

SWEETWATER COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Census Bureau's intercensal estimates indicate that Sweetwater County's population increased 37,613 in 2000 to 39,944 in 2008 or by 6.20 percent. This compares to a statewide population growth of 7.88 percent over the period.¹¹⁶ The number of people from 15 to 24 years of age declined by 4.61 percent, and the number of people from 25 to 44 years of age decreased by 7.33 percent. The white population increased by 4.60 percent, while the black population increased by 79.58 percent. The Hispanic population changed from 3,545 to 4,865 people between 2000 and 2008, an increase of 37.24 percent. These data are presented in Table II.19.1, below.

Table II.19.1						
Profile of Population Characteristics						
Wyoming vs Sweetwater County, Census 2000 and 2008 Intercensal Estimates						
Subject	Wyoming			Sweetwater County		
	Census 2000	July 2008	% Change	Census 2000	July 2008	% Change
Population	493,782	532,668	7.88	37,613	39,944	6.20
Age						
Under 14 years	103,443	106,195	2.66	8,628	8,993	4.23
15 to 24 years	75,358	76,242	1.17	6,026	5,748	-4.61
25 to 44 years	138,619	137,338	-0.92	11,031	10,222	-7.33
45 to 54 years	74,079	82,508	11.38	5,950	6,598	10.89
55 to 64 years	44,590	64,771	45.26	2,969	5,059	70.39
65 & over	57,693	65,614	13.73	3,009	3,324	10.47
Race						
White	469,423	500,001	6.51	36,204	37,868	4.60
Black	3,942	6,884	74.63	289	519	79.58
American Indian and Alaskan Native	11,410	13,555	18.80	411	513	24.82
Asian	2,904	3,828	31.82	242	314	29.75
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	329	512	55.62	20	18	-10.00
Two or more races	5,774	7,888	36.61	447	712	59.28
Ethnicity (of any race)						
Hispanic or Latino	31,669	41,162	29.98	3,545	4,865	37.24

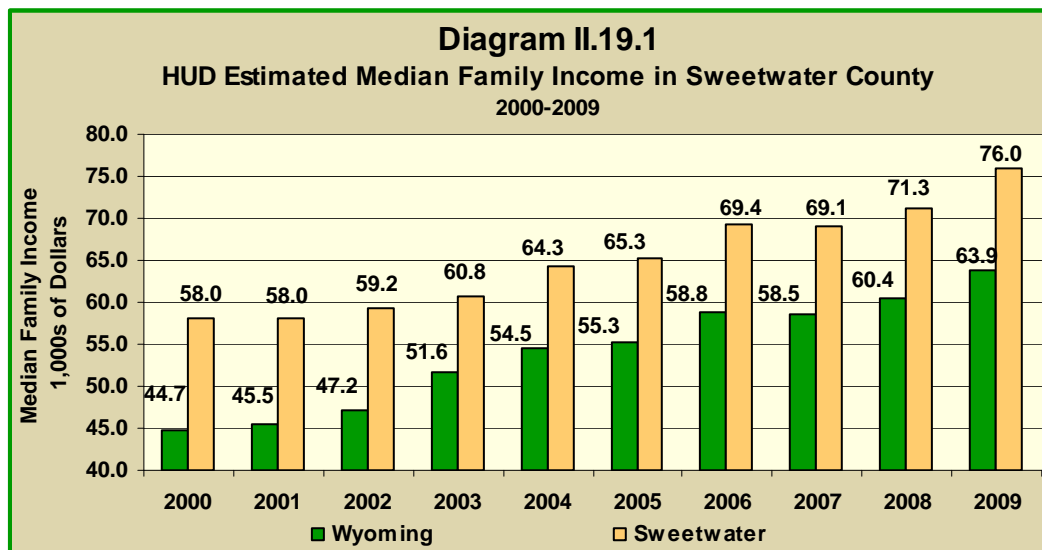
The Wyoming driver's license exchange data for Sweetwater County indicate a net change of 294 persons during 2009. The driver's license total exchanges for the last ten years for Sweetwater County are presented in Table II.19.3, which indicate a net increase of 2,520 persons over the time period.

Table I.19.3			
Driver's Licenses Exchanged and Surrendered in Sweetwater County			
2000 - 2009			
Year	In-Migrants	Out-Migrants	Net Change
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	1,453	1,159	294
Total	12,731	10,211	2,520

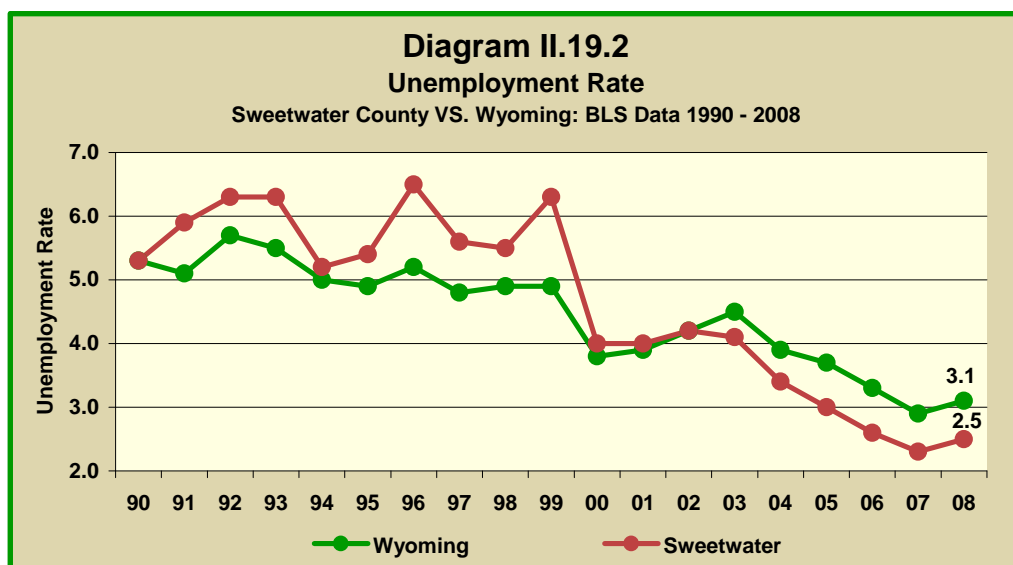
¹¹⁶ On December 22, 2008, the Census Bureau released a statewide population estimate for 2008, indicating that the population increased to 544,270.

ECONOMICS

The HUD estimated median family income (MFI) for Sweetwater County was \$76,000 in 2009.¹¹⁷ 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, as seen in Diagram II.19.2.



¹¹⁷ 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 3.45 percent between 2007 and 2008, changing from a total of 24,757 to 25,610 workers. Second quarter 2009 preliminary estimates indicate a decreasing trend with employment increasing to 24,095 persons in June.

Table II.19.4 Sweetwater County Total Monthly Employment BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2001 – 2009p									
Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009p
Jan	18,209	18,120	18,536	19,373	20,387	21,995	23,748	24,916	25,028
Feb	18,300	18,114	18,417	19,387	20,820	22,448	24,100	25,116	24,770
Mar	18,447	18,268	18,798	19,698	21,315	22,900	24,503	25,196	24,776
Apr	18,612	18,386	19,277	20,128	21,671	23,639	24,724	24,981	24,480
May	19,099	18,776	19,753	20,712	22,328	24,335	25,268	25,577	24,420
Jun	19,247	18,468	19,588	20,483	22,089	24,581	25,235	25,675	24,095
Jul	18,664	18,309	19,237	20,542	21,740	23,852	24,614	25,505	.
Aug	18,876	18,934	19,862	20,825	22,225	24,755	24,958	26,117	.
Sep	19,043	19,238	20,247	20,890	22,297	24,658	24,804	26,133	.
Oct	19,383	19,065	20,271	20,999	22,499	24,547	24,723	26,186	.
Nov	19,378	18,586	19,756	21,145	22,577	24,403	25,106	26,056	.
Dec	18,998	18,593	19,695	21,089	22,249	24,559	25,302	25,867	.
Annual	18,855	18,571	19,453	20,439	21,850	23,889	24,757	25,610	.
% Change	.	-1.51	4.75	5.07	6.90	9.33	3.63	3.45	.

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 6.33 percent between 2007 and 2008, changing from a total of 932 to 991 dollars.

Table II.19.5 Average Weekly Wages in Sweetwater County BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2001 – 2009p						
Year	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Annual	% Change
2001	678	682	673	713	687	.
2002	686	712	680	719	699	1.75
2003	709	722	697	762	723	3.43
2004	722	739	735	796	749	3.60
2005	759	808	800	867	809	8.01
2006	835	877	876	950	885	9.39
2007	900	930	906	991	932	5.31
2008	955	977	967	1,063	991	6.33
2009p	950	937

Total business establishments reported by the QCEW are displayed in Table II.19.6. Annual establishments increased by 2.58 percent between 2007 and 2008, changing from a total of 1,664 to 1,707 establishments. Preliminary 2009 estimates indicate an increase, with establishments rising to 1,744 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, 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 \$47,740. Average earnings per job in the county were \$56,010 in 2007, while Wyoming average earnings per job were \$44,409.

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.

Table II.19.7 Housing Unit Estimates for Wyoming and Sweetwater County Census 2000, 2001 - 2008 Intercensal Estimates				
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

Table II.19.6 Number of Establishments in Sweetwater County BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2001 – 2009p						
Year	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Annual	% Change
2001	1,236	1,248	1,257	1,251	1,248	.
2002	1,253	1,280	1,292	1,297	1,281	2.64
2003	1,308	1,317	1,332	1,325	1,321	3.12
2004	1,362	1,391	1,409	1,428	1,398	5.83
2005	1,442	1,473	1,509	1,532	1,489	6.51
2006	1,589	1,628	1,650	1,646	1,628	9.34
2007	1,645	1,662	1,675	1,672	1,664	2.21
2008	1,682	1,694	1,715	1,736	1,707	2.58
2009p	1,720	1,744

According to the Wyoming cost of living index, average apartment rent in Sweetwater County decreased by 5.0 percent, from \$779 in second quarter 2008 to \$740 in second quarter 2009. Detached single-family home rents decreased by 8.8 percent. Rents for mobile homes on a lot increased by 9.6 percent, and rents for mobile home lots increased by 4.1 percent.

Sweetwater County rental prices have experienced average annualized increases of 3.9 percent per year for apartments, 3.9 percent per year for houses, 4.2 percent per year for mobile homes plus a lot and 3.0 percent per year for mobile home lots since fourth quarter 1986 through second quarter 2009. 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. 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 high of \$259,470 in 2000 and 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 – 2009

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
Q2.09	740	306	1,015	821

Table II.19.9 Building Permits and Valuation in Sweetwater 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	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.

Table II.19.10 Average Sales Prices in Sweetwater County and Wyoming Assessor Data, 1999 - 2008				
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 eighteen times semiannually during the past nine years, with the most recent conducted in December 2009.¹¹⁸ During December 2009, a total of 72 surveys were completed by property managers in Sweetwater County. Of the 2,085 rental units surveyed, 148 were vacant, indicating a vacancy rate of 7.10 percent. This compares to a 1.57 percent vacancy rate one year ago and a statewide December 2009 vacancy rate of 6.78 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 calendar year 2009 Housing Needs Assessment Survey, fielded by the Wyoming Department of Transportation, had 12 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, 100.0 percent wished to build, with all respondents anticipating spending above \$100,000. Additional survey data are presented in Section C of Volume II, Technical Appendix.

Table II.19.11 Semi-Annual Rental Vacancy Survey Sweetwater County 2001- 2009				
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
2009b	72	2,085	148	7.10

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.

The household forecast indicates a total increase of 8,379 households in Sweetwater County, from 14,105 in 2000 to 22,484 in 2030. Homeowners are expected to increase from 10,586 in 2000 to 17,295 by 2030. Renters are anticipated to increase from 3,519 in 2000 to 5,189 in 2030.

Homeownership from the year 2000 to 2030 is expected to increase by 607 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 771 households, and to increase by 1,208 for those with 51 to 80 percent of MFI.

Rental demand from the year 2000 to 2030 is expected to increase by 507 households for renters with extremely low incomes, 30 percent or less of MFI. Further, rental demand for those with 31 to

¹¹⁸Those 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.

50 percent of MFI is expected to increase by 288 households over the period. Table II.19.11, below, provides details of the household forecast by tenure and income.

Table II.19.11 Strong Growth Household Forecast by Tenure and Income Sweetwater 2000 Through 2030						
Year	0-30%	31-50%	51-80%	81-95%	96+%	Total
Homeowners by Percent of Median Family Income						
2000	958	1,217	1,906	1,010	5,496	10,586
2005	979	1,244	1,948	1,032	5,619	10,822
2010	1,145	1,455	2,278	1,207	6,571	12,657
2015	1,242	1,578	2,471	1,309	7,128	13,729
2020	1,345	1,708	2,676	1,418	7,717	14,864
2025	1,452	1,845	2,890	1,531	8,335	16,054
2030	1,565	1,988	3,113	1,649	8,979	17,295
Renters by Percent of Median Family Income						
2000	1,069	607	877	327	639	3,519
2005	1,040	591	853	319	621	3,424
2010	1,183	672	970	362	707	3,893
2015	1,277	726	1,048	391	763	4,206
2020	1,375	781	1,128	421	822	4,527
2025	1,475	838	1,210	452	881	4,856
2030	1,576	895	1,293	483	942	5,189
Total Households by Percent of Median Family Income						
2000	2,027	1,824	2,783	1,337	6,135	14,105
2005	2,019	1,835	2,801	1,351	6,240	14,246
2010	2,328	2,126	3,249	1,569	7,278	16,550
2015	2,520	2,303	3,520	1,701	7,891	17,935
2020	2,720	2,489	3,804	1,839	8,539	19,391
2025	2,927	2,683	4,100	1,983	9,216	20,910
2030	3,141	2,883	4,406	2,132	9,921	22,484