2000	326	275	51
2001	355	247	108
2002	337	245	92
2003	278	210	68
2004	279	227	52
2005	292	203	89
2006	302	230	72
2007	397	226	171
2008	441	246	195
2009	336	240	96
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,343</b>	<b>2,349</b>	<b>994</b>

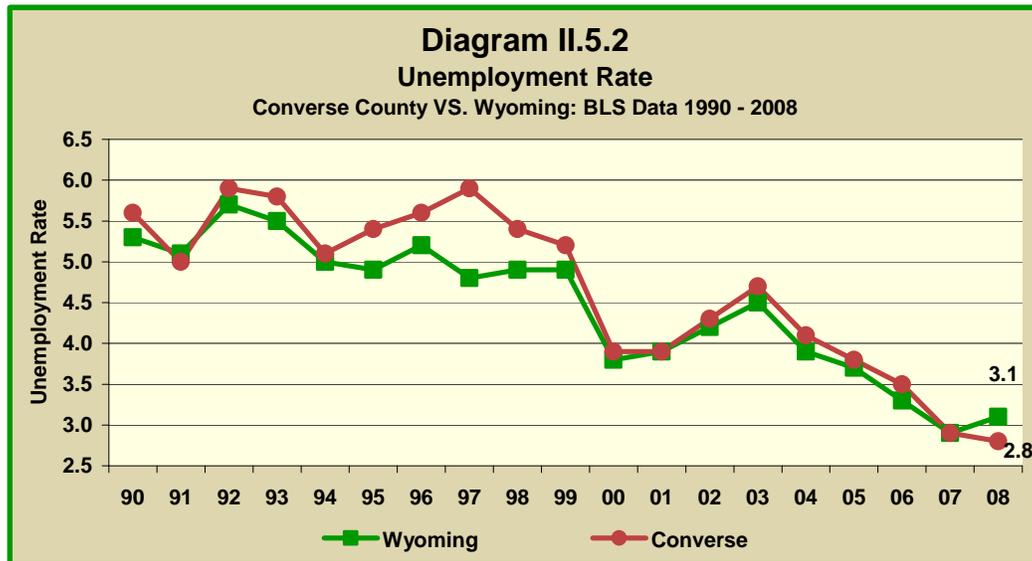
<sup>64</sup> On December 22, 2009, the Census Bureau released a statewide population estimate for 2009, indicating that the population increased to 544,270.

## ECONOMICS

The HUD estimated median family income (MFI) for Converse County was \$64,200 in 2009.<sup>65</sup> This compares to Wyoming’s MFI of \$63,900. Diagram II.5.1, below, illustrates the estimated MFI for the years 2000 through 2009.



Labor force and employment statistics were derived from Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data. Converse County’s labor force, defined as the number of people working or actively seeking work, increased by 394 persons, from 6,937 in 2007 to 7,331 in 2008. Employment increased by 394 persons. Unemployment, therefore, increased by one person and the unemployment rate, the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the labor force, decreased from 2.9 percent in 2007 to 2.8 in 2008, as seen in Diagram II.5.2.



<sup>65</sup> Starting from the year 2003 HUD MFI estimates were re-benchmarked using 2000 census income limits, hence the unusual increase in estimates compared to earlier years.

The BLS, in conjunction with the State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs), produces the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), which reports monthly data on employment and quarterly data on wages and number of business establishments.

QCEW employment data represents the number of workers who worked during or received pay for the pay period. Members of the armed forces, the self-employed, proprietors, domestic workers and unpaid family workers are not included in QCEW estimates. As seen in Table II.5.4, below, annual total monthly employment increased by 8.85 percent between 2007 and 2008, changing from a total of 4,972 to 5,412 workers. Preliminary 2009 estimates indicate an increasing trend, with employment rising to 5,502 persons in June.

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009p
Jan	4,369	4,051	4,194	4,361	4,441	4,676	4,675	5,241	5,213
Feb	4,227	4,068	4,152	4,324	4,443	4,694	4,697	5,268	5,174
Mar	4,224	4,042	4,207	4,388	4,532	4,748	4,770	5,284	5,249
Apr	4,284	4,104	4,319	4,505	4,631	4,735	4,783	5,372	5,342
May	4,344	4,311	4,507	4,631	4,847	4,831	4,947	5,477	5,494
Jun	4,370	4,481	4,632	4,749	5,052	5,020	5,081	5,570	5,502
Jul	4,270	4,254	4,533	4,492	4,743	4,765	4,887	5,467	.
Aug	4,398	4,149	4,335	4,504	4,742	4,787	4,983	5,477	.
Sep	4,351	4,333	4,466	4,509	4,852	4,899	5,113	5,574	.
Oct	4,367	4,300	4,599	4,621	4,820	4,782	5,212	5,472	.
Nov	4,354	4,208	4,492	4,561	4,793	4,728	5,233	5,397	.
Dec	4,295	4,128	4,471	4,597	4,737	4,774	5,281	5,341	.
<b>Annual</b>	<b>4,321</b>	<b>4,202</b>	<b>4,409</b>	<b>4,520</b>	<b>4,719</b>	<b>4,787</b>	<b>4,972</b>	<b>5,412</b>	.
% Change	.	-2.75	4.93	2.52	4.40	1.44	3.86	8.85	.

The QCEW also reports average weekly wages, which represent total compensation paid during the calendar quarter, regardless of when services were performed. As seen in Table II.5.5, at right, annual average weekly wages increased by 10.01 percent between 2007 and 2008, changing from a total of \$729 to \$802.

Year	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Annual	% Change
2001	503	541	498	545	522	.
2002	466	533	494	530	506	-3.07
2003	546	604	558	599	578	14.23
2004	572	606	584	635	600	3.81
2005	567	649	621	645	621	3.50
2006	626	690	629	745	673	8.37
2007	683	730	692	806	729	8.32
2008	743	800	787	879	802	10.01
2009p	774	836	.	.	.	.

Total business establishments reported by the QCEW are displayed in Table II.5.6. Establishments increased by 5.58 percent between 2007 and 2008, changing from a total of 502 to 530 establishments. Preliminary 2009 estimates indicate an increase, with establishments rising to 539 in the second quarter of 2009.

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) also measures employment, defined as the total number of full- and part-time

jobs by place of work. In 2007, the most recent year for which data are available, Converse County recorded 7,728 jobs. Total real personal income, comprising all wage and salary earnings, proprietorship income, dividends, interest, rents and transfer payments, adjusted for place of residence, was \$559,916,000, and real per capita income was \$43,505 in 2007. This compares with a statewide average real per capita income of \$47,740. Average earnings per job in the county were \$43,825 in 2007, while Wyoming average earnings per job were \$44,409.<sup>66</sup>

## ECONOMICS

The Census Bureau estimates that total housing units saw an increase of 6.19 percent in Converse County between 2000 and 2008, from 5,669 to 6,020. This compares to a 10.07 percent estimated increase statewide, as seen in Table II.5.7, below.

Subject	Wyoming	% Change from 2000	Converse County	% Change from 2000
2000 Census	223,854	.	5,669	.
July 2001 Estimate	225,959	0.94	5,694	0.44
July 2002 Estimate	227,773	1.75	5,713	0.78
July 2003 Estimate	229,637	2.58	5,739	1.23
July 2004 Estimate	232,556	3.89	5,823	2.72
July 2005 Estimate	235,654	5.27	5,846	3.12
July 2006 Estimate	239,175	6.84	5,894	3.97
July 2007 Estimate	242,332	8.25	5,920	4.43
July 2008 Estimate	246,393	10.07	6,020	6.19

Year	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Annual	% Change
2001	461	465	465	466	464	.
2002	470	479	481	474	476	2.59
2003	465	479	484	486	479	0.63
2004	498	503	496	499	499	4.18
2005	495	507	500	492	499	0.00
2006	499	496	495	493	496	-0.60
2007	495	500	504	510	502	1.21
2008	518	532	533	536	530	5.58
2009b	532	539	.	.	.	.

<sup>66</sup> Section D of Volume II, Technical Appendix provides additional BEA data for years 1969 through 2007.

According to the Wyoming cost of living index, average apartment rent in Converse County increased by 17.6 percent, from \$529 in second quarter 2008 to \$622 in second quarter 2009. Detached single-family home rents increased by 12.2 percent. Rents for mobile homes on a lot increased by 5.8 percent during the same time, and rents for mobile home lots increased by 2.9 percent.

Converse County rental prices have experienced average annualized increases of 3.3 percent per year for apartments, 2.8 percent per year for houses, 3.5 percent per year for mobile homes plus a lot and 1.9 percent per year for mobile home lots since fourth quarter 1986 through second quarter 2008. These figures compare to state average annualized increases in rental prices of 3.7 percent for apartments, 4.4 percent for houses, 3.8 percent for mobile homes plus a lot and 3.4 percent for mobile home lots over the same period. Table II.5.8, at right, presents the Converse County data for each rental type.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports building permit authorizations and “per unit” valuation of building permits by county annually. Single-family construction usually represents most residential development in the county. Single-family building permit authorizations in Converse County decreased from 99 in 2007 to 57 in 2008. Total residential units authorized decreased from 115 in 2007 to 103 in 2008.

The real value of single-family building permits increased from \$98,160 in 2007 to \$110,730 in 2008. The value over the past several years, in real dollars, has fluctuated from a high of \$160,720 in 2004 to a low of \$50,900 in 2001. These figures compare to the state average high of \$259,470 in 2000 and a low of \$175,810 in 2003. Additional details of permit activity and per unit valuations are given in Table II.5.9, on the following page.

Quarter Year	Apartments	Mobile Home Lot	House	Mobile Home
Q4.86	307	120	366	256
Q2.87	280	117	361	215
Q4.87	264	113	333	217
Q2.88	250	113	329	234
Q4.88	246	113	359	242
Q2.89	274	113	369	275
Q4.89	243	113	347	244
Q2.90	263	114	351	242
Q4.90	305	115	330	178
Q2.91	256	115	338	237
Q4.91	276	108	350	175
Q2.92	265	115	368	273
Q4.92	.	105	334	261
Q2.93	294	113	.	262
Q4.93	.	113	293	.
Q2.94	.	113	449	.
Q4.94	.	105	.	.
Q2.95	362	110	368	363
Q4.95	370	105	379	315
Q2.96	343	113	437	301
Q4.96	325	118	405	346
Q2.97	349	110	411	287
Q4.97	346	113	386	304
Q2.98	355	118	391	336
Q4.98	330	115	412	368
Q2.99	339	120	394	386
Q4.99	341	115	385	305
Q2.00	336	130	428	382
Q4.00	353	115	436	324
Q2.01	395	128	482	338
Q4.01	370	150	415	319
Q2.02	380	150	464	335
Q4.02	407	143	491	353
Q2.03	384	143	461	373
Q4.03	385	150	488	374
Q2.04	420	150	515	370
Q4.04	392	150	530	369
Q2.05	444	150	519	388
Q4.05	456	148	524	393
Q2.06	444	152	511	431
Q4.06	515	152	545	452
Q2.07	474	160	596	496
Q4.07	523	163	597	439
Q2.08	529	175	600	520
Q4.08	619	180	650	545
Q2.09	622	180	673	550

<b>Table II.5.9</b>								
<b>Building Permits and Valuation in Converse County</b>								
<b>1980 - 2008</b>								
Year	Authorized Construction in Permit Issuing Areas					WCDA		Per Unit Valuation, 1000s of Real 2008 Dollars
	Single-Family Units	Duplex Units	Tri- and Four-Plex Units	Multi-Family Units	Total Units	Tax Credit Projects	HOME Projects	Single-Family Units
1980	44	4	20	60	128	.	.	116.67
1981	48	4	.	46	98	.	.	101.41
1982	29	20	16	15	80	.	.	98.01
1983	16	12	.	.	28	.	.	91.01
1984	12	2	.	.	14	.	.	82.21
1985	2	6	.	.	8	.	.	109.70
1986	3	.	.	.	3	.	.	114.53
1987	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	113.67
1988	.	2	.	.	2	.	.	.
1989	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	75.70
1990	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1991	3	.	.	.	3	.	.	65.20
1992	2	.	.	.	2	.	.	135.27
1993	9	.	.	.	9	.	.	98.34
1994	6	6	.	.	12	.	10	127.20
1995	17	.	.	.	17	.	.	135.83
1996	18	.	.	.	18	.	12	107.48
1997	3	.	.	24	27	.	.	75.23
1998	11	.	.	.	11	.	.	132.76
1999	8	.	.	.	8	.	.	94.70
2000	1	10	.	.	11	.	10	104.00
2001	5	8	.	.	13	.	.	50.90
2002	10	2	4	.	16	.	.	129.02
2003	12	.	.	42	54	.	.	141.65
2004	18	.	.	.	18	41	11	160.72
2005	54	4	.	.	58	.	.	140.63
2006	34	.	.	.	34	.	.	122.06
2007	99	.	16	.	115	.	.	98.16
2008	57	.	40	6	103	.	.	110.73

The average sales price of existing, detached, single-family homes was provided by the County Assessor's office. In 2008, the average sales price in Converse County was \$187,131. This represented an increase of 7.9 percent from the previous year. In contrast, the state of Wyoming's average was \$256,045, a decrease of 3.4 percent over the previous year. A comparison of average sales prices between 1999 and 2008 is displayed in Table II.5.10, below.

<b>Table II.5.10</b>				
<b>Average Sales Prices in Converse County and Wyoming</b>				
<b>Assessor Data, 1999 - 2008</b>				
Year	Converse County Average Price (\$)	Converse County Annual % Change	Wyoming Average Price	Wyoming Annual % Change
1999	77,507	-0.28	101,517	4.76
2000	87,792	13.27	111,437	9.77
2001	88,000	0.24	116,469	4.52
2002	101,357	15.18	121,140	4.01
2003	123,707	22.05	132,708	9.55
2004	115,800	-6.39	142,501	7.38
2005	141,949	22.58	159,776	12.12
2006	148,804	4.83	187,869	17.58
2007	173,375	16.51	265,044	41.08
2008	187,131	7.9	256,045	-3.4

The Wyoming Rental Vacancy Survey has been completed eighteen times semiannually during the past nine years, with the most recent survey conducted in December 2009.<sup>67</sup> During December 2009, a total of 32 surveys were completed by property managers in Converse County. Of the 681 rental units surveyed, 47 were vacant, indicating a vacancy rate of 6.90 percent. This compares to a 2.04 percent vacancy rate one year ago and a statewide 2009 vacancy rate 6.78 percent. Over the last six months the vacancy rate has risen indicating a slight weakening of the rental market in Converse County

The calendar year 2009 Housing Needs Assessment Survey, fielded by the Wyoming Department of Transportation, had 102 respondents in Converse County. Of the incoming population who were unsatisfied with their current housing, 57.1 percent said they were seeking to own a home and 42.9 percent wished to rent. Of those seeking to own a home, 66.7 percent wished to buy existing units, of which 25.0 percent of respondents anticipated spending less than \$50,000 and 75.0 percent anticipated spending between \$50,000 and \$100,000. The remainder of those seeking to own a home, 33.3 percent, wished to build, of which 50.0 percent expected to build for between \$50,000 and \$100,000 and 50.0 percent expected to build for more than \$100,000. A significant portion of these people do not appear to have expectations in line with market realities.

Of those currently renting or seeking to rent, 16.7 percent of respondents hoped to spend below \$365, 50.0 percent between \$475 and \$599 per month, and 33.3 percent anticipated spending above \$600 on rent. Additional survey data are presented in Section C of Volume II, Technical Appendix.

## 2010 HOUSING NEEDS FORECAST

Three alternative housing forecasts were prepared: a *moderate growth* scenario, a *strong growth* scenario and a *very strong growth* scenario. While all three predictions are available in the *2010 Wyoming Housing Needs Forecast*, only the *strong growth* forecast is presented on the following page. The forecast of household formation by tenure was segmented by income, as a percentage of median family income (MFI). The income groupings for the counties were separated into five categories: 0 to 30 percent, 31 to 50 percent, 51 to 80 percent, 81 to 95 percent and more than 95 percent of median family income.

**Table II.5.11**  
**Semi-Annual Rental Vacancy Survey**  
**Converse County 2001- 2009**

Year	Sample	Total Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
2001a	14	393	18	4.58
2001b	9	355	12	3.38
2002a	11	316	6	1.90
2002b	8	183	6	3.28
2003a	13	325	10	3.08
2003b	11	504	14	2.78
2004a	19	378	15	3.97
2004b	22	481	40	8.32
2005a	19	472	24	5.08
2005b	21	1,143	26	2.27
2006a	20	575	27	4.70
2006b	21	625	9	1.44
2007a	23	530	4	0.75
2007b	15	424	2	0.47
2008a	21	612	10	1.63
2008b	20	491	10	2.04
2009a	24	491	13	2.65
2009b	32	681	47	6.90

<sup>67</sup> Those signified as 'a' in the "year" column of Table II.5.11 are conducted in June/July of each year. Those signified as 'b' are conducted each November/December. Conducting the surveys in June and December of each year allows one to view the prospective seasonality of vacancy rates, as well as year-to-year changes.

The household forecast indicates a total increase of 2,836 households in Converse County, from 4,694 in 2000 to 7,530 in 2030. Homeowners are expected to increase from 3,475 in 2000 to 5,807 by 2030. Renters are anticipated to increase from 1,219 in 2000 to 1,723 in 2030.

Homeownership from the year 2000 to 2030 is expected to increase by 221 households for homeowners with extremely low incomes, 30 percent or less of MFI. Homeownership for those with incomes from 31 to 50 percent of MFI is expected to increase by 203 households, and to increase by 330 for those with 51 to 80 percent of MFI.

Rental demand from the year 2000 to 2030 is expected to increase by 139 households for renters with extremely low incomes, 30 percent or less of MFI. Further, rental demand for those with 31 to 50 percent of MFI is expected to increase by 122 households over the period. Table II.5.11, below, provides details of the household forecast by tenure and income.

<b>Table II.5.11</b>						
<b>Strong Growth Household Forecast by Tenure and Income</b>						
<b>Converse 2000 Through 2030</b>						
<b>Year</b>	<b>0-30%</b>	<b>31-50%</b>	<b>51-80%</b>	<b>81-95%</b>	<b>96+%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Homeowners by Percent of Median Family Income</b>						
2000	329	303	491	254	2,098	3,475
2005	355	327	530	274	2,264	3,751
2010	402	370	600	310	2,563	4,245
2015	436	401	651	336	2,778	4,603
2020	472	435	705	364	3,009	4,985
2025	510	470	761	394	3,251	5,386
2030	550	506	821	424	3,505	5,807
<b>Renters by Percent of Median Family Income</b>						
2000	336	294	179	78	332	1,219
2005	336	294	179	78	332	1,220
2010	357	313	190	83	353	1,296
2015	385	337	205	89	381	1,397
2020	414	362	220	96	409	1,502
2025	444	389	236	103	439	1,611
2030	475	416	252	110	470	1,723
<b>Total Households by Percent of Median Family Income</b>						
2000	665	597	670	332	2,430	4,694
2005	692	621	709	352	2,597	4,971
2010	759	683	790	393	2,916	5,541
2015	821	738	855	426	3,159	6,000
2020	886	797	925	460	3,418	6,487
2025	954	858	997	497	3,690	6,997
2030	1,025	922	1,073	535	3,975	7,530