

POPULATION TRENDS

INTRODUCTION

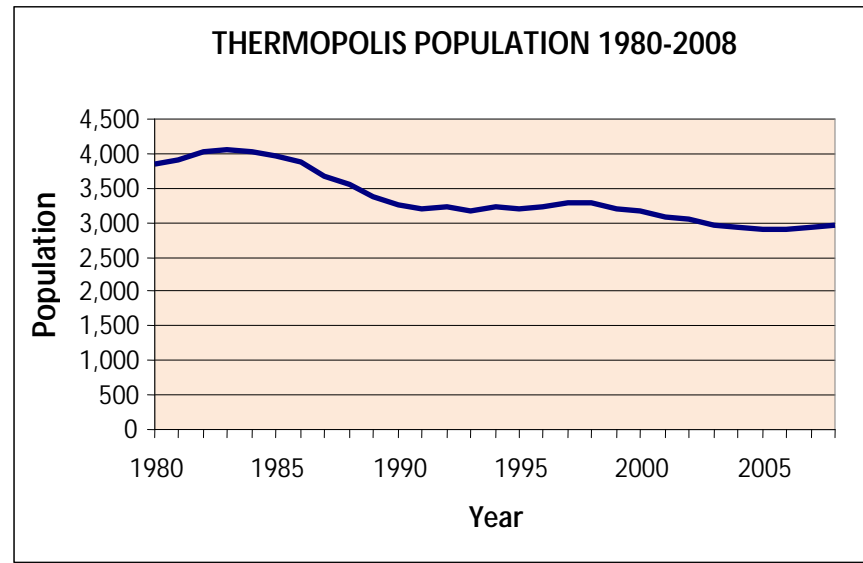
Planning for the future depends on the composition of the population and the potential for population change that comes as the result of net migration and changes to population characteristics such as age. Anticipating changes in population numbers and composition is essential to planning for future needs.

POPULATION NUMBERS

The population of Thermopolis in 2008 was estimated at 2,971, approximately 64% of the total population in Hot Springs County. Population has generally been declining since the 1980s. Thermopolis population declined by an estimated six percent from 2000 to 2008, while overall population in the state of Wyoming increased by approximately eight percent. Population decline in Hot Springs County is a combined result of natural decrease (more deaths than births) and net outmigration (more residents leaving the county than new residents moving in).

THERMOPOLIS POPULATION 2000 TO 2008										
Place	Census April 2000 Population	July 1, 2001	July 1, 2002	July 1, 2003	July 1, 2004	July 1, 2005	July 1, 2006	July 1, 2007	July 1, 2008	% Change April, 2000 to July, 2008
Wyoming	493,782	492,924	496,969	499,056	502,816	506,007	512,573	523,252	532,668	7.9
Hot Springs County	4,882	4,754	4,714	4,580	4,557	4,510	4,529	4,558	4,622	-5.3
E. Thermopolis	274	267	265	258	255	257	257	259	264	-3.6
Kirby	57	56	55	54	54	54	54	54	55	-3.5
Thermopolis	3,172	3,085	3,055	2,962	2,931	2,890	2,906	2,927	2,971	-6.3
Balance of County	1,379	1,346	1,339	1,306	1,317	1,309	1,312	1,318	1,332	-3.4

Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Release Date July 1, 2009 per compilation by Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division <http://eadiv.state.wy.us/>



Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 population are from U.S. Census Bureau's decennial census; all other years are Census Bureau's estimates; per compilation by Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division <http://eadiv.state.wy.us/>

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE: APRIL 1, 2000 TO JULY 1, 2008							
Area	Total Population Change	Natural Increase			Net Migration		
		Total	Births	Deaths	Total	Net International Migration	Net Internal Migration
Wyoming	38,886	23,970	57,611	33,641	17,347	2,125	15,222
Hot Springs County	-260	-151	360	511	-95	13	-108

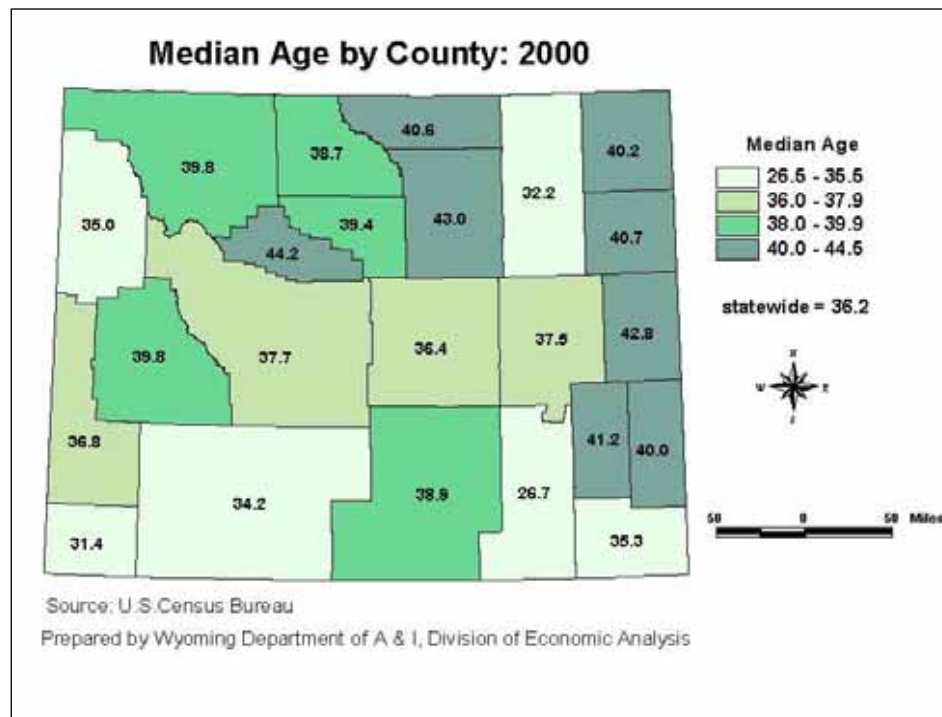
Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Release Date: March 19, 2009; <http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/tables/CO-EST2008-04-56.xls>

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Hot Springs County has the highest median age of any county in Wyoming. In 2000, median age in the county was 44.2 years. In Thermopolis, it was slightly lower at 43.5, but in neighboring East Thermopolis the median age was 55 years. Median age for the nation as a whole in 2000 was 35.3 years.

The population nationwide is aging, and based on 2008 census estimates, the median age in Hot Springs County had risen to 49.0 years and a similar increase is likely for Thermopolis (however census does not release median age estimates for towns).

Thermopolis and East Thermopolis each also have a much higher percentage of persons aged 65 years and older than does the state or the nation as a whole.



POPULATION 65 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER IN 2000		
	Number	% of Total
Thermopolis	667	21.0%
East Thermopolis	89	32.5%
Wyoming	57,693	11.7%

Source: Table DP-1 2000, US Census Bureau, Census 2000

The proportion of persons with disabilities is generally much higher in Thermopolis and East Thermopolis than in the state or nation. In Thermopolis the percentage of non-institutionalized persons 65 years and older is lower than that of Wyoming or the nation. This is likely attributed to the fact that proportionately more individuals are in institutional settings in Thermopolis (4.2% for Thermopolis compared to 1.6% for Wyoming and 1.4% for the nation).

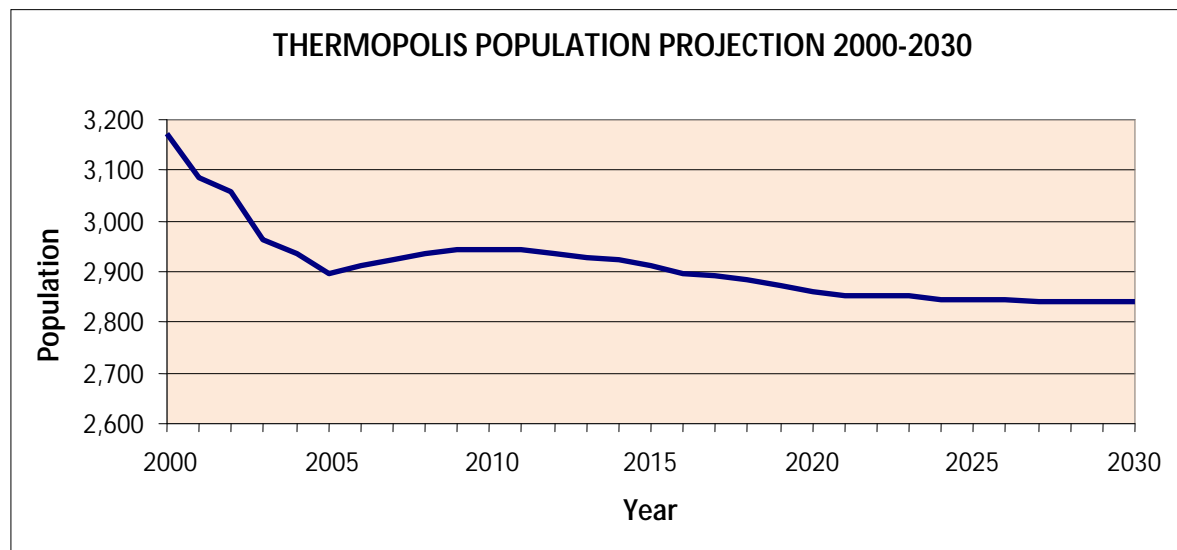
DISABILITY STATUS OF CIVILIAN NON-INSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION				
	Thermopolis	East Thermopolis	Wyoming	United States
% of Population 5-20 years	11.6	21.6	7.7	8.1
% of Population 21-64 years	25.1	29.1	16.8	19.2
% of Population 65 years and older	38.1	56.6	39.3	41.9

Source: Table DP-1 2000, US Census Bureau, Census 2000

Population in Thermopolis in 2000 was predominately White (96%) and considerably less diverse than the nation (with White population at 69.1%).

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

According to projections from the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, the 2030 population of Thermopolis will decline by approximately 300 persons compared to the 2000 census count. The projections are based on historic trends and economic variables. The State develops forecasts for each county and the rates of change are applied to the municipalities. Therefore, the projection for Thermopolis population mirrors that of Hot Springs County, which will also see some population decline.



Prepared by Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division <http://eadiv.state.wy.us>, July 2008

CONCLUSIONS

New residents are moving into Thermopolis, but overall population has declined in recent decades. Thermopolis and East Thermopolis have a much higher proportion of elderly and disabled individuals compared to state and national rates.

The population is aging nationwide and Wyoming is predicted to be in the top 6 states in the nation with highest percentages of older residents by 2030. The senior population in Thermopolis will also increase and become proportionately larger in relation to the town's total population.

It is important in community planning to identify population projections and to understand their limitations. The State of Wyoming makes its forecasts using the best available information on population and economic trends. Still, despite best efforts and most current technology, not all future events can be predicted. Therefore, local government should monitor growth and be able to make adjustments to plans if change occurs at much different rates than anticipated.

SOURCES:

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