

NIOBRARA COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Census Bureau's intercensal estimates indicate that Niobrara County's population increased from 2,407 in 2000 to 2,428 in 2008 or by 0.87 percent. This compares to a statewide population growth of 7.88 percent over the period.⁹⁸ The number of people from 15 to 24 years of age increased by 25.38 percent, and the number of people from 25 to 44 years of age decreased by 0.96 percent. The white population increased by 0.55 percent, while the black population increased by 100.0 percent. The Hispanic population changed from 36 to 62 between 2000 and 2008, an increase of 72.22 percent. These data are presented in Table II.14.1, below.

Table II.14.1 Profile of Population Characteristics Wyoming vs Niobrara County, Census 2000 and 2008 Intercensal Estimates						
Subject	Wyoming			Niobrara County		
	Census 2000	July 2008	% Change	Census 2000	July 2008	% Change
Population	493,782	532,668	7.88	2,407	2,428	0.87
Age						
Under 14 years	103,443	106,195	2.66	430	330	-23.26
15 to 24 years	75,358	76,242	1.17	260	326	25.38
25 to 44 years	138,619	137,338	-0.92	625	619	-0.96
45 to 54 years	74,079	82,508	11.38	346	371	7.23
55 to 64 years	44,590	64,771	45.26	295	290	-1.69
65 & over	57,693	65,614	13.73	451	492	9.09
Race						
White	469,423	500,001	6.51	2,376	2,389	0.55
Black	3,942	6,884	74.63	3	6	100.00
American Indian and Alaskan Native	11,410	13,555	18.80	12	15	25.00
Asian	2,904	3,828	31.82	3	2	-33.33
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	329	512	55.62	0	0	.
Two or more races	5,774	7,888	36.61	13	16	23.08
Ethnicity (of any race)						
Hispanic or Latino	31,669	41,162	29.98	36	62	72.22

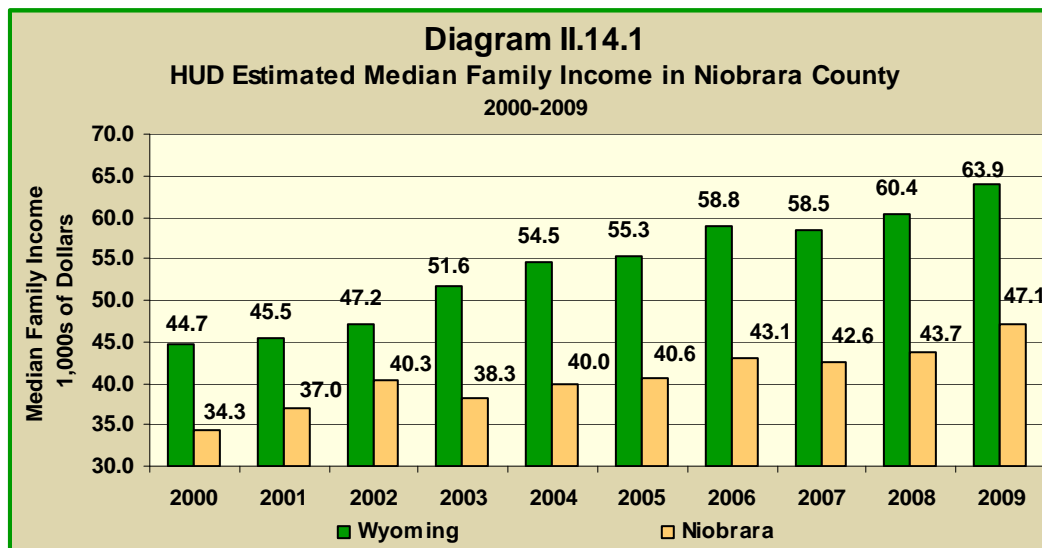
The Wyoming driver's license exchange data indicate a net increase of 45 persons during 2009. The driver's license total exchanges for the last ten years for Niobrara County are presented in Table II.14.3, which indicate a net increase of 223 persons over the time period.

Table II.14.3 Driver's Licenses Exchanged and Surrendered in Niobrara County 2000 - 2009			
Year	In-Migrants	Out-Migrants	Net Change
2000	73	55	18
2001	82	47	35
2002	57	52	5
2003	58	37	21
2004	49	51	-2
2005	61	42	19
2006	54	43	11
2007	81	50	31
2008	75	35	40
2009	82	37	45
Total	672	449	223

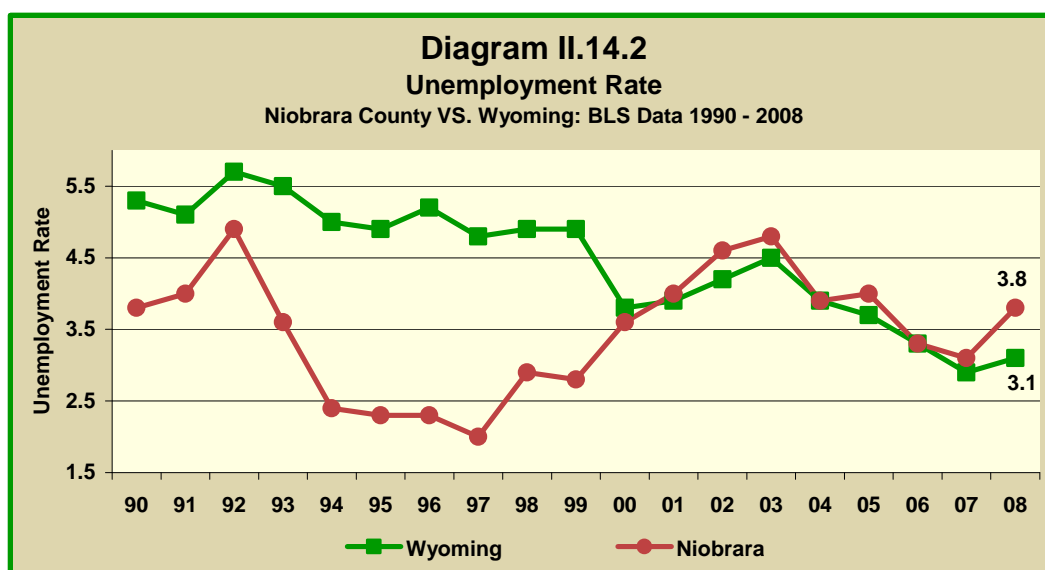
⁹⁸On December 22, 2009, the Census Bureau released a statewide population estimate for 2009, indicating that the population increased to 544,270.

ECONOMICS

The HUD estimated median family income (MFI) for Niobrara County was \$47,100 in 2009.⁹⁹ This compares to Wyoming's MFI of \$63,900. Diagram II.14.1, 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. Niobrara County's labor force, defined as the number of people working or actively seeking work, increased by 32 persons, from 1,198 in 2007 to 1,230 in 2008. Employment increased by 22 persons. Unemployment, therefore, increased by 10 persons and the unemployment rate, the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the labor force, increased from 3.1 percent in 2007 to 3.8 percent in 2008, as seen in Diagram II.14.2.



⁹⁹ 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.14.4 below, annual total monthly employment increased by 1.08 percent between 2007 and 2008, changing from a total of 837 to 846 workers. Over the second quarter of 2009 preliminary estimates indicate an increasing trend with employment rising to 917 persons in June.

Table II.14.4									
Niobrara County Total Monthly Employment									
BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2001 – 2009p									
Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009p
Jan	729	723	737	742	742	717	823	809	826
Feb	727	774	745	748	756	720	804	805	843
Mar	764	765	756	744	750	721	821	829	840
Apr	785	751	780	757	773	719	816	824	853
May	825	786	788	761	780	757	840	851	867
Jun	853	845	834	817	824	819	875	874	917
Jul	818	795	742	734	.	771	815	814	.
Aug	812	796	739	744	.	800	832	833	.
Sep	800	818	793	774	.	816	852	885	.
Oct	783	798	799	783	.	817	859	906	.
Nov	736	764	759	736	.	802	856	871	.
Dec	740	766	758	745	.	821	853	853	.
Annual	781	782	769	757	767	773	837	846	.
% Change	.	0.13	-1.66	-1.56	1.32	0.78	8.28	1.08	.

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.14.5, at right, annual average weekly wages increased by 2.56 percent between 2007 and 2008, changing from a total of 508 to 521 dollars.

Table II.14.5						
Average Weekly Wages in Niobrara County						
BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2001 – 2009p						
Year	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Annual	% Change
2001	361	390	368	399	379	.
2002	390	424	378	408	400	5.54
2003	394	419	386	415	404	1.00
2004	404	439	398	431	418	3.47
2005	415	446	.	.	440	5.26
2006	466	490	482	498	484	10.00
2007	496	517	496	522	508	4.96
2008p	514	526	508	536	521	2.56
2009p	543	554	.	.	.	.

Total business establishments reported by the QCEW are displayed in Table II.14.6, at right. Annual establishments increased by 2.31 percent between 2007 and 2008, changing from a total of 130 to 133 establishments. Preliminary 2009 estimates indicate an increase, with establishments rising to 138 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, Niobrara County recorded 1,815 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 \$84,374,000, and real per capita income was \$35,873 in 2007. This compares with a statewide average real per capita income of \$48,405. Average earnings per job in the county were \$21,497 in 2007, while Wyoming average earnings per job were \$44,409.¹⁰⁰

HOUSING

The Census Bureau estimates that total housing units saw an increase of 0.82 percent in Niobrara County between 2000 and 2008, from 1,338 to 1,349. This compares to a 10.07 percent estimated increase statewide, as seen in Table II.14.7, below.

Table II.14.7 Housing Unit Estimates for Wyoming and Niobrara County Census 2000, 2001-2008 Intercensal Estimates				
Subject	Wyoming	% Change from 2000	Niobrara County	% Change from 2000
2000 Census	223,854	.	1,338	.
July 2001 Estimate	225,959	0.94	1,338	0
July 2002 Estimate	227,773	1.75	1,337	-0.07
July 2003 Estimate	229,637	2.58	1,339	0.07
July 2004 Estimate	232,556	3.89	1,347	0.67
July 2005 Estimate	235,654	5.27	1,352	1.05
July 2006 Estimate	239,175	6.84	1,353	1.12
July 2007 Estimate	242,332	8.25	1,353	1.12
July 2008 Estimate	246,393	10.07	1,349	0.82

¹⁰⁰ 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 Niobrara County changed by 1.2 percent, from \$419 in second quarter 2008 to \$424 in second quarter 2009. Detached single-family home rents increased by 7.6 percent.

Niobrara County rental prices have experienced average annualized increases of 4.4 percent per year for apartments and 4.5 percent per year for houses since fourth quarter 1998 through second quarter 2009. These figures compare to state average annualized increases in rental prices of 3.7 percent for apartments and 4.4 percent for houses over the same period. Table II.14.8, at right, presents the Niobrara 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. Total residential units authorized in Niobrara County increased from zero in 2007 to three in 2008.

The real value of single-family building permits was \$144,000 in 2008. The value over the past several years, in real dollars, has fluctuated from a high of \$162,550 to a low of \$80,500. 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.14.9, on the following page.

Table II.14.8 Wyoming Cost of Living Index for Niobrara County Rental Housing Costs, 1986 - 2009				
Quarter Year	Apartments	Mobile Home Lot	House	Mobile Home
Q4.86	.	.	.	.
Q2.87	.	.	.	.
Q4.87	.	.	.	.
Q2.88	.	.	.	.
Q4.88	.	.	.	.
Q2.89	.	.	.	.
Q4.89	.	.	.	.
Q2.90	.	.	.	.
Q4.90	.	.	.	.
Q2.91	.	.	.	.
Q4.91	.	.	.	.
Q2.92	.	.	.	.
Q4.92	.	.	.	.
Q2.93	.	.	.	.
Q4.93	.	.	.	.
Q2.94	.	.	.	.
Q4.94	.	.	.	.
Q2.95	.	.	.	.
Q4.95	.	.	.	.
Q2.96	.	.	.	.
Q4.96	.	.	.	.
Q2.97	.	.	.	.
Q4.97	.	.	.	.
Q2.98	.	108	.	.
Q4.98	263	105	338	.
Q2.99	268	110	346	.
Q4.99	.	130	300	.
Q2.00	271	.	320	.
Q4.00	283	120	328	.
Q2.01	280	.	314	.
Q4.01	.	.	349	.
Q2.02	277	.	305	.
Q4.02	260	.	354	.
Q2.03	342	.	341	.
Q4.03	292	.	388	.
Q2.04	335	.	398	.
Q4.04	325	.	446	.
Q2.05	348	.	474	.
Q4.05	385	.	511	.
Q2.06	391	130	492	.
Q4.06	391	130	529	.
Q2.07	364	140	488	.
Q4.07	391	.	511	.
Q2.08	419	.	511	.
Q4.08	417	.	517	.
Q2.09	424	.	550	.

Table II.14.9 Building Permits and Valuation in Niobrara 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	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1981	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1982	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1983	5	.	.	6	11	.	.	90.82
1984	3	.	.	.	3	.	.	91.76
1985	3	.	.	.	3	.	.	146.26
1986	3	.	.	.	3	.	.	143.11
1987	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1988	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	96.99
1989	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	77.88
1990	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1991	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1992	3	.	.	.	3	.	.	71.06
1993	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	76.14
1994	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	307.73
1995	4	.	.	.	4	.	.	169.38
1996	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1997	2	.	.	.	2	.	.	192.36
1998	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1999	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2000	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2001	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2002	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2003	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	80.50
2004	4	.	.	.	4	.	.	95.01
2005	4	.	.	.	4	.	.	162.20
2006	3	.	.	.	3	.	.	162.55
2007	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2008	3	.	.	.	3	.	.	144.00

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 Niobrara County was \$98,935. This represented an increase of 17.8 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.14.10, below.

Table II.14.10 Average Sales Prices in Niobrara County and Wyoming Assessor Data, 1999 - 2008				
Year	Niobrara County Average Price (\$)	Niobrara County Annual % Change	Wyoming Average Price	Wyoming Annual % Change
1999	47,987	16.82	101,517	4.76
2000	58,804	22.54	111,437	9.77
2001	48,391	-17.71	116,469	4.52
2002	45,490	-5.99	121,140	4.01
2003	53,370	17.32	132,708	9.55
2004	57,155	7.09	142,501	7.38
2005	69,218	21.11	159,776	12.12
2006	81,420	17.63	187,869	17.58
2007	83,988	3.15	265,044	41.08
2008	98,935	17.8	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 2009.¹⁰¹ During December 2009, a total of four surveys were completed by property managers in Niobrara County. Of the 120 rental units surveyed, 11 were vacant, indicating a vacancy rate of 9.17 percent. This compares to a 3.13 percent vacancy rate one year ago and a statewide December 2009 vacancy rate of 6.78 percent.

The calendar year 2009 Housing Needs Assessment Survey, fielded by the Wyoming Department of Transportation, had one respondent in Niobrara County. Of the incoming population who were unsatisfied with their current housing, 75.0 percent said they were seeking to own a home and 25.0 percent of respondents wished to rent. Of those seeking to own a home, 68.4 percent wished to buy existing units and 31.6 percent wished to build.

Table II.14.11 Semi-Annual Rental Vacancy Survey Niobrara County 2001- 2009				
Year	Sample	Total Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
2001a	6	42	.	.
2001b	2	11	1	9.09
2002a	4	57	11	19.30
2002b	3	21	7	33.33
2003a	6	76	24	31.58
2003b	7	96	12	12.50
2004a	8	108	14	12.96
2004b	8	102	4	3.92
2005a	6	96	8	8.33
2005b	5	49	6	12.24
2006a	5	88	7	7.95
2006b	5	88	2	2.27
2007a	4	73	6	8.22
2007b	4	78	1	1.28
2008a	5	90	3	3.33
2008b	3	64	2	3.13
2009a	2	60	0	0.00
2009b	4	120	11	9.17

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 842 households in Niobrara County, from 1,011 in 2000 to 1,853 in 2030. Homeowners are expected to increase from 737 in 2000 to 1,419 by 2030. Renters, on the other hand, are anticipated to increase from 274 in 2000 to 435 in 2030.

Homeownership from the year 2000 to 2030 is expected to increase by 77 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 93 households, and to increase by 117 for those with 51 to 80 percent of MFI.

Rental demand from the year 2000 to 2030 is expected to increase by 37 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 29 households over the period. Table II.14.11, on the following page, provides details of the household forecast by tenure and income.

¹⁰¹Those signified as 'a' in the "year" column of Table II.14.11 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.

Table II.14.11 Strong Growth Household Forecast by Tenure and Income Niobrara 2000 Through 2030						
Year	0-30%	31-50%	51-80%	81-95%	96+%	Total
Homeowners by Percent of Median Family Income						
2000	83	101	127	94	332	737
2005	80	97	122	91	319	708
2010	93	112	141	105	370	822
2015	108	131	164	123	431	957
2020	125	151	189	141	497	1,103
2025	142	172	216	161	566	1,257
2030	160	194	244	182	639	1,419
Renters by Percent of Median Family Income						
2000	63	50	68	40	53	274
2005	55	43	59	35	46	238
2010	64	50	69	41	54	277
2015	73	57	78	46	61	316
2020	82	65	88	52	69	355
2025	91	72	98	58	76	394
2030	100	79	108	64	84	435
Total Households by Percent of Median Family Income						
2000	146	150	195	135	385	1,011
2005	135	140	181	126	365	946
2010	157	163	210	146	424	1,100
2015	181	188	243	169	492	1,274
2020	206	215	278	193	566	1,458
2025	233	243	314	219	642	1,651
2030	260	273	351	245	723	1,853