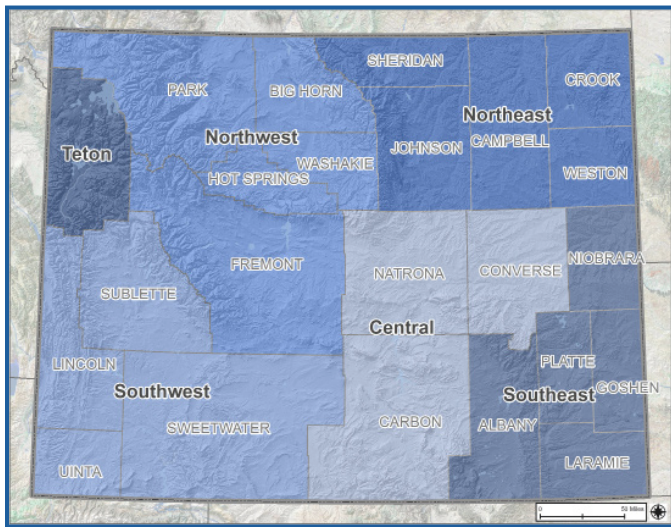


# Summary of the Northwest Region

## 2021 WYOMING PROFILE of Demographics, Economics, and Housing, Ending June 30, 2021

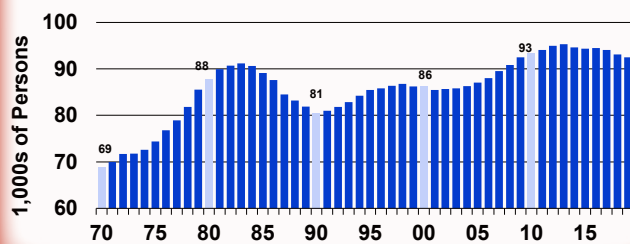
The **Wyoming Profile**, sponsored by the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership, is undertaken semi-annually to provide current, quality information about factors influencing the development, production, use, rehabilitation, demand, and need for **housing and related services** in Wyoming's communities. **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 92,408 persons as of July 1, 2020, which indicates a growth rate of -1.0 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.

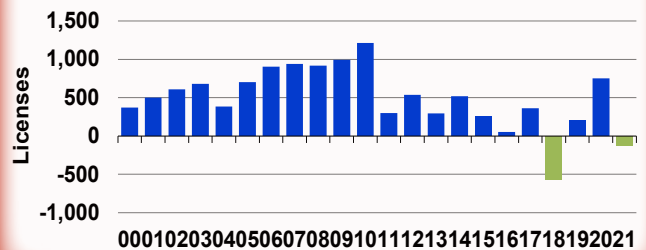
**Diagram 1. Northwest Region Population 1970–2020 Census Bureau Data**



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 the first half of 2021 showed a decrease of 132 persons, as seen in Diagram 2.

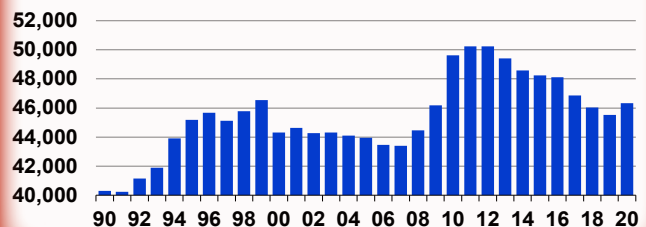
**Diagram 2. Northwest Region Migration 2000 – First Half 2021: WYDOT Data**



### 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 6.6 percent from 1990 to 2020, as shown in Diagram 3. Between 2019 and 2020, the labor force increased to 46,340. The number of persons working also increased to 43,710 persons in 2020.

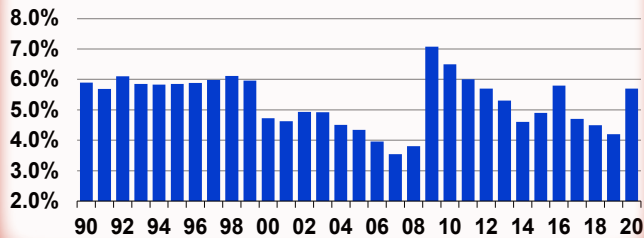
**Diagram 3. Northwest Region Labor Force 1990–2020 BLS Data**



\*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.

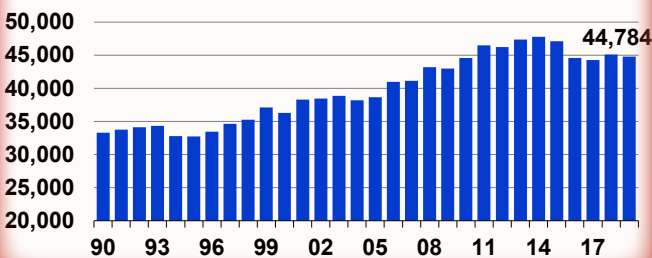
The national recession contributed to a rapid rise in unemployment between 2008 and 2010. Still, unemployment rates fell from a high of 6.4 percent in 1998 to a low of 3.5 percent in 2007, but then spiked sharply in 2010 to 6.5 percent and fell to 5.7 percent in 2016 and fell again to 4.2 percent in 2020, as noted in Diagram 4.

**Diagram 4. Northwest Region Unemployment Rate 1990–2020 BLS Data**



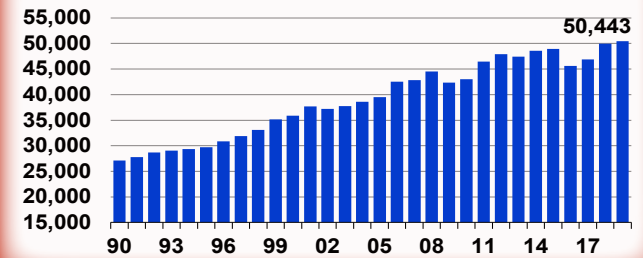
Low unemployment rates often cause upward wage pressure in the labor markets, and in turn, cause earnings to increase. In 1990, average earnings by place of work in the Northwest Region was \$27,145 in real 2019 dollars. Unfortunately, this level of earnings was not sustained, and the average declined through the 1990s. However, since 1990, earnings increased at an annual growth rate of 1.2 percent. As of 2019, the year for which the most recent data are available from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the earnings by place of work was \$44,784, shown in Diagram 5.

**Diagram 5. Northwest Region Average Earnings Per Job: 1990–2019 BEA Data, Real 2019 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, create per capita income. Real per capita income was \$50,443 in 2019 and was 17.3 percent higher than it was in 2010, as shown in Diagram 6.

**Diagram 6. Northwest Region Per Capita Income 1990–2019 BEA Data, Real 2019 Dollars**



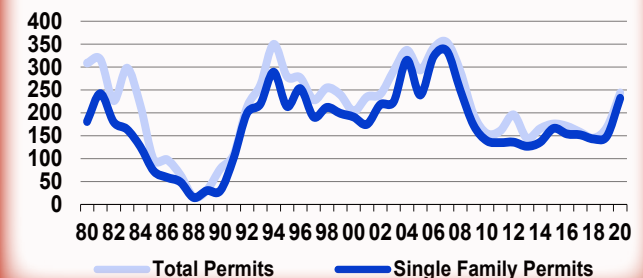
## Highlights...

- The population of the Northwest Region decreased by 1.0 percent since the 2010 Census, to 92,408 persons.
- The unemployment rate was 4.2 percent in 2020, which compared to the state rate of 3.6 percent.

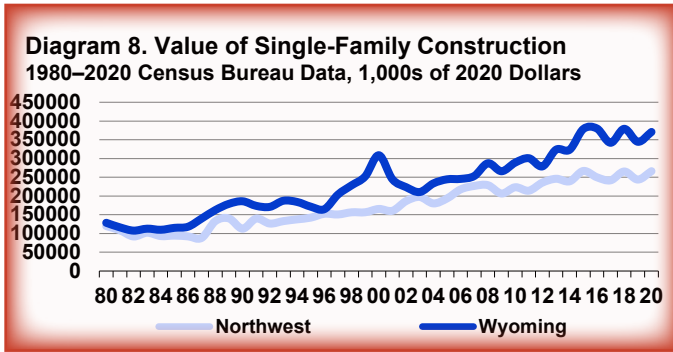
## Housing

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 232 units in 2020, as shown in Diagram 7.

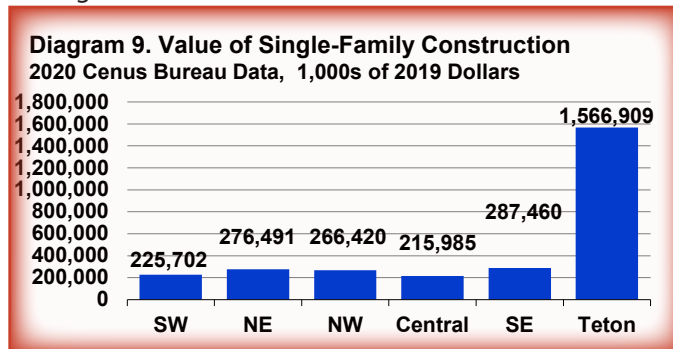
**Diagram 7. Northwest Region Residential Permits 1980–2020 Census Bureau Data**



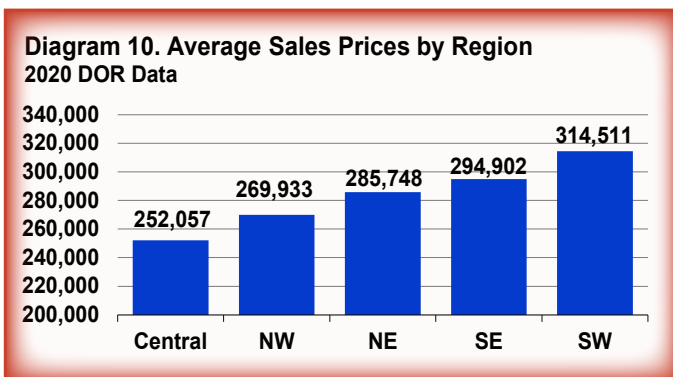
From 1980 to 2020, the real value of construction, representing only the cost of building the unit and not the land and lot costs, showed some fluctuation. In 2020, the Northwest average was \$266,420 and the statewide average was \$370,742, as noted in Diagram 8.



The average real value of new construction in the Northwest Region was comparable to other regions in the state in 2020, with the Northwest ranking third, as noted in Diagram 9.



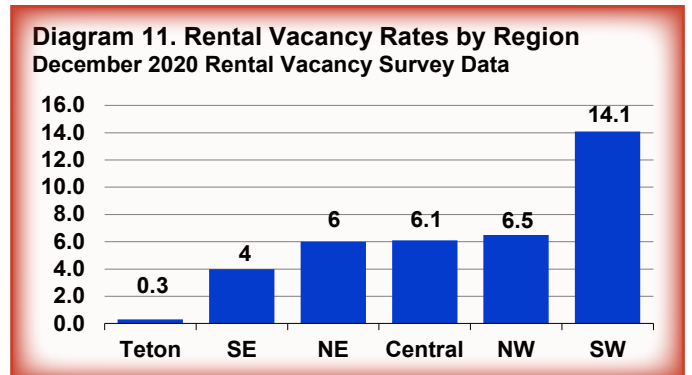
County tax assessors in Wyoming report housing prices for existing homes sold on 10 acres or less throughout the state to the Wyoming Department of Revenue (DOR). As shown in Diagram 10, the Northwest Region had an average existing price of \$269,933 in 2020, which was comparable to other regions with 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 2021, 127 completed surveys covered 3,064 rental units in the Northwest Region. Rental vacancy rates in the region decreased from 5.3 percent in the second half of 2020 to 1.4 percent in first half of 2021. These data are presented in the Table 1.

Rental Vacancy Survey Data (a = June, b = December)				
Year	Sample	Total Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
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%
2020b	94	1,243	81	6.5%
2021a	127	3,064	42	1.4%

The Northwest Region had the second lowest vacancy rate of all regions in the state, as shown in Diagram 11. The statewide vacancy rate was 4.3 percent.



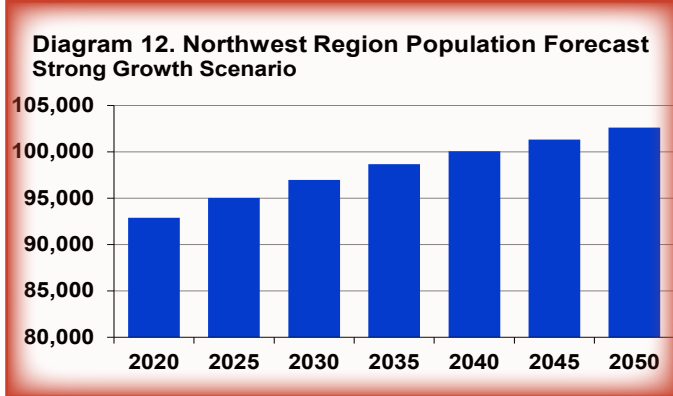
### Highlights...

- According to DOR data, the average home price in the Northwest Region was \$269,933 in 2020.
- The June of 2021 rental vacancy survey revealed a vacancy rate of 1.4 percent, as compared to the state rate of 4.3 percent.

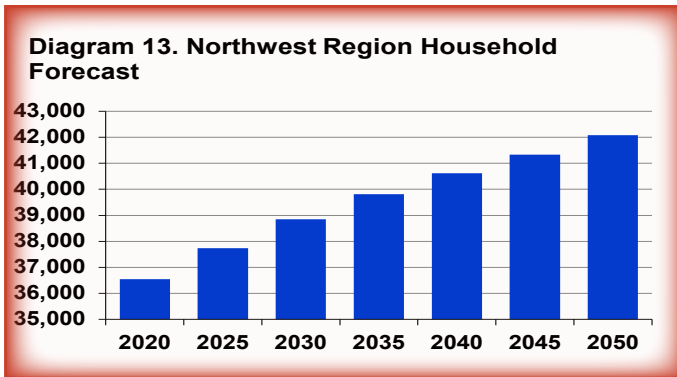
### WCDA Housing Needs Forecast

The 2020 Wyoming Housing Needs Forecast models three separate growth scenarios: moderate, strong, and very strong. Only the strong growth scenario is presented here.

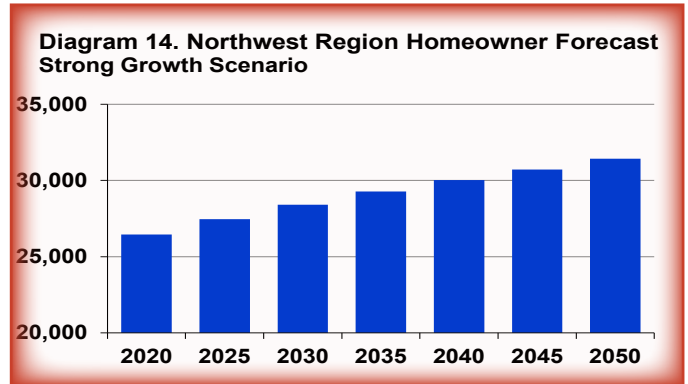
In the strong growth scenario, population is forecasted to increase at an average annual rate of 0.3 percent, reaching 102,631 persons in 2050, as shown in Diagram 12.



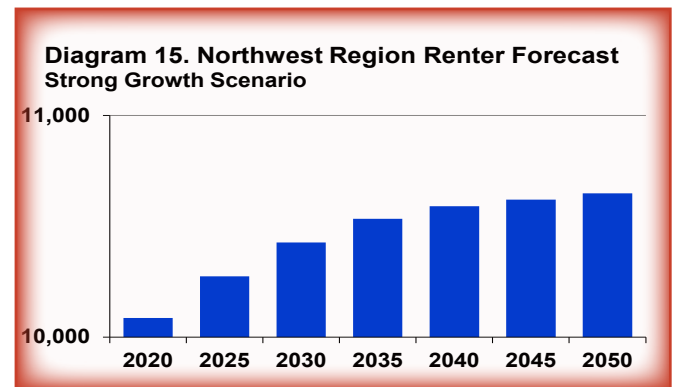
The Wyoming Housing Needs Forecast also modeled household formation, which was computed using forecasted values of persons per household and population. The strong growth scenario household formation forecast estimates an increase of 3,506 households between 2020 and 2050. This represents an increase of 13.4 percent from the 2020 level, or an average annual growth rate of 0.3 percent, as shown in Diagram 13.



The forecast separated households into owner- and renter-occupied households. Owner-occupied households were forecasted to increase from 26,453 households in 2020 to 31,431 households in 2050. This represents an increase of 4,685 owner-occupied households and average annual growth rate of 17.5 percent, as shown in Diagram 14.



Renter-occupied households were forecasted to increase from 10,086 in 2020 to 10,649 in 2050. This represents an increase of 289 renter-occupied households and an average annual growth rate of 0.1 percent, as shown in Diagram 15.



This regional summary was prepared for the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership. The complete 2021 Wyoming profile is available online on the WCDA website, [www.WyomingCDA.com](http://www.WyomingCDA.com).

