



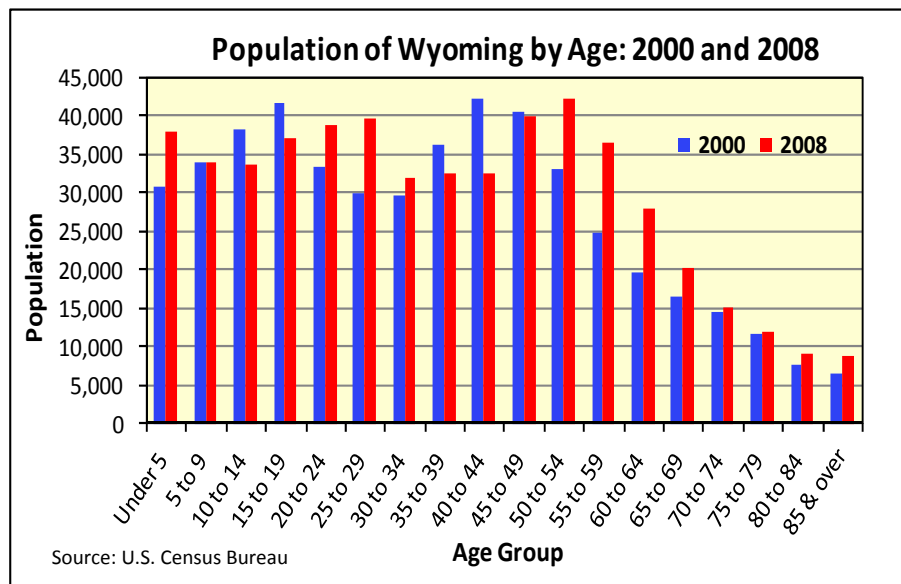
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***The Changing Face of Wyoming's Population***

**CHEYENNE** -- Wyoming's total minority population reached 70,150 in July 2008, according to estimates just released by the U.S. Census Bureau. Minority is defined as any group other than single-race, Non-Hispanic White. The growth of minorities since 2000 was 16,520 persons, or 30.8 percent, compared with 7.9 percent overall increase for the State's total population. This addition in the minority population contributed over 42.5 percent of the state's population growth from 2000 to 2008. Hispanic was the largest minority group with 41,162 in July 2008, and it increased 30.0 percent during the eight-year span. All other races, including Black, American Indian, and Asian recorded at least 19 percent or higher growth, while the majority, Non-Hispanic White, increased only 5.1 percent. With 13.2 percent of the State's total population, the proportion of minorities in Wyoming was still ranked the 9<sup>th</sup> lowest in the nation, while over one in three U.S. residents is a minority.



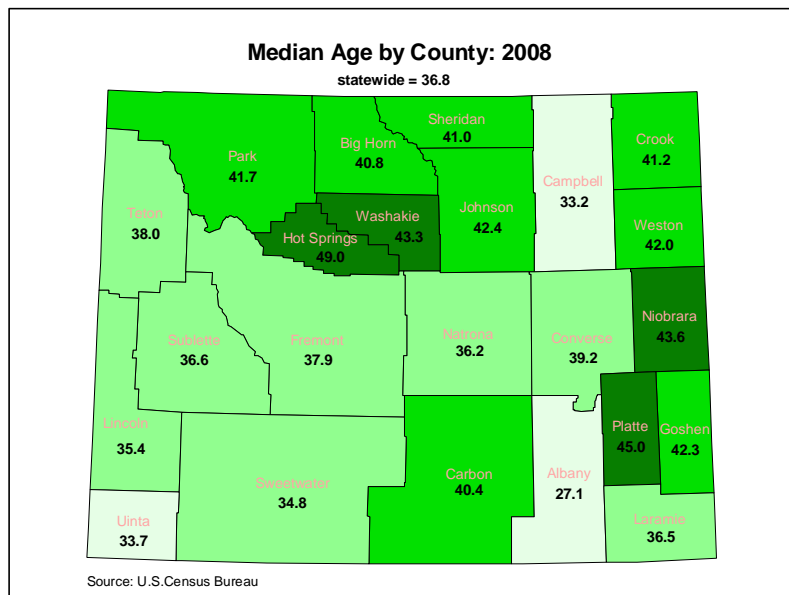
The U.S. Census Bureau also released the estimation of 2008

population by age and sex at the state level. "The figures indicate that the aging trend of Wyoming's population has been slowing down," said Dr. Wenlin Liu, senior economist with the Economic Analysis Division. The median age (half of the population younger, and half older) increased from 36.2 in 2000 to 36.8 in 2008, at a much slower rate than the U.S. Particularly, the State's median age has been declining since 2005. "This is unusual, but not a surprise because Wyoming's fast development in the energy and construction industries in recent years has been drawing many younger workers into the State. It has also kept many of Wyoming's youth from leaving the State due to the abundant job opportunities," said Liu. "Movers tend to be much younger than non-movers. Whenever the State experiences an overall positive net migration (more people moved into Wyoming than residents moving out), the population aging will be lessened. The annual net in-migration of around 6,000 in the past a couple of years was the highest since 1982," Liu continued.

The population under 18 years has increased three years in a row, which is the first time happened in many years. The growth was particularly significant for the pre-teenage children. Many of them are baby boomers' grandchildren. "The number of births in the state has increased tremendously since 2001, at 33.0 percent. The number of births in 2008, over 8,000, was the highest since 1986," said Liu. "However, Wyoming's aging could speed up in the coming years. The proportion of the State's elderly population (65 and over) was 12.3 percent in 2008, still lower than the U.S. level of 12.8 percent, but it grew faster than the national rate. In addition, Wyoming has one of the highest proportions of the early baby boom population, and one of the lowest Generation X (age 30 to 44 in 2008) proportion in the country. Together with slower employment growth, and the rural nature of the State, Wyoming may continue to face a labor force shortage and a faster population aging," Liu said. Wyoming's population 65 and older increased from 57,693 in 2000 to 65,614 in 2008, or 13.7 percent. It is projected to reach 103,500 or about 18 percent of total state residents by 2020.

The U.S. Census Bureau also released 2008 county population estimates by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin. The data shows the following highlights:

- The Hispanic population increased the fastest in Sublette County, at 239.3 percent between 2000 and 2008, followed by Teton, Lincoln, and Campbell counties at 114.3, 102.5, and 83.0 percent, respectively.
- Fremont County had the highest percentage minority population in 2008 at 27.3 percent, dominated by Native Americans, followed by Laramie (19.6%), Carbon (18.9%), Washakie (17.1%), and Sweetwater (16.7%) counties where the vast majority of the minority population was Hispanic.



- The largest county, Laramie, also had the largest number of Hispanics (10,246), Black (3,545), and Asian (1,229) in 2008. They comprise of 24.9 percent, 51.5 percent, and 32.1 percent of State total Hispanic, Black, and Asian population, respectively.
- Statewide, the percentage of minority population increased from 10.9 percent in 2000 to 13.2 percent in 2008, while the percentage of Hispanic population grew from 6.4 percent to 7.7 percent during the same period.
- Counties with the smallest proportion of minority population in 2008 were Crook (2.9%), Niobrara (4.1%), Johnson (5.0%), Lincoln (5.8%), and Weston (5.9%).
- The State's oldest county was Hot Springs, with median age of 49.0, with 25.4 percent of its population age 65 and older, and 4.7 percent of population age 85 and over in 2008. Other counties with a higher proportion of elderly population (65 and over) were Niobrara (20.3%), Platte (18.9%), Goshen (18.5%), and Big Horn (18.4%). These counties tend to have the smallest proportion of children population.
- The youngest county was Albany, with median age of 27.1 in 2008, followed by Campbell (33.2), Uinta (33.7), and Sweetwater (34.8).
- Sweetwater County had the highest percentage of preschool (under 5 years) population (8.6%) in 2008, followed by Campbell (8.4%), Lincoln (8.2%), and Uinta (8.0%) counties.
- Campbell County had the lowest percentage of population age 65 or older, at 5.9 percent, followed by Sweetwater (8.3%), Uinta (8.4%), Albany (8.5%), and Teton (8.6%) counties.

Complete population figures are available online at <http://eadv.state.wy.us/> or the U.S. Census Bureau's website at <http://www.census.gov/>.