

3.4 Population

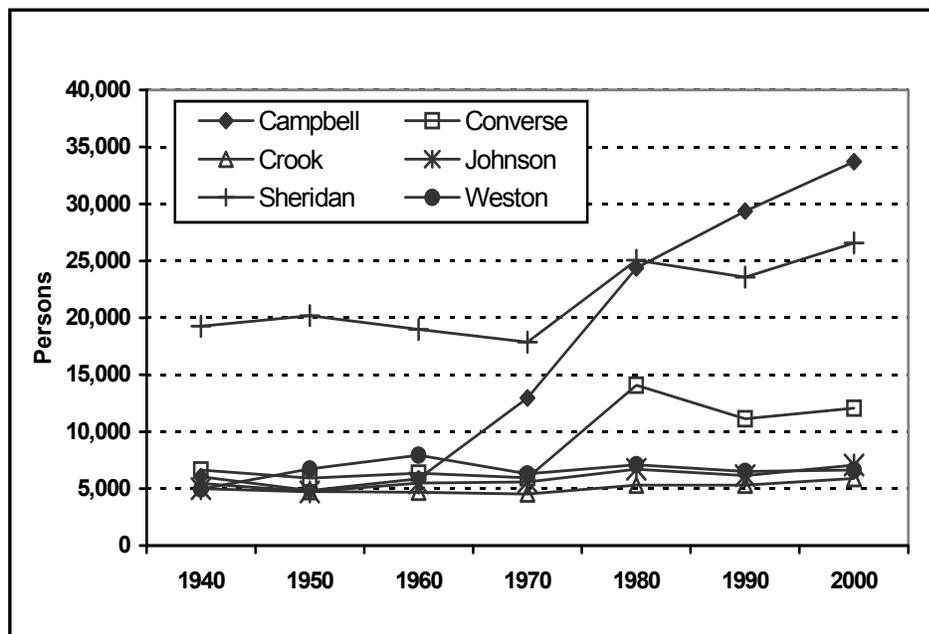
3.4 Population

This section presents current population data as well trends from the decennial censuses of 1940 through 2000. The data are presented for counties and for the main cities and towns. Totals for the State of Wyoming are included for comparison.

3.4.1 County Population Trends

All six counties in the PRB have experienced population effects from energy resource development. However, Campbell County's growth from around 6,000 in 1960 to more than 33,000 in 2000 is perhaps the most significant trend in the region. Anchored by the City of Gillette, Campbell County is recognized as the study area's economic and demographic hub.

Campbell County has grown in every decade since 1960, and the county experienced explosive growth between 1970 and 1980 (**Figure 3-17** and in **Table 3-2**). In 1960, Campbell County had a population of 5,861, and Sheridan County had a population of 18,989. By 1980, after growing 121 percent in the 1960s and 88 percent in the 1970s, Campbell County had a population of 24,367, only 3 percent lower than Sheridan County's population of 25,048.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, various years.

Figure 3-17 County Population Trends (1940 - 2000)

In 1990, after continued growth in Campbell County and a loss of population in Sheridan County, Campbell County had a population of 29,370, about 25 percent higher than Sheridan County's population of 23,562. In 2000, Campbell County's population was 33,698, up another 15 percent, while Sheridan County's population rose 13 percent to 26,560.

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Table 3-2
Population of the PRB (1940-2000)

County/Location	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Campbell							
Gillette (city)	2,177	2,191	3,580	7,194	12,134	17,635	19,646
Wright (town)	-	-	-	-	1,117	1,236	1,347
Rest of county	3,871	2,648	2,281	5,763	11,116	10,499	12,705
Total	6,048	4,839	5,861	12,957	24,367	29,370	33,698
Converse							
Douglas (city)	2,205	2,544	2,822	2,677	6,030	5,076	5,288
Glenrock (town)	1,014	1,110	1,584	1,515	2,736	2,153	2,231
Rest of county	3,412	2,279	1,960	1,746	5,303	3,899	4,533
Total	6,631	5,933	6,366	5,938	14,069	11,128	12,052
Crook							
Moorcroft (town)	387	517	826	981	1,014	768	807
Sundance (town)	685	893	908	1,056	1,087	1,139	1,161
Rest of county	4,391	3,328	2,957	2,498	3,207	3,387	3,919
Total	5,463	4,738	4,691	4,535	5,308	5,294	5,887
Johnson							
Buffalo (city)	2,302	2,674	2,907	3,394	3,799	3,302	3,900
Rest of county	2,678	2,033	2,568	2,193	2,901	2,843	3,175
Total	4,980	4,707	5,475	5,587	6,700	6,145	7,075
Sheridan							
Sheridan (city)	10,529	11,500	11,651	10,856	15,146	13,900	15,804
Rest of county	8,726	8,685	7,338	6,996	9,902	9,662	10,756
Total	19,255	20,185	18,989	17,852	25,048	23,562	26,560
Weston							
Newcastle (city)	1,962	3,395	4,345	3,432	3,596	3,003	3,065
Upton town	545	951	1,224	987	1,193	980	872
Rest of county	2,451	2,387	2,360	1,888	2,317	2,535	2,707
Total	4,958	6,733	7,929	6,307	7,106	6,518	6,644
Six-county Area							
Selected places	21,806	25,775	29,847	32,092	47,852	49,192	54,121
Rest of area	25,529	21,360	19,464	21,084	34,746	32,825	37,795
Total	47,335	47,135	49,311	53,176	82,598	82,017	91,916
State of Wyoming	250,742	290,529	330,066	332,416	469,557	453,588	493,782

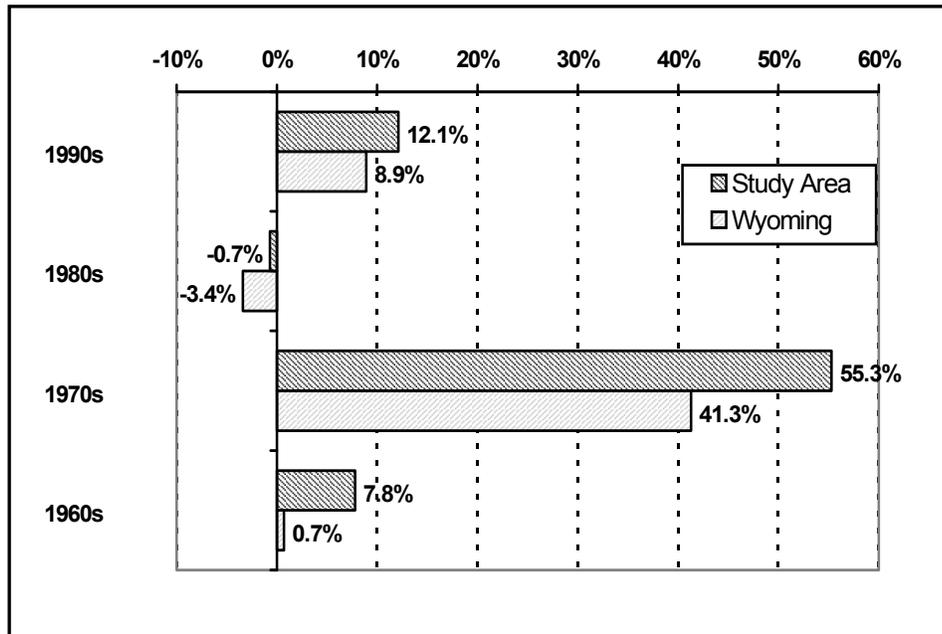
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, various years.

Other counties in the PRB have, like Sheridan County, experienced a cyclical pattern of relatively strong growth in the 1970s, stabilization or modest decline in the 1980s, and a resumption of growth in the 1990s. In Converse County, population more than doubled in the 1970s (137 percent growth) and then declined by 21 percent from 1980 to 1990. From 1990 to 2000, Converse County's population grew again by about 8 percent. In the 1990s, Crook County grew 11 percent, Johnson County grew 15 percent, Sheridan County grew 13 percent, and Weston County grew 2 percent.

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3.4.2 Study Area in the State Context

Driven by Campbell County, total population in the PRB has grown more (or declined less) in every decade since 1960 than the State of Wyoming as a whole. **Figure 3-18** graphically compares growth by decade in the study area to growth in Wyoming.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, various years.

Figure 3-18 Population Change in the PRB Study Area (1960s - 1990s)

3.4.3 Components of Population Change

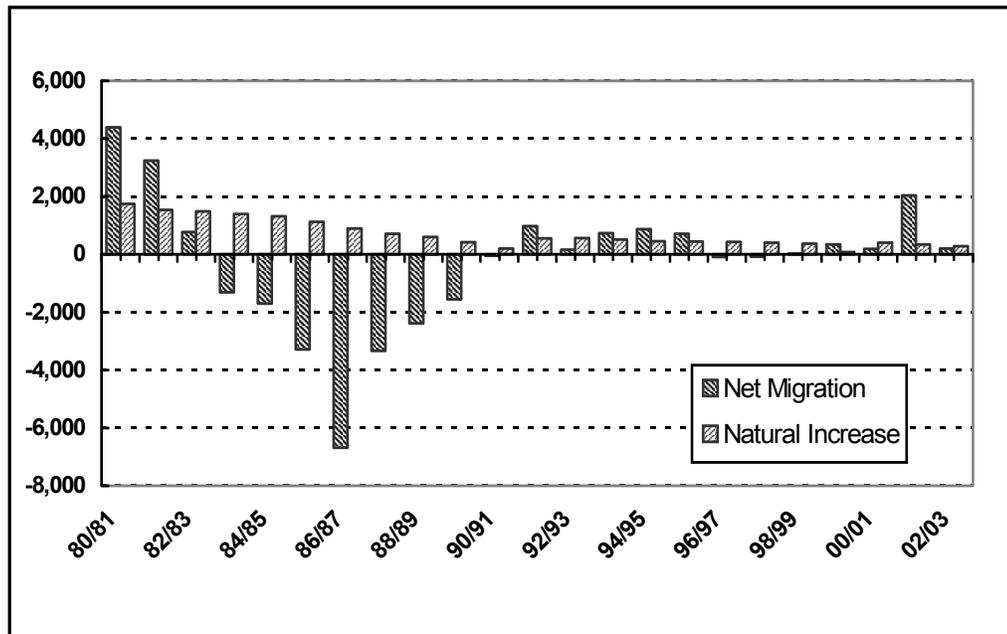
Migration is an important component of population change in the PRB. Migration data do not identify the motivation of the movers. However, age is known to be a key factor, with young adults and young households/families most likely to move. In addition, intrastate and interstate moves (but not local moves) are generally associated with job searches or transfers, contributing to the region's ability to balance its labor force with current levels of economic activity.

In the past 5 years, the county most affected by in-migration was Johnson County, where 31.8 percent of the population in 2000 lived elsewhere in the U.S. or abroad in 1995. This was 7 percentage points higher than the migration rate for the state as a whole. Sheridan County's migration rate of 25.1 percent also was higher than the state overall. Other counties in the area had lower 5-year migration rates than the state: Converse County's was 22.9 percent, Campbell County's was 22.4 percent, Crook County's was 21.9 percent, and Weston County's was 18.4 percent. In addition, Johnson, Crook, Campbell, and Sheridan counties all have more than twice the level of interstate migration as intrastate migration from within Wyoming. In Converse and Weston counties, the numbers of interstate and intrastate migrants were about comparable (U.S. Census Bureau, various years).

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The census data also show that three regions contribute the overwhelming majority of net migration to the counties of the study area: the West, Midwest, and South. Internal Revenue Service data tracks year-to-year movement of individual households. For Campbell County, states that originate or receive large migration flows are South Dakota, Nevada, and North Dakota. Wyoming counties that typically send and receive large migration flows to Campbell County are Natrona, Sheridan, Converse, Weston, and Sweetwater. Geographic proximity and economic similarity may play a part in these linkages, while the relative population sizes of typical origins and destinations may be a secondary factor (U.S. Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service 2003).

Census data measure migration over the 5-year interval preceding the decennial census, however, households may have moved more than once during that period. Annual data indicate the relative importance of migration for year-to-year population change. Census Bureau estimates of the components of population change indicate the relative importance of migration and natural increase. **Figure 3-19** presents these data for the PRB overall for the 1-year periods from July 1, 1980, through July 1, 2003.



Note: The estimated components of population change are from July 1 of one year to July 1 of the following year with the labels for the horizontal axis indicating the beginning and ending year (e.g., 80/81 indicates the period from July 1, 1980, to July 1, 1981).

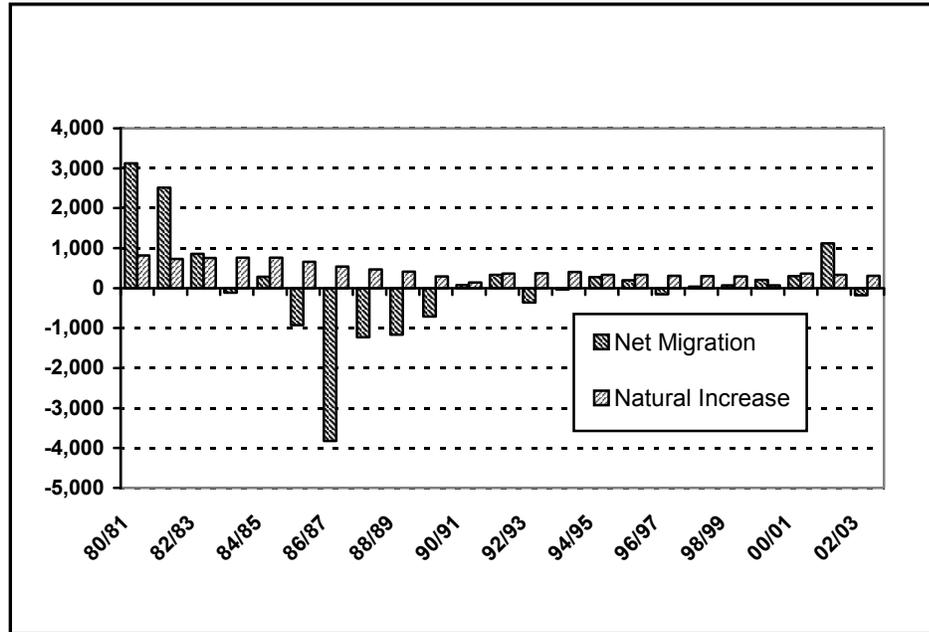
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, various years.

Figure 3-19 Components of Population Change in the PRB Study Area (1980 – 2003)

The data reflect the turning point in annual net migration to the study area that occurred in the early 1980s as the natural resources economy began to slow. Net in-migration decreased from 1981 through 1983 and turned to net out-migration beginning in 1984. The study area did not experience net in-migration again until 1993. Since then, net migration generally has been positive, but the net gains of population to the study area have been relatively small, compared to the levels of net in-migration experienced in the 1920s and early 1980s. Data for Campbell County follow the same

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pattern, reflecting the county's relative importance in driving overall trends within the PRB (Figure 3-20).



Note: The estimated components of population change are from July 1 of one year to July 1 of the following year with the labels for the horizontal axis indicating the beginning and ending year (e.g., 80/81 indicates the period from July 1, 1980, to July 1, 1981).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, various years.

Figure 3-20 Components of Population Change in Campbell County (1980 - 2003)

3.4.4 Demographics and Household Characteristics

Characteristics of the population and of households in Campbell County, as measured in the 2000 Census, indicate that a relatively young, family-oriented community has emerged from the energy-boom of the late 1970s and 1980s (see **Table 3-3**). The county's low median age and high percentage of family households reflect this perspective, despite the slightly higher percentage of men in the population—51.4 percent, compared to 50.3 percent for all of Wyoming, perhaps one continuing effect of the natural resource and energy labor force.

**Table 3-3
Selected Demographic and Household Characteristics (2000)**

County/State	Male (percent)	Female (percent)	Median Age (years)	Under 18 years (percent)	Average Household Size (persons)	Family Households (percent)
Campbell	51.4	48.6	32.2	31.0	2.73	73.8
Converse	49.8	50.2	37.5	28.5	2.55	72.6
Crook	50.6	49.4	40.2	27.9	2.51	71.3
Johnson	49.1	50.9	43.0	24.2	2.36	67.8
Sheridan	48.9	50.1	40.6	24.1	2.31	63.4
Weston	50.8	49.2	40.7	24.1	2.42	71.2
Wyoming	50.3	49.7	36.2	26.1	2.48	67.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2001.

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The population of Campbell County is also youthful compared both to Wyoming as a whole and to other counties in the PRB study area. The county median age is 32.2 years, compared to 36.2 for Wyoming overall and a range from 37.5 to 43.0 years in other study area counties. A relatively large percentage of persons under the age of 18, 31.0 percent compared to 26.1 percent statewide and 24.1 percent to 28.5 percent in other study area counties, also reflects Campbell County's younger population. The county's share of under-18-year-olds is 19 percent higher than the state and 29 percent higher than neighboring Sheridan County.

Families in Campbell County account for a larger share of all households and the typical household is larger than in surrounding counties or the state as a whole. Both characteristics are corollaries of the relatively large youth and adolescent population in Campbell County. Families in Campbell County account for 73.8 percent of all households, compared to a 67.4 percent share in Wyoming as a whole and 63.4 percent to 72.6 percent in other counties of the study area. Campbell County's household size of 2.73 persons per household is also 10 percent higher than the state's household size of 2.48 and those of other study area counties, which range from 2.31 to 2.55 persons per household. The local age and household characteristics reverberate in other local social and economic conditions especially public education.

Minority populations do reside in the PRB study area, though in relatively small numbers and generally represent smaller segments of the local population than they are across the state's entire population. As shown in the census data in **Table 3-4**, self-identified Hispanic or Latino persons are 3.5 percent of the total population of Campbell County, compared to between 0.9 and 5.5 percent in other study area counties, and 6.4 percent of Wyoming as a whole. Although not presented in the table, American Indians are the single largest group of non-white persons found within the categories of persons of "one race" or of "two or more races."

Table 3-4
Race and Hispanic or Latino Population (2002)

County/State	Race			
	White Alone (percent)	One Race – All Other (percent)	Two or More Races (percent)	Hispanic or Latino – Any Race (percent)
Campbell	96.1	2.6	1.3	3.5
Converse	94.7	3.8	1.5	5.5
Crook	97.9	1.4	0.7	0.9
Johnson	97.0	1.4	1.6	2.1
Sheridan	95.9	2.8	1.3	2.4
Weston	95.9	2.6	1.5	2.1
Wyoming	92.1	6.1	1.8	6.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2001.

3.4.5 Urbanization of the Study Area

The PRB is a relatively urbanized area in the sense that the majority of the population resides in cities, towns or designated places, and a minority of the population resides in areas outside of recognized population concentrations. This characteristic began many years ago in the growth of the 1940s and peaked in the 1950s. The 1960 census reported that 60.5 percent of the study area population resided in cities, towns, and designated places.

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Since then, the population distribution has fluctuated more or less around a 60 percent share of the study area population residing in the main cities, towns, and places. The 1980 census reported the urban share at 57.9 percent of the population, the 1990 census reported 60 percent, and the 2000 census reported a 58.9 percent urban share.

The general trend toward residency in urban areas in the PRB coincides with the decline in the importance of agriculture and the emergence of energy resource development as the region's principal economic driver. This has been reinforced by the policies of well-situated cities and towns. By annexing adjacent land, these municipalities, including and perhaps especially Gillette, first gained and then generally have maintained a majority share of population in the study area.

3.4.6 County Population Since the 2000 Census

The total population of the PRB has grown an estimated 4.2 percent since the 2000 census, with Campbell County accounting for most of the growth. Over the same period, the total population of Wyoming grew by an estimated 1.5 percent. **Table 3-5** presents county population estimates as of July 1, 2003, in comparison to the census counts as of April 1, 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2004a).

Growth in the study area has been especially strong in Campbell County, where the 2003 estimated population is up by 7.5 percent from the 2000 census. Johnson County population is also up 6.6 percent in 2003 from the 2000 census. Growth in Converse County and Sheridan County over the same period also has been above average at 2.3 percent and 2.1 percent, respectively.

Table 3-5
2003 Population Estimates and Change Since the 2000 Census

Location	Census	Estimate	Change from 2000 to 2003	
	April 1, 2000	July 1, 2003	Number	Percentage
Campbell County	33,698	36,240	2,542	7.5
Converse County	12,052	12,330	278	2.3
Crook County	5,887	5,928	41	0.7
Johnson County	7,075	7,543	468	6.6
Sheridan County	26,560	27,111	551	2.1
Weston County	6,644	6,659	15	0.2
Study Area	91,916	95,811	3,895	4.2
Wyoming	493,782	501,242	7,460	1.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2004a.