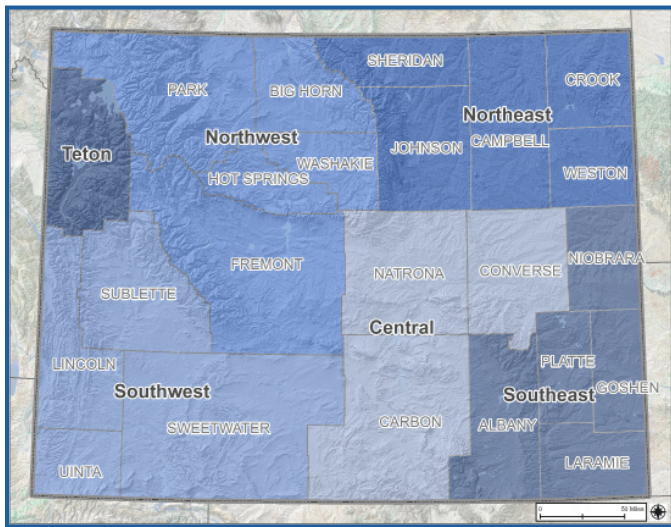


Summary of the Northwest Region

2015 WYOMING PROFILE of Demographics, Economics, and Housing, Ending December 31, 2015

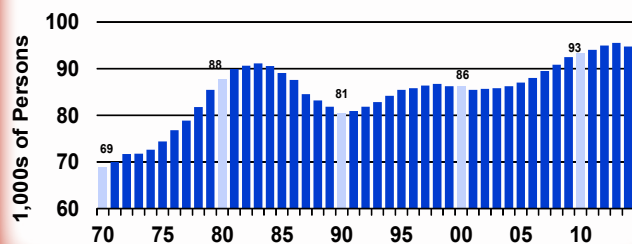
The **Wyoming Profile**, sponsored by the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership, is undertaken semi-annually to provide current, quality information about factors influencing the development, production, use, rehabilitation, demand, and need for **housing and related services** in Wyoming's communities. **This regional summary**, focusing on the Northwest Region, is one of six publications that inspect a group of counties in the state, as shown in the map presented below. The **Northwest Region** is comprised of Big Horn, Fremont, Hot Springs, Park, and Washakie counties.



Demographics

According to U.S. Census Bureau data, between 2000 and 2010, the Northwest Region's population rose from 86,222 to 93,341, or by 8.2 percent. The most recent Census Bureau count placed the population in the Northwest Region at 94,760 persons as of July 1, 2014, which indicates a growth rate of 1.5 percent since the 2010 Census. The growth in population can be attributed to the natural increase of the overall population, the net of births minus deaths, as well as the net migration. The changes in population are shown in Diagram 1.

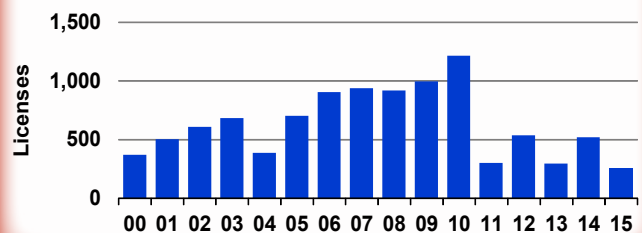
Diagram 1. Northwest Region Population
1970-2014 Census Bureau Data



The Wyoming Housing Database Partnership utilizes quarterly data from the Wyoming Department of

Transportation (DOT) regarding driver's licenses of new or departing residents to track changes in population. While the net of surrendered and exchanged driver's licenses was somewhat small between 2000 and 2004, with 369 and 384 exchanges respectively. There were substantial increases in the following years, with 2010 figures representing 1,215 persons. However, figures for 2015 showed a net in-migration of 255, as seen in Diagram 2.

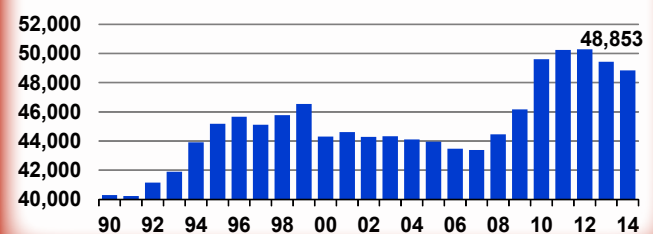
Diagram 2. Northwest Region Migration
2000 - 2015 WYDOT Data



Economics

Economic growth in the region can be evaluated through labor force statistics data, which represent those persons working or seeking work as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The labor force in the Northwest Region expanded relatively modestly from 1990 to 2014, and rose at an average annual rate of 0.8 percent per year, as shown in Diagram 3. In fact, between 2013 and 2014, the labor force decreased to 48,853. The number of persons working also fell to 46,479 persons in 2014.

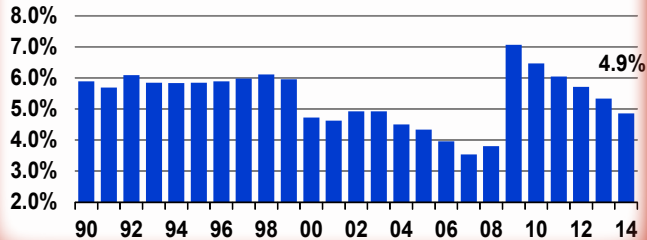
Diagram 3. Northwest Region Labor Force
1990-2014 BLS Data



*The sample is redesigned and a new sample selected after each decennial census (LAUS Program Manual). This caused a shift in the data between 1999 and 2000.

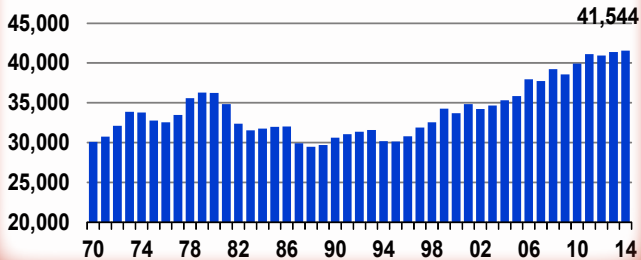
The national recession contributed to a rapid rise in unemployment between 2008 and 2010. Still, unemployment rates fell from a high of 6.4 percent in 1998 to a low of 3.5 percent in 2007, but then spiked sharply in 2010 to 6.5 percent and fell to 5.3 percent in 2013, continuing to fall to 4.9 percent in 2014, as noted in Diagram 4.

Diagram 4. Northwest Region Unemployment Rate 1990–2014 BLS Data



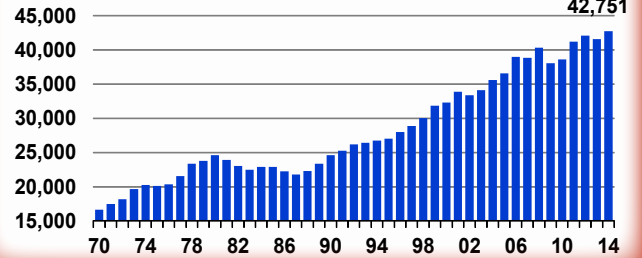
Low unemployment rates often cause upward wage pressure in the labor markets, and in turn, cause earnings to increase. In 1979, average earnings by place of work in the Northwest Region was \$36,287 in real 2014 dollars. Unfortunately, this level of earnings was not sustained, and the average declined through the 1990's. However, since 2010, earnings increased at an annual growth rate of 0.3 percent. As of 2014, the year for which the most recent data are available from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the earnings by place of work was \$41,544, shown in Diagram 5.

Diagram 5. Northwest Region Average Earnings Per Job: 1970–2014 BEA Data, Real 2014 Dollars



Personal income is made up of earnings and unearned income sources, such as dividends, interest, rent, and government transfer payments. Together, these income sources, when divided by population, constitute per capita income. Real per capita income was \$42,751 in 2014 and was 10.7 percent higher than it was in 2010, as shown in Diagram 6.

Diagram 6. Northwest Region Per Capita Income 1970–2014 BEA Data, Real 2014 Dollars



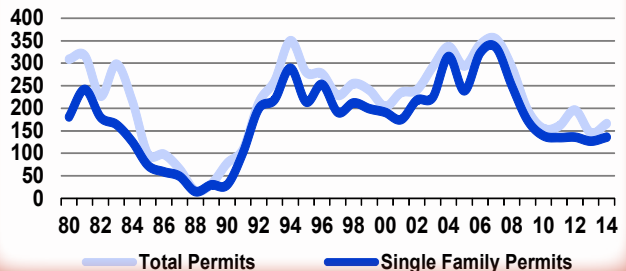
Highlights...

- The population of the Northwest Region has grown by 1.5 percent since the 2010 Census, to 94,760 persons.
- The unemployment rate was 4.9 percent in 2014, higher than seen in 2007 but lower than in 2010.

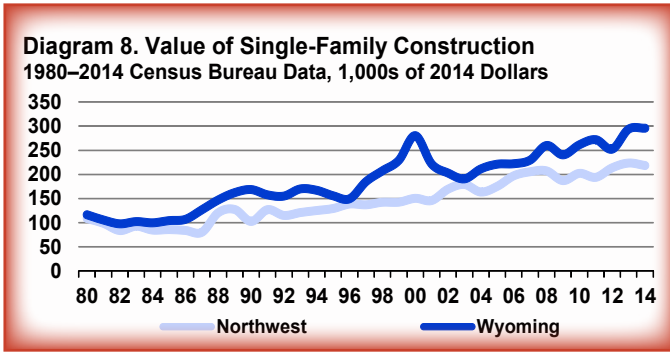
Housing

Consequences of economic change are often seen in the housing market. During the late 1970s, when incomes were increasing, the housing sector was very active and there was a significant amount of housing construction in the Northwest Region. Like employment and income, the housing market fell sharply during the recession of the early 1980s; 1981 saw 317 total permits, of which some 242 were for single-family units, but by 1988 there were only 17 permits. After a spike in 2006, the construction of single-family units fell again, with only 173 units permitted in 2009, 139 in 2010 and 136 in 2014, as shown in Diagram 7.

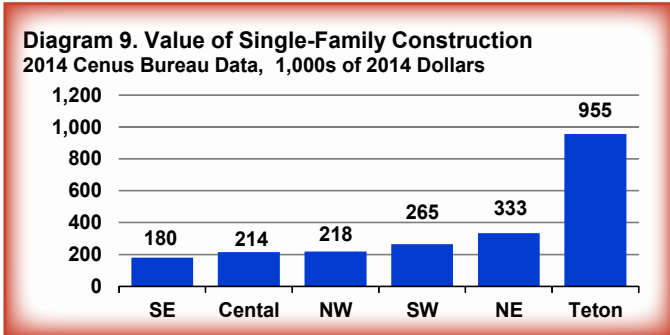
Diagram 7. Northwest Region Residential Permits 1980–2014 Census Bureau Data



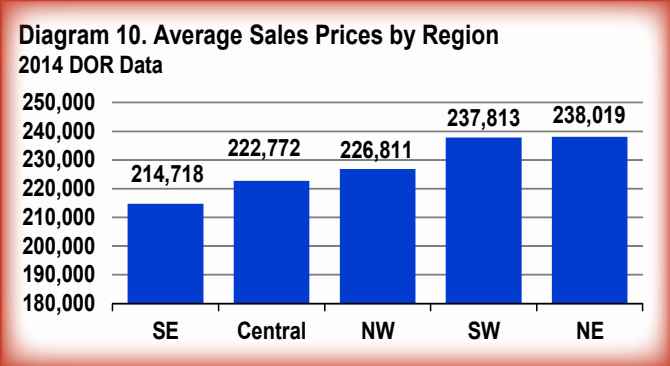
From 1980 to 2014, the real value of construction, representing only the cost of building the unit and not the land and lot costs, showed some fluctuation. In 2014, the statewide average was \$295,855 and the Northwest average was \$218,400, as noted in Diagram 8.



The average real value of new construction in the Northwest Region was comparable to other regions in the state in 2014, with the Northwest ranking fourth, as noted in Diagram 9.



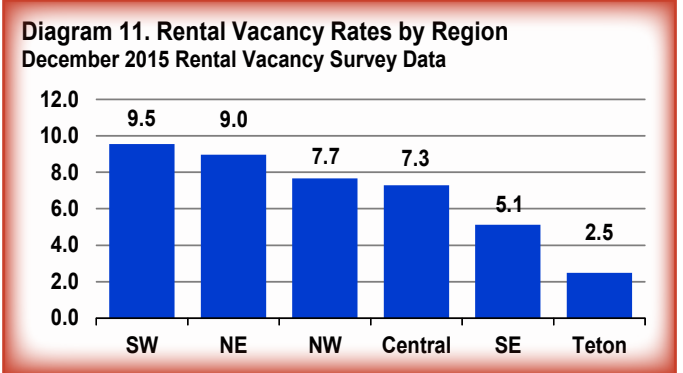
County tax assessors in Wyoming report housing prices for existing homes sold on 10 acres or less throughout the state to the Wyoming Department of Revenue (DOR). As shown in Diagram 10, the Northwest Region had an average existing price of \$226,811 in 2014, which was comparable to other regions with the exception of the Teton Region, which is not shown but had an average price of \$1.4 million. In the Northwest Region, new construction exceeded prices for existing housing.



Every six months since 2001, the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership has conducted a survey of rental properties throughout the state. In the second half of 2015, 250 completed surveys covered 3,826 rental units in the Northwest Region. Rental vacancy rates in the region rose from 5.6 percent in the first half of 2015 to 7.7 percent in second half of 2015. These data are presented in the Table 1.

Rental Vacancy Survey Data (a = December, b = June)				
Year	Sample	Total Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
2004a	99	2,604	136	5.2%
2004b	87	2,187	122	5.6%
2005a	93	2,099	68	3.2%
2005b	104	2,530	95	3.8%
2006a	97	1,843	51	2.8%
2006b	120	2,609	64	2.5%
2007a	119	2,468	34	1.4%
2007b	117	2,722	70	2.6%
2008a	138	2,880	87	3.0%
2008b	155	2,756	82	3.0%
2009a	142	2,613	116	4.4%
2009b	161	2,762	146	5.3%
2010a	190	2,636	110	4.2%
2010b	191	3,145	142	4.5%
2011a	208	2,990	104	3.5%
2011b	232	2,860	107	3.7%
2012a	239	3,148	102	3.2%
2012b	248	3,775	127	3.4%
2013a	245	3,927	150	3.8%
2013b	247	3,329	194	5.8%
2014a	261	3,744	138	3.7%
2014b	250	4,024	233	5.8%
2015a	250	4,466	248	5.6%
2015b	250	3,826	293	7.7%

The Northwest Region had the third highest vacancy rate of all regions in the state, as shown in Diagram 11. The statewide vacancy rate was 6.9 percent.



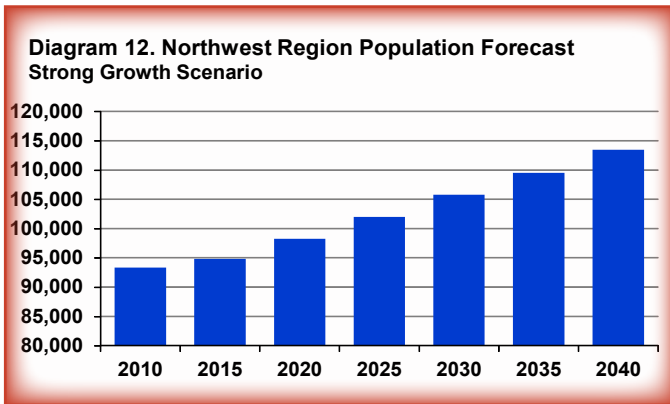
Highlights...

- According to DOR data, the average home price in the Northwest Region was \$226,811 in 2014.
- The December 2015 rental vacancy survey revealed a vacancy rate of 7.7 percent, as compared to the state rate of 6.9 percent.

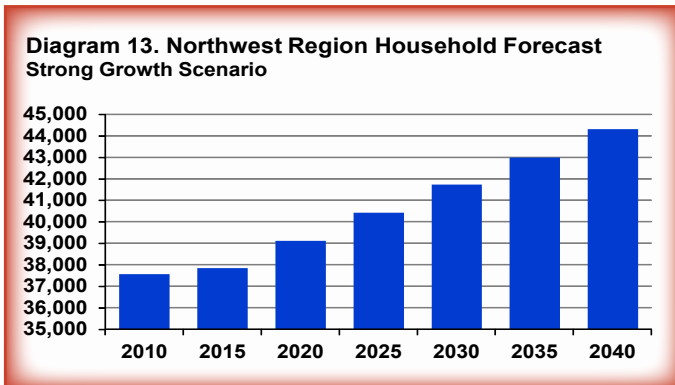
WCDA Housing Needs Forecast

The 2015 Wyoming Housing Needs Forecast models three separate growth scenarios: moderate, strong, and very strong. Only the strong growth scenario is presented here. In the strong growth scenario, population is forecasted to

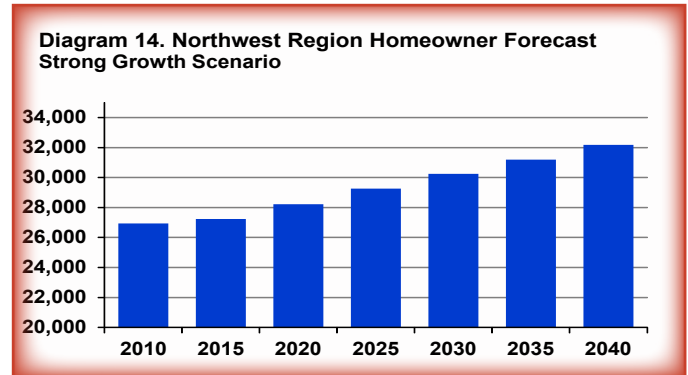
increase at an average annual rate of 0.7 percent, reaching 113,489 persons in 2040, as shown in Diagram 12.



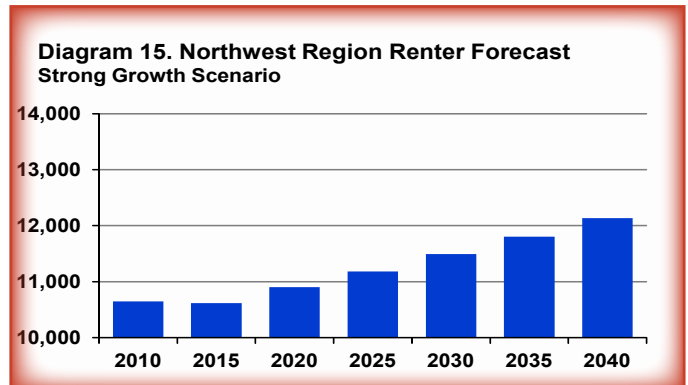
The Wyoming Housing Needs Forecast also modeled household formation, which was computed using forecasted values of persons per household and population. The strong growth scenario household formation forecast estimates an increase of 6,736 households between 2010 and 2040. This represents an increase of 17.9 percent from the 2010 level, or an average annual growth rate of 0.6 percent, as shown in Diagram 13.



The forecast separated households into owner- and renter-occupied households. Owner-occupied households were forecasted to increase from 26,929 households in 2010 to 32,179 households in 2040. This represents an increase of 5,250 owner-occupied households and average annual growth rate of 0.6 percent, as shown in Diagram 14.



Renter-occupied households were forecasted to increase from 10,649 households in 2010 to 12,136 households in 2040. This represents an increase of 1,487 renter occupied households and an average annual growth rate of 0.4 percent, as shown in Diagram 15.



This regional summary was prepared for the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership. The complete 2015 Wyoming profile is available online on the WCDA website, www.WyomingCDA.com.



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