

CONVERSE COUNTY

POPULATION

The Census Bureau's intercensal estimates indicate that Converse County's population increased by 10.08 percent between 2000 and 2008, from 12,870 to 13,267. This rate compares to a statewide population growth of 7.88 percent over the period. These data are presented in Table II.5.1, below.

Table II.5.1 Population Estimates for Wyoming and Converse County Census 2000, 2001 - 2008 Intercensal Estimates				
Subject	Wyoming	% Change from 2000	Converse County	% Change from 2000
Population				
2000 Census	493,782	.	12,052	.
July 2001 Estimate	492,924	-0.17	11,979	-0.61
July 2002 Estimate	496,969	0.65	12,153	0.84
July 2003 Estimate	499,056	1.07	12,149	0.80
July 2004 Estimate	502,816	1.83	12,240	1.56
July 2005 Estimate	506,007	2.48	12,447	3.28
July 2006 Estimate	512,573	3.81	12,619	4.70
July 2007 Estimate	523,252	5.97	12,870	6.79
July 2008 Estimate	532,668	7.88	13,267	10.08

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.5.2, at right, from April 2000 to July 2008, Converse County's natural increase was estimated to be 532 people. Converse County has been experiencing net in migration, with over 683 persons arriving in the county in the last eight years.⁶⁸

The Wyoming driver's license exchange data indicate a net increase of 31 persons during 2009. The driver's license total exchanges for the last nine and one-half years for Converse County are presented in Table II.5.3, on the following page, which indicate a net increase of 929 persons over the time period.

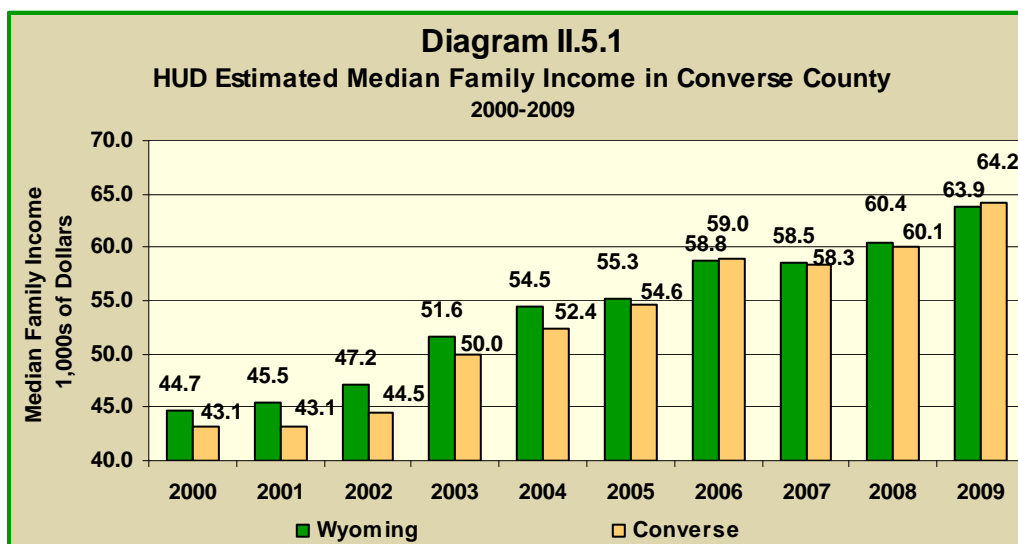
Table II.5.2 Converse County Population Change Census 1980 - 7/2008	
1980 Population	14,069
Natural Increase 80-90	1,733
Net Migration 80-90	-4,674
1990 Population	11,128
Natural Increase 90-00	615
Net Migration 90-00	309
2000 Population	12,052
Natural Increase 00-08	532
Net Migration 00-08	683
2008 Population Estimate	13,267

⁶⁸ Net migration includes a residual, a change the Census Bureau has not attributed to any cause.

Table II.5.3			
Driver's Licenses Exchanged and Surrendered in Converse County			
2000 - First Half of 2009			
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 - First Half	163	132	31
Total	3,170	2,241	929

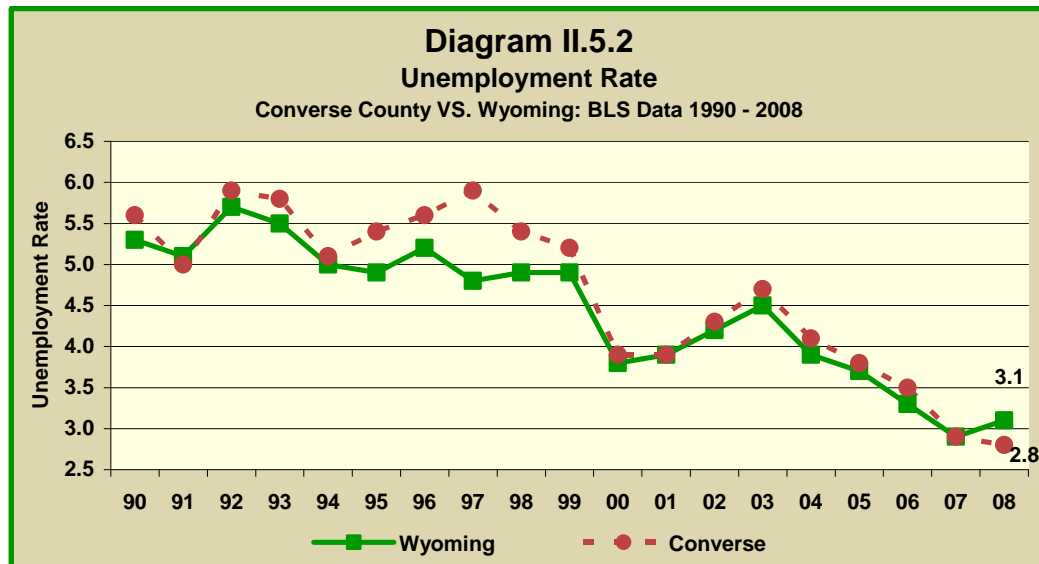
ECONOMICS

The HUD estimated median family income (MFI) for Converse County was \$64,200 in 2009.⁶⁹ 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. Converse County continued to see lower labor force utilization than the state of Wyoming, as seen in Diagram II.5.2, on the following page.

⁶⁹ 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 3.86 percent between 2006 and 2007, changing from a total of 4,787 to 4,972 workers. Preliminary 2008 estimates indicate an increasing trend, with employment rising to 5,532 persons in September.

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008p
Jan	4,369	4,051	4,194	4,361	4,441	4,676	4,675	5,241
Feb	4,227	4,068	4,152	4,324	4,443	4,694	4,697	5,268
Mar	4,224	4,042	4,207	4,388	4,532	4,748	4,770	5,284
Apr	4,284	4,104	4,319	4,505	4,631	4,735	4,783	5,372
May	4,344	4,311	4,507	4,631	4,847	4,831	4,947	5,477
Jun	4,370	4,481	4,632	4,749	5,052	5,020	5,081	5,570
Jul	4,270	4,254	4,533	4,492	4,743	4,765	4,887	5,419
Aug	4,398	4,149	4,335	4,504	4,742	4,787	4,983	5,437
Sep	4,351	4,333	4,466	4,509	4,852	4,899	5,113	5,532
Oct	4,367	4,300	4,599	4,621	4,820	4,782	5,212	.
Nov	4,354	4,208	4,492	4,561	4,793	4,728	5,233	.
Dec	4,295	4,128	4,471	4,597	4,737	4,774	5,281	.
Annual	4,321	4,202	4,409	4,520	4,719	4,787	4,972	.
% Change	.	-2.75	4.93	2.52	4.40	1.44	3.86	.

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 8.32 percent between 2006 and 2007, changing from a total of \$673 to \$729.

Total business establishments reported by the QCEW are displayed in Table II.5.6. Establishments increased by 1.21 percent between 2006 and 2007, changing from a total of 496 to 502 establishments. Preliminary 2008 estimates indicate an increase, with establishments rising to 532 in the third quarter of 2007.

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) also measures employment. Here it is defined as the total number of full- and part-time jobs by place of work. In 2007, the latest year available for the data, 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 \$48,045. Average earnings per job in the county were \$43,825 in 2007, while Wyoming average earnings per job were \$43,407.⁷⁰

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.

Table II.5.7 Housing Unit Estimates for Wyoming and Converse County Census 2000, 2001 - 2008 Intercensal Estimates				
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

⁷⁰ 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 changed by 18.4 percent, from \$523 in fourth quarter 2007 to \$619 in fourth quarter 2008. Detached single-family home rents increased by 8.9 percent. Rents for mobile homes on a lot increased by 24.1 percent during the same time, and rents for mobile home lots increased by 10.4 percent.

Converse County rental prices have experienced average annualized increases of 3.2 percent per year for apartments, 2.6 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 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 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 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.5.9, on the following page.

Table II.5.8 Wyoming Cost of Living Index for Converse County Rental Housing Costs, 1986 – 2008				
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

Table II.5.9 Building Permits and Valuation in Converse County 1980 - 2008								
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.

Table II.5.10 Average Sales Prices in Converse County and Wyoming Assessor Data, 1999 - 2008				
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 seventeen times semiannually during the past nine years, with the most recent survey conducted in June, 2009.⁷¹ During June of 2009, a total of 24 surveys were completed by property managers in Converse County. Of the 491 rental units surveyed, 13 were vacant, indicating a vacancy rate of 2.65 percent. This compares to a 1.63 percent vacancy rate one year ago and a 2009 vacancy rate 6.06 percent statewide. Over the last six months the vacancy rate has risen only slightly indicating a stable rental market in Converse County.

The fiscal year 2009 Housing Needs Assessment Survey, fielded by the Wyoming Department of Transportation, had 126 respondents in Converse County. Of the incoming population who were unsatisfied with their current housing, 80.0 percent said they were seeking to own a home and 20.0 percent wished to rent. Of those seeking to own a home, 76.9 percent wished to buy existing units, of which 100.0 percent of respondents anticipated spending more than \$100,000. The remainder of those seeking to own a home, 23.1 percent, wished to build, of which no respondents expected to build for less than \$50,000, 33.3 percent expected to build for less than \$100,000 and 66.7 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, 50.0 percent of respondents hoped to spend between \$365 and \$599 per month, and 50.0 percent anticipated spending above \$600 on rent. 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 1,307 loans purchased in Converse County between 1979 and 2009, with 23 in fiscal 2009. The average home size over the period was 1,133 square feet and 1,138 square feet in fiscal 2009. For homes receiving a WCDA loan in fiscal 2009, the average year a home was built was 1974. The average household income in fiscal 2009 in nominal terms, without the effects of inflation being taken into consideration, was \$48,251. The average purchase price in fiscal 2009 was \$141,576. In fiscal 2009, 17.4 percent of loans purchased were for new construction, and 34.8 percent had female heads of household. Fiscal year data over the entire operating history of the WCDA can be found in the August 2008 Volume II Technical Appendix, Section E.

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

⁷¹ 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.

