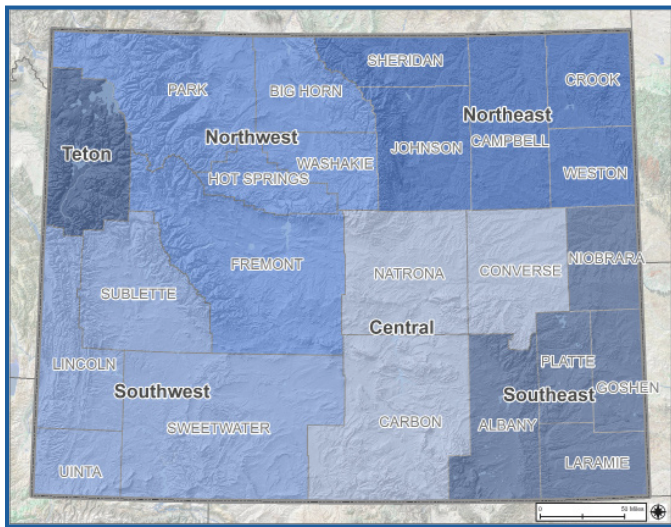


Summary of the Northwest Region

2020 WYOMING PROFILE of Demographics, Economics, and Housing, Ending June 30, 2020

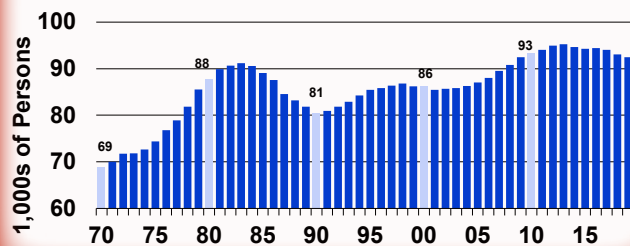
The **Wyoming Profile**, sponsored by the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership, is undertaken semi-annually to provide current, quality information about factors influencing the development, production, use, rehabilitation, demand, and need for **housing and related services** in Wyoming's communities. **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 92,463 persons as of July 1, 2019, which indicates a growth rate of -0.9 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.

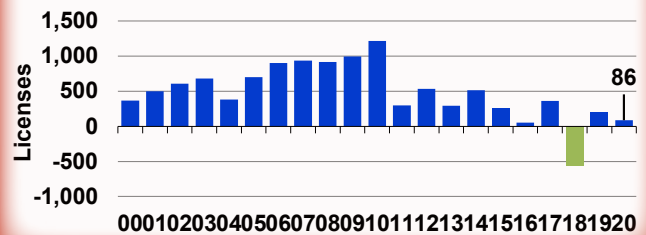
Diagram 1. Northwest Region Population 1970–2019 Census Bureau Data



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 and figures for 2019 showed an increase of 86 persons, as seen in Diagram 2.

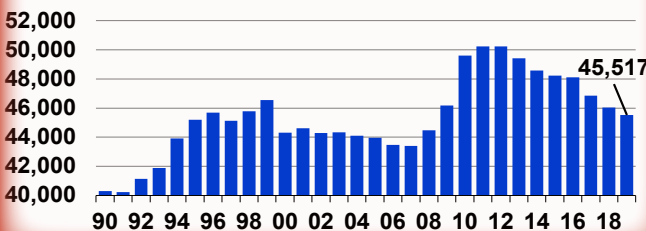
Diagram 2. Northwest Region Migration 2000 – First Half 2020: WYDOT Data



Economics

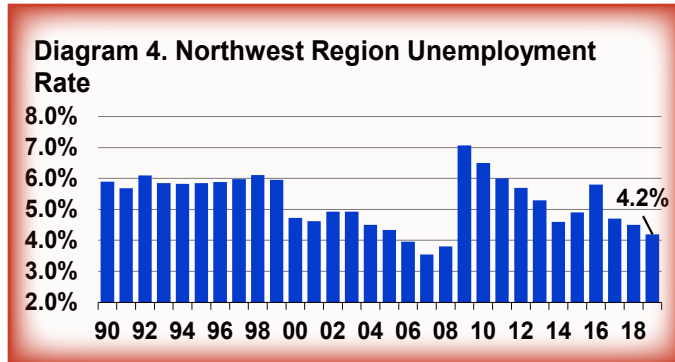
Economic growth in the region can be evaluated through labor force statistics data, which represent those persons working or seeking work as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The labor force in the Northwest Region has decreased at an annual average rate of 8.2 percent from 1990 to 2019, as shown in Diagram 3. Between 2018 and 2019, the labor force decreased to 45,517. The number of persons working also fell to 43,618 persons in 2019.

Diagram 3. Northwest Region Labor Force 1990–2019 BLS Data

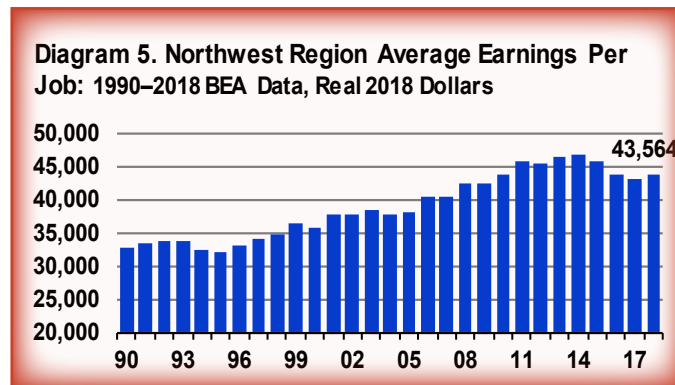


*The sample is redesigned and a new sample selected after each decennial census (LAUS Program Manual). This caused a shift in the data between 1999 and 2000.

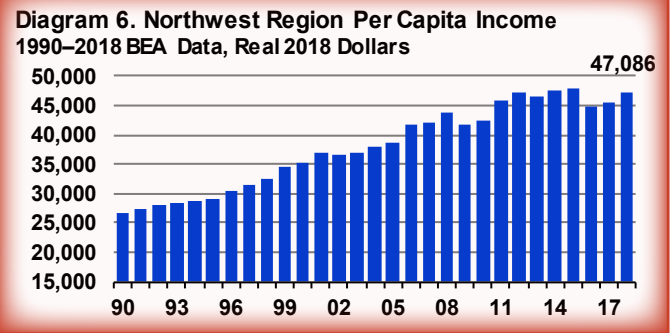
The national recession contributed to a rapid rise in unemployment between 2008 and 2010. Still, unemployment rates fell from a high of 6.4 percent in 1998 to a low of 3.5 percent in 2007, but then spiked sharply in 2010 to 6.5 percent and fell to 5.7 percent in 2016 and fell again to 4.2 percent in 2019, as noted in Diagram 4.



Low unemployment rates often cause upward wage pressure in the labor markets, and in turn, cause earnings to increase. In 1990, average earnings by place of work in the Northwest Region was \$31,536 in real 2018 dollars. Unfortunately, this level of earnings was not sustained, and the average declined through the 1990s. However, since 1990, earnings increased at an annual growth rate of 1.2 percent. As of 2018, the year for which the most recent data are available from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the earnings by place of work was \$43,564, shown in Diagram 5.



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, create per capita income. Real per capita income was \$47,086 in 2018 and was 11.4 percent higher than it was in 2010, as shown in Diagram 6.

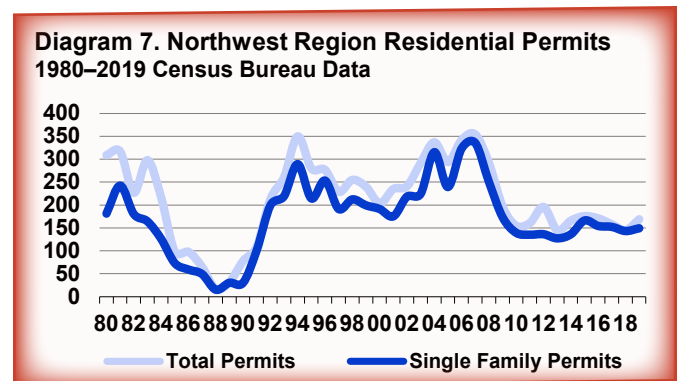


Highlights...

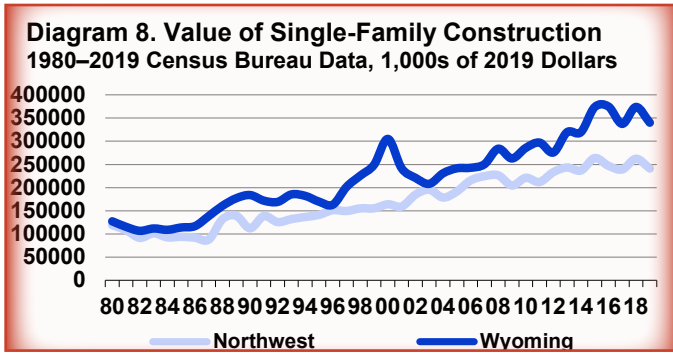
- The population of the Northwest Region decreased by 0.9 percent since the 2010 Census, to 92,463 persons.
- The unemployment rate was 4.2 percent in 2019, which compared to the state rate of 3.6 percent.

Housing

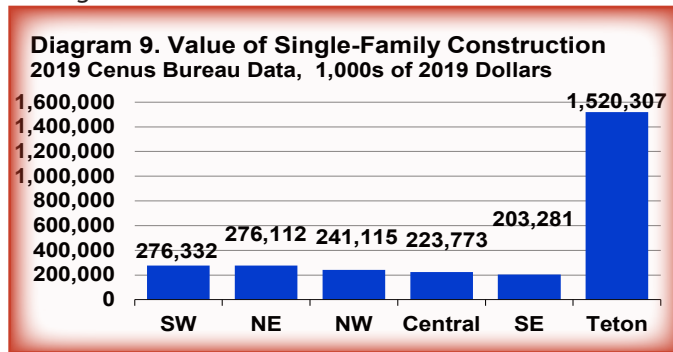
Consequences of economic change are often seen in the housing market. During the late 1970s, when incomes were increasing, the housing sector was very active and there was a significant amount of housing construction in the Northwest Region. Like employment and income, the housing market fell sharply 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 178 units permitted in 2018, but increased to 195 units in 2019, as shown in Diagram 7.



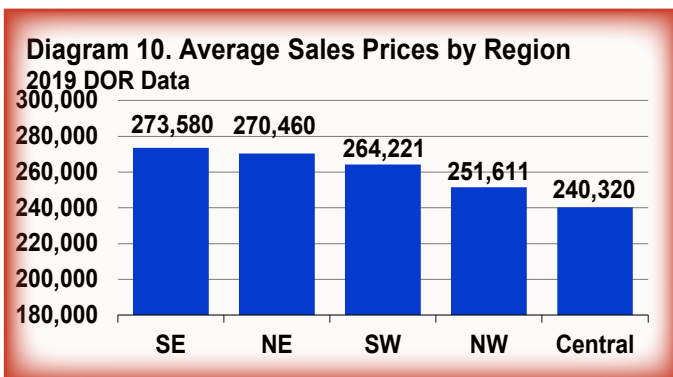
From 1980 to 2019, the real value of construction, representing only the cost of building the unit and not the land and lot costs, showed some fluctuation. In 2019, the Northwest average was \$241,115 and the statewide average was \$340,338, as noted in Diagram 8.



The average real value of new construction in the Northwest Region was comparable to other regions in the state in 2019, with the Northwest ranking third, as noted in Diagram 9.



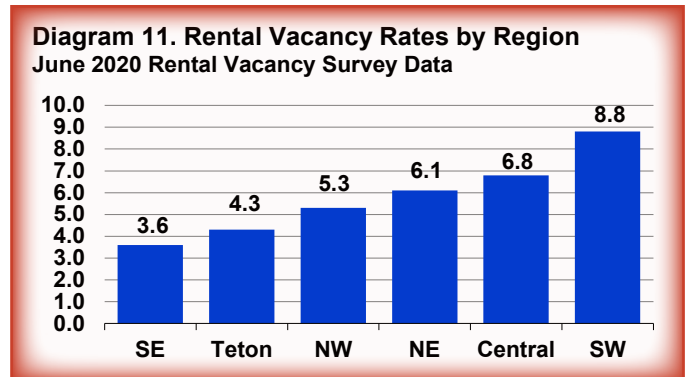
County tax assessors in Wyoming report housing prices for existing homes sold on 10 acres or less throughout the state to the Wyoming Department of Revenue (DOR). As shown in Diagram 10, the Northwest Region had an average existing price of \$251,611 in 2019, which was comparable to other regions with the exception of the Teton Region, which is not shown but had an average price of \$2.18 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 first half of 2020, 190 completed surveys covered 2,742 rental units in the Northwest Region. Rental vacancy rates in the region decreased from 7.6 percent in the second half of 2019 to 5.3 percent in first half of 2020. These data are presented in the Table 1.

Rental Vacancy Survey Data (a = June, b = December)				
Year	Sample	Total Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
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	287	4,466	248	5.6%
2015b	250	3,826	293	7.7%
2016a	249	3,753	291	7.8%
2016b	247	3,475	289	8.3%
2017a	253	3,519	298	8.5%
2017b	219	3,185	256	8.0%
2018a	269	3,779	276	7.3%
2018b	224	3,482	295	8.5%
2019a	234	3,660	214	5.8%
2019b	203	2,942	255	7.6%
2020a	190	2,742	145	5.3%

The Northwest Region had the third lowest vacancy rate of all regions in the state, as shown in Diagram 11. The statewide vacancy rate was 5.8 percent.



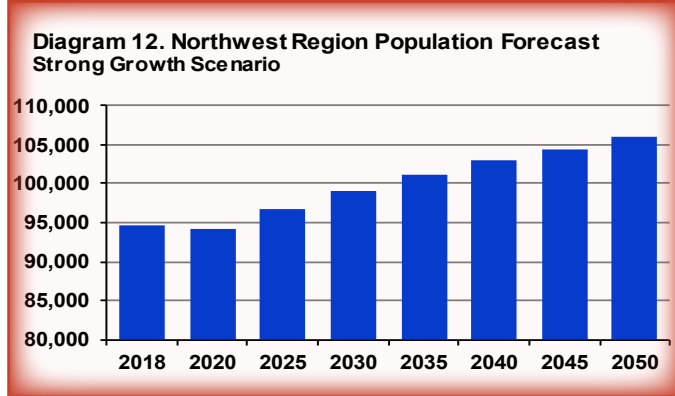
Highlights...

- According to DOR data, the average home price in the Northwest Region was \$251,611 in 2019.
- The June 2020 rental vacancy survey revealed a vacancy rate of 5.3 percent, as compared to the state rate of 5.8 percent.

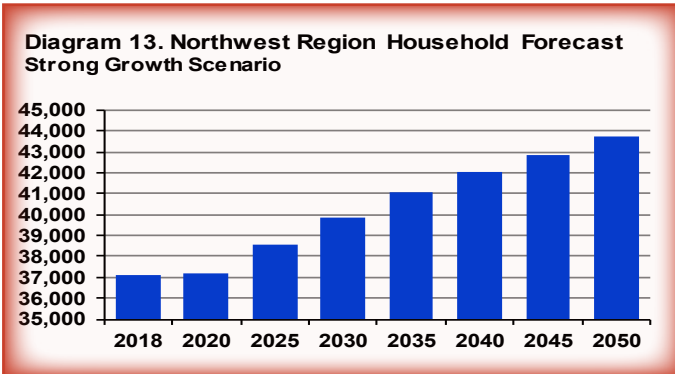
WCDA Homebuyer Program

Since 1979, the Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA) has helped over 50,000 householders become homeowners in Wyoming. Over the last 14 years,

the WCDA assisted between 50 and 300 Northwest Region householders per year with the purchase of their home through a homebuyer program. In Fiscal 2018, the WCDA programs served 77 participants, as shown in Diagram 12.

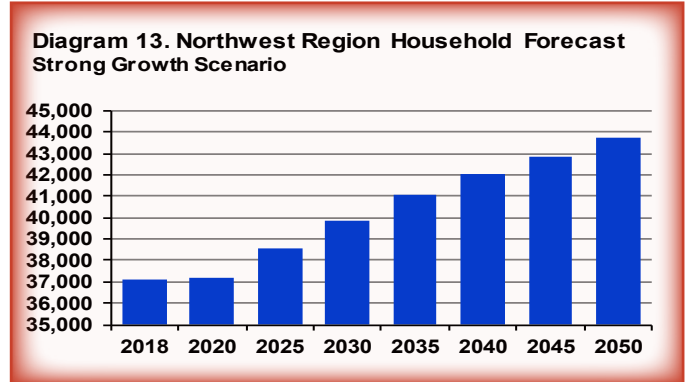


WCDA homebuyer programs provide assistance to first time and low-income homebuyers. From 2000 to 2018 the Northwest Region-wide average for all home sales, as reported by the DOR, rose 2.8 percent per year. However, prices in the WCDA programs increased by an average of 1.2 percent between Fiscal 2000 and 2018, reaching \$155,755 in Fiscal 2018, as shown in Diagram 13.

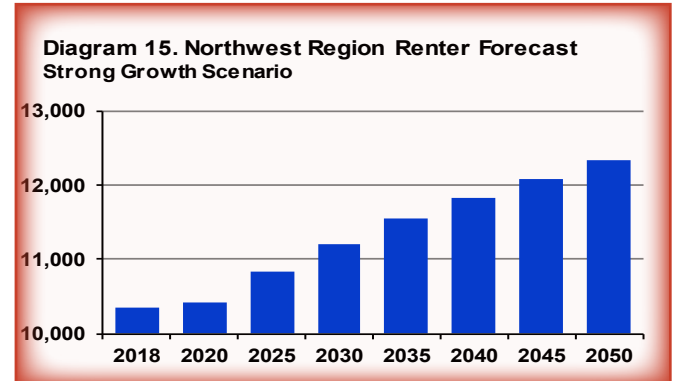


The need for the housing programs is very evident, as

household incomes in the region have not been keeping pace with increases in housing costs. The average household income for Northwest Region households participating in the WCDA homebuyer programs rose from \$32,364 on 2000 to \$54,452 in 2018, an average increase of 0.9 percent per year, as shown in Diagram 14.



The WCDA increased its efforts to support the purchase of newly constructed affordable homes in Wyoming from 2000 to 2018. Consequently, the share of new construction purchased in the Northwest Region, WCDA program participants was much higher in 2010 than it was in the early 2000s; it rose from 11.6 percent in Fiscal 2000 to 20.5 percent in 2010, but fell to 0.0 percent in 2018, as shown in Diagram 15.



This regional summary was prepared for the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership. The complete 2020 Wyoming profile is available online on the WCDA website, www.WyomingCDA.com.

