



POPULATION BRIEF

Trends in the Western U.S.

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Wyoming

The population of the State of Wyoming increased from 469,557 in 1980 to 563,626 in 2010, a boost of 20 percent. Most of this growth came in the decade from 2000 to 2010 where the state gained 69,844 residents or 14.1 percent. Over the three-decade period, Wyoming had the slowest rate of population growth of the 13 western states. From 2000 to 2010, however, Wyoming's growth rate surpassed the growth rate of six of the 13 western states.

Table 1 presents data showing population changes in Wyoming counties from 1980 to 2010. It is apparent that population change patterns varied extensively. In Teton and Sublette Counties, the population more than doubled during this three-decade period. From 2000 to 2010, the most rapid rates of population growth were in Sublette (73.1 percent) and Campbell (36.9 percent). Both of these counties experienced significant growth in the energy industries. On the other hand, in seven counties (Big Horn, Carbon, Converse, Hot Springs, Niobrara, Platte, and Washakie) the 2010 population was smaller than the 1980 population. From 2000 to 2010, only two counties (Hot Springs and Platte) had population declines.

Wyoming has a smaller proportion of their residents living in metropolitan counties than any other state in the western region. Figure 1 shows that 29.7 percent of Wyoming's population lived in one of the state's two metro counties (Laramie County – Cheyenne; and Natrona County – Casper). Figure 2 indicates that population growth rates are slightly higher in nonmetro than in metro counties. This is because the counties with declining populations are more than offset by the rapidly growing counties such as Sublette, Teton and Campbell.

Racial/Ethnic Composition of the Wyoming Population

As presented in Table 2, 85.9 percent of the Wyoming population was White in 2010. Of the states in the western region, only Montana has a smaller proportion of minority residents. The minority population of Wyoming has steadily increased from eight percent in 1980 to 14.1 percent in 2010 (Figure 3). Hispanics are the most numerous minority group in Wyoming and

represent 8.9 percent of the state's population. More than 90 percent of the population is White in 11 of Wyoming's 23 counties. In Carbon, Laramie, Sweetwater, Teton, and Washakie Counties, more than 10 percent of the residents are Hispanic while Fremont County has a significant Native American population.

Educational Attainment in Wyoming


Over 90 percent of Wyoming residents' age 25 and older had at least a high school degree in 2009, while 23.2 percent of these individuals had a college degree (Table 3). Wyoming had a higher proportion of high school graduates than any other state in the western region; however, only Nevada had a lower proportion of college graduates than Wyoming. In every Wyoming County, at least 88 percent of adults were high school graduates. There were, however, wide variations in college graduation rates by county. While 49.5 percent of adults in Teton and 48.8 percent in Albany Counties were college graduates, this proportion was less than 20 percent in 13 counties.

Educational attainment varies widely for different segments of the population. Especially significant are variations by race/ethnicity. As is evident in Figure 4, more than 90 percent of White, Black and Asian adults were high school graduates in 2009, only 77.3 percent of Native Americans and 74.9 percent of Hispanics had a high school degree. Similarly, 44.4 percent of Asians and more than one-fourth of White and Black adults were college graduates, compared to 7.6 percent of Native Americans and 7.9 percent of Hispanics. Figure 5 shows that differences in educational attainment by metro vs. nonmetro residence were not extensive in Wyoming.

Income and Poverty in Wyoming

The median household income in Wyoming in 2009 was \$54,400 (Table 3). Six of the 13 western states had income levels higher than in Wyoming. Incomes varied widely by county. Median household incomes were more than \$70,000 in Campbell (\$78,797) and Sublette (\$73,558) Counties and exceeded \$60,000 in Sweetwater, Teton and Uinta Counties. In contrast, median household incomes were \$40,016 in Niobrara County, \$40,367 in Hot Springs County, and \$40,772 in Albany County.

Table 3 also shows that 10.2 percent of Wyoming residents were living in poverty in 2009. Only Alaska had lower poverty rates than Wyoming. Poverty rates ranged from a low of 5.8 percent in Sublette and Teton Counties to a high of 18.7 percent in Albany County. Finally, Table 3 shows that the median value of owner-occupied homes in Wyoming was \$163,400 in 2009. Median home values were lower in only New Mexico and Montana in the western region. These values ranged from \$704,700 in Teton County to \$101,300 in Hot Springs County.

Incomes and poverty levels also varied widely for people with different characteristics. Figure 6A shows that median household incomes were much higher for Asians and Whites than for Blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans. Also, Figure 6B shows that while 9.3 percent of the White residents of Wyoming were living in poverty, this proportion was much higher for minority residents of the state. Figures 7A and 7B show that in Wyoming, unlike other states, incomes are higher and poverty rates lower in nonmetro compared to metro counties. 

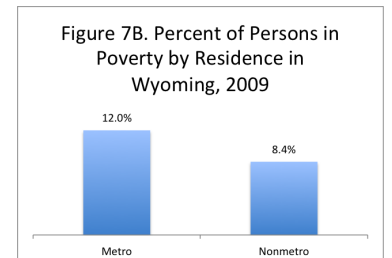
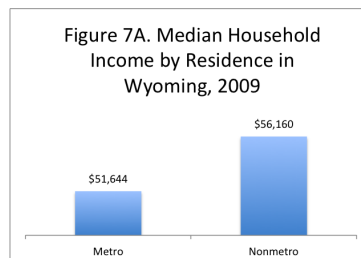
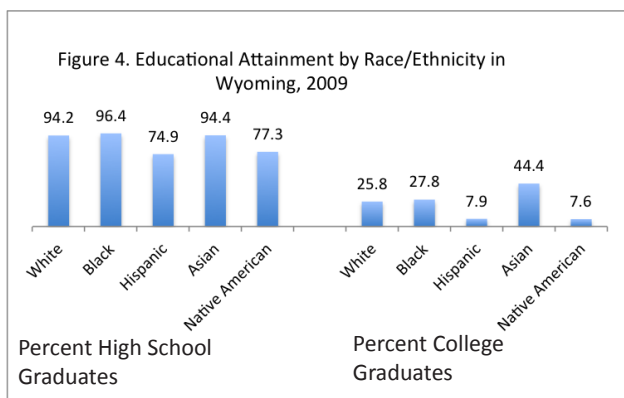
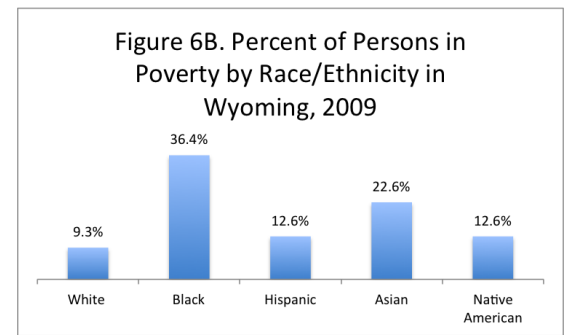
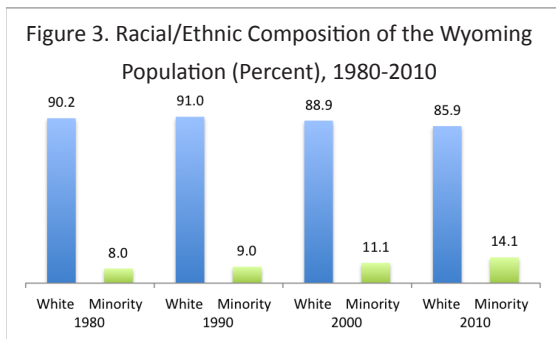
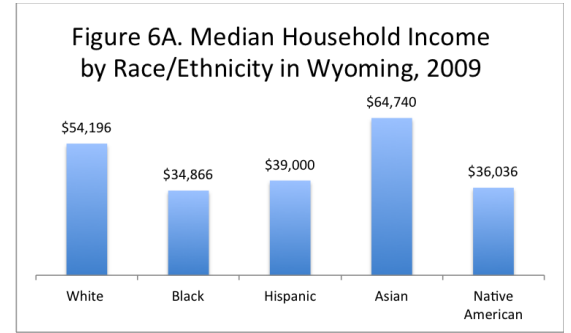
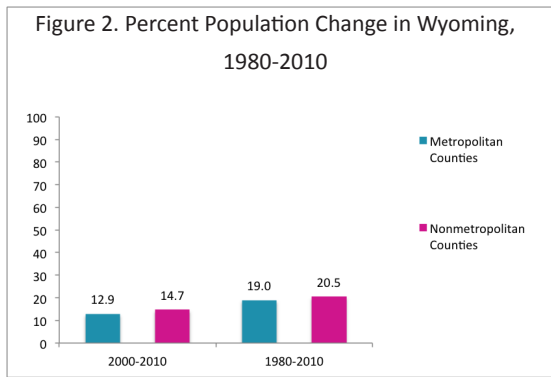
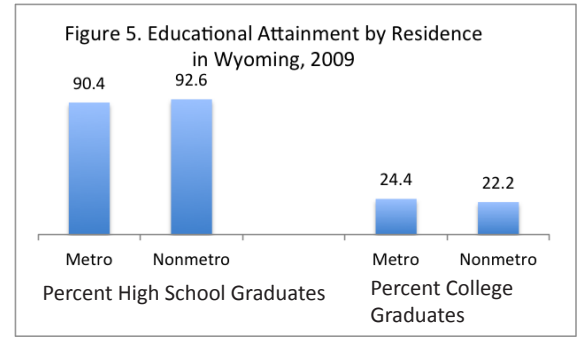
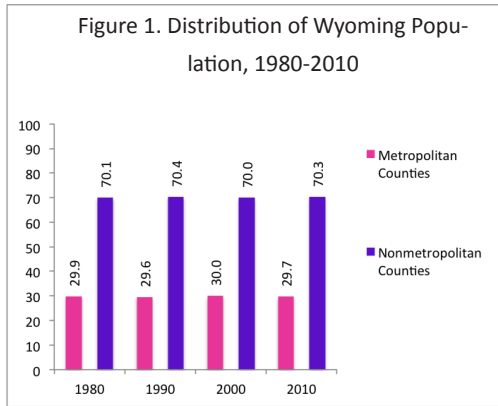


Table 1. Population Change for Wyoming Counties, 1980-2010

County	Population				Population Change			
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2000-2010		1980-2010	
					Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Albany	29,062	30,797	32,014	36,299	4,285	13.4	7,237	24.9
Big Horn	11,896	10,525	11,461	11,668	207	1.8	-228	-1.9
Campbell	24,367	29,370	33,698	46,133	12,435	36.9	21,766	89.3
Carbon	21,896	16,659	15,639	15,885	246	1.8	-6,011	-27.5
Converse	14,069	11,128	12,052	13,833	1,781	14.8	-236	-1.7
Crook	5,308	5,294	5,887	7,083	1,196	20.3	1,775	33.4
Fremont	38,992	33,662	35,804	40,123	4,319	12.1	1,131	2.9
Goshen	12,040	12,373	12,538	13,249	711	5.7	1,209	10.0
Hot Springs	5,710	4,809	4,882	4,812	-70	-1.4	-898	-15.7
Johnson	6,700	6,145	7,075	8,569	1,494	21.1	1,869	27.9
Laramie	68,649	73,142	81,607	91,738	10,131	12.4	23,089	33.6
Lincoln	12,177	12,625	14,573	18,106	3,533	24.2	5,929	48.7
Natrona	71,856	61,226	66,533	75,450	8,917	13.4	3,594	5.0
Niobrara	2,924	2,499	2,407	2,484	77	3.2	-440	-15.0
Park	21,639	23,178	25,786	28,205	2,419	9.4	6,566	30.3
Platte	11,975	8,145	8,807	8,667	-140	-1.6	-3,308	-27.6
Sheridan	25,048	23,562	26,560	29,116	2,556	9.6	4,068	16.2
Sublette	4,548	4,843	5,920	10,247	4,327	73.1	5,699	125.3
Sweetwater	41,723	38,823	37,613	43,806	6,193	16.5	2,083	5.0
Teton	9,355	11,172	18,251	21,294	3,043	16.7	11,939	127.6
Uinta	13,021	18,705	19,742	21,118	1,376	7.0	8,097	62.2
Washakie	9,496	8,388	8,289	8,533	244	2.9	-963	-10.1
Weston	7,106	6,518	6,644	7,208	564	8.5	102	1.4
State Total	469,557	453,588	493,782	563,626	69,844	14.1	94,069	20.0

Table 3. Economic Conditions and Education for Wyoming Counties, 2009

County	Median Household Income	Percent of Persons in Poverty	Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes	Percent of Persons 25+ with High School Degree	Percent of Persons 25+ with College Degree
Albany	\$40,772	18.7	\$182,500	94.0	48.8
Big Horn	\$45,070	10.6	\$108,500	88.3	19.0
Campbell	\$78,797	6.4	\$189,700	90.4	16.9
Carbon	\$50,353	11.7	\$117,500	89.8	18.4
Converse	\$58,658	8.9	\$154,500	92.6	17.0
Crook	\$50,851	8.3	\$141,800	91.4	18.1
Fremont	\$42,738	14.7	\$141,600	88.9	22.2
Goshen	\$41,453	14.3	\$117,300	88.3	19.9
Hot Springs	\$40,367	11.9	\$101,300	91.2	18.2
Johnson	\$49,457	8.9	\$188,200	93.4	25.6
Laramie	\$50,441	10.4	\$162,500	90.5	22.7
Lincoln	\$59,160	8.0	\$182,000	91.2	17.4
Natrona	\$55,179	9.2	\$161,200	92.0	21.5
Niobrara	\$40,016	14.4	\$106,700	92.0	18.8
Park	\$47,264	10.4	\$171,600	92.1	25.7
Platte	\$45,564	12.6	\$115,100	88.3	16.9
Sheridan	\$48,963	9.4	\$204,000	92.8	22.7
Sublette	\$73,558	5.8	\$243,100	94.1	26.2
Sweetwater	\$69,297	7.3	\$155,300	89.5	16.9
Teton	\$68,777	5.8	\$704,700	95.9	49.5
Uinta	\$64,284	9.0	\$158,800	89.9	17.3
Washakie	\$47,098	11.5	\$125,700	88.2	24.5
Weston	\$50,642	9.9	\$107,100	90.0	19.3
State Total	\$54,400	10.2	\$163,400	91.1	23.2

Table 2. Percentage of Population by Race/Ethnicity for Wyoming Counties, 2010

County	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American
Albany	84.8	1.2	8.8	2.8	0.7
Big Horn	89.4	0.2	8.4	0.3	0.9
Campbell	88.9	0.3	7.8	0.6	1.2
Carbon	79.8	0.7	16.8	0.7	1.0
Converse	91.3	0.3	6.3	0.3	0.8
Crook	95.9	0.2	2.0	0.2	0.7
Fremont	71.5	0.3	5.6	0.4	21.2
Goshen	87.9	0.6	9.7	0.3	0.8
Hot Springs	94.6	0.2	2.2	0.4	1.5
Johnson	94.4	0.2	3.2	0.4	1.1
Laramie	80.8	2.5	13.1	1.1	1.0
Lincoln	93.5	0.2	4.3	0.3	0.8
Natrona	89.1	0.9	6.9	0.7	1.0
Niobrara	95.0	0.2	2.1	0.4	0.8
Park	92.5	0.2	4.8	0.6	0.6
Platte	91.2	0.3	6.7	0.4	0.4
Sheridan	93.1	0.4	3.5	0.7	1.2
Sublette	90.4	0.3	6.9	0.5	0.8
Sweetwater	80.9	1.0	15.3	0.8	1.0
Teton	82.2	0.2	15.0	1.1	0.5
Uinta	88.5	0.3	8.8	0.3	0.8
Washakie	83.9	0.3	13.6	0.6	1.1
Weston	93.8	0.3	3.0	0.3	1.1
State Total	85.9	0.8	8.9	0.8	2.4



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About the WRDC

The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is one of four regional centers competitively funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture to strengthen the capacity of local citizens to guide the future of their rural communities. Each of the four Centers link the research and extension capacity of regional land-grant universities with local decision-makers to enhance rural prosperity, create thriving communities, and support a sustainable and competitive agricultural system.

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