

## SWEETWATER COUNTY

### POPULATION

The Census Bureau's intercensal estimates indicate that Sweetwater County's population increased by 6.20 percent between 2000 and 2008, from 37,613 to 39,944. This rate compares to a statewide population growth of 7.88 percent over the period. These data are presented in Table II.19.1, below.

<b>Table II.19.1</b>				
<b>Population Estimates for Wyoming and Sweetwater County</b>				
<b>Census 2000, 2001 - 2008 Intercensal Estimates</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Wyoming</b>	<b>% Change from 2000</b>	<b>Sweetwater County</b>	<b>% Change from 2000</b>
<b>Population</b>				
2000 Census	493,782	.	37,613	.
July 2001 Estimate	492,924	-0.17	36,568	-2.78
July 2002 Estimate	496,969	0.65	36,838	-2.06
July 2003 Estimate	499,056	1.07	36,576	-2.76
July 2004 Estimate	502,816	1.83	36,883	-1.94
July 2005 Estimate	506,007	2.48	37,308	-0.81
July 2006 Estimate	512,573	3.81	38,001	1.03
July 2007 Estimate	523,252	5.97	39,376	4.69
July 2008 Estimate	532,668	7.88	39,944	6.20

### MIGRATION

Total population change is a combination of births, deaths and the net migration of those arriving in and leaving the state. The result of births minus deaths is termed the "natural increase." As calculated from data seen in Table II.19.2, at right, from April 2000 to July 2008, Sweetwater County's natural increase was estimated to be 2,971 people. Sweetwater County has been experiencing net out-migration, with over 640 persons leaving the county in the last seven years.<sup>131</sup>

The Wyoming driver's license exchange data for Sweetwater County indicate a net change of 221 persons during 2009. The driver's license total exchanges for the last nine and one-half years for Sweetwater County are presented in Table II.19.3, on the following page, which indicate a net increase of 2,447 persons over the time period.

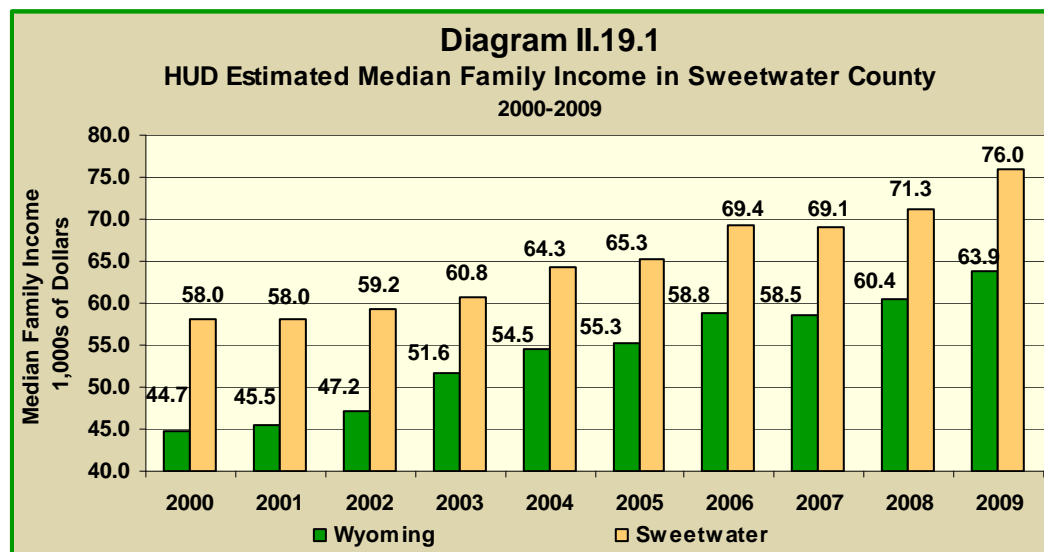
<b>Table II.19.2</b>	
<b>Sweetwater County Population Change</b>	
<b>Census 1980 - 7/2008</b>	
<b>1980 Population</b>	<b>41,723</b>
Natural Increase 80-90	6,801
Net Migration 80-90	-9,701
<b>1990 Population</b>	<b>38,823</b>
Natural Increase 90-00	3,160
Net Migration 90-00	-4,370
<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>37,613</b>
Natural Increase 00-08	2,971
Net Migration 00-08	-640
<b>2008 Population Estimate</b>	<b>39,944</b>

<sup>131</sup> Net migration includes a residual, a change the Census Bureau has not attributed to any cause.

<b>Table I.19.3</b>			
<b>Driver's Licenses Exchanged and Surrendered in Sweetwater County</b>			
<b>2000 - First Half of 2009</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>In-Migrants</b>	<b>Out-Migrants</b>	<b>Net Change</b>
2000	866	1,190	-324
2001	1,076	1,039	37
2002	912	927	-15
2003	825	815	10
2004	1,174	976	198
2005	1,255	1,012	243
2006	1,560	849	711
2007	1,705	1,074	631
2008	1,905	1,170	735
2009 – First Half	827	606	221
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,105</b>	<b>9,658</b>	<b>2,447</b>

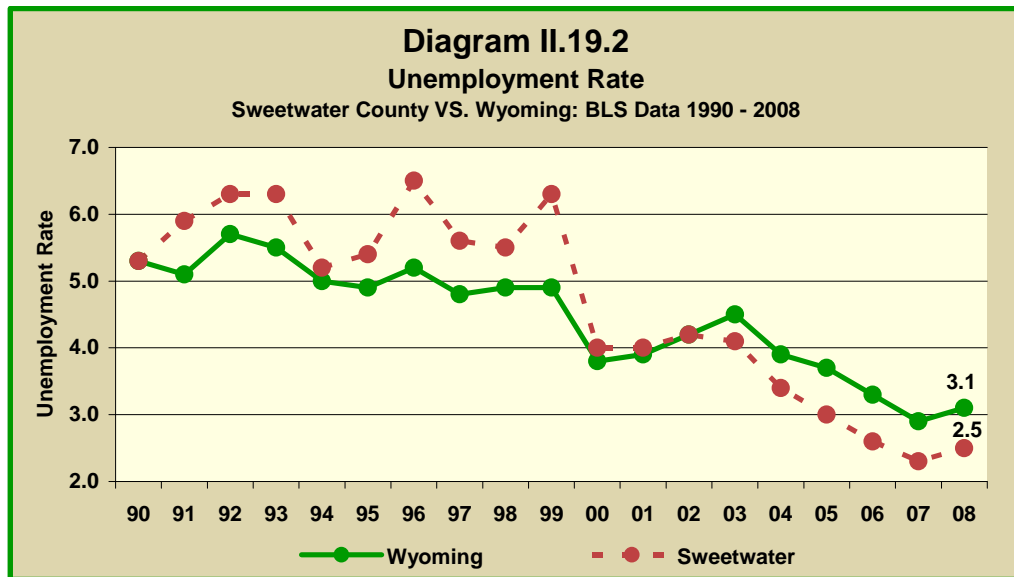
## ECONOMICS

The HUD estimated median family income (MFI) for Sweetwater County was \$76,000 in 2009.<sup>132</sup> This compares to Wyoming's MFI of \$63,900. Diagram II.19.1, 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. Sweetwater County's labor force, defined as the number of people working or actively seeking work, increased by 228 persons, from 23,862 in 2007 to 24,090 in 2008. Employment increased by 180 persons. Unemployment, therefore, increased by 48 persons and the unemployment rate, the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the labor force, increased from 2.3 percent in 2007 to 2.5 in 2008. Sweetwater County continued to enjoy better labor force utilization than the state of Wyoming, as seen in Diagram II.19.2, on the following page.

<sup>132</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 represent 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.19.4 below, annual total monthly employment increased by 3.63 percent between 2006 and 2007, changing from a total of 23,889 to 24,757 workers. Over the first quarter of 2008 preliminary estimates indicate a decreasing trend with employment increasing to 26,072 persons in September.

<b>Table II.19.4</b> <b>Sweetwater County Total Monthly Employment</b> <b>BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2001 – 2008p</b>								
Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008p
Jan	18,209	18,120	18,536	19,373	20,387	21,995	23,748	24,916
Feb	18,300	18,114	18,417	19,387	20,820	22,448	24,100	25,116
Mar	18,447	18,268	18,798	19,698	21,315	22,900	24,503	25,196
Apr	18,612	18,386	19,277	20,128	21,671	23,639	24,724	24,981
May	19,099	18,776	19,753	20,712	22,328	24,335	25,268	25,577
Jun	19,247	18,468	19,588	20,483	22,089	24,581	25,235	25,675
Jul	18,664	18,309	19,237	20,542	21,740	23,852	24,614	25,462
Aug	18,876	18,934	19,862	20,825	22,225	24,755	24,958	26,059
Sep	19,043	19,238	20,247	20,890	22,297	24,658	24,804	26,072
Oct	19,383	19,065	20,271	20,999	22,499	24,547	24,723	.
Nov	19,378	18,586	19,756	21,145	22,577	24,403	25,106	.
Dec	18,998	18,593	19,695	21,089	22,249	24,559	25,302	.
Annual	18,855	18,571	19,453	20,439	21,850	23,889	24,757	.
% Change	.	-1.51	4.75	5.07	6.90	9.33	3.63	.

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.19.5, at right, annual average weekly wages increased by 5.31 percent between 2005 and 2006, changing from a total of 885 to 932 dollars.

Total business establishments reported by the QCEW are displayed in Table II.19.6. Annual establishments increased by 2.21 percent between 2006 and 2007, changing from a total of 1,628 to 1,664 establishments. Preliminary 2008 estimates indicate an increase, with establishments rising to 1,718 in the third quarter of 2008.

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 latest year available for the data, Sweetwater County recorded 30,878 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 \$1,857,560,000, and real per capita income was \$47,175 in 2007. This figure compares with a statewide average real per capita income of \$48,045. Average earnings per job in the county were \$56,010 in 2007, while Wyoming average earnings per job were \$43,407.<sup>133</sup>

## HOUSING

The Census Bureau estimates that total housing units saw an increase of 7.74 percent in Sweetwater County between 2000 and 2008, from 15,921 to 17,153. This compares to a 10.07 percent estimated increase statewide, as seen in Table II.19.7, below.

<b>Table II.19.7</b> <b>Housing Unit Estimates for Wyoming and Sweetwater County</b> <b>Census 2000, 2001 - 2008 Intercensal Estimates</b>				
Subject	Wyoming	% Change from 2000	Sweetwater County	% Change from 2000
2000 Census	223,854	.	15,921	.
July 2001 Estimate	225,959	0.94	15,995	0.46
July 2002 Estimate	227,773	1.75	16,026	0.66
July 2003 Estimate	229,637	2.58	16,045	0.78
July 2004 Estimate	232,556	3.89	16,078	0.99
July 2005 Estimate	235,654	5.27	16,254	2.09
July 2006 Estimate	239,175	6.84	16,484	3.54
July 2007 Estimate	242,332	8.25	16,727	5.06
July 2008 Estimate	246,393	10.07	17,153	7.74

<sup>133</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 Sweetwater County changed by 3.3 percent, from \$751 in fourth quarter 2007 to \$776 in fourth quarter 2008. Detached single-family home rents increased by 5.8 percent. Rents for mobile homes on a lot increased by 4.1 percent, and rents for mobile home lots increased by 8.1 percent.

Sweetwater County rental prices have experienced average annualized increases of 4.2 percent per year for apartments, 4.5 percent per year for houses, 4.0 percent per year for mobile homes plus a lot and 4.1 percent per year for mobile home lots since fourth quarter 1986 through fourth quarter 2008. These figures compare to state average annualized increases in rental prices of 3.5 percent for apartments, 4.4 percent for houses, 3.6 percent for mobile homes plus a lot and 2.8 percent for mobile home lots. Table II.19.8, at right, presents the Sweetwater 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 Sweetwater County decreased from 438 in 2007 to 144 in 2008. Total residential units authorized decreased from 472 in 2007 to 245 in 2008.

The real value of single-family building permits increased from \$155,670 in 2007 to \$178,510 in 2008. The value over the past several years, in real dollars, has fluctuated from a high of \$204,120 in 2003 to a low of \$155,670 in 2007. These figures compare to the state average eight-year high of \$259,470 in 2000 and an eight-year low of \$175,810 in 2003. Additional details of permit activity and per unit valuations are given in Table II.19.9, on the following page.

**Table II.19.8**  
**Wyoming Cost of Living Index for Sweetwater County**  
**Rental Housing Costs, 1986 – 2008**

Quarter Year	Apartments	Mobile Home Lot	House	Mobile Home
Q4.86	317	160	434	331
Q2.87	302	164	375	318
Q4.87	316	164	394	304
Q2.88	282	169	346	300
Q4.88	249	167	395	312
Q2.89	269	167	366	321
Q4.89	303	163	402	307
Q2.90	282	166	400	327
Q4.90	324	166	448	355
Q2.91	337	166	443	353
Q4.91	358	166	476	351
Q2.92	346	169	481	361
Q4.92	368	169	430	388
Q2.93	384	174	486	332
Q4.93	375	174	482	394
Q2.94	387	174	467	388
Q4.94	393	173	477	403
Q2.95	385	173	461	372
Q4.95	390	174	518	373
Q2.96	380	182	499	359
Q4.96	396	182	493	381
Q2.97	366	182	460	346
Q4.97	372	185	441	378
Q2.98	363	183	459	405
Q4.98	358	188	470	406
Q2.99	354	188	472	392
Q4.99	363	195	474	360
Q2.00	367	196	485	389
Q4.00	333	196	498	401
Q2.01	368	200	534	439
Q4.01	390	201	533	422
Q2.02	387	202	518	443
Q4.02	392	197	516	422
Q2.03	391	208	539	449
Q4.03	412	218	595	457
Q2.04	427	212	635	566
Q4.04	469	212	654	546
Q2.05	512	214	674	594
Q4.05	624	224	773	619
Q2.06	684	238	816	669
Q4.06	686	253	922	701
Q2.07	709	261	1,013	741
Q4.07	751	283	1,074	774
Q2.08	779	294	1,113	749
Q4.08	776	306	1,136	806

<b>Table II.19.9</b> <b>Building Permits and Valuation in Sweetwater 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	325	6	56	414	801	.	.	96.72
1981	385	8	60	63	516	.	.	85.72
1982	278	12	19	16	325	.	.	83.89
1983	189	2	.	22	213	.	.	83.48
1984	123	.	.	16	139	.	.	83.60
1985	93	.	.	.	93	.	.	94.27
1986	85	.	.	.	85	.	.	99.14
1987	50	2	.	20	72	.	.	101.87
1988	30	.	.	.	30	.	.	113.00
1989	34	.	.	.	34	.	.	99.67
1990	56	.	.	.	56	.	.	116.88
1991	80	.	.	.	80	.	.	121.57
1992	102	.	.	.	102	.	.	131.23
1993	99	.	.	.	99	.	.	161.35
1994	115	.	.	8	123	48	.	174.47
1995	90	.	.	.	90	.	.	166.92
1996	90	.	.	.	90	.	.	161.78
1997	75	.	.	.	75	.	.	170.91
1998	73	.	.	.	73	.	.	185.12
1999	39	.	.	12	51	.	.	155.51
2000	36	.	.	5	41	.	.	164.17
2001	38	.	.	.	38	.	.	200.51
2002	48	.	.	.	48	.	.	180.91
2003	63	.	.	.	63	.	.	204.12
2004	216	.	.	.	216	60	6	178.98
2005	260	.	.	.	260	101	.	165.91
2006	236	.	8	24	269	.	.	175.40
2007	438	8	.	26	472	69	.	155.67
2008	144	.	22	79	245	.	.	178.51

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 Sweetwater County was \$242,470. This represented an increase of 5.4 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.19.10, below.

<b>Table II.19.10</b> <b>Average Sales Prices in Sweetwater County and Wyoming</b> <b>Assessor Data, 1999 - 2008</b>				
Year	Sweetwater Average Price (\$)	Sweetwater Annual % Change	Wyoming Average Price	Wyoming Annual % Change
1999	108,324	2.82	101,517	4.76
2000	108,633	0.29	111,437	9.77
2001	111,056	2.23	116,469	4.52
2002	114,838	3.41	121,140	4.01
2003	121,652	5.93	132,708	9.55
2004	142,688	17.29	142,501	7.38
2005	179,000	25.45	159,776	12.12
2006	195,981	9.49	187,869	17.58
2007	230,063	17.39	265,044	41.08
2008	242,470	5.4	256,045	-3.4

The Wyoming Rental Vacancy Survey has been completed seventeen times semiannually during the past nine years, with the most recent conducted in June, 2009.<sup>134</sup> During June of 2009, a total of 67 surveys were completed by property managers in Sweetwater County. Of the 1,924 rental units surveyed, 107 were vacant, indicating a vacancy rate of 5.56 percent. This compares to a 1.19 percent vacancy rate one year ago and a statewide June 2009 vacancy rate of 6.06 percent. The increase in vacancy rate can be attributed to the increase of multi-family rental stock, with 79 multi-family units being permitted in 2008 alone.

The fiscal year 2009 Housing Needs Assessment Survey, fielded by the Wyoming Department of Transportation, had eight respondents in Sweetwater County. Of the incoming population who were unsatisfied with their current housing, all respondents said they were seeking to own a home. Of those seeking to own a home, 50.0 percent wished to buy existing units. The remainder of those seeking to own a home, 50.0 percent, wished to build, of which all respondents expected to build for more than \$100,000. Additional survey data are presented in Section C of Volume II, Technical Appendix.

The Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA) began purchasing home loans in 1978, to provide affordable housing in Wyoming. There were a total of 3,715 loans purchased in Sweetwater County between 1979 and 2009, with 29 in fiscal 2009. The average home size over the period was 1,111 square feet and 1,237 square feet on average in fiscal 2009. For homes receiving a WCDA loan in fiscal 2009, the average year a home was built was 1979. The average household income in fiscal 2009 in nominal terms, without the effects of inflation being taken into consideration, was \$55,547. The average purchase price in fiscal 2009 was \$176,908. In fiscal 2009, 10.3 percent of loans purchased were for new construction, and 13.8 percent had female heads of household. Fiscal year data over the entire operating history of the WCDA can be found in the August 2009 Volume II, Technical Appendix, Section E.

<b>Table II.19.11</b> <b>Semi-Annual Rental Vacancy Survey</b> <b>Sweetwater County 2001- 2009</b>				
Year	Sample	Total Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
2001a	16	821	67	8.16
2001b	19	1,083	49	4.52
2002a	20	1,060	65	6.13
2002b	21	1,439	65	4.52
2003a	24	1,620	34	2.10
2003b	33	1,942	18	0.93
2004a	29	1,369	12	0.88
2004b	28	1,264	20	1.58
2005a	24	1,440	34	2.36
2005b	27	923	22	2.38
2006a	29	1,290	24	1.86
2006b	30	1,433	9	0.63
2007a	30	1,416	17	1.20
2007b	32	1,484	13	0.88
2008a	36	1,684	20	1.19
2008b	52	1,906	30	1.57
2009a	67	1,924	107	5.56

<sup>134</sup>Those signified as 'a' in the "year" column of Table II.19.11 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.

