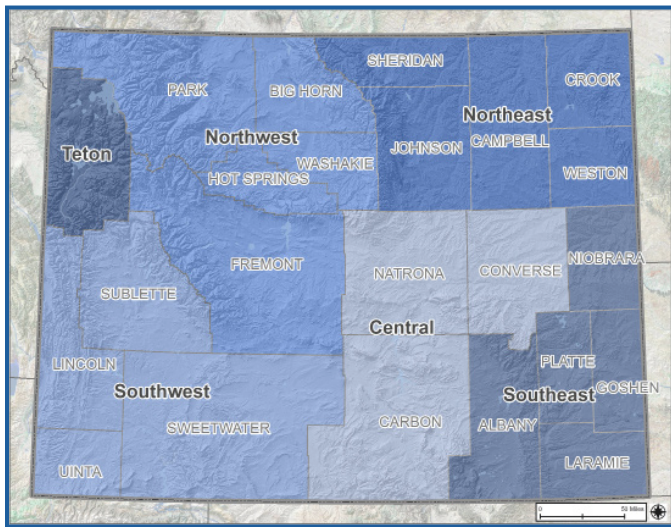


Summary of the Southwest Region

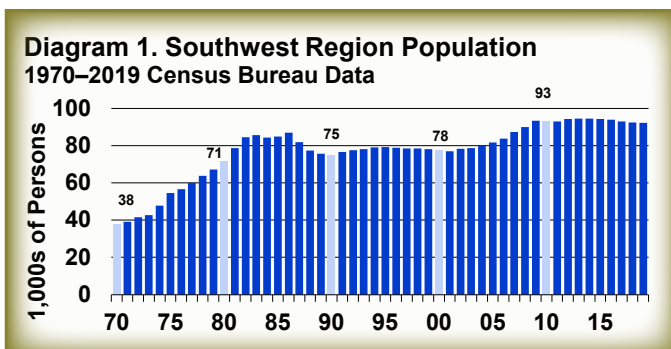
2020 WYOMING PROFILE of Demographics, Economics, and Housing Ending June 30, 2020

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 Southwest Region, is one of six publications that inspect a group of counties in the state, as shown in the map presented below. The **Southwest Region** is comprised of Lincoln, Sweetwater, Sublette, and Uinta counties.



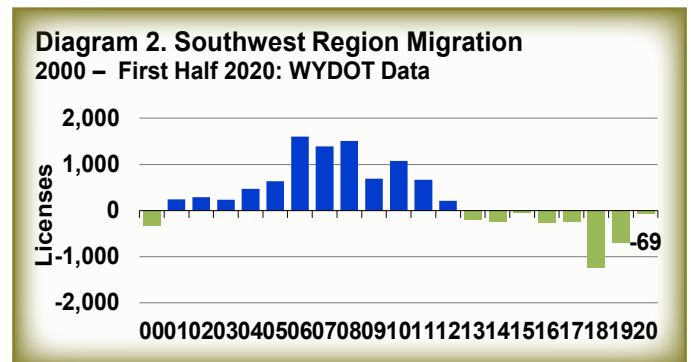
Demographics

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, between 2000 and 2010, the Southwest Region's population rose from 77,848 to 93,277 or by 19.8 percent. Recent Census Bureau counts place the population in the Southwest Region at 93,230 as of July 1, 2019, which indicates a growth rate of -0.7 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. Population changes are shown in Diagram 1.



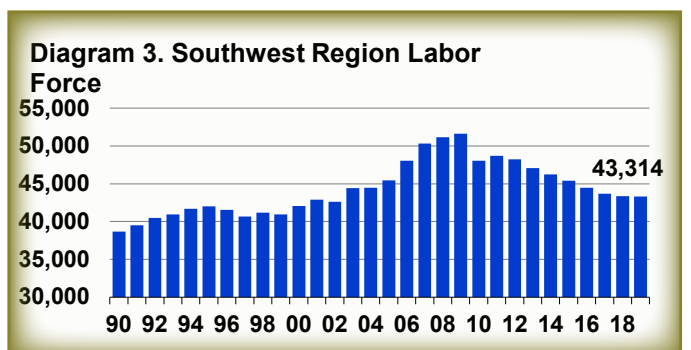
The Wyoming Housing Database Partnership utilizes quarterly data from the Wyoming Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding driver's licenses of new

or departing residents to track changes in population. While the net of surrendered and exchanged driver's licenses was low at 233 in 2003, there were substantial increases in the following years, with net in-migrants at 1,075 persons in 2010. However, population growth then slowed somewhat, with figures showing a net decrease of 69 persons in 2020, shown in Diagram 2.

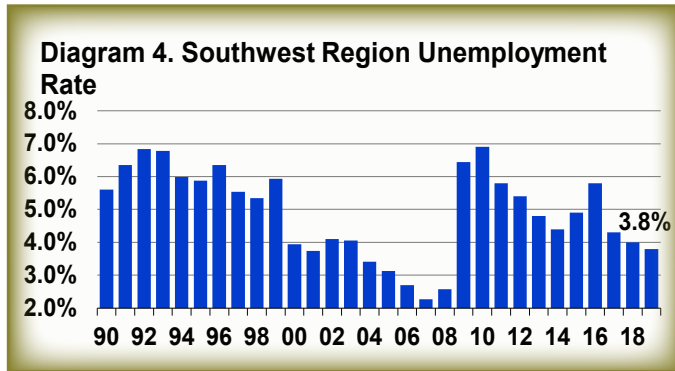


Economics

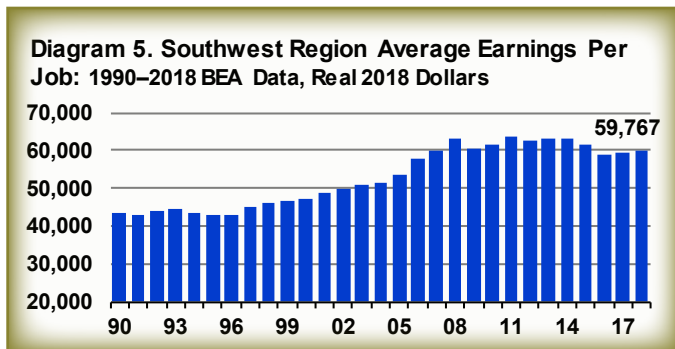
Economic growth in the region can be evaluated through labor force statistics data, which represent those persons working or seeking work as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). In the Southwest Region, the labor force expanded steadily from 2010 to 2019, decreasing at an average annual rate of 9.9 percent per year, as shown in Diagram 3. Between 2018 and 2019, the labor force decreased by 0.1 percent to 43,314 persons. The number of persons working fell to 41,656 in 2019.



The national recession contributed to a rapid rise in unemployment between 2008 and 2010. Still, unemployment rates changed from a high of 6.9 percent in 1993 to a low of 2.3 percent in 2007. These rates rose sharply to 6.9 percent in 2010 and fell to 3.8 percent in 2019, as noted in Diagram 4.

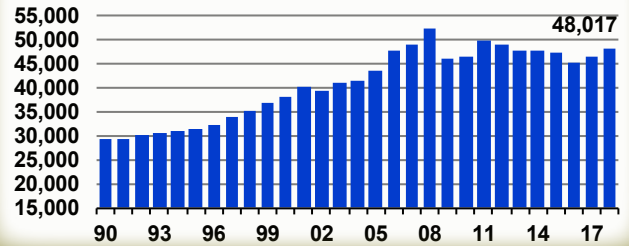


Low unemployment rates often cause upward wage pressure in the labor markets, and in turn, cause earnings to increase. In 1990, average earnings by place of work in the Southwest Region was \$41,928 in real 2018 dollars. Unfortunately, this level of earnings was not sustained, and the average declined until the late 1990s. Since 1990, earnings increased at an annual growth rate of 1.4 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 \$59,767, 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 3.6 percent higher than it was in 2010, reaching \$48,017 in 2018, as shown in Diagram 6.

Diagram 6. Southwest Region Per Capita Income
1990–2018 BEA Data, Real 2018 Dollars



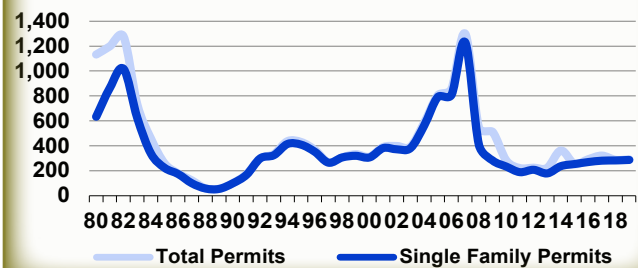
Highlights...

- The population of the Southwest Region decreased by 0.7 percent since the 2010 Census, to 93,230 persons.
- The unemployment rate was 3.8 percent in 2019, which compared to the state rate of 3.6 percent.

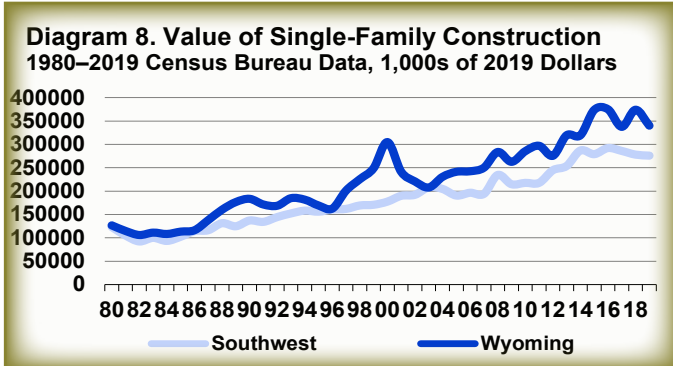
Housing

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 with significant levels of housing construction in the Southwest Region. Like employment and income, the housing market fell sharply during the recession of the early 1980s; 1980 saw 1,132 total permits, of which some 633 were for single-family units, but by 1988, there were only 58 permits, all of which were for single-family units. The permitted single-family residential units peaked in 2007 at 1,200 units and 287 units were permitted in 2019, as shown in Diagram 7.

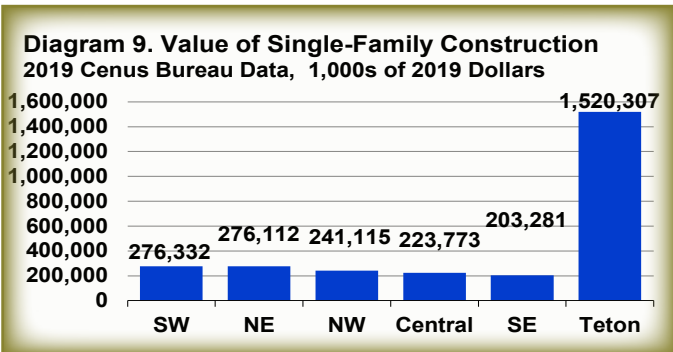
Diagram 7. Southwest Region Residential Permits
1980–2019 Census Bureau Data



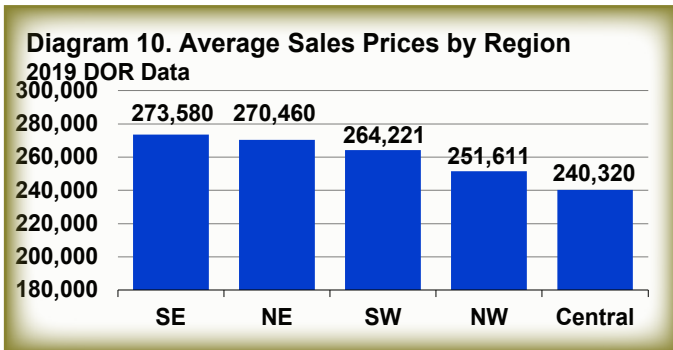
From 1980 to 2019, the real value of construction, representing only the cost of building the unit and not the land and lot costs, was fairly stable in the region. In 2019, the Southwest Region had an average value of \$276,332 compared to the statewide average of \$340,338 as shown in Diagram 8.



The average real value of new construction in the Southwest Region was the second highest in the state, as shown 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 Southwest Region had the third highest prices for existing homes in 2019 at \$264,221, and was exceeded only by the Teton Region, which is not pictured but had an average housing price of \$2.18 million

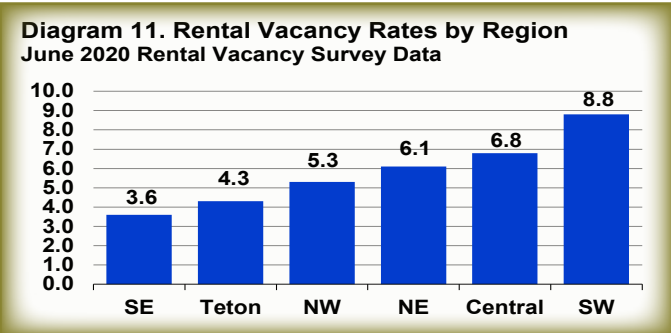


Every six months since 2001, the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership has conducted a survey of rental properties throughout the state. In the first half of 2020, 127 completed surveys covered 3,520 rental units in the Southwest Region. Results showed that rental vacancy rates fluctuated dramatically in this region with a low of 0.8 percent in the second half of 2006 and a high of 10.5 percent in the second half of 2009. In the first half of 2020, rental vacancy rates decreased to 8.8 percent, as shown in Table 11.

Table 1. Southwest Region Rental Vacancy Rates
Rental Vacancy Survey Data (a = June, b = December)

Year	Sample	Total Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
2008b	150	3,707	155	4.2%
2009a	157	3,268	234	7.2%
2009b	198	3,827	403	10.5%
2010a	232	4,158	352	8.5%
2010b	299	4,233	355	8.4%
2011a	299	4,258	324	7.6%
2011b	243	4,186	267	6.4%
2012a	245	4,274	217	5.1%
2012b	246	5,233	336	6.4%
2013a	266	4,772	381	8.0%
2013b	261	5,375	495	9.2%
2014a	257	5,923	354	6.0%
2014b	244	5,937	432	7.3%
2015a	255	4,606	375	8.1%
2015b	202	4,296	410	9.5%
2016a	209	5,239	411	7.8%
2016b	197	3,847	547	14.2%
2017a	190	4,333	686	15.8%
2017b	161	3,712	523	14.1%
2018a	200	4,503	651	14.5%
2018b	166	4,104	457	11.1%
2019a	161	4,503	363	8.1%
2019b	142	3,473	426	12.3%
2020a	127	3,520	309	8.8%

The statewide vacancy rate was 5.8 percent. The Southwest Region had the highest vacancy rate of all regions in the state with 8.8 percent of all units vacant, as shown in Diagram 11.



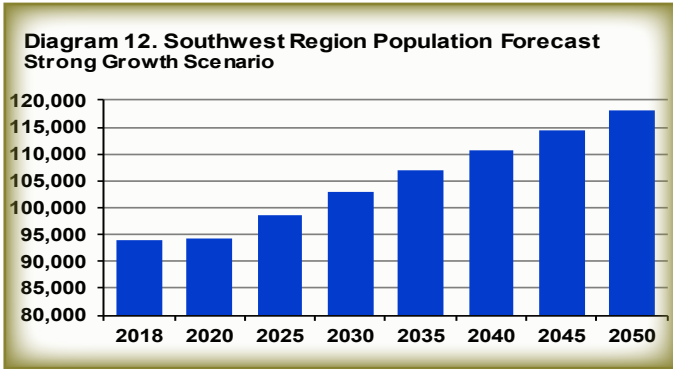
Highlights...

- According to DOR data, the average home price in the Southwest Region was \$264,221 in 2019.
- The June 2020 rental vacancy survey revealed a vacancy rate of 8.8 percent, as compared to the state rate of 5.8 percent.

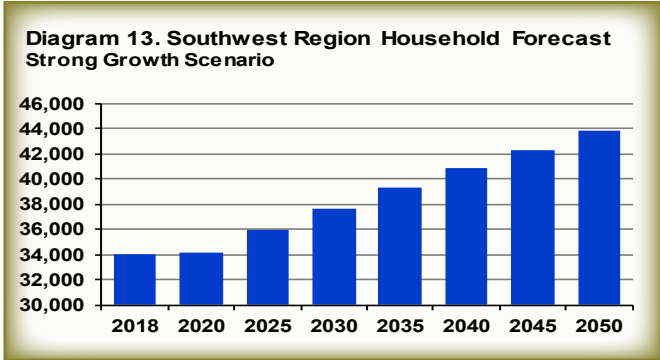
WCDA Home Buyers Program

Since 1979, the Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA) has helped more than 50,000 householders become homeowners in Wyoming. From 2000 to 2017, the WCDA assisted between 10 and 250

Southwest Region householders per year with the purchase of their home through a homebuyer program. In Fiscal 2018, the WCDA programs served 9 participants, as shown below.

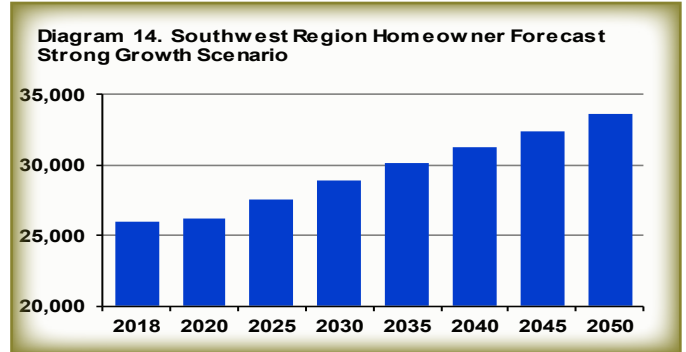


WCDA homebuyer programs provide assistance to first-time and low-income homebuyers. From 2000 to 2018, the Southwest Region-wide average for all home sales, as reported to the DOR by each county's tax assessor, rose by an average 2.6 percent per year. Average prices in the WCDA programs decreased by an average of 1.7 percent per year from Fiscal 2000 to 2018, as shown in Diagram 13.

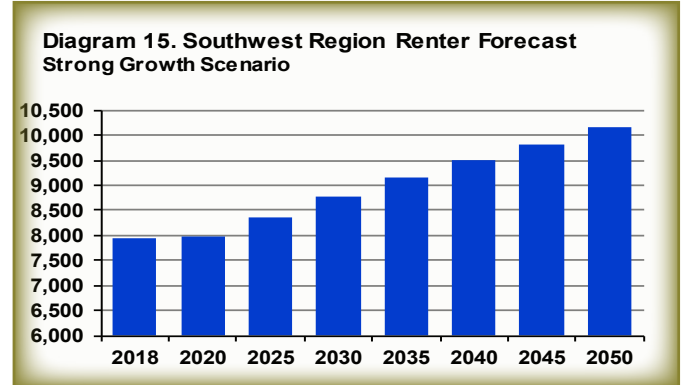


The need for the housing programs is very evident, as household incomes for participants in the programs have

not been keeping pace with increases in housing costs. The average household income for Southwest Region households participating in the WCDA homebuyer programs rose from \$34,028 in 2000 to \$65,905 in 2018. This translates to an average increase of 1.1 percent per year, as noted in Diagram 14, and was less than the growth in housing prices.



The WCDA is increasing its efforts to support the purchase of new affordable homeownership opportunities in Wyoming. The level of new construction found in the Southwest Region WCDA homebuyer programs increased from 6.8 percent in 2000 to a high of 21.4 percent in 2010, and decreased 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.

