

# COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



## **GREAT DIVIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COALITION (CARBON COUNTY AND SWEETWATER COUNTY, WYOMING) *November 2012***

*PREPARED BY*

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## **Executive Summary**

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) presents an aggressive economic development plan for the Great Divide Economic Development Coalition (GDEDC). The GDEDC District encompasses Carbon and Sweetwater Counties in Wyoming. The plan is based upon regional economic development priorities and goals determined by the Board of Directors of the GDEDC, following analysis of economic data, demographics, and input from the communities in the GDEDC District.

The CEDS includes an action plan that identifies a wide variety of specific economic development objectives and related projects that are to be completed to achieve each economic goal. Each project objective includes a descriptive scope, assignment of responsibilities, and a schedule for completion.

The CEDS report provides an assessment of the regional economy that examines economic strengths, weaknesses, and development opportunities in Carbon and Sweetwater Counties. The regional economic assessment considers:

- Potential opportunities associated with value-added industries and commercial enterprises.
- Potential for industrial expansion and diversification of the traditional natural resource-based economy.
- Retail trade leakage and opportunities for potential retail expansion.
- Development opportunities associated with the future expansion of power generation and transmission.
- Opportunities for regional tourism promotion.
- An analysis of support industries and quality of life enhancements to create a more desirable economic climate.

The CEDS report also identifies specific areas within each county that are eligible for EDA funding because they meet the criteria for what the EDA calls an economically "distressed" area.

Potential cooperative partners and resources to pursue and implement future economic development opportunities are identified. Performance measures are provided to guide the GDEDC in the:

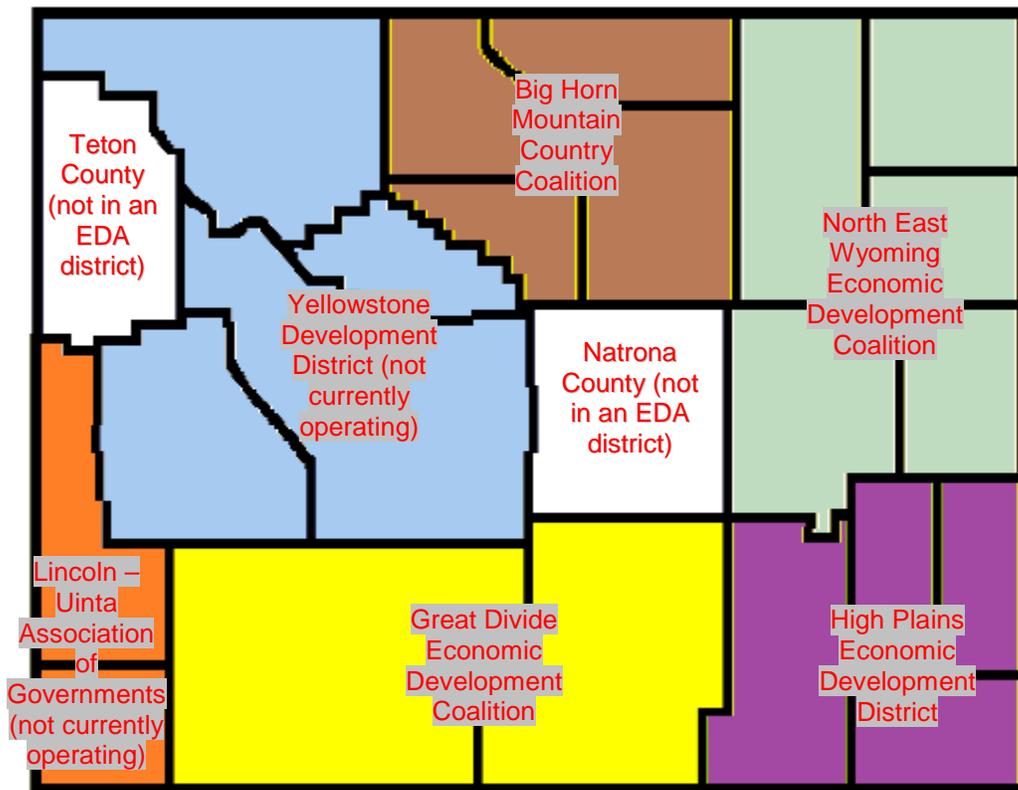
- Monitoring of project schedules.
- Coordination between the GDEDC Board and other organizations participating in the completion of the action plan.
- Preparation of annual reports.

## Introduction; Methodology

The Great Divide Economic Development Coalition (GDEDC), the economic development district for Carbon and Sweetwater Counties, retained Community Builders, Inc. (CBI) to help rewrite and update its comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS).

A CEDS is a local planning process that provides a mechanism for coordinating the efforts of individuals, organizations, local governments, and private industry concerned with economic growth and development. An economic development district must be comprised of at least two counties. Carbon and Sweetwater Counties became an economic development district prior to the development of a draft CEDS originally prepared in 2002 joining several other districts in Wyoming (see map of Wyoming Counties and Districts below). The district currently has one county economic development organization, various chamber of commerce organizations, and other county, municipal, and quasi-public organizations, that lead ongoing economic efforts in the Great Divide District.

### Wyoming EDA Districts



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration.

An adopted CEDS is required for any community or county that wants to secure funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) under its public works, economic adjustment, and most planning programs. It is a prerequisite for designation by EDA as an economic development district (EDD). Planning

grants are available from EDA from any community or county with an adopted CEDS, but other public works grants require that the local economy be considered to be economically distressed. A CEDS is also increasingly required or requested as a prerequisite for other grants, including the Wyoming Business Council Business Ready Communities Program.

The CEDS document will describe the problems, needs, potential, and resources of the area; present the community's vision and goals; set the direction for an action plan; establish priority programs and projects for implementation; and outline the standards for the annual evaluation and update of the process.

The CEDS analyzes the regional economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives. Background and history of the region's economy, with appropriate population, labor force, resources, and environmental issues was gathered. Other plans and studies were reviewed (see Appendix "B" for list). The end result is a regional plan of action, suggesting projects to implement objectives and goals set forth in the strategy. Upon approval by the GDEDC, the CEDS document will be transmitted to EDA for their review and approval.

### **Public Participation Plan**

Public leadership and broad based and diverse community participation is critical to the CEDS planning process. One of the first steps CBI did was to develop a Public Participation Plan, which is included in Appendix "A." Goals in the public participation process included education, collecting information, mapping out the process, obtaining buy-in and identifying community champions.



CBI collected input from local governments, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and residents, including meetings with industry representatives, municipal governing bodies, private citizens and the Great Divide Board of Directors. A written Survey Monkey document was developed and sent out to potential stakeholders with results analyzed and included in summary form in the final CEDS. Follow-up interviews using a standard set of questions (see Appendix "A"), were held with a number of individuals in conjunction with site

visits to the majority of communities within Carbon and Sweetwater County. In addition, CBI researched and prepared an updated analysis of the region's economy, including demographic data from the 2010 Census.

The Action Plan emerged from individual discussions with about fifty community leaders in various public and private capacities who identified community assets, economic development issues, and potential economic development opportunities. A list of stakeholders contacted is included in Appendix "A."

On October 29, 2012, the Great Divide Economic Development Board of Directors met and adopted the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, including the prioritized Action Plan.

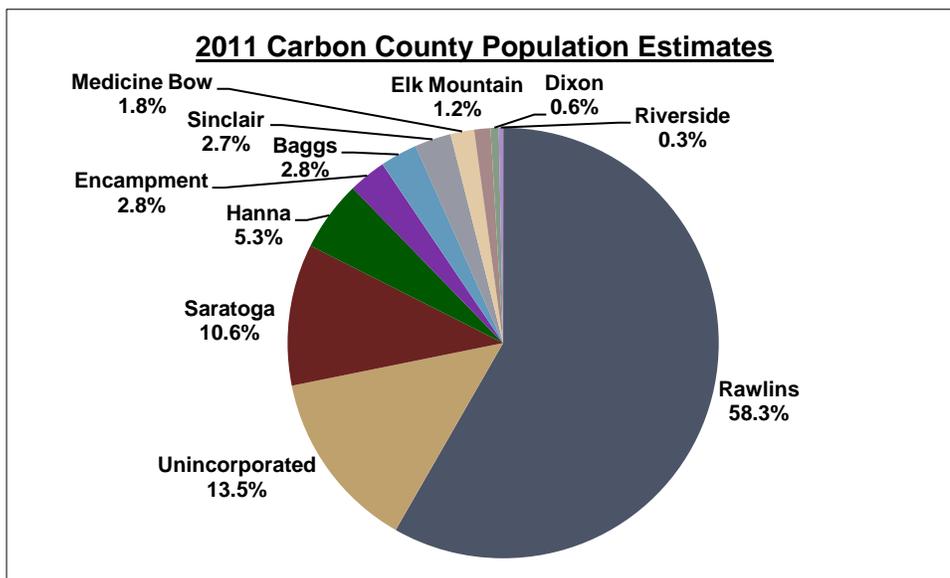


# Demographic and Socioeconomic Data

## Population Estimates

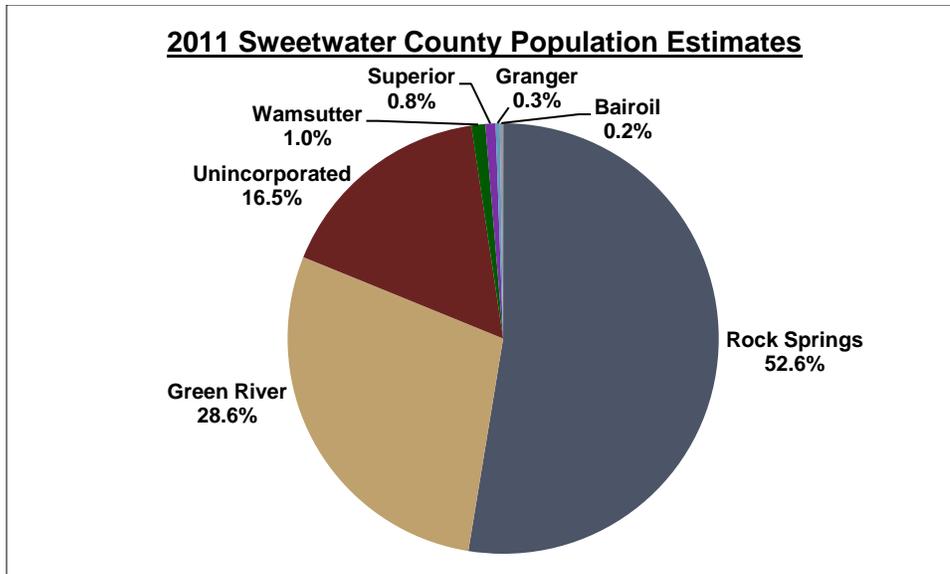
The GDEDC District contains a huge area of land (18,324 square miles) with the population of a small city (estimated as of July 1, 2011 to be 59, 961 residents). More than 75% of those residents live in one of three municipalities: Rock Springs (23,229), Green River (12,622), or Rawlins (9,203). Yet, because of the size of the two counties that comprise the EDA district, the population density is only 3.3 residents per square mile.

Carbon County’s total population of 15,786 includes ten municipalities, ranging in size from Riverside (52) to Rawlins. About 13.5% of the population lives in unincorporated areas. It is considered to be very rural, and has a population density of 2.0 people per square mile. The population of these municipalities and the unincorporated area are compared in the chart below.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Sweetwater County’s population is 44,175 residents, much larger than Carbon County. Sweetwater County includes six municipalities, the smallest of which is Bairoil (107). It is also a very rural area, with a population density of 4.2 residents per square mile. The relative size of Sweetwater County’s population within its municipalities and unincorporated areas is represented in the chart below.



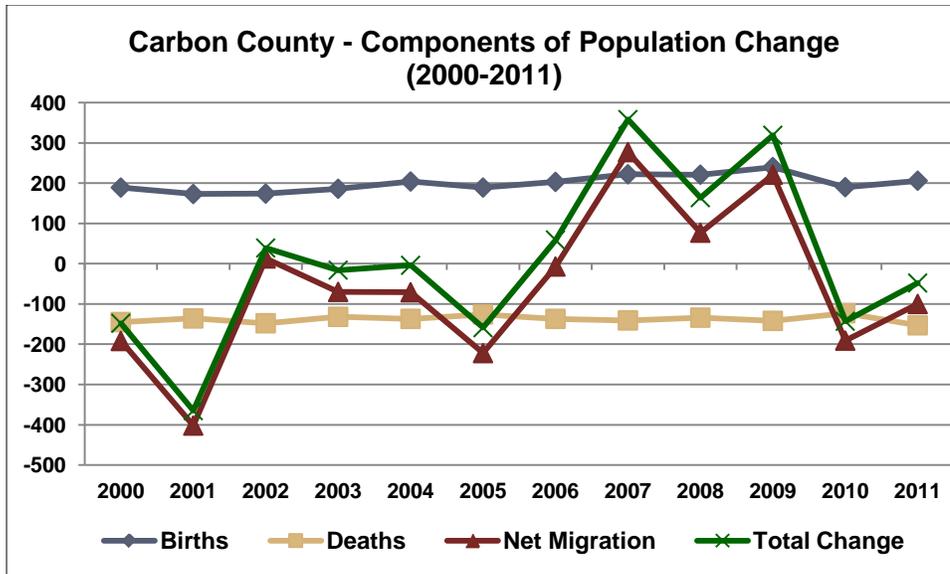
Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

### **Components of Population Change**

There are three components to population change: Births, deaths, and net migration. Net migration is the number of people moving into the area minus the number of people moving out of the area. Over time, population change can be very revealing as to whether a county is booming (i.e., lots of people moving, or migrating, there) or stagnating (i.e., similar numbers of births and deaths).

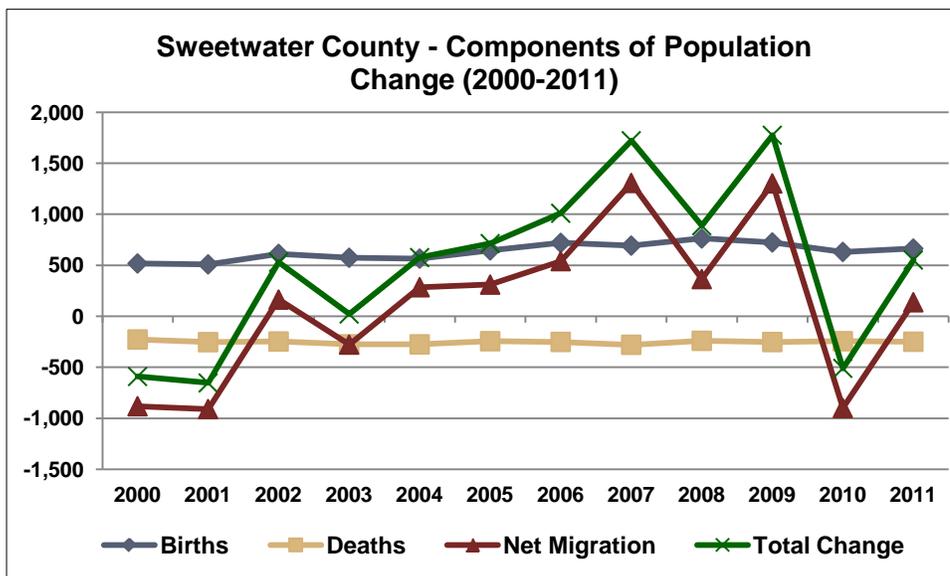
Year-to-year patterns for change in population in the GDEDC District are driven by net migration, both positive and negative. However, since 2000, the total net migration for the district has produced just 65 new residents, while the number of births has outnumbered deaths since 2000 to create another 444 new residents.

In Carbon County, the number of deaths is about 70% of the number of births each year (since 2000). This means that the “natural” growth of Carbon County adds about 62 new residents annually. Nearly all of that gain in population, however, has been lost to net migration (i.e., people moving away). Since 2000, Carbon County’s population has grown just 1.3%, total. Consequently, Carbon County faces some special challenges due to a stagnating population. The following graph illustrates each of the components of population change, and highlights the Total Change for each year since 2000.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Sweetwater County's population is not stagnating. The number of births is more than twice the number of deaths, adding an average of 382 new residents each year since 2000. Net migration has also been adding to the population (by an average of 121 people annually) such that Sweetwater County's total population has grown by more than 500 people, or 17.9% (about 1.1% per year), since 2000. The components of change for Sweetwater County since 2000 are shown in the graph below.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The similarity of the two graphs above suggests that both counties are strongly connected to a boom-bust cycle that is commonly seen in economies dominated by energy production and the extraction of natural resources. The key difference between the two counties is

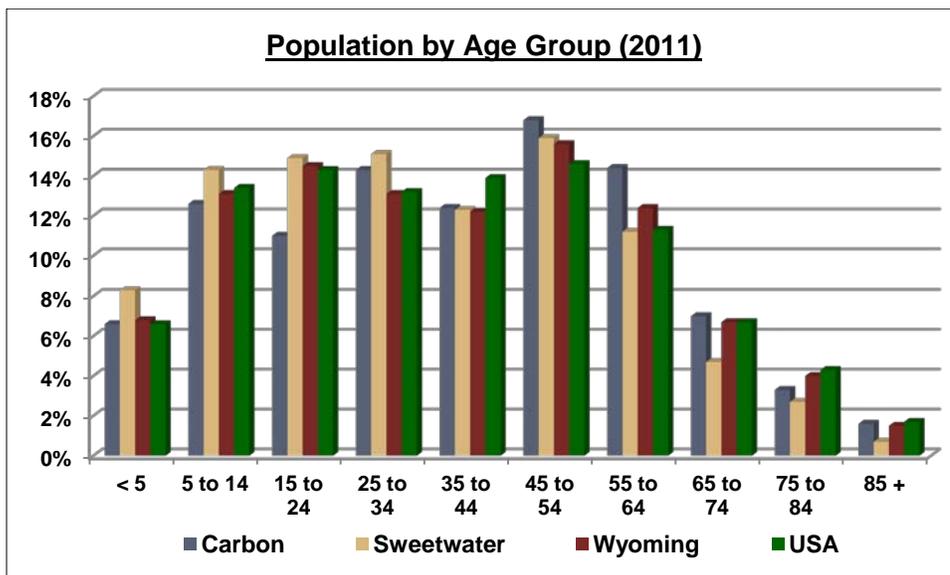
that Sweetwater County is growing. That difference can be better understood by examining populations by age group, discussed below.

### **Households**

According to ACS data from 2006-2010, the GDED District contains 22,620 households. There are about 6,205 households in Carbon County, of which 70.1% are family households (i.e., more than one related person). The average household size is 2.27 persons. Sweetwater County has 16,415 households, of which 70.8% are families. The average household size in Sweetwater County is 2.53 persons.

### **Population by Age Group**

In many ways, Carbon County’s population is older than Sweetwater County’s. Yet, both counties differ from state and national trends in significant ways. The percentage of people who are aged 45 to 74 is much higher in Carbon County than the other areas. The younger age groups, from birth to age 34, are dominated by Sweetwater County’s population.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Because of the differences in the relative sizes of each age group, there are also differences in the median age for each area. Carbon County is much “older” and Sweetwater County much “younger” than the other areas, as identified in the following table.

Area	Median Age (2011)
Carbon County	39.7
Sweetwater County	33.1
Wyoming	37.0
USA	36.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

One reason for the higher median age in Carbon County is the large number of retirees that reside in and around the Town of Saratoga, where the median age is 51.3 years. Other Carbon County municipalities that have a high median age include Encampment (50.0 years), Medicine Bow (59.1 years), and Riverside (58.3 years). In contrast, the City of Rawlins' population has a median age of 34.7 years.

### **Population by Race and Origin**

Like much of Wyoming, the population within the GDED District is mostly white, even more so than the state generally, as seen in the following table.

<b>2011 Population by Race</b>	<b>Carbon</b>	<b>Sweetwater</b>	<b>Wyoming</b>	<b>USA</b>
White	94.9%	94.9%	93.5%	78.1%
Black	1.0%	1.2%	1.1%	13.1%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.6%	1.3%	2.6%	1.2%
Asian	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	5.0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
2 or more races	1.5%	1.6%	1.8%	2.3%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau.*

However, Carbon and Sweetwater Counties have a more representative percentage of their population with Hispanic origins, as seen below. People claiming to have Hispanic origins can be of any race.

<b>Hispanic Origins</b>	<b>Carbon</b>	<b>Sweetwater</b>	<b>Wyoming</b>	<b>USA</b>
Hispanic	16.7%	15.5%	9.1%	16.7%
White, not Hispanic	79.4%	80.4%	85.5%	63.4%

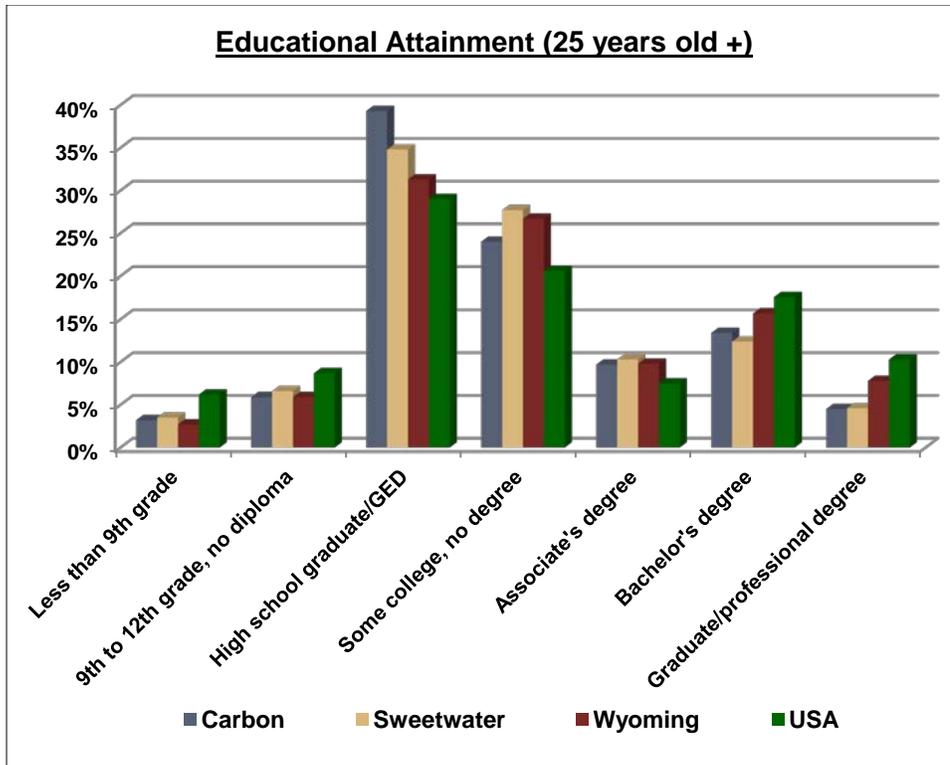
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau.*

### **Educational Attainment**

The GDED District is a little behind Wyoming with the average percentage of adults (25 years old or higher) who have at least a high school diploma (includes equivalency). In Carbon County, 90.9% of the adult population has a high school graduate or higher education, and in Sweetwater County, 89.9% of its adult population has at least that level of education. Those percentages exceed that national average (85.0%), but lag behind the State of Wyoming (91.3%).

More than half of Carbon County's adult population (51.6%) has some level of college. A higher percentage of Sweetwater County's adult population has some college education (55.0%), perhaps because of the presence of Western Wyoming Community College in Rock Springs. However, both counties lag behind the national average (56.0%) and the state average (60.0%) for some level of college.

The highest level of educational attainment for adults aged 25 years or older is represented in the graph below. It demonstrates the slight tendency in the GDED District for adults to end their education at the high school or early community college levels.

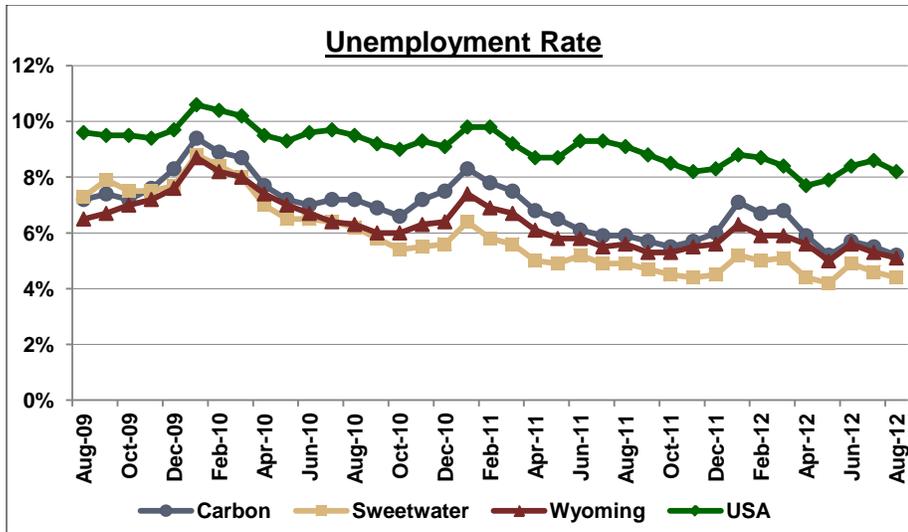


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data (2006-2010).

**Labor Force**

The labor force residing in the GDEDC District includes between 31,000 and 32,000 workers, with an average of 7,158 workers in Carbon County and 24,188 workers residing in Sweetwater County during the period January – August 2012. Generally, unemployment rates in the two counties track the statewide rate. However, since early 2010, the unemployment rate in Carbon County has generally been higher than the statewide average, while Sweetwater County unemployment has generally been lower. Both counties have unemployment rates that are much lower than the national unemployment rate, as seen below.





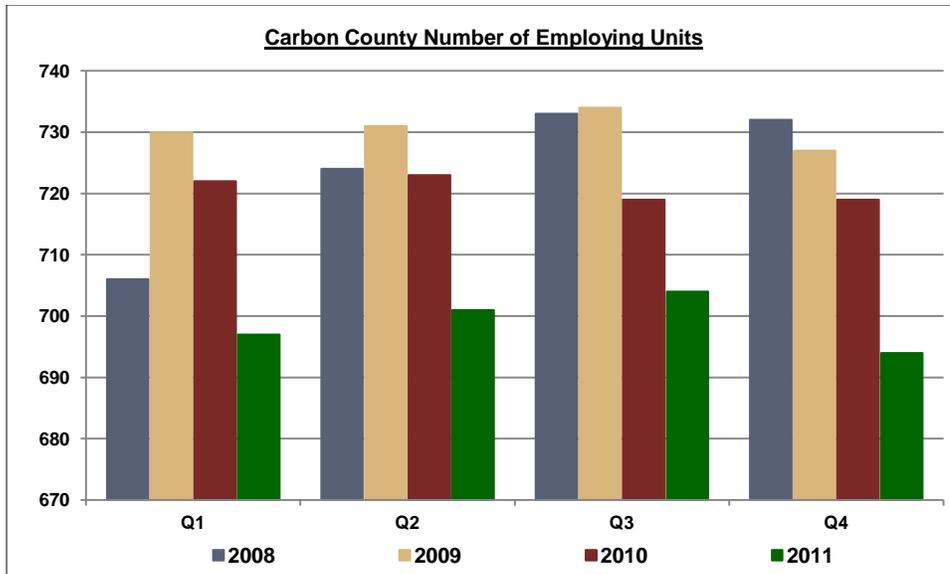
Source: Wyoming Dept. of Employment/Research & Planning Division, Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

Unemployment rates are one of the key criteria that the EDA uses to determine whether a local economy is “distressed” and therefore eligible for grant funding. The EDA requires that the local economy have, for the previous 24-month period, a rate that is one percentage point greater than the national unemployment rate. Because unemployment rates in the GDEDC District have been consistently lower than the national average, this criterion is not likely to be relevant (for this purpose) in the near future.

### **Employing Units**

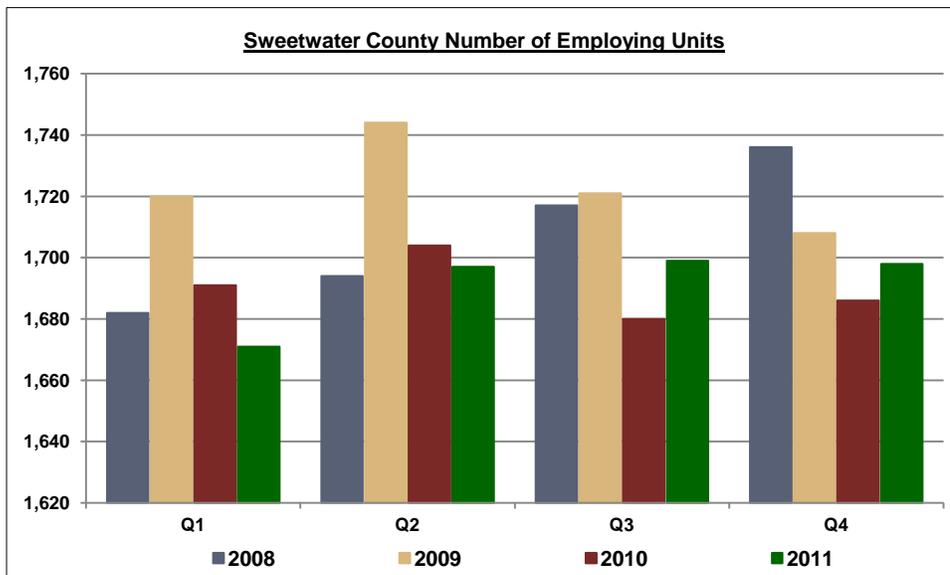
According to the Wyoming Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), there are about 2,403 employing units in the GDEDC District. QCEW data tracks every employer, every employee, and the wages paid for employers that are covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI). There are other sorts of employment situations that are not included in the UI reports, but QCEW data is considered the most reliable source of employment trends at the local level.

For 2011 (the most recent data available), Carbon County had an average of 699 employing units. This is a fewer number of employers than the previous few years, as seen in the graph below.



Source: Wyoming Dept. of Employment/Research & Planning Division, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

The number of employing units in Sweetwater County is also recovering from historic highs. During 2011, the county averaged 1,691 employing units. That number is trending higher, as seen below.



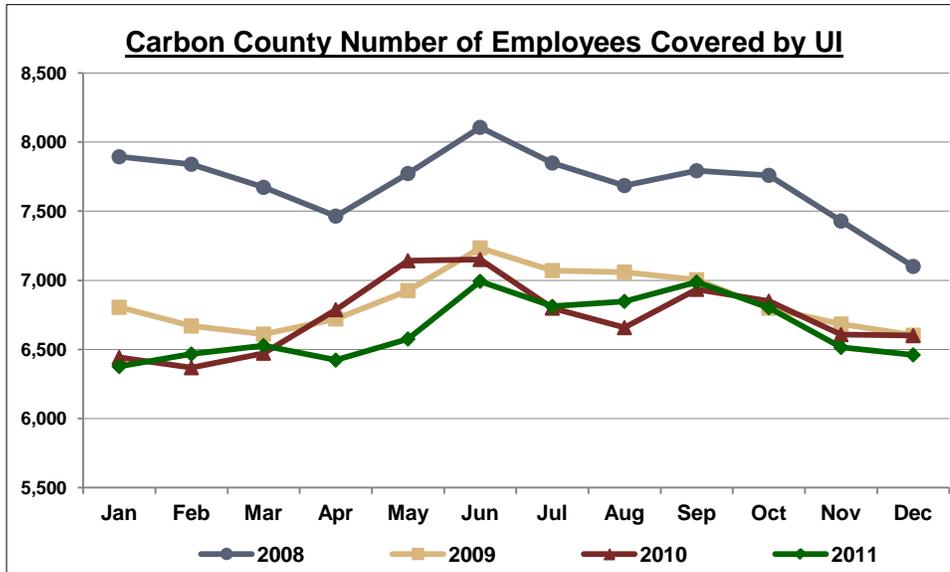
Source: Wyoming Dept. of Employment/Research & Planning Division, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

### Employees

About 32,000 workers in the GDEDC District are covered by UI. This number is slightly higher than the resident labor force identified by the LAUS data above, because UI data is collected by place of business instead of by residence of worker. It shows us that there are

more workers commuting into the GDEDC District for work than there are workers commuting outside of the district.

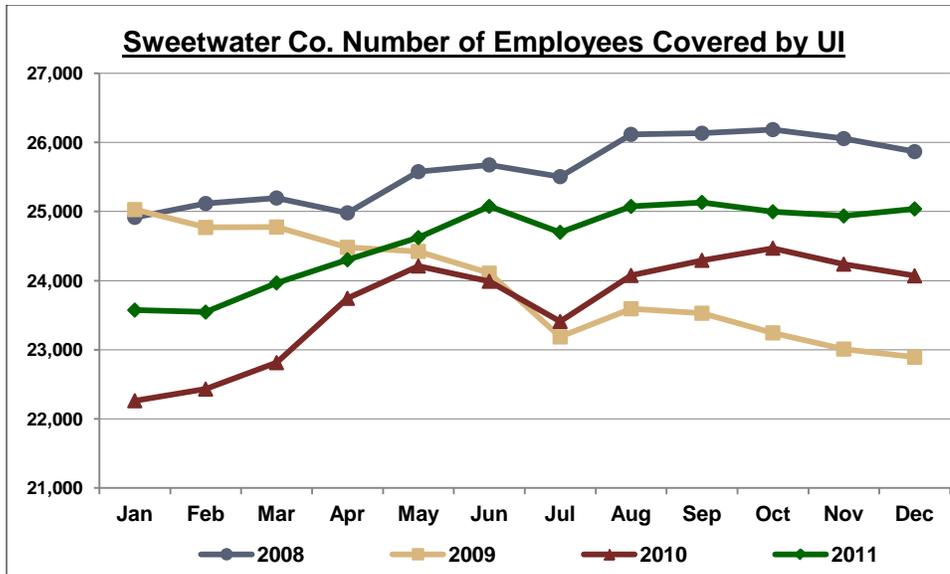
The number of employees working in Carbon County has dropped during the last few years, but the most recent data suggests that employment is beginning to stabilize. For the fourth quarter of 2011, Carbon County had an average of 6,593 employees covered by UI, which is 1.4% less than the average employment in the fourth quarter of 2010. Historic employment is presented in the following graph.



Source: Wyoming Dept. of Employment/Research & Planning Division, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Sweetwater County employment is recovering more quickly, and is now approaching its highest levels reached in 2008. During the fourth quarter of 2011, Sweetwater County had 24,990 employees covered by UI, which is 3.0% higher than the average from fourth quarter 2010, as seen below.

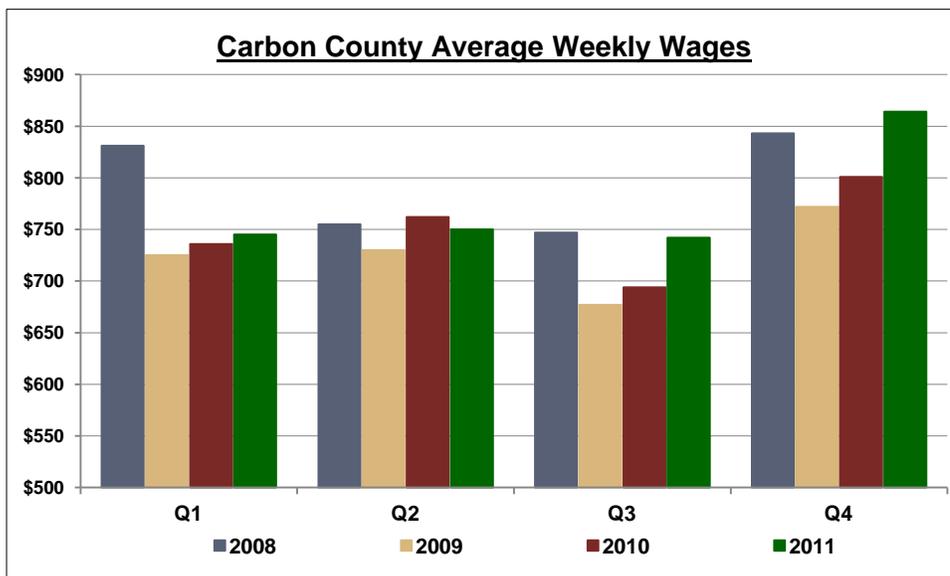




Source: Wyoming Dept. of Employment/Research & Planning Division, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

### Average Wages

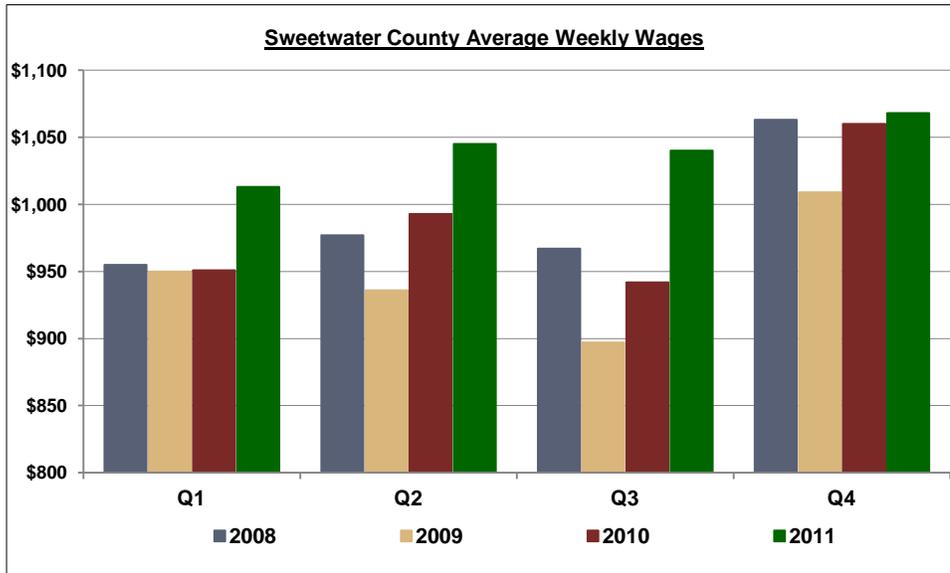
The average wages of employees covered by UI are remarkably different between Carbon and Sweetwater Counties. As of 2011, average wages in Carbon County have risen to \$775 per week, up 3.6% compared to 2010. Average wages for each quarter are presented in the graph below.



Source: Wyoming Dept. of Employment/Research & Planning Division, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Sweetwater County wages are currently much higher than Carbon County and, in fact, much higher than they have historically been even locally. Average wages in 2011 were

\$1,042 per week, which is 5.6% higher than 2010. Historic data for average wages in Sweetwater County is presented below.

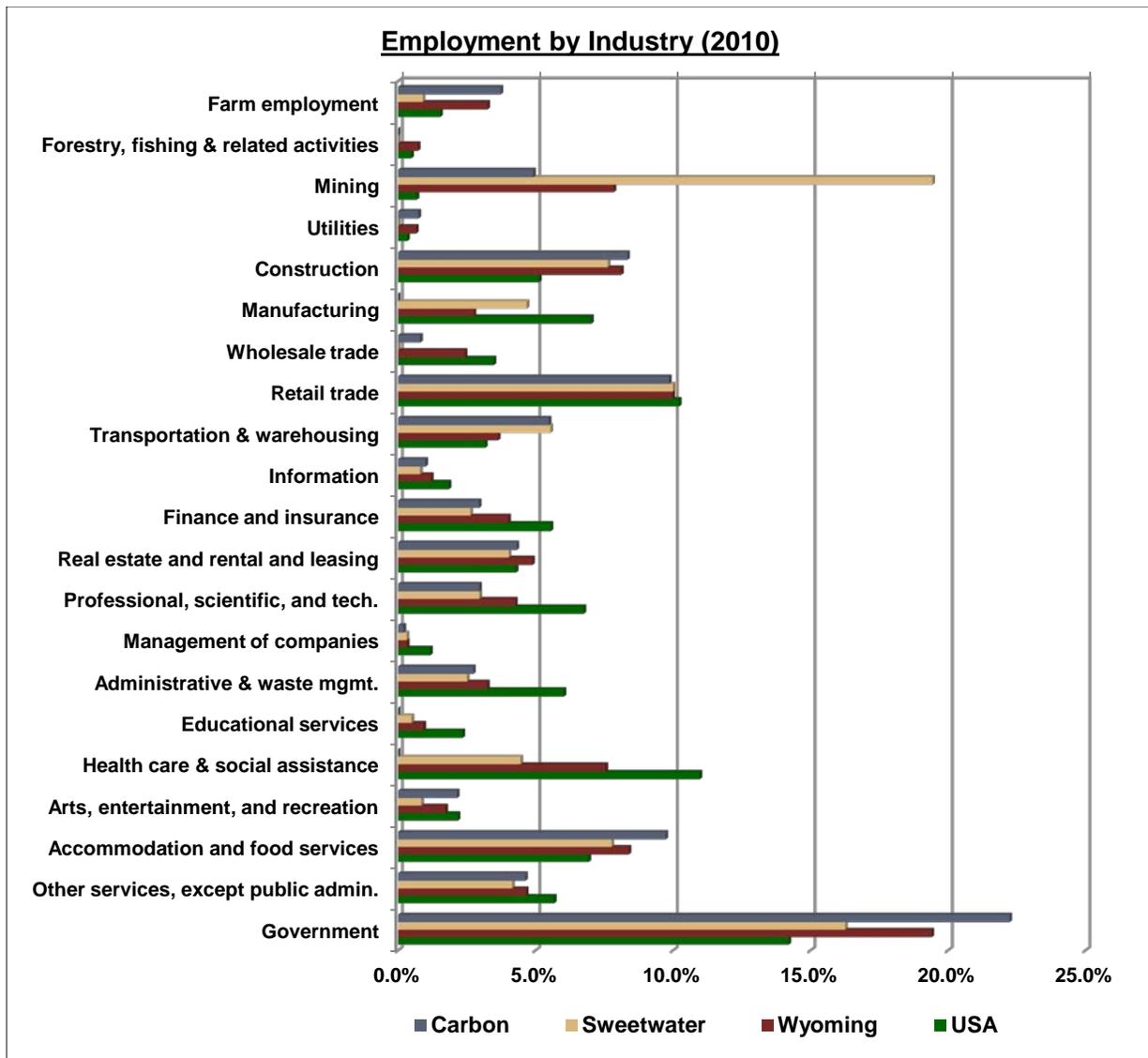


Source: Wyoming Dept. of Employment/Research & Planning Division, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

### **Employment by Industry**

The GDEDC District employment diversification reflects its natural resources and location. Like much of Wyoming, both Carbon and Sweetwater Counties have a relatively high percentage of Mining and Construction jobs. Interstate 80 traverses both counties, so they also have high percentages of employment in the Transportation and Accommodation & Food Service sectors. Both counties have a higher than average percentage of Government employees, which is quite common in rural states like Wyoming.





Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

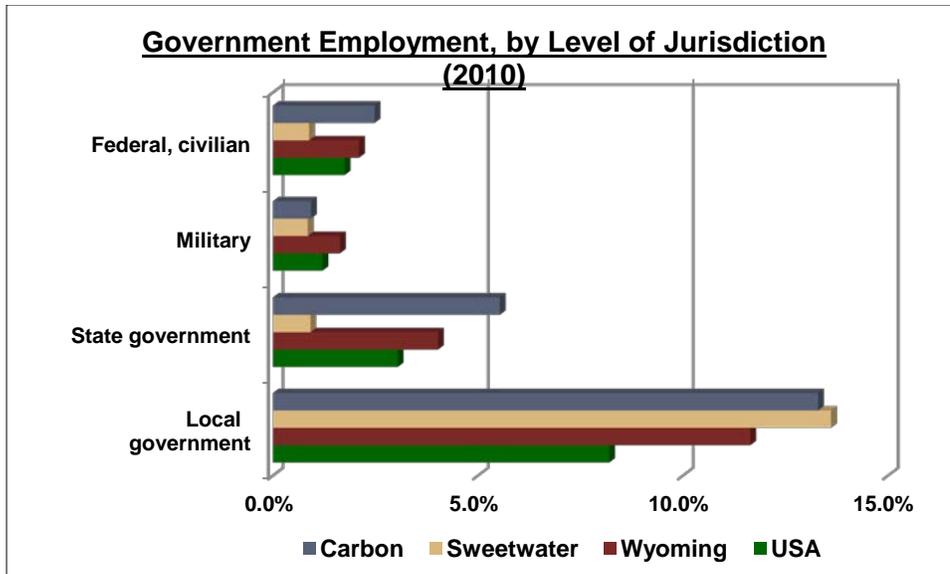
Based on the relative percentages of employees that are working in each industry in the GDEDC District, there are several strengths and weaknesses that should be noted. Although no economy is as well diversified as the nation's, comparisons to it and to the state's can be helpful to identify which industrial sectors are strong, weak, or neutral.

Some sectors (at the county level) include just a few employers, and the government suppresses any public release of their information to protect their privacy. These "unknowns" may actually be significant strengths or weaknesses. For example, the Utility industry information has been suppressed for Sweetwater County, yet the Jim Bridger power plant is located there and is a significant employer (and tax base) for the local economy. Likewise, the Manufacturing sector data has been suppressed for Carbon County, even though the Sinclair Oil Refinery is located there and is a significant employer (and tax base) for that County's economy. The Manufacturing industry is a key economic driver for

any economy, because it is a producer of goods that can be exported, bringing new capital into a community. However, because most Wyoming-based manufacturers are rather small and hard to identify, it is difficult to assess whether this particular industry in Carbon County is a strength or weakness. Nonetheless, an evaluation of employment by industrial sector is found in the following table.

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Carbon</b>	<b>Sweetwater</b>
Farm employment	Strength	Weakness
Forestry, fishing & related activities	Unknown	Unknown
Mining	Strength	Strength
Utilities	Strength	Unknown
Construction	Strength	Strength
Manufacturing	Unknown	Neutral
Wholesale trade	Weakness	Unknown
Retail trade	Neutral	Neutral
Transportation & warehousing	Strength	Strength
Information	Weakness	Weakness
Finance and insurance	Weakness	Weakness
Real estate and rental and leasing	Neutral	Neutral
Professional, scientific, and tech.	Weakness	Weakness
Management of companies	Weakness	Weakness
Administrative & waste mgmt.	Neutral	Neutral
Educational services	Weakness	Weakness
Health care & social assistance	Unknown	Weakness
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	Neutral	Weakness
Accommodation and food services	Strength	Strength
Other services, except public admin.	Neutral	Neutral
Government/Public Sector	Strength	Strength

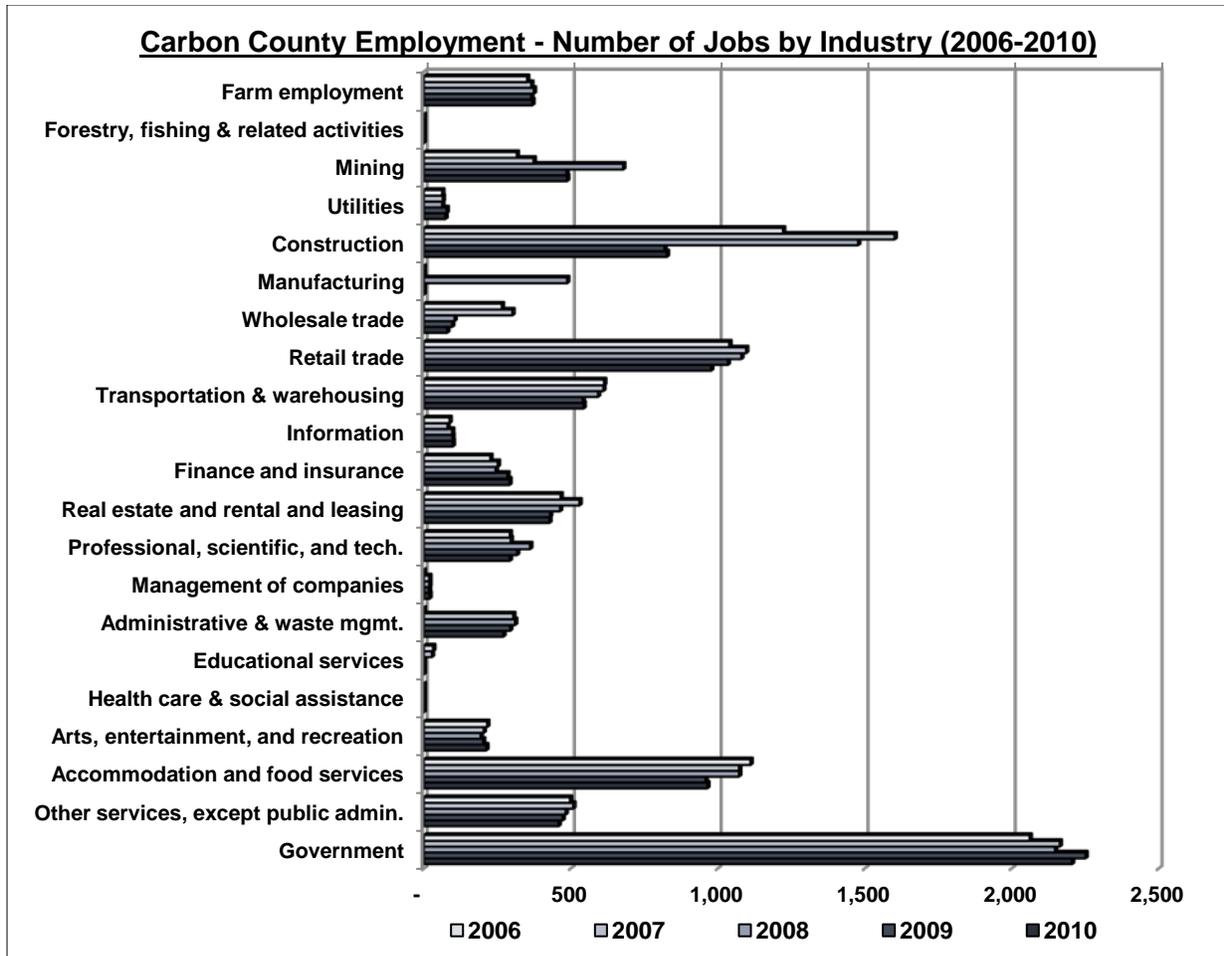
Although the Government sector is seen as a strength from an economic (jobs) point of view, a large government is often seen as a drag on the community because it must be supported by taxes and because it impacts business decisions with regulations and laws. Therefore, it is important to know more particularly what levels of government are represented in that sector. The following graph makes the comparison of levels of government.



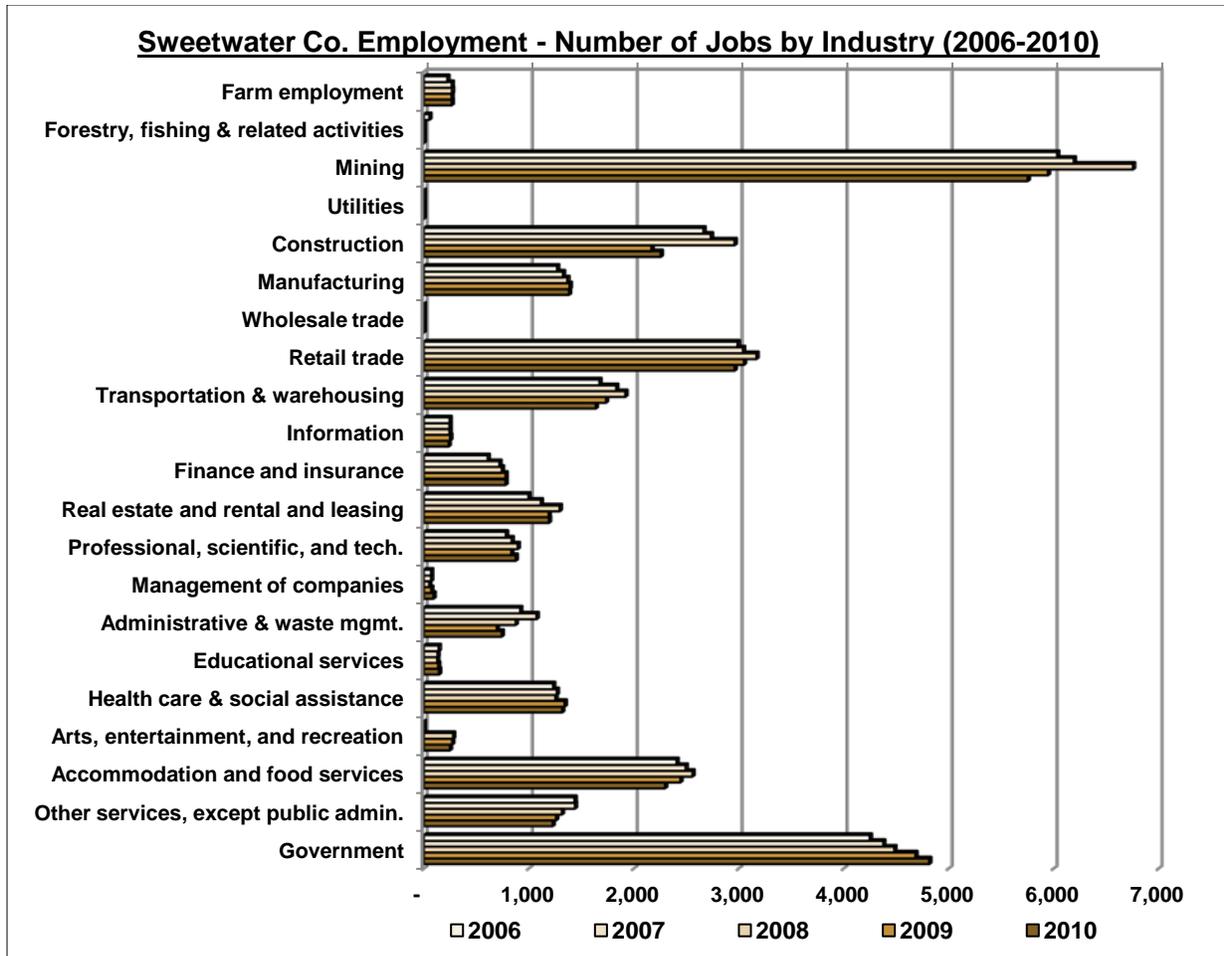
Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Carbon County has relatively high levels of federal and state government, probably because the Wyoming State Penitentiary is located there. Both counties have high levels of local government, which includes municipalities, counties, and public schools.

It also important to consider employment trends, rather than just one year of data, when considering jobs. Examination of five years of data suggests, for example, that Carbon County has seen declines in employment across nearly every industrial sector, except for the Government sector. Some declines have been significant, particularly in the Construction and Accommodation & Food Service sectors. Yet, there has also been growth in a couple of fledgling industries: Information and Finance & Insurance sectors. The graph below illustrates five years of data for Carbon County's employment, by number of jobs from 2006 to 2010 (Note: 2010 is the most recent year for which data is available for the entire year).



Sweetwater County's job market has also changed, losing ground in nearly every sector during the last couple of years. From the graph below, it is clear that Sweetwater County's economy peaked in 2008. Since that time, the county has lost a significant number of jobs, particularly in the Mining and Construction sectors. Meanwhile, the Government sector has steadily grown since 2006. Not all industries are shown in the graph below, due to suppression of data for sectors with small numbers of employers or employees.



**Income**

Income can be measured in many ways. This analysis will look at three different measures of income in the GDEDC District:

- Per Capita Income (PCI)
- Median Household Income (MHI)
- Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)

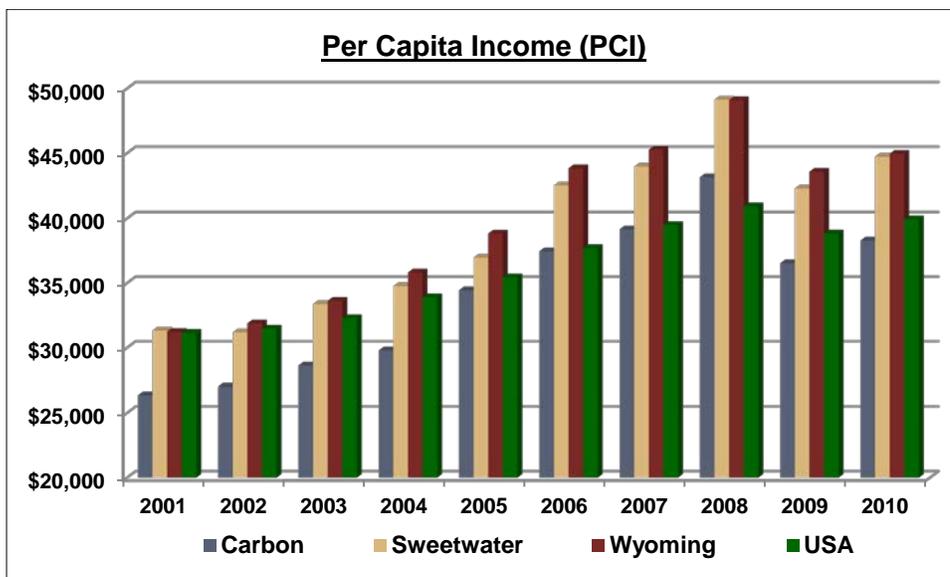
**Per Capita Income**

PCI is calculated by adding up all income within an area, and then dividing it by the number of people living in that area. The EDA is particularly focused on Per Capita Income (PCI), and it is one of the key factors the EDA considers to determine if an economy is distressed. A local economy is considered to be distressed (and therefore eligible for certain funding) if its most recent PCI is 80% or less than the national PCI. That level of PCI has not been present in Carbon or Sweetwater Counties for at least the past 10 years, as shown in the following table.

Per Capita Income (PCI)										
Area	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Carbon	\$26,363	\$27,011	\$28,634	\$29,794	\$34,450	\$37,462	\$39,162	\$43,143	\$36,538	\$38,291
Sweetwater	\$31,339	\$31,192	\$33,383	\$34,766	\$36,972	\$42,562	\$43,962	\$49,145	\$42,322	\$44,734
Wyoming	\$31,216	\$31,890	\$33,634	\$35,825	\$38,839	\$43,836	\$45,281	\$49,104	\$43,568	\$44,961
USA	\$31,157	\$31,481	\$32,295	\$33,909	\$35,452	\$37,725	\$39,506	\$40,947	\$38,846	\$39,937
<b>80% of USA</b>	<b>\$24,926</b>	<b>\$25,185</b>	<b>\$25,836</b>	<b>\$27,127</b>	<b>\$28,362</b>	<b>\$30,180</b>	<b>\$31,605</b>	<b>\$32,758</b>	<b>\$31,077</b>	<b>\$31,950</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

It is important to note that, during the mid-2000's, PCI in the GDEDC grew more rapidly than the national PCI. In fact, in 2008, both counties exceeded the national PCI, although Carbon County has since then slipped behind the nation again. Sweetwater County, like much of Wyoming, continues to exceed the national PCI, as shown in the graph below.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

### Eligibility for EDA Funding

Although neither Carbon nor Sweetwater County has PCI established eligibility for EDA funding as a distressed economy, there are smaller areas within each county whose PCI is sufficiently low as to qualify. The EDA has recently considered the 5-year average data from the American Community Survey (ACS) to establish Per Capita Income levels for smaller areas, such as Census Tracts and Census Block Groups. The data in the PCI table above reflects the annual PCI as determined by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. The data below is different, because ACS uses a different methodology (including averaging) to calculate PCI.

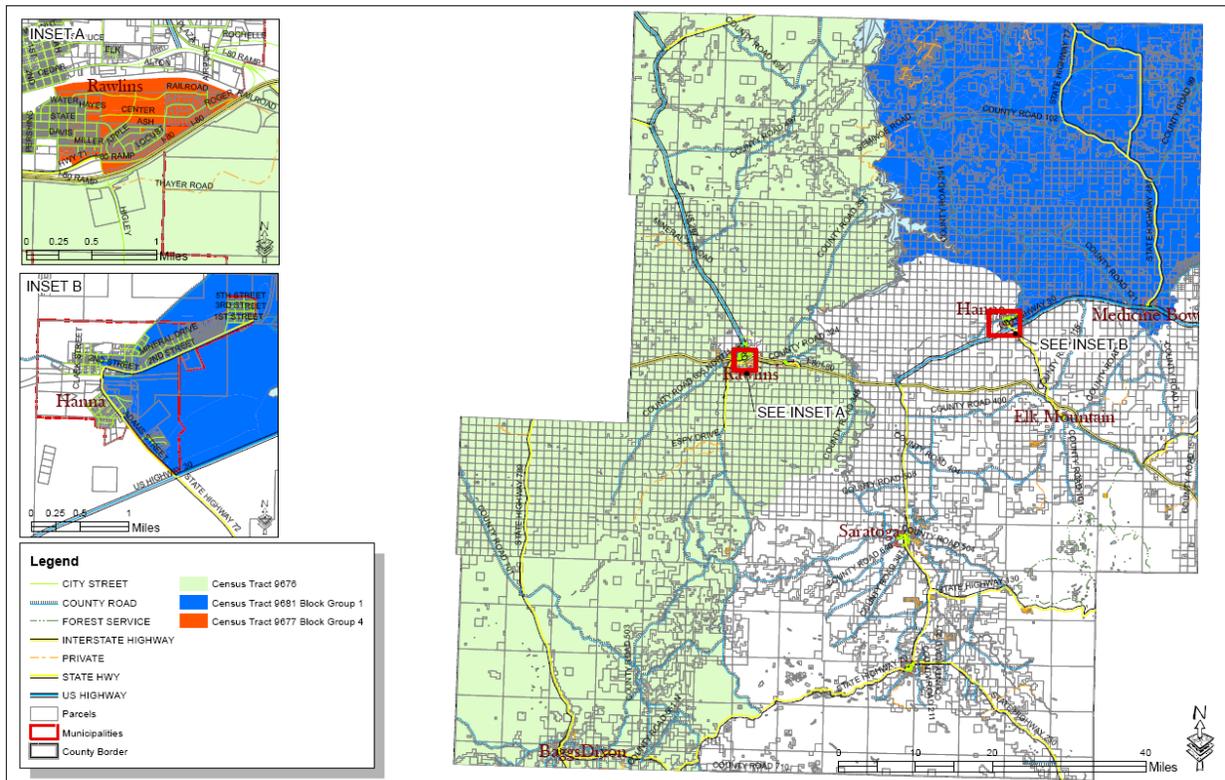
Per Capita Income (PCI)		
Area	2005-2009	2006-2010
Carbon	\$25,606	\$26,122
Sweetwater	\$29,825	\$30,961
Wyoming	\$26,925	\$27,860
USA	\$27,041	\$27,334
<b>80% of USA</b>	<b>\$21,633</b>	<b>\$21,867</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data.

Again, we see that neither Carbon nor Sweetwater County would qualify as a distressed economy according to the EDA analysis of PCI. The more detailed analysis that follows, however, shows that some smaller areas within each County would qualify. If eligibility for EDA funding is sought, one should pursue funding at the largest geographic level for which eligibility is established. Since eligibility is not possible at the county level, one must look to Census Tracts or even Census Block Groups.

### Carbon County - Detailed PCI Analysis

Carbon County includes five Census Tracts. A map of these Census Tracts is included in the map below, with the Tracts that are eligible for EDA funding shaded in light green, blue, and orange.



Carbon County Census Tracts for 2006-2010 data (defined by U.S. Census Bureau).

As of the most recent ACS data (2006-2010), one of those Census Tracts has sufficiently low PCI that it should qualify for EDA assistance. Census Tract 9676 had PCI in 2005-2009 that was 76.5% of the national PCI; and more recently, in 2006-2010, its PCI was just 73.9% of the national average. Accordingly, it is less than 80% of the national PCI during that time. (Note: Census Tract 9676 also should have qualified with the previous data, 2005-2009). The PCI for each Census Tract is included in the table below.

<b>Per Capita Income (PCI) – Census Tracts</b>		
<b>Carbon County Census Tracts</b>	<b>ACS 2005-2009</b>	<b>ACS 2006-2010</b>
9676 (west side of County)	<b>\$20,698</b>	<b>\$20,208</b>
9677 (east side of Rawlins)	\$23,867	\$26,056
9678 (west side of Rawlins)	\$30,126	\$31,066
9680 (south east of County)	\$27,566	\$26,743
9681 (north east of County)	\$21,898	\$22,677

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data.*

Within the five Census Tracts in Carbon County, there are smaller areas called Census Block Groups. At the Census Block Group level, there are at least three small areas that should qualify for EDA funding:

- Census Tract 9676 qualifies in its entirety. This area covers most of western Carbon County, shown in pale green on the map above.
- Block Group 4 of Census Tract 9677 has a current PCI of \$19,983, using the 2006-2010 ACS data. This is the area of that Tract that is between the railroad tracks and I-80 in the Rawlins downtown area. It is shown on the map above in orange.
- Block Group 1 of Census Tract 9681 has a current PCI of \$21,698, using the 2006-2010 ACS data. This is the area north of Highway 30, along the eastern boundary of the County. It includes the east half of Hanna and all of Medicine Bow, as shown in blue on the map above.

The PCI for all Census Block Groups in Carbon County is listed in the table below.

<b>Per Capita Income (PCI) – Census Block Groups</b>		
<b>Census Block Groups</b>	<b>ACS 2005-2009</b>	<b>ACS 2006-2010</b>
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9676	\$31,951	\$31,723
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9676	<b>\$15,780</b>	<b>\$16,712</b>
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9677	<b>\$21,437</b>	\$23,243
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9677	\$26,385	\$31,219
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9677	\$26,367	\$32,407
Block Group 4, Census Tract 9677	<b>\$20,698</b>	<b>\$19,983</b>
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9678	\$37,738	\$36,322
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9678	\$23,661	\$25,830
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9678	\$32,000	\$29,918
Block Group 4, Census Tract 9678	\$31,123	\$28,872
Block Group 5, Census Tract 9678	<b>\$21,352</b>	NA
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9680	\$26,073	\$24,814
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9680	\$31,170	\$29,406
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9680	\$25,652	\$26,302
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9681	<b>\$21,342</b>	<b>\$21,698</b>
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9681	\$23,102	\$24,265
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9681	<b>\$20,886</b>	NA

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data.*

Thus, according to the most recent data, Census Tract 9676 (in its entirety), Census Block Group 4 of Census Tract 9677, and Census Block Group 1 of Census Tract 9681 should be eligible for EDA funding.

### **Sweetwater County – Detailed PCI Analysis**

Similar detailed analysis is possible for Sweetwater County. As of 2010, there are twelve Census Tracts in Sweetwater County. Most of the county, because of its rural nature, is included in Census Tract 9716, which covers more than half of the county. However, none of the Census Tracts in Sweetwater County has sufficiently low PCI to be eligible for EDA funding. The threshold (80% of the nation's PCI is \$21,867), and all Sweetwater Census Tracts are above that amount. PCI for each Census Tract is presented in the table below.

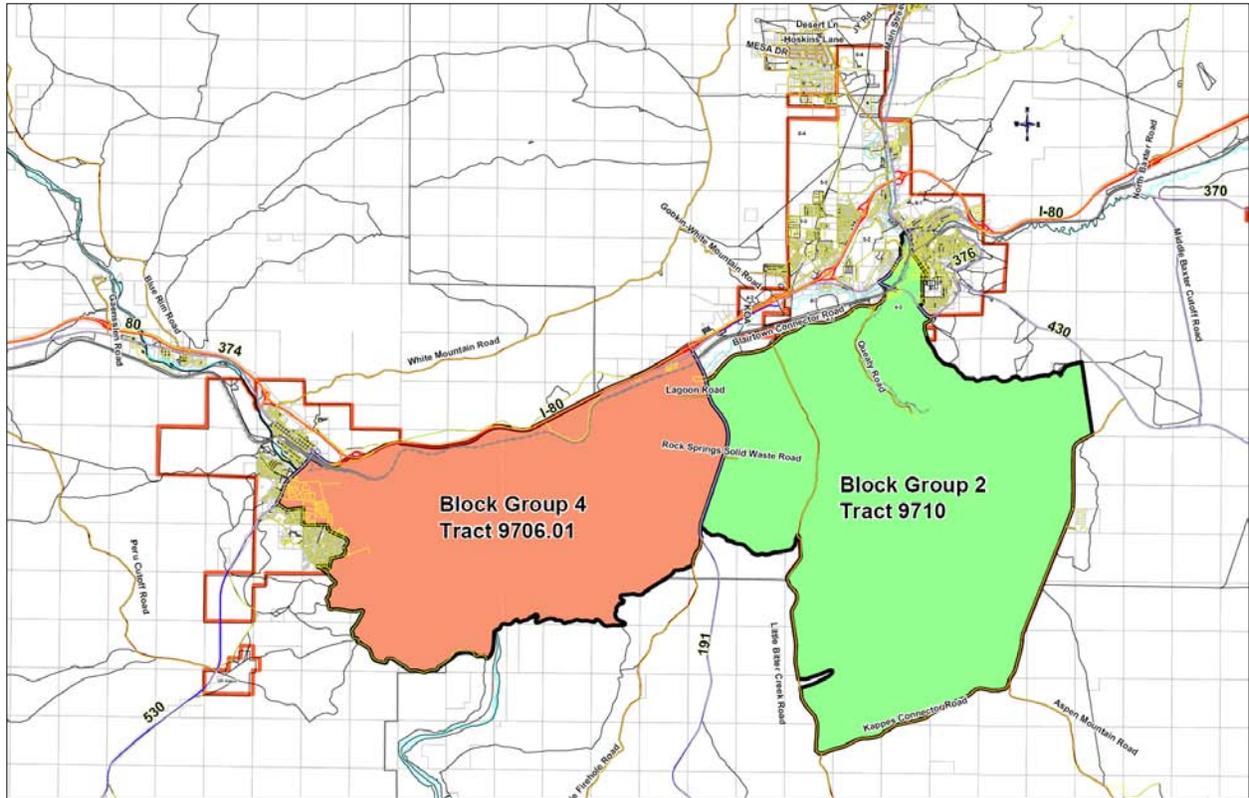
<b>Per Capita Income (PCI) - Census Tracts</b>		
<b>Sweetwater County Census Tracts</b>	<b>ACS 2005-2009</b>	<b>ACS 2006-2010</b>
Census Tract 9705	\$27,217	\$27,005
Census Tract 9706.01	\$23,598	\$25,023
Census Tract 9706.02	\$29,298	\$30,090
Census Tract 9707	\$29,663	\$30,718
Census Tract 9708	\$25,350	\$24,661
Census Tract 9709.01	\$36,718	\$36,946
Census Tract 9709.02	\$28,568	\$29,354
Census Tract 9709.03	\$30,689	\$35,589
Census Tract 9710	\$27,061	\$28,032
Census Tract 9711	\$31,014	\$33,808
Census Tract 9712	\$33,086	\$36,019
Census Tract 9716	\$37,828	\$40,830

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data.*

At the Census Block Group level, there are two areas of Sweetwater County that could be eligible for EDA funding:

- Block 4 of Census Tract 9706.01. This Census Block Group covers the area between Green River and Rock Springs, south of Interstate 80, and including the eastern edge of Green River. This is the salmon colored area in the map below.
- Block Group 2 of Census Tract 9710. This is a large area, adjacent and to the east of Block 4 of Census Tract 9706.01, south of Rock Springs, continuing east to Aspen Mountain Road. This area is shown in the green shaded area of the map below.

Both of these areas are shown in the map below.



*Rock Springs area Census Tracts for 2006-2010 data (defined by U.S. Census Bureau).*

In addition, Block Group 1 of Census Tract 9706.01 was potentially eligible for EDA funding with 2005-2009 ACS data, and it is very close to qualifying now. Accordingly, that area should be carefully monitored in the future to determine its eligibility status. The PCI for all Census Block Groups in Sweetwater County is identified in the following table.

Per Capita Income (PCI) - Census Block Groups		
Census Block Groups	ACS 2005-2009	ACS 2006-2010
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9705	\$27,822	\$34,104
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9705	\$26,257	\$24,005
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9706.01	<b>\$14,599</b>	\$22,629
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9706.01	\$24,689	\$28,529
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9706.01	\$27,701	\$28,992
Block Group 4, Census Tract 9706.01	NA	<b>\$20,848</b>
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9706.02	\$27,060	\$24,498
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9706.02	\$30,650	\$40,074
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9706.02	NA	\$26,324
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9707	\$30,792	\$31,978
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9707	\$30,685	\$27,569
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9707	\$27,984	\$32,143
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9708	\$35,085	\$24,120
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9708	\$22,313	\$24,408
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9708	\$25,690	\$25,652
Block Group 4, Census Tract 9708	NA	\$25,064
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9709.01	\$37,978	\$33,312
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9709.01	\$35,124	\$40,513
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9709.01	NA	\$43,516
Block Group 4, Census Tract 9709.01	NA	\$32,724
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9709.02	\$25,783	\$26,742
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9709.02	\$31,439	\$29,632
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9709.02	NA	\$30,871
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9709.03	\$34,266	\$46,940
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9709.03	\$22,580	\$27,069
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9710	\$31,258	\$32,407
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9710	<b>\$19,760</b>	<b>\$20,504</b>
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9711	\$27,692	\$30,894
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9711	\$34,259	\$41,874
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9711	NA	\$31,058
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9712	\$31,100	\$36,199
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9712	\$35,047	\$35,827
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9716	\$33,766	\$37,230
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9716	\$45,596	\$44,689

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data.

Based on this detailed analysis, it appears that the area between Green River and Rock Springs, south of Interstate 80, would be eligible for EDA funding.

### Median Household Income

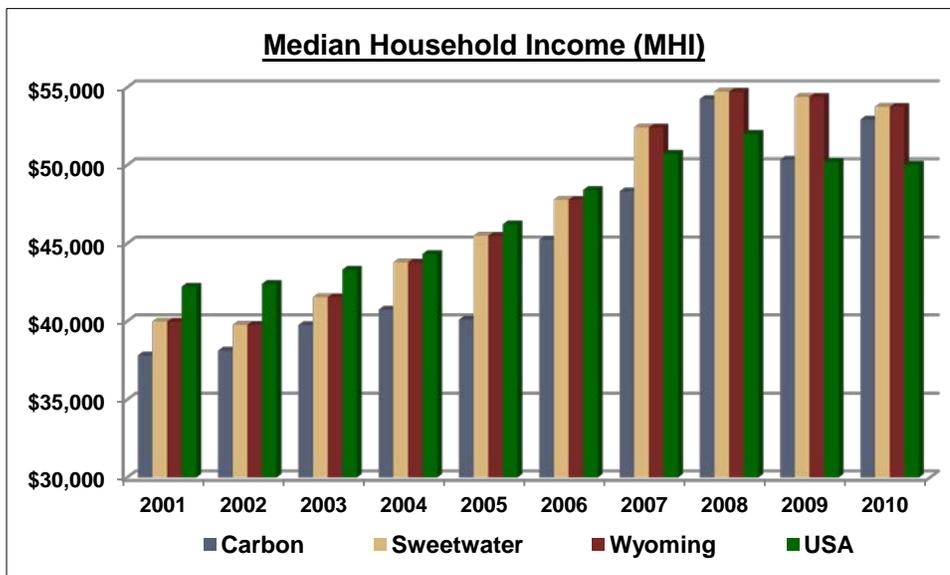
While PCI is a very important income measure to the EDA, it can be skewed by a few relatively high-income individuals. Therefore, it is important to examine other income measures, such as Median Household Income (MHI). MHI is measured by adding all the income of every person living in a household, and then by determining the point at which half of the local population has higher income and half of the local population has lower income. MHI is a midpoint, not an average.

The MHI for Carbon and Sweetwater Counties, along with the state and national MHI, for 2000 to 2010 is provided in the following table.

Median Household Income (MHI)										
Area	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Carbon	\$37,808	\$38,118	\$39,759	\$40,750	\$40,114	\$45,258	\$48,358	\$54,257	\$50,353	\$52,935
Sweetwater	\$39,988	\$39,772	\$41,554	\$43,785	\$45,501	\$47,819	\$52,433	\$54,735	\$54,400	\$53,757
Wyoming	\$39,988	\$39,772	\$41,554	\$43,785	\$45,501	\$47,819	\$52,433	\$54,735	\$54,400	\$53,757
USA	\$42,228	\$42,409	\$43,318	\$44,334	\$46,242	\$48,451	\$50,740	\$52,029	\$50,221	\$50,046

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates (SAIPE data).

The GDED District's MHI has done well compared to state and national markets in the last decade. Both Carbon and Sweetwater Counties have enjoyed steady growth, and now exceed the national MHI, as seen in the graph below.



### Adjusted Gross Income

A third income measure is Adjusted Gross Income (AGI), as reported on federal tax returns. There is a long lag time to receive AGI data because it takes the Internal Revenue Service a few years to process and then release data for counties. However, it is a very precise

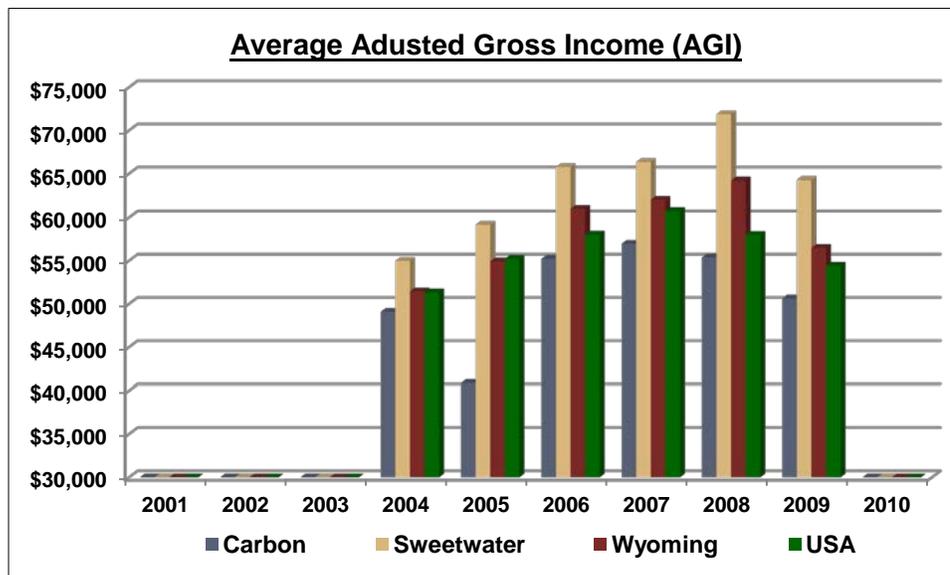
calculation (not an estimate like the other measures), and it reveals the components of income, including wages, dividends, interest.

An average AGI is calculated by dividing the total amount of all AGI's in the county, and then dividing by the number of tax returns that have been filed in that county. The average AGI for Carbon and Sweetwater Counties, along with the state and national MHI, for 2000 to 2010 is provided in the following table.

Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)										
Area	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Carbon	NA	NA	NA	\$49,090	\$40,879	\$55,226	\$56,962	\$55,386	\$50,646	NA
Sweetwater	NA	NA	NA	\$54,985	\$59,160	\$65,773	\$66,355	\$71,877	\$64,301	NA
Wyoming	NA	NA	NA	\$51,458	\$54,940	\$61,026	\$62,077	\$64,238	\$56,488	NA
USA	NA	NA	NA	\$51,342	\$55,238	\$58,029	\$60,762	\$58,005	\$54,427	NA

Source: Internal Revenue Service.

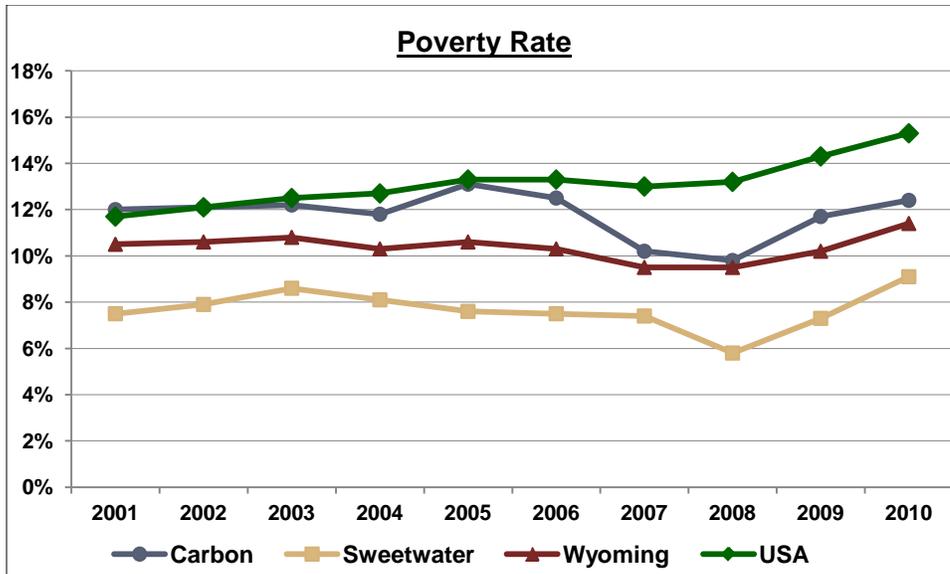
Carbon County's AGI has lagged behind the other areas in the last several years, while Sweetwater County's growth has increased the difference between it and the state and nation, as seen in the graph below.



Source: Internal Revenue Service.

### Poverty

Poverty rates in the GDEDC vary by location. The poverty rate in Carbon County has bounced between the Wyoming poverty rate (low) and the national poverty rate (high). In contrast, Sweetwater County's poverty rate has been well below all of these areas, as shown in the graph below.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates (SAIPE data).

The actual poverty rates for all of these areas during the last ten years in Carbon County has averaged 11.8%, while Sweetwater County’s poverty rate has averaged 7.7%, as presented in the table below.

Poverty Rate	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Carbon</b>	12.0%	12.1%	12.2%	11.8%	13.1%	12.5%	10.2%	9.8%	11.7%	12.4%
<b>Sweetwater</b>	7.5%	7.9%	8.6%	8.1%	7.6%	7.5%	7.4%	5.8%	7.3%	9.1%
<b>Wyoming</b>	10.5%	10.6%	10.8%	10.3%	10.6%	10.3%	9.5%	9.5%	10.2%	11.4%
<b>USA</b>	11.7%	12.1%	12.5%	12.7%	13.3%	13.3%	13.0%	13.2%	14.3%	15.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates (SAIPE data).

# Geographic, Climate, Environmental and Natural Resource Profile

## Location and History

The Great Divide economic district comprises Carbon and Sweetwater counties in south central and southwest Wyoming. This region, which encompasses 18,323 square miles, is characterized by a rich history.



Prior to the migration of white settlers, small bands of Indian tribes traveled throughout the region as they passed between the Great Basin at the west and the Great Plains to the east. Historians believe that permanent settlement by the Indians in the region did not occur until the arrival of European and American settlers.



In the early 1800's, fur traders, explorers, and pioneers migrated from the east to the west coast of the continental United States using the Oregon, Overland, Cherokee and Emigrant trails. Settlements began to emerge. Military outposts such as Fort Halleck and Fort Bridger were established to provide some safety to overland travelers migrating to the west. Construction of Union Pacific's Transcontinental Railroad in 1868 brought new residents and the establishment of new communities such as Medicine Bow and Rawlins. Carbon and Dana (now ghost towns) were born because of the access to coal resources in the Hanna Basin. Fort Steele was established to protect the Platte River railroad bridge. Cattlemen and sheepherders, who arrived in the 1870's and 1880's, helped foster the establishment of communities such as Saratoga and Medicine Bow.



At the turn of the 20th century, minerals such as gold and copper attracted both prospectors and wealthy mining interests to the Sierra Madre Range on the Continental Divide. This led to the establishment of Encampment in southern Carbon County.

Mineral and energy development continues to dominate the regional economy. The exploration, production, and transport of oil and natural gas, as well as the mining of trona and coal, are primary sources of regional employment. However, these activities are highly cyclical due to their influence from variable commodity prices, market demands, and global energy and mineral supplies.



### Climate

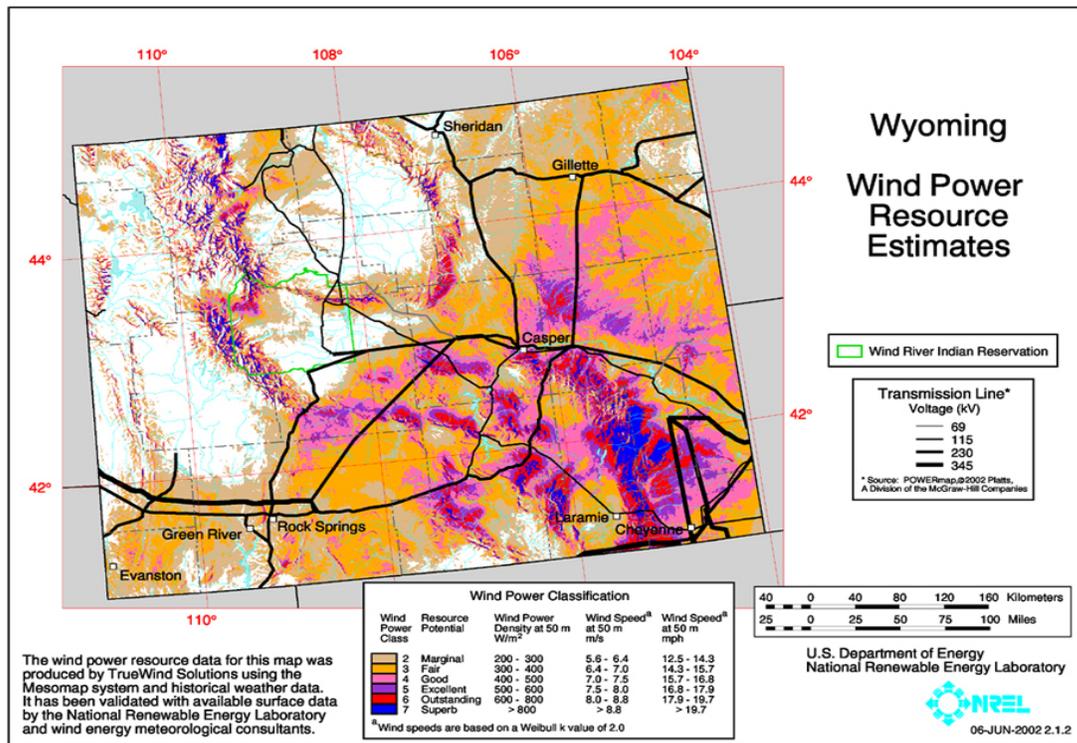
Both Carbon and Sweetwater County generally represent an arid, high desert environment. Alpine trees and vegetation that characterize portions of the Continental Divide and Medicine Bow Mountains in Carbon County contrast the climate associated with high desert areas.

	Avg. Max Temp - Jan	Avg. Max Temp - July	Avg. Min Temp - Jan	Avg. Min. Temp - July	Avg. Annual Precip	Avg. Annual Snowfall
<b>Carbon County</b>						
Rawlins	29.4	83.5	11.5	49.4	8.18	47.8
Saratoga	33.3	83.3	10.5	49.5	9.7	52.1
Baggs	32.2	86.2	5.3	48.4	9.98	38.9
Medicine Bow	32.0	83.6	11.6	47.7	10.48	44.2
<b>Sweetwater County</b>						
Rock Springs	31.7	86.2	9.8	51	8.75	47.2
Green River	32.0	87.2	4.7	49.9	7.97	29
Wamsutter	28.7	84.6	7.2	48.9	7.09	27.3
Farson	25.9	83.5	-6.4	44.2	7.35	28.3

Source: Western Regional Climate Center 11/8/1881-6/26/2012

### Wind

Although average wind speed is not typically monitored and recorded in small towns, the U.S. Department of Energy has developed a wind resource map that includes Carbon and Sweetwater Counties, seen below. The colors represent the “Class” of wind power resource, ranging from 1 (weakest) to 7 (strongest). While most of Sweetwater County’s wind resources are fair, Carbon County has very good wind resources, some of which is considered to be outstanding (Class 6) or even superb (Class 7), as seen in the map below.



Source: U.S. Department of Energy/NREL

## Environment

The Great Divide region has a significant amount of oil and gas activity, mining and other natural resource development. Thus, it is prone to potential adverse impact to air and water quality if mitigation measures are not rigorously applied. The wind levels throughout the region generally help keep air quality at acceptable standards.

Water quality is also potentially impacted by the number of unlined landfills in the region (and throughout Wyoming). Mitigation and remediation measures are being addressed at the solid waste facilities through Wyoming DEQ.



## **Natural Resources**

Sweetwater and Carbon counties contain significant natural resources that primarily include minerals, groundwater and surface water resources, and abundant wildlife. Each of these resources is generally described in the following paragraphs.

### **Minerals**

#### ***Trona***

Trona is naturally occurring sodium carbonate/bicarbonate mineral. Extensive deposits are located in southwest Wyoming east of Green River. Bedded deposits characterize the trona found in the Eocene Green River Formation. In Sweetwater County, trona is refined onsite into soda ash, as well as the manufacture of other sodium-based products. This mineral is an essential ingredient used to make glass containers, flat glass, and fiberglass. Soda ash is also utilized to control pH in various environments and to scrub sulfur dioxide gases in coal-fired power plants.

#### ***Oil and Gas***

Significant oil and natural gas reserves are situated throughout much of Sweetwater County. Oil shale bearing strata occurs primarily in the Green River Basin west of Green River, as well as the Washakie Basin in the southeast part of the county. Significant oil and gas production has taken place in the Greater Green River Basin for many decades.

In Carbon County, the eastern portion of the Greater Green River Basin extends about 10 to 40 miles in the west portion of Carbon County. Gas reserves are primarily located in the east side of the Great Divide and Washakie Basins (DeBruin, 1996). These two basins are characterized by stratigraphic traps and produce from younger geologic formations.

#### ***Coal***

Sweetwater County contains both sub-bituminous and bituminous coals. East of Rock Springs, surface coal mining is taking place at the Bridger Coal and Black Butte/Pit 22 mine which are located east and south of Point of Rocks. Subsurface mines include the Black Butte and Bridger Coal mines. The coal mined from these sources is primarily used as a source of energy for the nearby Jim Bridger Power Plant, which is situated north of Point of Rocks. There has been interest in developing new coal mine resources for possible exportation to Chinese markets.

Higher Btu coal that ranges between 8,500 and 10,200 British thermal units per pound, are located in Carbon County's Hanna Basin. Existing coal reserves are not depleted in this area. Current planning efforts are underway to develop this resource as a coal to liquids plant.

#### ***Potash***

In Sweetwater County, rocks in the Leucite Hills, including Boars Tusk and Steamboat Mountain, are known sources of potash. During the First World War,

potash was mined by the Liberty Potash Company on Zirkel Mesa. Potassium chloride was processed in a plant in Green River for the production of fertilizer.

### ***Uranium***

Uranium resources, which are developed via in-situ production, are located in Carbon County's Shirley Basin. Other uranium resources are situated in the Poison Basin west of Baggs. In Sweetwater County, uranium resources are available in the Great Divide Basin. Historically, mining claims were made over the Rock Springs Formation and/or Ericson Formation of the Cretaceous Mesaverde Group. Current efforts are underway to re-explore and develop these uranium resources because the price of uranium has increased dramatically in the past five years.

### **Surface Water Resources**

#### ***Sweetwater County***

Surface water resources in the Sweetwater County are part of the Green River/Great Divide Basin.



The Green River originates in the Wind River Mountain range and the Bridger-Teton National Forest. Perennial stream flows generally characterize upland mountain drainages of the Green River Basin that are generally north of Sweetwater County. Tributaries to the Green River (within Sweetwater County) include the Big Sandy and Blacks Fork. The Flaming Gorge Reservoir, located in the southwest part of Sweetwater County, is used to help regulate flows along the Green River, which is a major tributary to the Colorado River System.

The Great Divide Basin is a topographically closed hydrologic unit that lies in between Sweetwater and Carbon counties. This basin comprises 3,959 square miles.

#### ***Carbon County***

Carbon County generally includes portions of three hydrologic basins:

1. Upper North Platte River;
2. Little Snake River; and,

### 3. The east portion of the Great Divide Basin.

The upland basin boundaries reflect the upper elevation of the Continental Divide. Most of Carbon County is situated within the North Platte River Basin. The upper North Platte River originates in northern Colorado. Within Carbon County, the North Platte River is fed by surface flows from the Encampment River and Medicine Bow River. The North Platte River subsequently drains into the Seminoe and Pathfinder reservoirs where surface waters are stored and released to downstream users in Wyoming and Nebraska.

The Little Snake River originates within the upper elevations of the Sierra Madre Mountains in Wyoming and Colorado's Routt National Forest. Within Carbon County, primary tributaries include Savery Creek, Battle Creek, and Muddy Creek. The Little Snake River eventually flows south of Baggs to the Yampa River that flows into the Green River, a tributary to the Colorado River. High Savery Reservoir has recently been developed as an additional surface water storage and release source for Carbon County.

As stated earlier, the east portion of the Great Divide is again a closed hydrologic unit that discharges no surface flows outside the Great Divide Basin. Intermittent streams within the basin occasionally flow in response to surface runoff generated from rainfall and snowmelt.

### Fish and Wildlife

#### ***Fish***

In Wyoming, there are approximately 49 extant native fish and 27 established nonnative fish species. Most of the species occur in the GDEDC District. Game fish species that can be found in the GDEDC District include trout (brown, brook, lake, cutthroat, grayling, golden, rainbow, splake, tiger trout, cutbow, and other trout hybrids), walleye, whitefish, largemouth and smallmouth bass, channel catfish, northern pike, tiger musky, yellow perch, black bullhead, stonecat, crappie, rock bass, bluegill, pumpkinseed, green sunfish, green sunfish-bluegill hybrid, freshwater drum, sauger, shovelnose sturgeon, and burbot (ling).

There are more than 1,000 creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, and reservoirs in the GDEDC District, including the Green River and North Platte River drainages, making it a highly desirable fishing and boating environment. Outdoor Life magazine has recently named Saratoga as one of the best hunting and fishing towns in America (#10).

#### ***Wildlife***

People traveling along Interstate 80, state highways and county roads can view a considerable amount of wildlife in both Carbon and Sweetwater counties.



The pronghorn antelope is highly migratory; however, its habitat typically includes grasslands and sagebrush communities. Mule deer and white-tailed deer are also highly migratory and use a variety of habitats such as forested areas, riparian areas and lowland drainages, and brushy foothill areas.

Rocky Mountain elk tend to seasonally migrate to locate grasses on transitional range areas between April and mid-June. During the summer, most Rocky Mountain elk migrate to higher elevations. At the close of summer, elk return to winter range areas that include wooded and brushy areas in lower elevations.



Mountain lions are rarely observed by local residents as these animals prefer coniferous and deciduous forests, shrub lands, rocky cliffs and ledges, and meadows at higher elevations. Black bears also enjoy forested areas; however, they also spend considerable time in riparian areas and moist meadow areas at higher elevations.



Various bird species occur in Sweetwater and Carbon counties. Bald and golden eagles are commonly observed in the vicinity of the North Platte River drainage in southern Carbon County. State biologists desire to conserve selected habitats where sagebrush and riparian areas are available. Habitats for a wide variety of other mammals such as shrews, bats, rabbits, prairie dogs, gophers, kangaroo rats, and beavers are also present in both counties.



# Infrastructure

## Water

Sources and storage capacity of municipal systems in Great Divide communities can be found on the following chart:

Carbon County	Surface Water Source	# Wells	# Springs	Other	System Capacity (gallons per day)	Treated Water Storage
Baggs	Little Snake River	0	0	NA	288,000	336,000
Dixon	Little Snake River	0	0		86,400	100,000
Elk Mountain	NA	2	NA		144,000	200,000
Encampment	North Fork River					
Hanna	Rattlesnake Creek	0	0		2,000,000	1,000,000
Medicine Bow	None	2	0		211,820	1,500,000
Rawlins	North Platte River, various reservoirs	3	30		8,000,000	19,000,000
Riverside	NA	3	0	Sierra Madre Jt. Powers Bd.	518,000	270,000
Saratoga	NA	5	0		1,250	2,000,000
Sinclair	NA	0	0	City of Rawlins	0	0
Sweetwater County	Surface Water Source	# Wells	# Springs	Other	System Capacity	Treated Water Storage
Bairoil	NA	1	1	Merit Oil	240,000	360,000
Granger	Green River	0	NA		700	500,000
Green River	Green River	0	0	JPWB	3,472	3,300,000
Rock Springs	Green River	0	0	JPWB	16,000,000	12,000,000
Superior	NA	3	0		600,000	450,000
Wamsutter	NA	4	0		320,000,000	700,000

Source: Wyoming Water Development Commission 2011 Water System Survey

### Carbon County

Each of the 10 incorporated municipalities in Carbon County is served by a community water system. The system serving the Town of Riverside is owned and operated by the Sierra Madre Joint Powers Board.

### Sweetwater County

Community water systems serve the Sweetwater County communities. The largest purveyor of water in Sweetwater County is the Rock Springs/Green River Joint Powers Water Board (JPWB). The Joint Powers Water Board obtains and treats surface water from the Green River. Its treated surface water supplies are purchased by the City of Rock Spring and the City of Green River. The capacity of the JPWB water treatment plant is 32

million gallons of water per day. There is considerable capacity available for greater treatment and consumption.

While the JPWB owns water transmission and distribution systems to and within Green River and Rock Springs, separate lease operation agreements give the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of these systems to both Green River and Rock Springs. Rock Springs also includes transmission and distribution systems that serve the Town of Reliance.

**Sewer**  
***Carbon County***

Most of the communities in Carbon County are served by sewage lagoon systems, both aerated and passive. Planned expansions will be based on the needs and parameters established by the Wyoming DEQ and EPA.

***Sweetwater County***

Most communities in Sweetwater County utilize a 3-cell lagoon configuration for sewer treatment. Wamsutter reports that the 3-cell lagoon serving that community has not been properly maintained and may have problems meeting its design capacity of 2000-2500. Green River operates a 5-cell aerated lagoon system with good capacity.

**Solid Waste Management**

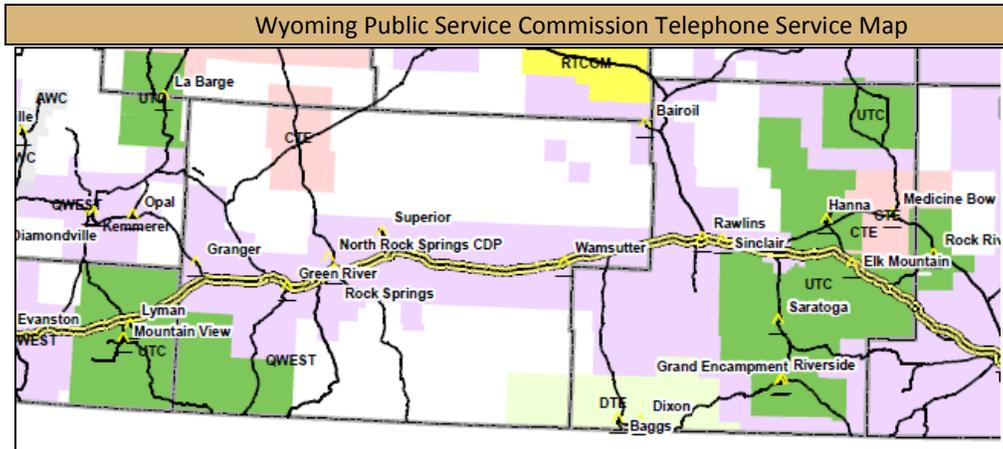
With the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality's emphasis on the development of integrated municipal solid waste management systems, most smaller communities have or will develop transfer stations for transfer of solid waste to regional landfill facilities.

Facility	Operator	Status	Groundwater Status (based on 2010 report)
Rawlins	City of Rawlins	Currently transferring municipal solid waste (MSW) to Casper. Plan to dispose construction demolition waste (CD) for 4 more years and close. May need transfer station improvements.	Contamination identified above groundwater protection standards.
Baggs	Baggs Solid Waste Disposal District (SWDD)	Transporting MSW to Casper, plan to continue operating a CD landfill.	Contamination identified
Saratoga	Upper Platte River SWDD	Plan to cease disposal of MSW when current area is full and continue disposal of CD in remaining areas.	Contamination identified
Hanna	High Country Joint Powers Board	Will cease receipt of waste in about 6 years and transfer waste to a regional landfill.	Contamination identified
Wamsutter	Sweetwater Co. SWDD #2	Plan to continue operating a lined MSW landfill.	Contamination identified
Rock Springs	Sweetwater Co. SWDD #1	Plan to operate as a lined regional MSW landfill.	Contamination identified
Encampment	Upper Platte River SWDD	Operate a small transfer station and transfer waste to Saratoga.	Additional data needed
Eden Valley (Farson)	Eden Valley SWDD	Will cease disposal soon and transfer waste to a regional landfill (probably Rock Springs)	Contamination identified
Green River	City of Green River	Plan to cease disposal of all waste and transfer all waste to the Rock Springs (SCSWDD #1) regional landfill.	Contamination identified

Source: Wyoming DEQ Solid Waste Division

### **Telecommunications**

Carbon and Sweetwater communities are served by various telephone, internet, and cellular service providers as can be seen on the map below:



<i>Primary Telecommunication Service Providers</i>			
<b>Carbon County</b>	<b>Primary Telecommunication</b>	<b>Sweetwater County</b>	<b>Primary Telecommunication</b>
Baggs	Dubois Telephone	Bairoil	Century Link
Dixon	Dubois Telephone	Granger	Century Link
Elk Mountain	Union	Green River	Century Link
Encampment	Union	Rock Springs	Century Link
Hanna	Union	Superior	Century Link
Medicine Bow	Century Link	Wamsutter	Century Link
Rawlins	Century Link	Eden Valley	CenturyLink
Riverside	Union		
Saratoga	Union		
Sinclair	Century Link		

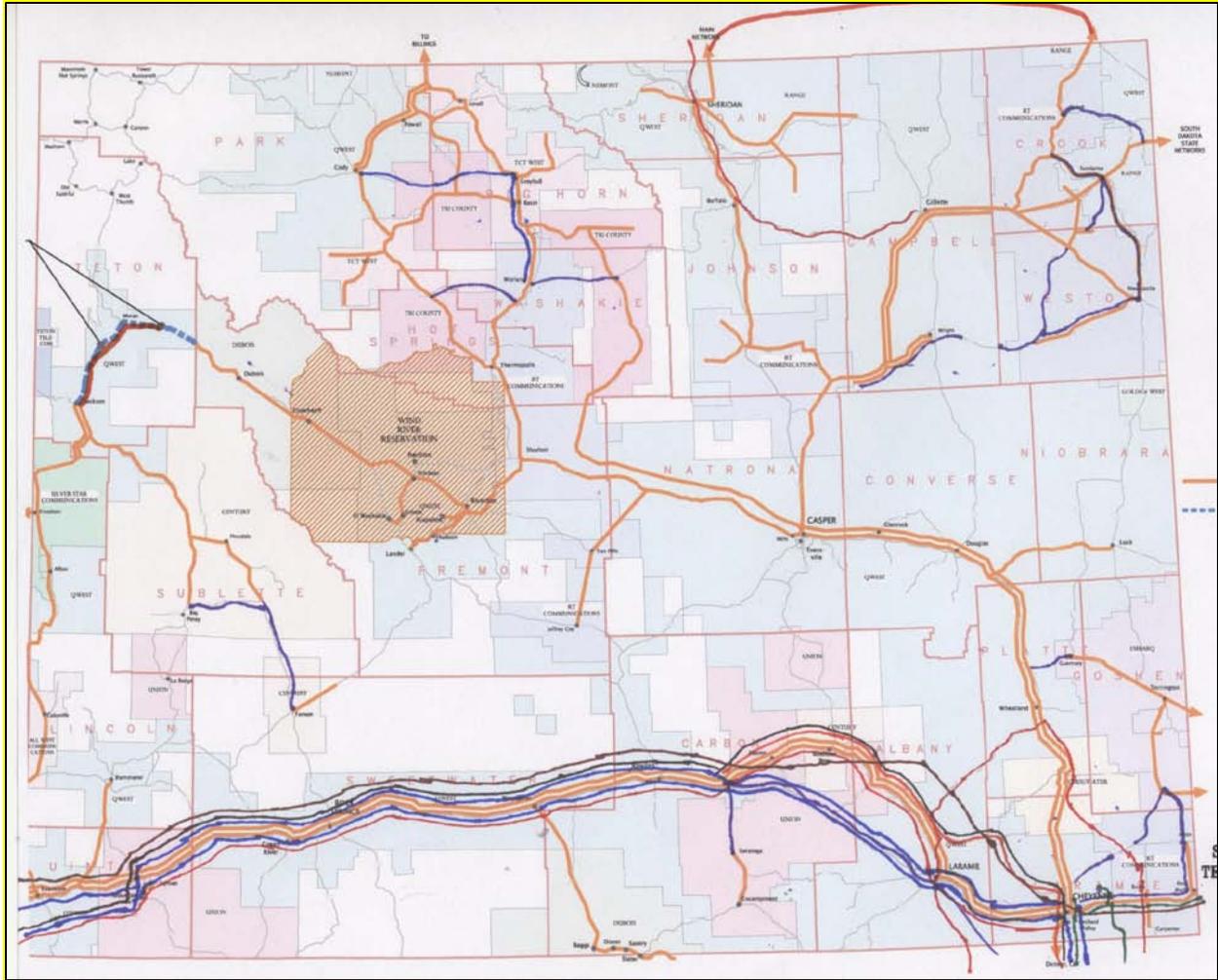
Source: Wyoming Public Service Commission

### **Cell Service**

Numerous other companies exclusively provide internet and cellular services to both counties although there are pockets of the region with limited cell service. Primary cell service is provided by Verizon Wireless and Union Wireless.

### **Fiber Optic Facilities and Broadband Services**

There are eleven long-haul fiber optic routes that traverse Carbon and Sweetwater Counties. Most of these routes run parallel to Interstate 80, but about half of them are parallel to U.S. Highway 30 in Carbon County, which runs through Medicine Bow and Hanna. These routes are shown on the map below.



Source: Joe Sharkey, Telecommunications consultant to Wyoming Business Council.

Fiber optic telecommunications are accessible wherever there is a Point of Presence (PoP). According to Joe Sharkey (telecommunications consultant to the Wyoming Business Council), there are many fiber “huts” within the GDEDC, but most of them have not been upgraded to PoP’s. Instead, they serve as regeneration points for the signal that is carried on the fiber lines. Upgrading the huts can be expensive, and typically is only done when a long-haul carrier believes that it can profitably benefit from the expense.

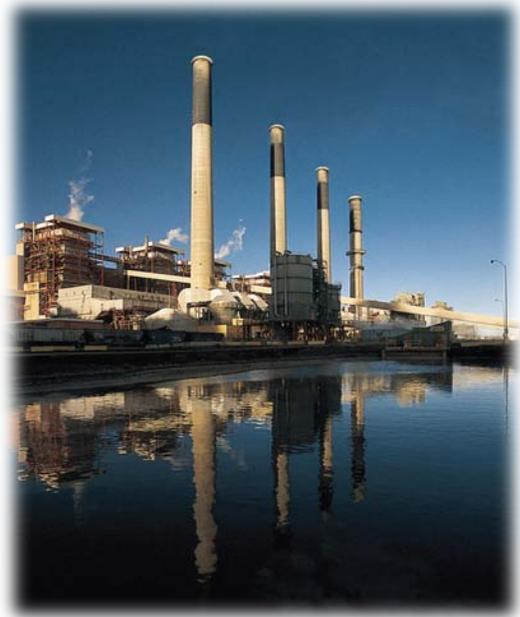


Several communities along the Interstate 80 corridor have explored the possibility of further enhancing their access to long-haul fiber optic telecommunication routes. Better connectivity can help existing businesses grow, and it can also be critically important to recruit or develop new businesses within the technology industries. Data centers, in particular, are a good fit.

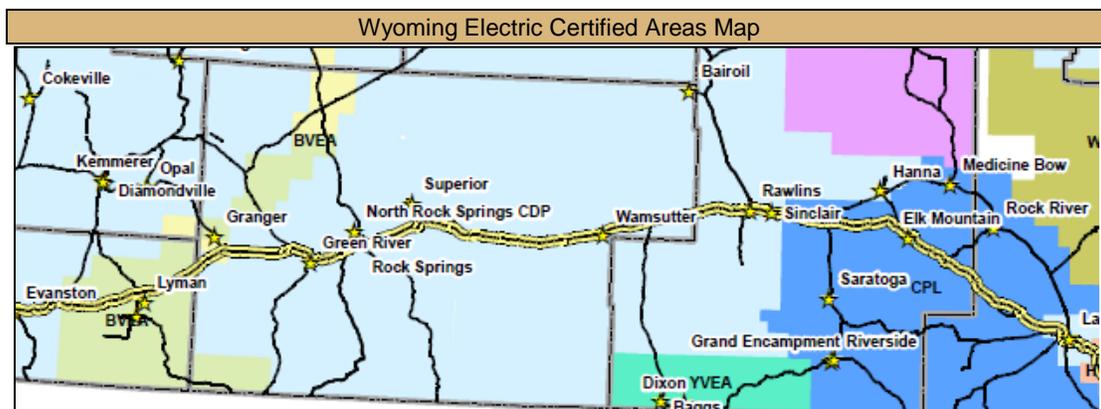
## Energy Distribution

### Electrical Transmission and Distribution Systems

PacifiCorp is the only utility company that generates and distributes power within the Great Divide District. This corporation is the majority owner (2/3) of the Jim Bridger Power Plant in Sweetwater County. PacifiCorp also owns and operates one of the larger privately held transmission systems in the United States.



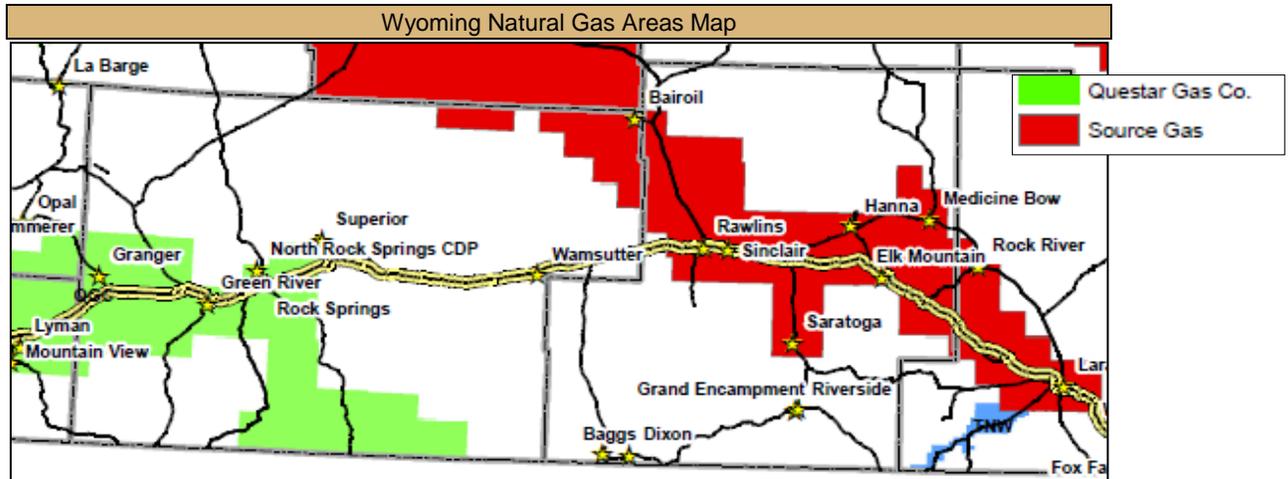
Within the Great Divide District, Rocky Mountain Power, a division of PacifiCorp, serves all of Sweetwater County with the exception of Granger (Bridger Valley Electric Association) and most of the area north of Interstate 80 in Carbon County. Three rural electrical utilities are distributors of electrical power to selected portions of Carbon County. Carbon Power and Light serves the communities of Saratoga, Encampment, Elk Mountain, and Riverside. Yampa Valley Electric Association provides electrical power service to the Little Snake River communities of Baggs and Dixon. High Plains Power, Inc. is the distributor of electrical power to Medicine Bow and much of the Energy Basin that is situated north of Medicine Bow.



Source: Wyoming Public Service Commission

## Natural Gas

Natural Gas is provided in Sweetwater County by Questar Gas Co. where available. Much of Carbon County is served by Source Gas. Areas not served by natural gas utilize propane or wood fuel for heating.



Source: Wyoming Public Service Commission

## Transportation

### Ground Transportation

Transportation represents an essential hub of the regional economy that significantly influences existing commerce and future economic development within the Great Divide district. Both counties contain a significant amount of transportation facilities that include:

- Interstate 80, as well as State highways and county roads;
- The Union-Pacific rail corridor; and,
- Community airports located at Rock Springs, Rawlins, and Saratoga.

### ***Interstate 80***

Interstate 80 is a primary vehicular corridor that links commercial truck and passenger traffic between the east and west coasts of the United States. Recent traffic counts for the portion of Interstate 80 (see chart on next page), that extends within Sweetwater and Carbon County indicate that average daily traffic volumes range from 10,000-19,000 vehicles per day with 40-55% of those, on average, consisting of truck traffic.



2010 Interstate 80 Traffic Counts Carbon and Sweetwater County				
SECTION DESCRIPTION	MILEPOST	Average Daily Total Traffic		% Trucks
	BEGIN	All Vehicles	Trucks	
UINTA - SWEETWATER COUNTY LINE	57.041	11,045	5,229	47%
JCT ROUTE 12 (GRANGER JCT INT)	66.120	13,458	6,123	45%
JCT ROUTE 374 (LITTLE AMERICA INT)	68.972	12,619	6,439	51%
WEST VACO INT	72.296	13,425	6,397	48%
JCT ROUTE 374 (LABARGE INT)	83.007	14,985	6,690	45%
COVERED WAGON ROAD INT	85.697	14,051	6,535	47%
GREEN RIVER E. URBAN & CORP LIMITS	92.654	25,068	6,838	27%
JCT ROUTE 17 (FLAMING GORGE INT)	99.138	19,855	6,851	35%
ROCK SPRINGS WEST URBAN LIMITS	100.270	19,855	6,851	35%
JCT ROUTE 53 (DEWAR DRIVE INT)	102.358	17,345	6,828	39%
JCT COLLEGE DRIVE INT	103.819	16,948	6,870	41%
JCT ROUTE 13 (ELK STREET INT)	104.825	15,069	6,584	44%
JCT ROUTE 53 (PILOT BUTTE INT)	107.056	13,589	6,391	47%
ROCK SPRINGS EAST URBAN LIMITS	107.810	13,589	6,391	47%
JCT ROUTE 1905 (SUPERIOR INT)	122.272	13,025	6,409	49%
JCT ROUTE 1911 (POINT OF ROCKS)	130.840	12,040	6,390	53%
RED DESERT INT	165.582	11,588	6,402	55%
WAMSUTTER INT	173.413	12,050	6,808	56%
CONTINENTAL DIVIDE INT	184.288	12,009	6,793	57%
JCT ROUTE 18 (CRESTON JCT, WY 789)	187.204	12,262	6,718	55%
SWEETWATER - CARBON COUNTY LINE	199.051	12,292	6,724	55%
RAWLINS WEST URBAN LIMITS	211.200	13,053	6,845	52%
JCT ROUTE 54 (SPRUCE STREET INT)	211.780	12,489	6,557	53%
JCT ROUTE 4573 (THAYER INT)	214.111	13,400	6,575	49%
RAWLINS EAST URBAN LIMITS	215.820	14,920	6,025	40%
JCT ROUTE 411 (EAST SINCLAIR INT)	221.926	12,040	5,818	48%
FORT STEELE INT	228.341	11,950	5,818	49%
JCT ROUTES 22 & 410 (SARATOGA INT)	235.280	10,220	5,531	54%
PETERSON INT	238.150	10,200	5,529	54%
JCT ROUTE 404 (W ELK MOUNTAIN INT)	255.602	10,381	5,686	55%
EAST ELK MOUNTAIN INT	260.232	10,391	5,685	55%
JCT ROUTE 105 (ARLINGTON INT)	272.056	10,411	5,686	55%
CARBON - ALBANY COUNTY LINE	280.901	10,411	5,689	55%

Source: Wyoming Department of Transportation Planning Department

Interstate trucking and passenger traffic along Interstate 80 is an important market for the Great Divide district. This traffic generates significant retail expenditures for fuel,



convenience foods, prepared meals, as well as tires, batteries and accessories. The same traffic also creates other retail service expenditures such as emergency towing and vehicular repair. Most of these expenditures are made at local truck stops along Interstate 80. Existing truck stops in Carbon County are located along Interstate 80 at Walcott Junction, Sinclair, and Rawlins. In Sweetwater County, truck stops are situated at Wamsutter, Point of Rocks, Rock Springs, and Little America.

### ***State Highways and County Roads***

Highways that comprise the Wyoming State highway system are generally classified as primary or secondary. Primary highways generally handle more traffic and typically are:



- auxiliary routes off a U.S. highway route; for example, Wyoming 130 and 230 are auxiliary routes off U.S. highway 30;
- primary state routes from other another state, e.g., Wyoming 789; and,
- Routes that come close to fitting into the U.S. highway grid.

In Sweetwater and Carbon counties, primary state highways often provide the connections to communities within each county. Secondary state highways and county roads in both counties provide vehicular access to ranches and rural residences, oil and gas exploration and production areas, mining sites, and recreation areas within and outside of the Great Divide area. However, in some cases, secondary roads provide direct access from Interstate 80, e.g., Wyoming 371 from I-80 to Superior.

### **Rail Transportation**

Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) operations in Sweetwater and Carbon counties support UPRR's successful freight transportation business between Chicago and Los Angeles. UPRR's rail freight service primarily includes the delivery of various commodities such as soda ash and coal, petrochemicals, automobiles, and inter-modal freight, e.g., containerized and roll-on/ roll-off freight. A number of railroad sidings have been removed by UPRR which greatly limits the value of having a railroad transportation system in the region.



## **Air Transportation**

Most of the airports located in the Great Divide region have current Airport Master Plans that can be consulted for additional information.

### ***Rock Springs Airport***

The primary and only commercial airport in the Great Divide District is the Rock Springs-Sweetwater County Airport. Owned by the Rock Springs/Sweetwater County Airport Joint Powers Board, SkyWest and Great Lakes Airlines operating at the Rock Springs Airport provide passenger and air cargo service to and from Denver International Airport, Salt Lake City International Airport and Gillette, Wyoming. The airport generally contains a 10,000-foot lighted runway, with a second 5,228-foot runway, an instrument landing system, a passenger terminal and lounge area. A fixed base operator also provides fuel, as well as air taxi service.

Annual passenger traffic at the Rock Springs Airport averaged 20,993 passengers in 2010, with an average of 38 total operations per day.

### ***Rawlins Airport***

Rawlins Municipal Airport, also known as Harvey Field, is a public airport located on the northeast side of Rawlins. An average of 22 aircraft operations take place at the airport each day. The airport is owned by the Rawlins Carbon County Airport Board. The airport board is currently recruiting an operator to provide fuel, aircraft parking, a passenger terminal and lounge, pilot supplies, and courtesy transportation. The airport contains two asphalt runways. Runway 4/22 is 7,008 long; runway 10/28 is 4,322 feet in length. There is no air control terminal. However, runway edge lighting is available.

### ***Shively Field Airport***

Shively Field Airport is owned by the Town of Saratoga and located on the southwest side of Saratoga. An average of 23 aircraft operations occur at the airport each day. One paved and lighted runway is available. The length of runway 5/23 is 8,801 feet and is in good condition. Hangars and tie downs are available as well as the sale of jet fuel. The Town of Saratoga is considering industrial park development adjacent to the airport to allow business fly-ins for corporate meetings.

### ***Dixon Airport***

Carbon County owns the general aviation airport in Dixon. A 7,000-foot asphalt runway serves this airport in the Little Snake River Valley.

### ***Medicine Bow Airport***

The Town of Medicine Bow owns a turf-dirt runway airport with two runways, one 2,680 feet in length and one 3,170 feet in length.

## Major Sectors of the Economy

The Carbon and Sweetwater County economies are similar in many ways. Analysis of the number of jobs, total wages, average annual wages, excise taxes, and property taxes generated by each industry demonstrates the relative size and tax impact of every economic sector. The following chart provides this data, highlighting the top two industries in each category. (Note that some data is suppressed by the reporting agency, for jobs and wages because there are too few employers in certain industries and disclosure would violate their right to confidentiality, and for property taxes simply because data is not typically collected by industry). These “Non-Disclosed” data points are shown as “ND” below and their collective data is shown in the ND row).

GDEDC DISTRICT - 2011 ECONOMY BY INDUSTRY						
NAICS	Jobs	Total Wages	Avg. Annual Wages	Excise Taxes	Property Tax Value	
AGR	11	ND	ND	ND	\$43,362	\$15,302,421
MIN	21	<b>6,142</b>	<b>\$533,610,198</b>	<b>\$86,885</b>	<b>\$19,941,868</b>	<b>\$2,293,166,365</b>
UTL	22	ND	ND	ND	\$4,302,941	\$301,789,880
CON	23	2,161	\$114,822,932	\$53,138	\$2,595,998	ND
MFR	31-33	ND	ND	ND	\$6,192,493	<b>\$456,689,823</b>
WHO	42	819	\$45,613,640	\$55,706	\$7,823,249	ND
RET	44-45	3,018	\$82,582,936	\$27,362	<b>\$23,502,030</b>	ND
TRA	48-49	1,554	\$90,947,201	\$58,540	\$919,103	ND
INF	51	279	\$7,784,986	\$27,878	\$2,530,312	ND
FIN	52	526	\$23,283,902	\$44,294	\$54,760	ND
REL	53	538	\$30,705,382	\$57,056	\$3,404,057	ND
PRO	54	692	\$41,275,649	\$59,633	\$329,661	ND
MGT	55	120	\$6,182,778	\$51,595	\$45	ND
ADM	56	637	\$23,374,681	\$36,671	\$136,147	ND
EDU	61	ND	ND	ND	\$36,857	ND
HEA	62	1,453	\$45,541,824	\$31,340	\$5,137	ND
ART	71	175	\$3,104,584	\$17,749	\$106,842	ND
ACC	72	3,212	\$50,399,464	\$15,691	\$7,599,897	ND
OTH	81	679	\$20,703,610	\$30,514	\$3,730,909	ND
PUB	92	<b>6,687</b>	<b>\$286,432,610</b>	<b>\$42,835</b>	<b>\$8,134,385</b>	<b>\$0</b>
ND		2,539	\$193,645,503	<b>\$76,278</b>	\$0	\$105,548,247
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>31,230</b>	<b>\$1,600,011,880</b>	<b>\$51,234</b>	<b>\$91,390,043</b>	<b>\$3,172,496,736</b>

Source: Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (QCEW data for Jobs and Wages); and Wyoming Department of Revenue (Excise Taxes and Property Tax Values).



Clearly, the Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction industry (MIN) is a major economic sector in the GDEDC District. As of 2011, this industry is providing 6,142 jobs, paying total wages of more than \$533 million (with average annual wages of \$86,885), generating nearly \$20 million in excise taxes, and has a property tax value of about \$2.3 billion.

The Public Administration sector (PUB) – which includes local, state, and federal governments – employs 6,687 workers and generates \$286 million in total wages (paying average annual wages of \$42,835). The small population and rural nature of Carbon and Sweetwater Counties contributes to the relative significance of Public sector employment, as there are many public services that are provided regardless of a community’s size. Yet, public entities are exempt from property taxes, and the excise taxes they collect are primarily for vehicles registered in each county.



Other major sectors in the Great Divide District include Accommodation and Food Services (ACC); Retail (RET); Construction (CON); Transportation and Warehousing (TRA), and Health Care and Social Assistance (HEA). Additionally, although much of the industry-specific data has been suppressed, Utilities (UTL)

and Manufacturing (MFR) are major economic sectors. Finally, although it is not a significant contributor to job production or the tax base, the Agriculture industry is omnipresent and helps to define the area’s rural culture. The major sectors for which reliable data is available are discussed below.



There are differences between the Carbon and Sweetwater County economies. In Carbon County, for example, the Accommodation and Food Service sector provides almost 1,000 jobs, making it the largest private sector. Public administration is, by far, the largest economic sector providing jobs (2,111) and total wages (\$90 million). However, the Mining (MIN) sector provides the highest annual wages and is the most significant tax base. In the following chart, jobs and wages data for Manufacturing (MFR) and Education (EDU)

has been suppressed by the state. However, data for those industries is included in the Totals below, and is also identified in the Non-Disclosed (ND) row below. Based on historic data, and on other resources, about 400 of those jobs are in the Manufacturing sector, which pays very high wages. Thus, the Non-Disclosed (ND) row below shows the second highest annual wage level (\$76,288) among all economic sectors.

<b>CARBON COUNTY - 2011 ECONOMY BY INDUSTRY</b>						
<b>NAICS</b>	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>Total Wages</b>	<b>Avg. Annual Wages</b>	<b>Excise Taxes</b>	<b>Property Tax Value</b>	
AGR	11	167	\$5,795,906	\$34,741	\$17,678	\$10,270,145
MIN	21	260	\$22,081,639	<b>\$84,902</b>	<b>\$5,344,662</b>	<b>\$583,138,931</b>
UTL	22	65	\$4,018,723	\$61,590	\$1,501,396	\$96,591,442
CON	23	411	\$20,139,284	\$49,011	\$525,966	ND
MFR	31-33	ND	ND	ND	\$335,421	<b>\$115,669,893</b>
WHO	42	48	\$2,005,621	\$41,711	\$2,499,387	ND
RET	44-45	686	\$18,227,822	\$26,565	<b>\$7,006,206</b>	ND
TRA	48-49	256	\$13,877,401	\$54,262	\$343,129	ND
INF	51	81	\$2,332,863	\$28,830	\$814,669	ND
FIN	52	140	\$5,301,479	\$37,935	\$19,439	ND
REL	53	80	\$2,124,957	\$26,507	\$1,118,333	ND
PRO	54	128	\$6,316,448	\$49,219	\$103,700	ND
MGT	55	20	\$1,266,023	\$62,263	\$0	ND
ADM	56	104	\$3,055,874	\$29,266	\$57,116	ND
EDU	61	ND	ND	ND	\$551	ND
HEA	62	438	\$12,349,694	\$28,228	\$3,032	ND
ART	71	88	\$2,025,832	\$22,999	\$78,403	ND
ACC	72	<b>946</b>	\$15,835,084	\$16,745	\$3,378,917	ND
OTH	81	133	\$3,733,572	\$28,019	\$929,061	ND
PUB	92	<b>2,111</b>	<b>\$90,307,634</b>	\$42,774	\$2,434,274	\$0
ND		486	<b>\$37,107,897</b>	<b>\$76,288</b>	\$0	\$26,066,668
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,649</b>	<b>\$267,903,753</b>	<b>\$40,291</b>	<b>\$26,511,331</b>	<b>\$831,737,079</b>	

Source: Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (QCEW data for Jobs and Wages); and Wyoming Department of Revenue (Excise Taxes and Property Tax Values).

By comparison, Sweetwater County (see chart below) is dominated by the Mining (MIN) sector. A closely related industry, Utilities (UTL), is also a significant economic sector, although data for the industry is not disclosed (because there are very few employers). More than 300 jobs from the Utilities sector are included in the Non-Disclosed (ND) row in the following chart, where average annual wages are \$87,401.

<b>SWEETWATER COUNTY - 2011 ECONOMY BY INDUSTRY</b>						
<b>NAICS</b>	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>Total Wages</b>	<b>Avg. Annual Wages</b>	<b>Excise Taxes</b>	<b>Property Tax Value</b>	
AGR	11	ND	ND	ND	\$25,684	\$5,032,276
MIN	21	5,882	\$511,528,559	\$86,972	\$14,597,206	\$1,710,027,434
UTL	22	ND	ND	ND	\$2,801,545	\$205,198,438
CON	23	1,750	\$94,683,648	\$54,108	\$2,070,032	ND
MFR	31-33	1,374	\$109,999,605	\$80,039	\$5,857,072	\$341,019,930
WHO	42	771	\$43,608,019	\$56,579	\$5,323,862	ND
RET	44-45	2,332	\$64,355,114	\$27,597	\$16,495,824	ND
TRA	48-49	1,298	\$77,069,800	\$59,383	\$575,974	ND
INF	51	198	\$5,452,123	\$27,490	\$1,715,643	ND
FIN	52	386	\$17,982,423	\$46,597	\$35,321	ND
REL	53	458	\$28,580,425	\$62,403	\$2,285,724	ND
PRO	54	564	\$34,959,201	\$62,003	\$225,961	ND
MGT	55	100	\$4,916,755	\$49,415	\$45	ND
ADM	56	533	\$20,318,807	\$38,122	\$79,031	ND
EDU	61	30	\$378,944	\$12,631	\$36,306	ND
HEA	62	1,016	\$33,192,130	\$32,680	\$2,105	ND
ART	71	87	\$1,078,752	\$12,423	\$28,439	ND
ACC	72	2,266	\$34,564,380	\$15,252	\$4,220,980	ND
OTH	81	545	\$16,970,038	\$31,123	\$2,801,848	ND
PUB	92	4,576	\$196,124,976	\$42,863	\$5,700,111	\$0
ND		416	\$36,344,428	\$87,401	\$0	\$79,481,579
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24,580</b>	<b>\$1,332,108,127</b>	<b>\$54,194</b>	<b>\$64,878,712</b>	<b>\$2,340,759,657</b>	

Source: Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (QCEW data for Jobs and Wages); and Wyoming Department of Revenue (Excise Taxes and Property Tax Values).

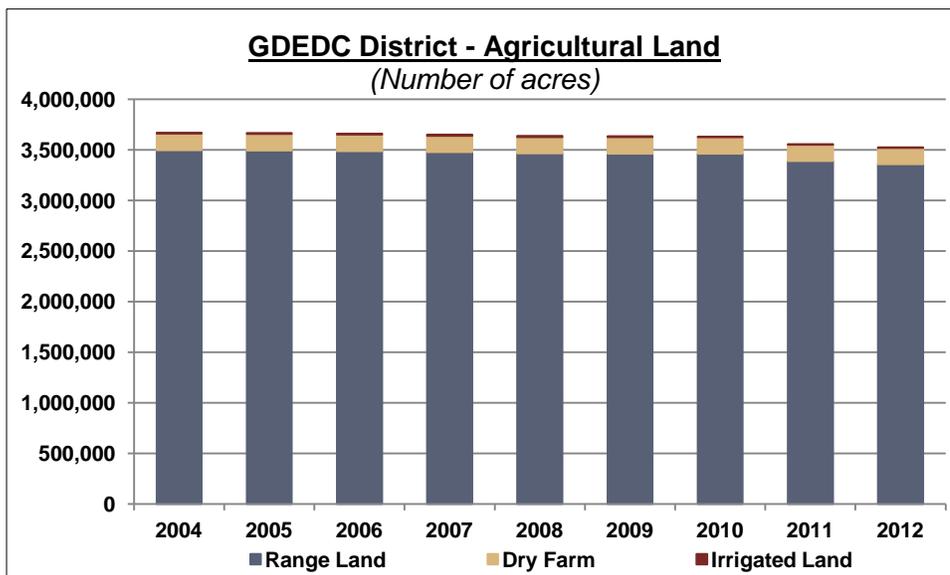
Comparisons to the GDEDC District's economy in 2006 reveal that most industries have not grown in the last five years. Overall, 231 jobs have been added since 2006 and \$265 million added to the total wages in the GDEDC District. However, excise tax collections are actually down by almost \$33 million, and the Mining (MIN) industry has lost \$279 million in tax valuation. The Construction (CON) industry has suffered the most, losing 873 jobs and nearly \$34 million in total wages. The only sectors that have grown significantly are Mining (MIN, added 378 jobs), Transportation and Warehousing (TRA, added 198 jobs), and the Public sector (PUB, added 817 jobs). The following chart provides the amount of change in the economy from 2006 to 2011, highlighting the two most significant changes in each category.

GDED DISTRICT - # \$ GROWTH BY INDUSTRY (2006 - 2011)						
NAICS	Jobs	Total Wages	Avg. Annual Wages	Excise Taxes	Property Tax Value	
AGR	11	ND	ND	ND	\$18,112	\$2,109,441
MIN	21	378	\$124,725,687	\$15,938	-\$12,658,404	-\$278,685,545
UTL	22	ND	ND	ND	-\$1,076,228	\$106,368,045
CON	23	-873	-\$33,970,744	\$4,087	-\$1,867,525	ND
MFR	31-33	ND	ND	ND	\$352,306	\$209,534,430
WHO	42	-65	\$3,646,286	\$8,218	-\$5,339,212	ND
RET	44-45	-219	\$3,950,141	\$3,073	-\$8,722,116	ND
TRA	48-49	198	\$22,756,955	\$8,222	\$4,825	ND
INF	51	-6	\$441,032	\$2,110	\$223,162	ND
FIN	52	-8	\$2,479,427	\$5,328	-\$36,749	ND
REL	53	37	\$9,778,654	\$15,313	-\$1,663,133	ND
PRO	54	71	\$12,723,845	\$13,637	\$20,077	ND
MGT	55	ND	ND	ND	\$45	ND
ADM	56	-81	\$1,344,131	\$5,984	-\$111,824	ND
EDU	61	ND	ND	ND	-\$13,666	ND
HEA	62	158	\$6,287,269	\$1,023	-\$14,991	ND
ART	71	ND	ND	ND	-\$68,353	ND
ACC	72	-22	\$7,012,178	\$2,276	-\$665,648	ND
OTH	81	-270	-\$14,215,913	-\$6,289	-\$349,209	ND
PUB	92	817	\$78,081,337	\$7,342	-\$770,078	ND
ND		-180	\$30,704,475	\$16,339	\$0	\$45,478,507
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>\$265,032,122</b>	<b>\$8,167</b>	<b>-\$32,738,618</b>		<b>\$84,804,878</b>

Source: Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (QCEW data for Jobs and Wages); and Wyoming Department of Revenue (Excise Taxes and Property Tax Values).

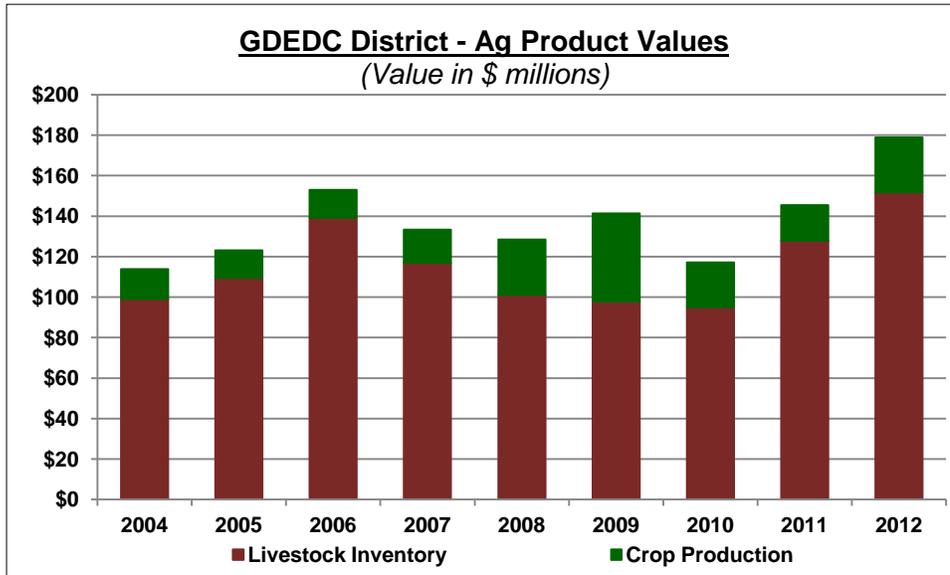
### Agriculture (AGR)

About 3.5 million acres of land in the GDED District are dedicated to agriculture (about 30% of all land). Most agricultural land is used for ranching, though there is some dry farm land and a little irrigated acreage, as seen in the graph below.



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.

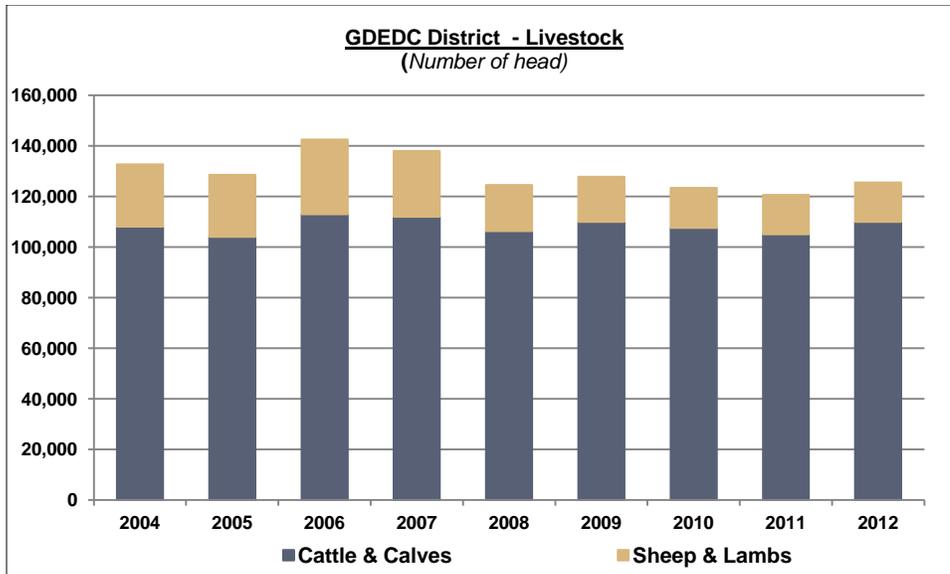
Although each county uses about the same amount of land for agricultural purposes, the number of livestock (cattle and sheep) is much higher in Carbon County. During the last several years, the GDEDC District has produced about \$140 million of agricultural products annually. Carbon County produces about 80% of that total, with the remainder coming from Sweetwater County. Total agricultural production is shown in the chart below.



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.



Like the rest of Wyoming, much of the agriculture production in the GDEDC comes from livestock. For the last several years, about 108,000 head of cattle and 16,000 head of sheep have been raised in the GDEDC District, as seen in the chart below. About 80% of the cattle and 50% of the sheep are in Carbon County, with the balance from Sweetwater County. Cattle production is relatively stable (depending on weather and market conditions), but sheep production continues to decline.



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.

### Mining (MIN)



Mining and Oil & Gas extraction are significant industries in the GDEDC District in terms of wages and tax base. Extraction of trona and coal are the main mining activities, although recently there has been interest in uranium mining since the price of uranium is now high enough to warrant *in situ* mining. Additionally, technological advances in oil and gas extraction have allowed that industry to grow significantly during the last ten years as well.

### Construction (CON)

The Construction (CON) industry in the GDEDC District is considerably smaller now than it was five years ago. There are three minor industrial sectors included in Construction:

- Construction of buildings
- Heavy & civil engineering construction
- Specialty trade contractors

Heavy and civil engineering construction has experienced the biggest reductions in its size, losing 60% of the number of jobs since 2006. Construction of buildings has also shrunk significantly (34%), while the number of jobs in the Specialty trade contractors industry has actually grown 7% since 2006 (especially in Sweetwater County).

### **Manufacturing (MFR)**

Manufacturing (MFR) is a significant industrial sector in the GDEDC District, particularly in Sweetwater County. The Manufacturing industry provides approximately 1,700 jobs that pay very high annual wages (\$76,000 - \$80,000). It generates 7% of all excise taxes in the GDEDC, and it represents 14% of the total property tax valuations in the GDEDC District. There are several minor industries included in Manufacturing, but three of them are dominant in the GDEDC District:

- Chemical manufacturing
- Nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing
- Machinery manufacturing

Most of the jobs in these three industries are directly related to trona/soda ash mining and production. However, one of the other big manufacturers in Carbon County is Sinclair Refinery, where about 300 workers refine oil into gasoline and other petroleum products.

### **Retail Trade**

About half of the jobs and wages, and a third of the excise tax collections, in the Retail (RET) economic sector are directly related to tourism and travel. Three minor retail industries are included in tourism and travel sector:



- Motor vehicle and parts dealers
- Food & beverage stores
- Gasoline stations

Of course, much of Retail economic activity is due to the heavily traveled Interstate 80. Yet, these sub-sectors represent about 39% of Retail industry excise taxes in Carbon County, but less than 33% of Retail industry taxes in Sweetwater County.

### **Transportation and Warehousing (TRA)**

The tables and charts above that present data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) represent 98% of all employment in the GDEDC District. QCEW data is highly reliable, in part because it is based on actual unemployment insurance forms that are filed by most employers with the government. However, one key industry omitted from the QCEW data is important for the GDEDC District: Railroads. The Rail transportation industry (which is included in the Transportation & Warehousing (TRA) sector) employs about 400 workers in the GDEDC District. Railroad workers earn, on average, \$106,860 annually in Wyoming, so this is an important industry for good jobs. However, railroad jobs and wages are not included in the QCEW data above because railroads use a completely separate unemployment insurance program.

Other industrial sub-sectors that are included in the Transportation and Warehousing (TRA) sector include:

- Truck transportation (especially important given the proximity to Interstate 80), which employs 1,020 workers in the GDEDC District, earning average wages of \$55,970 annually)
- Pipeline transportation (including natural gas and liquid petroleum products). In the GDEDC District, there are 224 jobs in this industry, and workers earn average annual wages of \$84,215.
- Support activities for transportation (snow plows, pilot cars, etc.)

Transportation is important because of Interstate 80, which is a major transportation artery connecting the east and west coasts, and the Union Pacific Railroad, which runs parallel to Interstate 80/Highway 30 through Carbon and Sweetwater Counties.

### **Health Care and Social Assistance (HEA)**

The Health Care and Social Assistance (HEA) industry in the GDEDC employs 1,453 workers, who are paid an annual average wages of \$31,340. This industry includes several sub-sectors, including:

- Ambulatory health care services (offices for doctors, dentists, physical therapists, etc.)
- Hospitals (data is not disclosed, because there is only one hospital in each county)
- Nursing & residential care facilities (data is not disclosed because there are very few facilities)
- Social assistance (includes child/youth services, seniors, food and shelter, vocational rehabilitation, day care, etc.)

### **Accommodation and Food Services (ACC)**

The Accommodation and Food Services (ACC) industry is especially strong in the GDEDC District, largely because of the presence of Interstate 80 in both counties. There are 3,212 employees in this industry in the GDEDC District. In Carbon County, about 14% of the workforce is employed in this industry, with about a 50/50 split between the two sub-sectors (i.e., there are 472 workers in the sub-sector of Accommodations, and 474 workers in the Food services and drinking places sub-sector). Sweetwater County has a smaller than expected percentage of workers (about 9%) in the Accommodation and Food Services industry. In addition, in Sweetwater County, 64% of these workers (1,448) are in the Food services and drinking places sub-sector, and just 36% (818) in the Accommodation sub-sector.

## **Relationship to Global Economy**

### **Local advantages and disadvantages**

The GDEDC District economy is very much tied to the global economy. Its strategic location along Interstate 80 and the Union Pacific Railroad, underscores the area's importance to interstate commerce. The trona field in Sweetwater County is one of the largest in the world, and the area provides much of the trona and soda ash needed by developing nations. Likewise, the electrical power produced in the GDEDC District (wind and coal-fired) keep the lights on for hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses throughout the western power grid region.

Recent interest in the exportation of coal from the Great Divide region may open new markets for this natural resource. The price of uranium is dictated by global markets, nuclear disarmament and foreign relations with former Soviet Union states. This creates a great deal of volatility for the uranium market.

Because of these ties to the global marketplace, the GDEDC District's economy can be particularly vulnerable to certain changes. Tariffs and international restrictions can quickly threaten the competitiveness of locally produced trona. Accordingly, it will remain important for Sweetwater County's trona industry to continue working with Wyoming's Congressional delegation to protect its profitability. If international restrictions are minimized, then the vast trona fields in the area will continue to be a very significant asset for the economy.

The trona field creates many good-paying jobs in the Mining sector, but also in the Manufacturing sector, where trona is processed into useful products. Given the proximity of trona production, it is unlikely that these manufacturing jobs will ever be outsourced or sent overseas. Thus, while the Manufacturing sector has been shrinking nationally for the last two decades, local manufacturers continue to provide skilled jobs that pay well.

The price of gasoline, and the taxes imposed on each gallon of gasoline or diesel fuel, can have profound impact on commercial truck traffic and railroad freight. Interstate 80 is also a key route for hunters, fishermen and vacationers travelling going to Wyoming's destinations and points beyond, so the local economy is affected whenever there is a significant change in gasoline prices.

Much of the GDEDC District is a high plains desert. Very little land is irrigated, leaving most agricultural interests dependant on the weather for water. Recent drought conditions will force many ranchers to cut back on the size of their herds. The drought will also greatly reduce the production of crops from farms. Unlike other agricultural areas that are irrigated (many using water that originates in Wyoming), the GDEDC District is hugely impacted – for better or for worse – by the amount of precipitation. In turn, nearly all Wyoming agriculture products are eventually shipped to other parts of the nation for processing, creating another tie to the global economy.

## **Factors that Affect Economic Performance**

### **State Laws**

There are several state laws that affect the local economy, particularly the energy sector. The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality Air Quality Division monitors air quality, and drilling activities in the Sublette County area have created air quality issues that could impact future industrial development there and in the Great Divide Region. The Industrial Siting Council is responsible for permitting and imposing mitigation measures for large-scale industrial projects.

### **Federal Law and Regulation**

The major industrial sectors of the Great Divide region are heavily regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency, Endangered Species Act and other regulatory entities involved in preserving the environment. Particular concerns noted include sage grouse protection, ozone restriction, and fracking rules. The large amount of BLM land in the region creates barriers to development due to costly and complex permitting processes. Federal regulations are thought to be one of the biggest threats to the region's energy industries.

Most industry leaders are concerned about the impact health care reform, Medicare and Medicaid changes will have on their bottom line.

### **Financial Resources**

Sweetwater County has a very healthy financial picture although many of the smaller communities have lost a local banking presence. For example, payroll checks exceeding \$40,000 per week are cashed at the local bar in at least one community.

### **Transportation Systems**

Much of Sweetwater and Carbon Counties have excellent ground access from I-80, as well as major rail connectivity, although the removal of rail sidings limits the accessibility of rail service. A number of long-haul fiber lines run along I-80 across both counties. Airport access is somewhat limited and/or lacking in commercial service. Natural geographic barriers separate western Carbon County from Eastern Carbon County with the major connecting State Highway closed through much of the winter due to winter weather conditions. I-80 experiences significant winter road closures as well and access between Green River and Rock Springs becomes difficult.

### **Energy Costs**

Electrical costs in the GDEDC District are low, as they are throughout much of Wyoming, making it more profitable for businesses to operate there. Likewise, natural gas prices are low (especially in the current market), which can especially be a benefit to manufacturers.

## **Taxes**

Mineral Royalty and severance tax increases and the loss of excise tax exemptions in certain industries poses concerns for industry leaders. This is offset by the distinction Wyoming has as a state income tax-free state.

## **Tax Base**

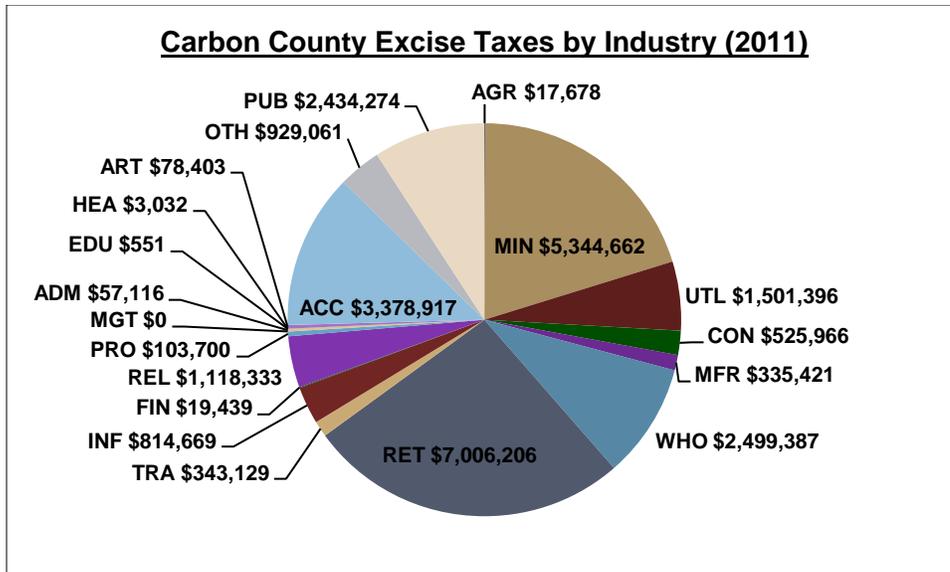
In Wyoming, there are a few tax revenue streams that support local government. Data is available for excise taxes (which are sales and use taxes), property taxes (locally assessed and state assessed), and mineral taxes. This data can be used to identify the size of industry, growth trends, types of natural resources being commercially produced, and the extent of private investment in the local economy.

## **Excise Taxes**

Excise taxes are assessed whenever a sale of a taxable good or service occurs, or when an item purchased tax-free is put into use by the buyer. In Carbon County, the excise tax rate is 5.0%, and in Sweetwater County, a 6.0% rate is charged. (Note: The higher rate is because Sweetwater County was collecting a sixth penny tax for special purposes in 2011). The Wyoming Department of Revenue collects the revenue and then distributes the local government share back to the counties where it was collected. Data is released on a monthly basis after counties receive their distribution, and broken down by the industrial sectors responsible for the tax. Accordingly, excise tax data can be helpful for obtaining detailed information on a timely basis to understand current economic conditions and trends.

### **Carbon County Excise Taxes**

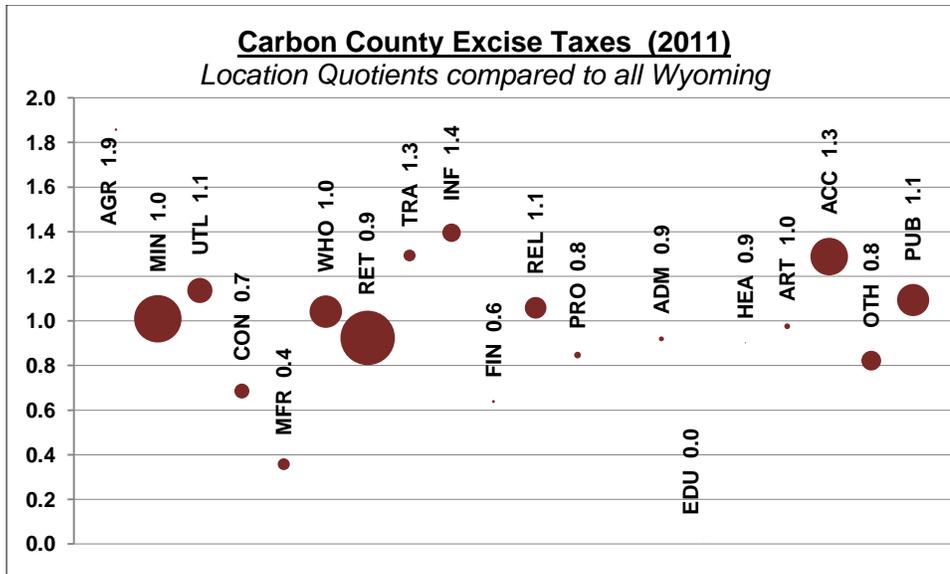
According to the Wyoming Department of Revenue data for tax distributions during calendar year 2011, Retail, Mining, and Accommodations & Food Service are the top three industry sectors in Carbon County. Those three sectors represented 59.3% of all excise tax distributions in Carbon County in 2011. All major industry sectors are presented in the graph below (industry abbreviations can be found in Appendix C).



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.

In 2010, those three top sectors represented 57.1% of the total, so they are strong and getting stronger. The Retail sector led the growth, adding \$538,692 more in collections (8.3% growth over 2010). However, that growth was offset by slow sales in the Real Estate (-\$244,379), Manufacturing (-\$223,633), and Utilities (-\$171,214). Decreasing sales is always a concern, but especially in those sectors that produce goods and services that can be exported (i.e., Manufacturing and Utilities).

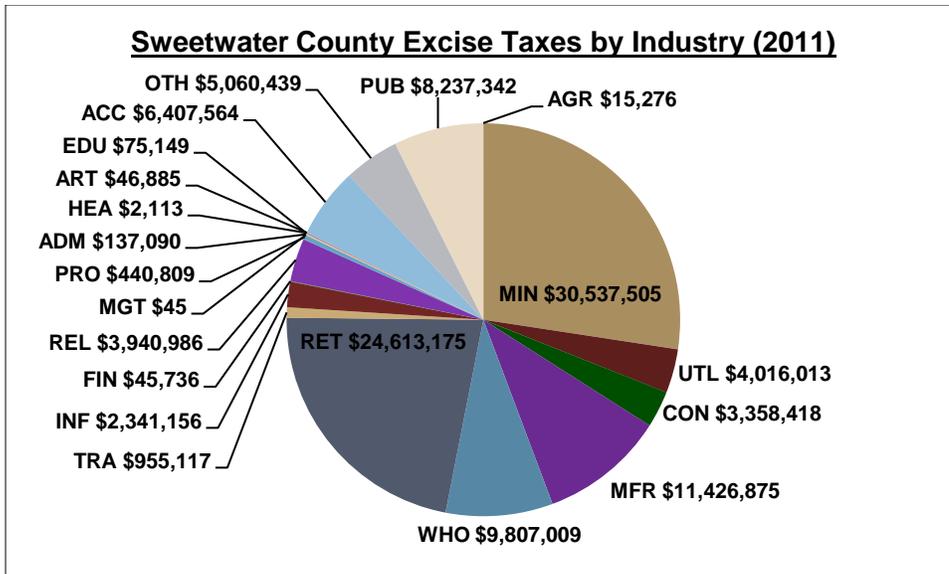
To evaluate relative strengths and weaknesses of each industry, Carbon County's excise tax data can be compared to the State. Comparing the percentage that each industry represents in the total taxes collected in Carbon County, to that same industry's percentage at the State level, reveals relative strength or weakness. Dividing the local percentage by the State percentage is called a location quotient. A location quotient less than 1.0 means that the industry is weaker at the local level than the State; and a location quotient of more than 1.0 means that the industry is stronger at the local level than the State. Carbon County's location quotients are presented in the graph below. The size of each bubble reflects the size of that industry in Carbon County.



Based on this location quotient analysis, we can conclude that Carbon County's economy is in some ways very similar to Wyoming's. The Mining, Utilities, Wholesale, Retail, Real Estate, Administration of Waste, Health, Arts, and Public Administration sectors are all similar in relative size to the Wyoming economy. The Transportation, Information, Accommodations & Food Service sectors appears to be significant strengths. Significant weaknesses would include the Construction, Manufacturing, and Education sectors.

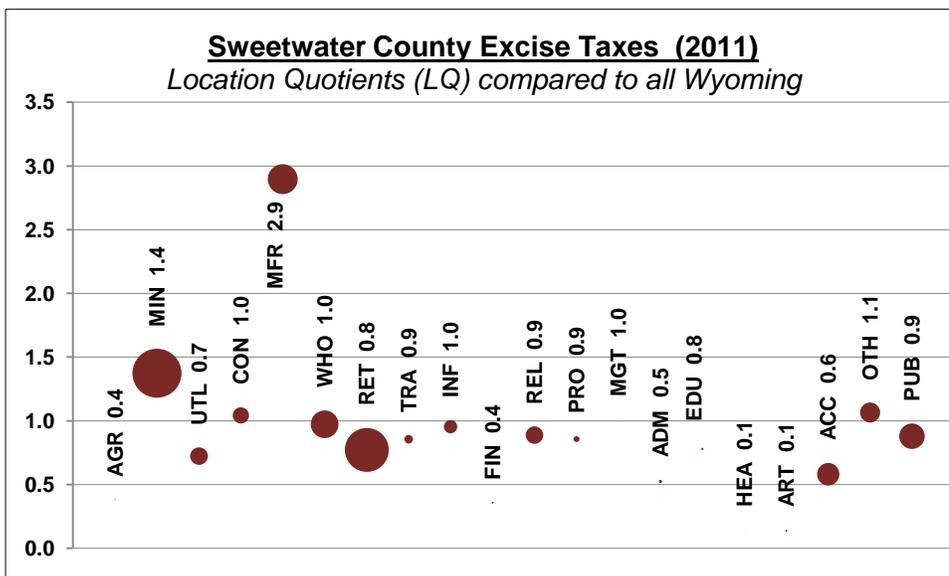
**Sweetwater County Excise Taxes**

According to the Wyoming Department of Revenue data for tax distributions during calendar year 2011, Sweetwater County's top three industrial sectors are Mining, Retail, and Manufacturing. Those three industries' sales represented 59.7% of the total excise tax collections in Sweetwater County in 2011. The previous year, those same industries generated 60.3% of the total. All three industries grew by more than 10% from 2010, so their reduction of the percentage of the total means that other industries are growing more quickly, which tells us that Sweetwater County is diversifying while it is growing. The total amount collected and percentage of the total for each industry is represented in the following graph.



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.

Comparing Sweetwater County's excise tax collections by industry to the State of Wyoming's collections allows us to better understand relative strengths and weaknesses. Location quotient analysis (see explanation above for Carbon County) allows us to see how each industry compares to that same industry on a statewide basis. The graph below provides the location quotient for each of Sweetwater County's major industrial sectors.



Based on this location quotient analysis, most industry sectors are very comparable to state averages. It is clear that Manufacturing (2.9) and Mining (1.4) are very strong sectors in Sweetwater County. Surprisingly, the Transportation, Retail, and Accommodations & Food Service sectors are not as strong as they could be,

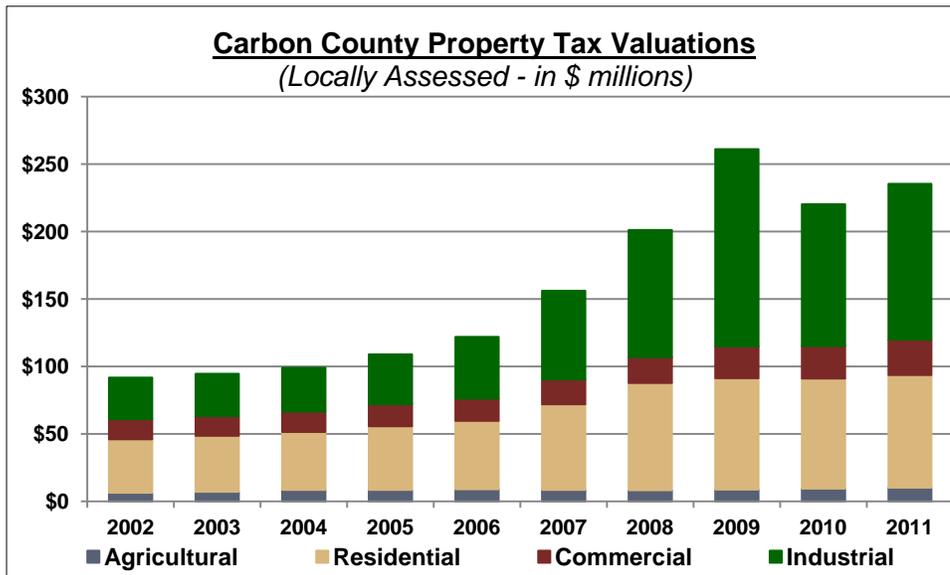
especially since Rock Springs is located on Interstate 80. Weaknesses also include the Financial, Health, and Arts sectors.

**Property Tax Values**

The responsibility for assessment of property taxes in Wyoming is split between local County Assessors and the State Department of Revenue. The value of agricultural, residential, most commercial and industrial property is assessed by County Assessors. The value of certain commercial transportation and utility properties (including electricity and telecommunications) are assessed by the State.

**Carbon County Property Tax Values**

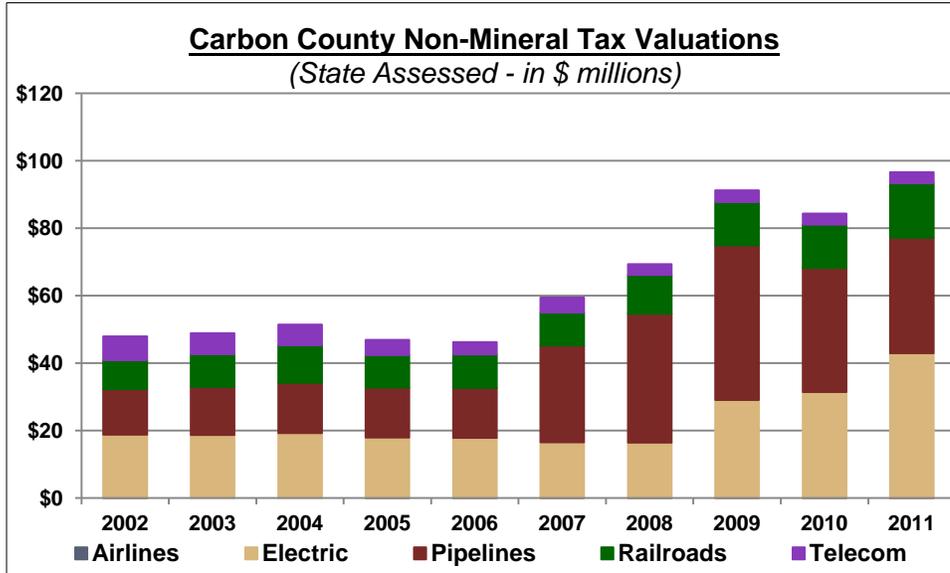
Carbon County has experience significant growth in its property tax base during the last ten years, particularly from industrial properties. Both commercial and industrial values are good indicators of private investment in the local economy. Since 2002, Carbon County’s industrial property valuations have grown by nearly \$85 million, and commercial valuations have grown by more than \$11 million. Some of this increase reflects inflation and higher valuations of existing property, but it also includes new investment from the private sector. In either instance, it reflects positively on the local economy. Locally assessed property valuations have risen by 157% since 2002, as presented in the graph below.



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.

The state-assessed property valuations in Carbon County have also grown during the last ten years. Even without growth in telecommunications (where values have dropped by 53.5% since 2002), total state-assessed property valuations have grown by 101.5% since 2002. This growth has been led by electric utilities (mostly wind farms) and new pipelines (for natural gas), which together account for \$48 million in new value – much of which is new construction. Airlines (not present) and railroads (no new growth) have not been factors during the last ten years in Carbon

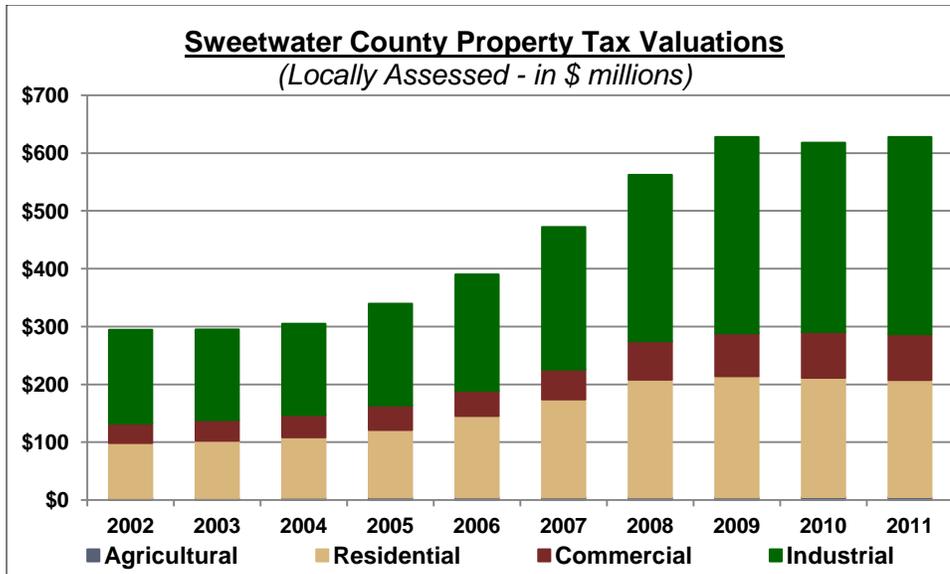
County. All state-assessed valuations from 2002 to 2011 are presented in the following graph.



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.

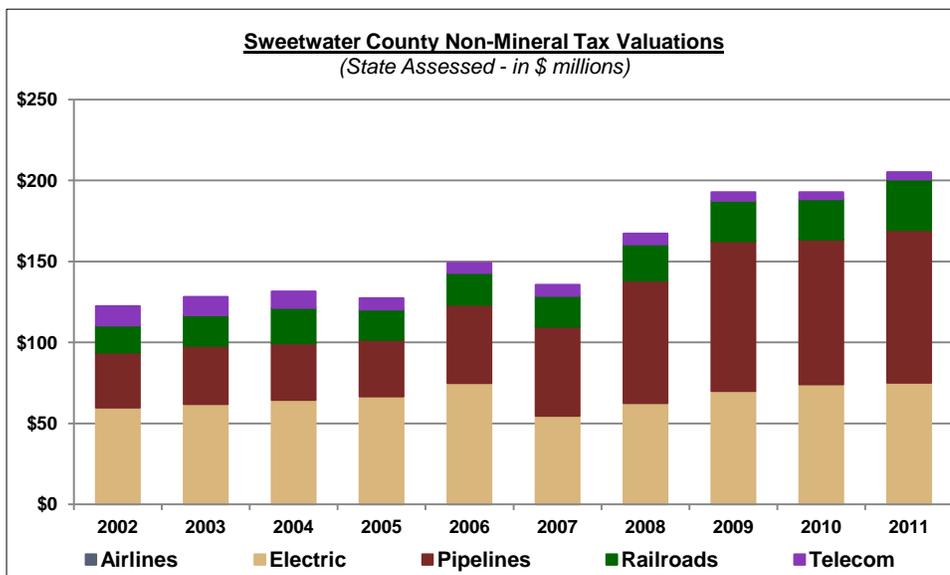
### Sweetwater County Property Tax Values

Sweetwater County property valuations reflect rapid growth from 2005 to 2009, and then a leveling off in its local economy. Like Carbon County, much of the growth during the last ten years has been driven by commercial and industrial property valuations. Commercial property valuations have risen \$46 million since 2002, and industrial property has risen by \$179 million. Residential property values have kept pace, rising 111.8% (or \$106.9 million) since 2002. Agricultural property taxes are minimally relevant to the local economy, representing less than 1% of the total locally assessed valuations. Total property valuations that are locally assessed have risen by 113.4% since 2002, as shown in the following graph.



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.

State-assessed property values in Sweetwater County have grown by \$82.8 million (or 67.7%) since 2002, led by growth in pipelines (mostly new natural gas pipelines). Airlines, which are certainly important from a transportation perspective, are not much of a factor for property taxes. However, like Carbon County, Sweetwater County has experienced growth in electric utilities. Railroad values have also risen, reflecting some new investment. The value of telecommunications has dropped 62.7% since 2002 (or about \$7.5 million), which means that the area is not enjoying new upgrades to facilities. All state-assessed property valuations are presented in the graph below.



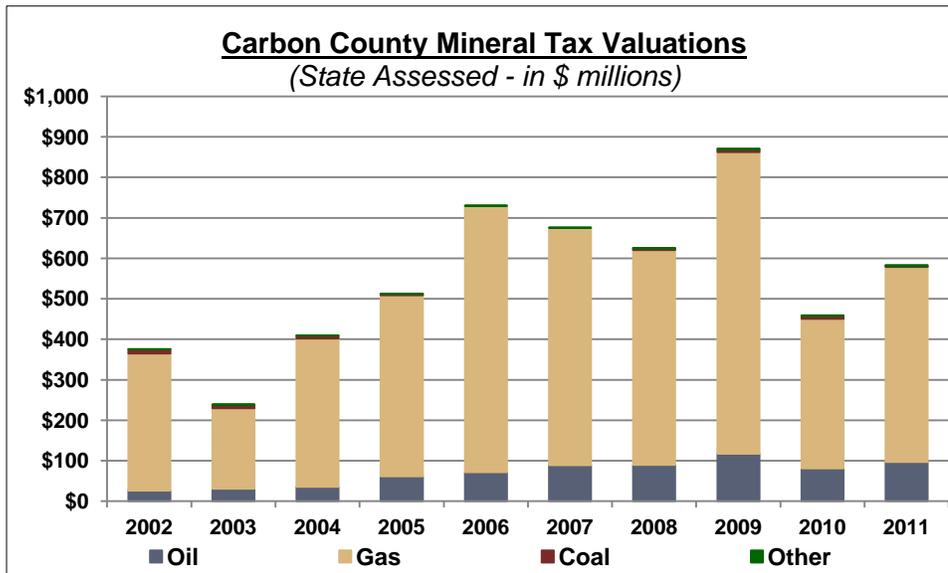
Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.

### Mineral Property Tax Values

For much of Wyoming, mineral taxes dwarf all other taxes. Mining, oil and gas extraction, and other mineral severance taxes represent much of state and local tax revenues. In general, mineral property values are based on the previous year's production, and so there is a one-year lag before the economic activity shows up in valuations. All mineral property values are assessed by the State. Unlike other property types, mineral properties are assessed at 100% of their value, which makes them even more significant.

### Carbon County Mineral Property Tax Values

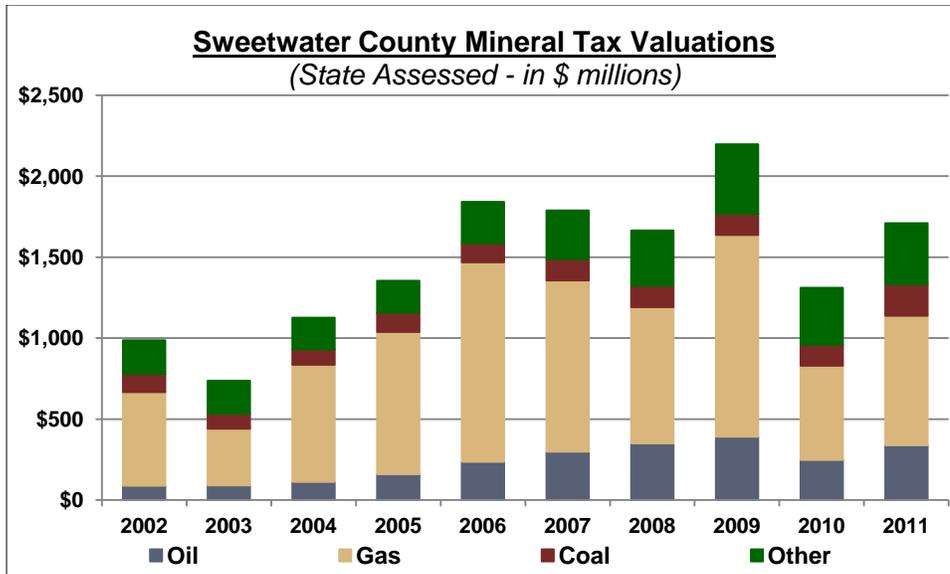
Natural gas production dominates Carbon County's mineral tax valuations, representing more than 80% of the county's mineral valuations every year since at least 2002. Gas production values have averaged \$472 million since 2002. Oil extraction, however, is becoming more significant. Oil property values have nearly tripled in size since 2002, adding more than \$70 million in value. Coal values have decreased to just \$2.4 million, and other minerals are valued even less. All mineral valuations for Carbon County since 2002 are presented in the graph below.



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.

### Sweetwater County Mineral Property Tax Values

Like Carbon County, gas property values dominate the mineral tax valuations in Sweetwater County. Much of the growth in Sweetwater County's economy can be attributed to natural gas production (more than \$801.2 million in 2011), although oil extraction has grown steadily (\$337.7 million in 2011). Coal production has grown very slowly and was valued at \$193.6 million in 2011. The "other" category consists mostly of trona or soda ash (\$377.6 million in 2011). All mineral tax valuations from 2002 to 2011 for Sweetwater County are presented in the graph below.



Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue.



# Quality of Life Factors that Affect Economic Performance

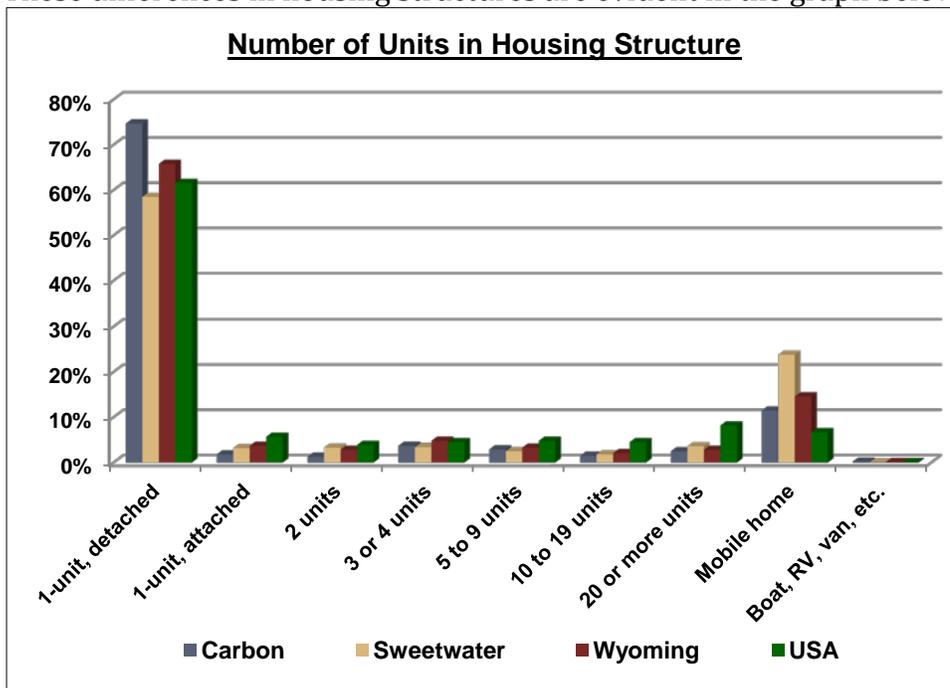
## Housing

### Housing Units

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's ACS data (2006-2010), the GDED District contains 26,539 housing units, of which 22,620 are occupied. There are 8,532 housing units in Carbon County. Since only 6,205 of them are occupied, there is a very high vacancy rate of 27.3%. By comparison, the national vacancy rate is 12.2% and the state vacancy rate is 14.7%. Sweetwater County has 18,007 housing units, of which 16,415 are occupied, leaving just 8.8% of its housing units vacant.



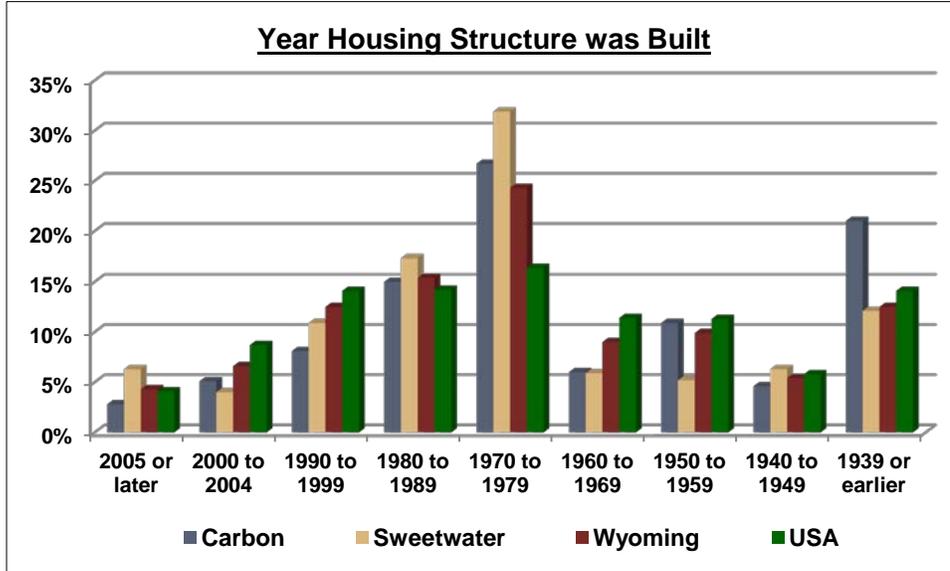
Most of Carbon County's housing units are located in single-family homes (74.7%). By comparison, just 61.6% of the nation's housing units and 65.8% of Wyoming's are single-family homes. Sweetwater has a lower percentage of single-family homes (58.5%), and a higher percentage of mobile homes (23.8%) than the other areas. These differences in housing structures are evident in the graph below.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data (2006-2010).

### Age of Housing Structures

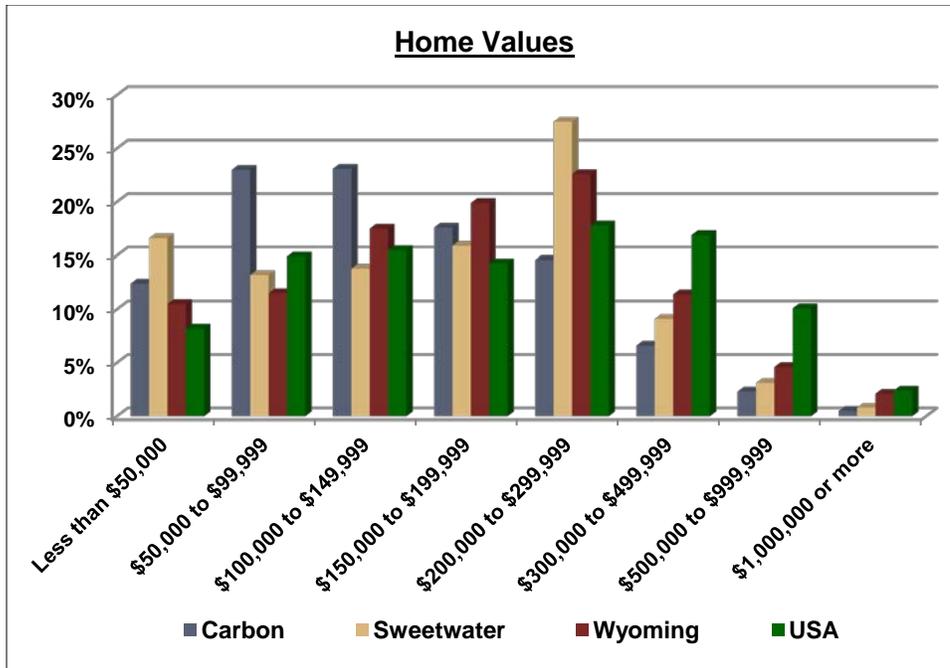
Like much of Wyoming, Carbon and Sweetwater Counties were growing significantly during the 1970's. Accordingly, many new housing structures were built during that decade. One other observation to make about the age of existing housing units is that more than 36% of Carbon County's housing units are at least 50 years old, as shown in the following graph.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data (2006-2010).

### Housing Values

Owner-occupied home values in the GDEDC District are lower than they are in Wyoming and the nation. Most of Carbon County's housing units (58.5%) are valued at less than \$149,000. Conversely, most of Sweetwater County's housing units (56.4%) are valued at more than \$150,000. These differences are evident in the graph below.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data (2006-2010).

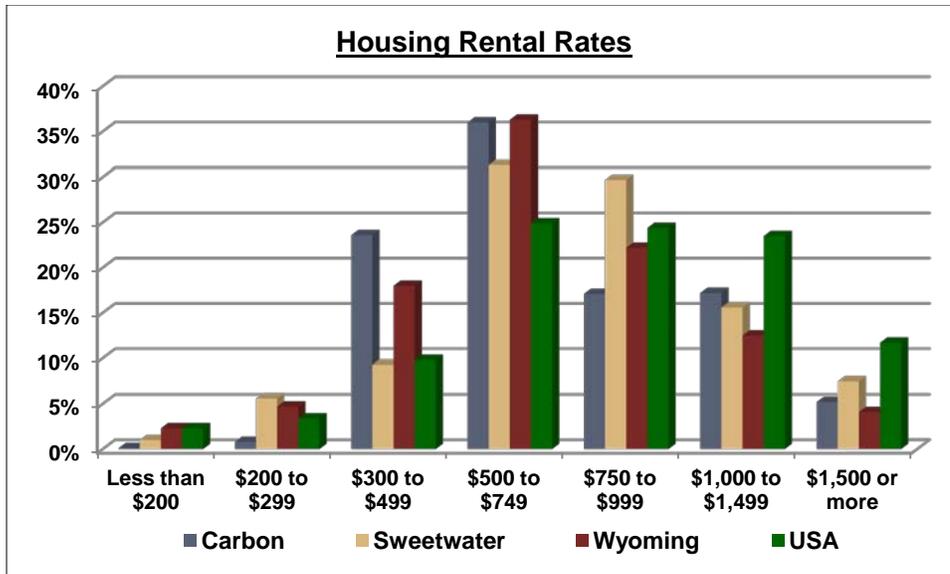
Given, these values, the median home values for Carbon and Sweetwater Counties are below state and national medians, as seen in the table below.

Home Values	Carbon	Sweetwater	Wyoming	USA
Number of owner-occupied units	4,424	12,096	152,806	76,089,650
Median value	\$129,100	\$169,500	\$174,000	\$188,400

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data (2006-2010).

### Housing Rental Rates

Most housing units (60.5%) in Carbon County cost less than \$749 per month, which is similar to rent in the rest of Wyoming. Housing unit rent costs more in Sweetwater County, where 52.8% of all units cost more than \$750 per month, which is similar to national rent patterns, as seen below.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data (2006-2010).

The number of occupied units paying rent and the median monthly rent amount for Carbon and Sweetwater Counties, the state, and the nation are presented in the table below.

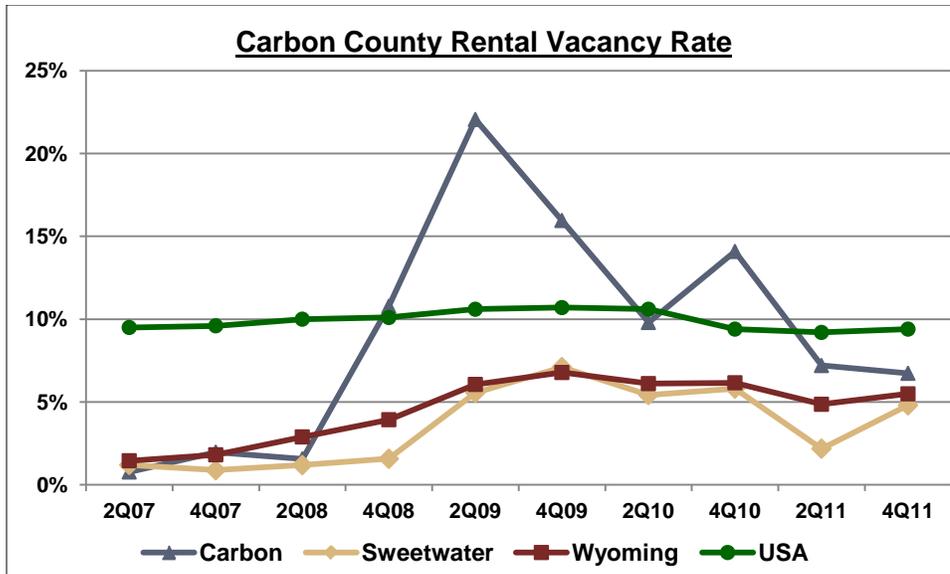
Housing Rent	Carbon	Sweetwater	Wyoming	USA
Occupied units paying rent	1,346	3,935	57,106	35,969,315
Median monthly rent	\$702	\$801	\$666	\$841

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS data (2006-2010).

### Rental Vacancies

The availability (vacancy) of rentable housing units in the GDED District rises and falls with a boom-bust cycle that mirrors mining and natural resource extraction in the area. Carbon County's rental vacancy rate peaked in the second quarter of 2009, but is now approaching the state average. In contrast, the vacancy rates for rental housing in Sweetwater County are usually lower than the state or national average. Further, it is common for rental vacancies to be under 2% in Sweetwater County during times of economic expansion, as seen below.





Source: Wyoming Community Development Authority, Wyoming Profile of Demographics, Economics, and Housing.

## Health Services

### Sweetwater County

The Wyoming Department of Health lists the following licensed healthcare facilities in Sweetwater County:

- Sweetwater Surgery Center - ambulatory surgical center located in Rock Springs
- Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County - a 99-bed, rural acute care facility located in Rock Springs. The facility is also a licensed End Stage Renal Dialysis Center.
- The Villa - a 27-bed Board and Care facility in Rock Springs
- Rocky Mountain Home Care - Home Health Agency based in Green River
- Sweetwater County Community Nursing Services - Rock Springs Home Health Agency
- Young at Heart Senior Citizen Center in Rock Springs also operates a licensed Home Health Agency



- Southwest Counseling Center - a Community Mental Health Center in Rock Springs
- Hospice of Sweetwater County - Rock Springs
- Castle Rock Convalescent Center - a 59-bed nursing home in Green River
- Sage View Care Center - an 82-bed nursing home in Rock Springs
- Castle Rock Hospital District operates a Rural Health Clinic based in Green River.
- Wamsutter - Health Care Clinic staffed by Carbon County Hospital. Full-time Physician's Assistant, physician, and chiropractor come one day per week. Provide services to 41 companies for drug testing, etc.
- Deer Trail Assisted Living Center and Memory Care recently opened its doors in Rock Springs.

### Carbon County

The Wyoming Department of Health lists the following licensed healthcare facilities in Carbon County:

- Memorial Hospital of Carbon County in Rawlins is a 25-bed, Critical Access Facility.
- Carbon County Public Health Nursing Service - a Home Health Agency based in Rawlins.
- Premium Health at Home, Inc. - a second Home Health Agency in Rawlins
- South Central Wyoming Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center - a 62-bed nursing home in Rawlins.
- Valley View Care and Rehabilitation Center - a 46-bed nursing home located in Saratoga.
- Rural Health Care Clinic in Baggs
- Medicine Bow Health Center - Medicine Bow
- Platte Valley Medical Rural Health Clinic - Saratoga



*Source: Wyoming Department of Health*

Hospice or at-home end of life care is not available in Carbon County, nor are there any Assisted Living or Adult Day Care facilities in Carbon County. However, Rawlins and Little Snake River Valley both recently completed feasibility studies for assisted living facilities in their communities and Rawlins is in the process of recruiting possible developers. The Carbon County Hospital has also suffered from very low customer satisfaction ratings in recent years due to a number of factors ([www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov](http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov))

## Schools

The Great Divide District has educational opportunities for elementary, secondary, and community college education.

### Sweetwater County School Districts

Sweetwater County contains two school districts that provide elementary and secondary education. Sweetwater County School District #1 has seen a 19% increase in enrollment in the past ten years while Sweetwater County District #2 has seen a 2% decrease in total enrollment.

Sweetwater County School District #1 has a current total enrollment of 5,296 in 2011 and serves Rock Springs, Farson-Eden, Wamsutter, and Superior. The district is made up of the following schools:

- Six - K-4 Elementary Schools in Rock Springs
- One - 5-7 Elementary School in Rock Springs
- One - 7-8 Junior High School in Rock Springs
- One - 9-12 High School in Rock Springs
- One - 9-12 Alternative High School in Rock Springs
- One K-8 Elementary/Middle School in Wamsutter
- One K-12 Elementary/Middle School/High School in Farson-Eden
- Wamsutter High School students are bused to Rawlins in Carbon County
- Superior closed its only school approximately eight years ago and all students are bused to nearby Rock Springs.

Sweetwater County School District #2 had a total enrollment in 2011 of 2,641 and provides elementary and secondary education opportunities to the west side of Sweetwater County. District #2 is composed of the following schools:

- Green River High School (grades 9-12)
- Expedition Academy Alternative High School (grades 10-12)
- Lincoln Middle School (grades 7-8)
- Monroe Intermediate School (grades 5-6)
- Four elementary schools
- Three rural schools (Granger, McKinnon and Thoman Ranch).

*Sources: Sweetwater County School District #1 and Sweetwater County School District #2*

### Carbon County School Districts

Carbon County also contains two school districts. CCSD1 has grown by a slight 2% margin over the past ten years while CCSD2 has decreased by 16%.

Carbon County School District #1, with a 2011 enrollment of 1,814 provides educational opportunities to elementary and secondary students. High school

dropout rates are high in the area at almost 25% in Rawlins in 2011. Schools and communities served in District #1 include:

- Bairoil School (a Sweetwater County community)
- Little Snake River Valley School
- Rawlins High School
- Rawlins Middle School
- Rawlins Cooperative High School
- Rawlins Elementary School
- Sinclair Elementary School
- CCSD#1 also serves the educational needs of high school students in the Sweetwater County community of Wamsutter.

Carbon County School District #2 (2011 enrollment of 640), serves the eastern Carbon County communities of Saratoga, Encampment, Riverside, Hanna, Medicine Bow and Elk Mountain. The District central office is located in Saratoga. Schools include:

- Elk Mountain Elementary
- Encampment K-12
- Hanna Elementary
- Hanna-Elk Mountain-Medicine Bow Junior/Senior High School (Hanna)
- Medicine Bow Elementary
- Saratoga Elementary
- Saratoga Middle/High

*Sources: Carbon County School Districts 1&2; Wyoming Department of Education*

### Western Wyoming Community College

The main campus of Western Wyoming Community College (WWCC) is located in Rock Springs. A smaller campus is also situated in Green River. WWCC had a full-time student enrollment of 5,023 in FY10, a 12% increase over FY09. 23% of those FTE's were enrollments in online courses, 15% were High School students enrolled in the concurrent program, and 5% of the FTEs came from workforce training credit courses. 34% of enrollees were non-credit students. WWCC places great emphasis on vocational training to match the necessary skill sets in the region's economy.



Source: Western Wyoming College

### Carbon County Higher Education

Carbon County Higher Education Center is a program offering concurrent high school/college credit, outreach affiliation through Western Wyoming College, Community College courses, vocational training, adult learning, and a "Kids' Campus" for childcare and preschool. A new dedicated vocational campus for the Carbon County Higher Education has recently been completed. Most facilities are located in Rawlins with the Little Snake River Valley Community Center providing outreach to southeast Carbon County.

### Educational, Cultural, and Recreational Facilities

In addition to the educational facilities described in the section above, the Great Divide region has a number of educational, cultural, and recreational facilities to enhance the overall quality of life.

### Sweetwater County

The Sweetwater Events Complex in Rock Springs is one of the greatest assets in Sweetwater County. With a 20,000 square foot exhibition building and a 42,480 square foot agricultural complex, the Complex can handle a variety of events from horse events, motor sports, concerts and other venues. Most recently, the Sweetwater Events Complex was the site of the National High School Finals Rodeo.



Sweetwater County has library branches throughout the county, a Community Fine Arts Center, the Rock Springs Civic Center, various museums, and other cultural opportunities.



Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area is famous for its world-class fishing, boating and family adventures. Expedition Island in Green River depicts the historic launching point for John Wesley Powell's epic explorations. And of course, the Green River itself is the focal point of that community and its attraction to outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Wild horses, sand dunes, and petroglyphs balance out the outdoor experience choices.

Rock Springs Family Recreation Center provides a variety of indoor recreation opportunities and Green River also has a community recreation center.

**Carbon County**

Carbon County offers a great deal for the outdoor recreation enthusiast including fishing, boating, ATVing, snowmobiling, hot springs soaking, hunting, chariot racing, and world class golf. The Rawlins Family Recreation Center is a city-owned facility serving the community.



Cultural history opportunities are available at a plethora of museums and historic hotels throughout the county, including the Grand Encampment Opera House, Grand Encampment Museum, historic Wyoming Frontier Prison in Rawlins, Wolf Hotel in Saratoga, the Virginian in Medicine Bow and the Elk Mountain Hotel in that community. Fort Steele is another stop on the history circuit.



Sweetwater and Carbon County also host a number of special event celebrations throughout the year. Carbon County and its communities have enjoyed international recognition as great places to hunt, fish, and otherwise enjoy outdoor recreational activities.

Carbon and Sweetwater Counties have two historic landmarks designated as National Historic Landmarks:

- Expedition Island (Green River)
- Tom Sun Ranch (Carbon County)

In addition, Carbon County has approximately 47 sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places and Sweetwater County has about 30.

Designated scenic byways including Battle Pass, Wild Horse loop and Miracle Mile allow for the viewing of scenic vistas by photographers, travelers and residents alike.



### **Public Safety**

Most of the smaller communities throughout both Sweetwater and Carbon County rely on contract agreements with the County Sheriffs for public safety. A few of them staff a part-time or full-time police officer. Most have volunteer fire departments with back up from

the larger city fire departments. In Sweetwater County, Rock Springs has a 35-personnel department, responding from three stations. Green River's Fire Department has three full time staff members and 30 volunteer firefighters. In Carbon County, the Rawlins Fire Department is a combination department with both paid, full-time staff members and volunteer members.



The Combined Communications Joint Powers Board of Rock Springs, City of Green River, and Sweetwater County consolidated multiple public safety answering points (PSAP), in 2012 and the Eden Valley recently constructed a new fire station in Farson.

Rawlins is also home to the Wyoming State Penitentiary, a high security/special needs prison with a current inmate count of 680.

### **Environmental Issues**

Because of the high level of oil and gas drilling in the region, hydraulic fracturing with chemicals to release these natural resources can pose serious environmental hazards to the water resources, environment, and residents. Sweetwater County has been impacted for many years with the after-effects of underground mining that led to mine subsidence, cave-ins, and other hazards.

Beetle killed pine trees and aspen fungus are endangering the forests in Carbon County from several perspectives. The lack of healthy timber creates lumber shortages, creates severe fire hazards and reduces the scenic panorama of forest land.



Most community landfills have seen observed levels of groundwater contamination and the cost of remediation and need for regionalization of municipal solid waste is an issue facing all Wyoming communities.

Flood hazards exist in low-lying areas of communities in southeastern Carbon County along the North Platte River. Of equal concern are drought conditions in 2012 that greatly impact stream flow and vegetation.

Opportunities exist throughout the region for the removal of "blighted" areas, whether abandoned or dilapidated housing, commercial, or industrial facilities. Brownfield sites still exist in many communities with underground storage tanks and other potentially contaminated soils from previous industrial activity without proper mitigation.

## State of the Regional Economy

A good understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) for the GDEDC District is important for planning.

### Strengths and Weaknesses

There are three key economic drivers in the GDEDC District:

- Energy
- Travel/transportation
- Trona/soda ash production

Production of energy (in all its manifestations) is the single largest driver of the GDEDC District's economy. Mining of coal, rail transportation of coal to power plants outside of the region, a coal-fired power plant, extraction of oil and natural gas, wind power, transmission lines, pipelines, and related services, and manufacturing all combine to form a large industrial cluster in the region. While there have been several "boom and bust" cycles for energy development, the diversity of resources (coal, oil, gas, uranium, and wind) provide a certain level of stability in the marketplace. Perhaps the biggest energy-related threat to the region is the low prices for natural gas that are currently dominating the market. The perceived environmental impacts of fossil-fuel energy development create political and legal threats to that key industry in the region. The Amber and Black Butte coal mine expansions and potential exportation will be constrained by continued over-regulation of the coal industry.



Wind power energy creates huge potential in the Great Divide region for development of this industry. The recently permitted Chokecherry & Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project is expected to be one of the wind energy developments in the world.



Travel and transportation are also key drivers for both Carbon County and Sweetwater County. Commercial truck traffic, tourism, and the general travel market keep Interstate 80 very busy. This traffic, in turn, drives the market for accommodations, restaurants, gas stations, and other industries that serve the travel market. Several factors can impact the travel and transportation economy: gasoline prices, weather, terrorism threats, forest fires, and other public safety issues.

The mining of trona and related production efforts is the most significant driver of Sweetwater County's economy, particularly when one considers the manufacturing and service sectors that are directly dependent on trona extraction and processing. Trona is rarely found in the large deposits that are present in Sweetwater County, which makes this industry cluster especially unique to the area.

Because the issue of retail leakage came up during this planning process (and because it was discussed in the previous CEDS document), it will be addressed here. As a whole, the GDED District's Retail sector is a strength. There are more retail goods sold in the area than local demand would support, which means that local businesses are effectively bringing in money from outside the area. There are pockets of retail leakage (especially in the small communities, where residents will travel to larger communities to shop). However, as a whole, Carbon and Sweetwater Counties are doing well with retail sales. Like most areas of Wyoming, the GDED District experiences retail leakage with sales of furniture, electronics, clothing, and restaurants. Yet, like most areas that are served by an Interstate highway, the GDED District has particularly strong sales of vehicles, auto parts, food (groceries and restaurants), and beer/alcohol.

In addition to those typical retail sales issues, it should also be noted that each county has unique retail leakage issues that are not apparent when looking at the broader GDED District economy. Carbon County, for example, is losing some of its retail market potential in automobile sales and building materials. Likewise, Sweetwater County has some retail leakage with general merchandise (department stores) and electronics/appliance stores. The most glaring retail leakage problem for both counties is restaurants. Each county is missing out on about \$8.5 million in restaurant sales each year.

The most significant weakness of the GDED economy is its lack of diversity. While the energy, travel/transportation, and trona industry clusters are very strong, there is not a lot of diversity beyond those three clusters. In fact, those three key industries continue to grow, adding new jobs and paying higher wages, while the lack of diversity in the economy continues to become a bigger problem, particularly when the "bust" side of the cycle in energy economies happens.

## **Opportunities and Threats**

There are numerous opportunities for the GDEDC District to grow its economy. Most important, the District would greatly benefit by diversifying. There are several steps that must be taken for the local economy to diversify:

### 1. Prepare infrastructure/shovel-ready sites.



Local communities in the GDEDC need to be ready for new development. Often, when businesses look to expand their operations, they look for an existing facility that meets their needs. At a minimum, they look for a construction site that has in place all necessary infrastructure (including roads, power, water, sewer, and telecommunications). Many Wyoming communities have developed business or industrial parks to prepare for development, using grant and loan funds from the Wyoming Business Council. Others have participated in the creation of a database of existing facilities (and land) that could potentially meet the needs of new businesses. The larger communities in the GDEDC District (including

Rawlins, Rock Springs, and Green River) could certainly improve their competitiveness with such efforts, as could any of the smaller communities.



Currently, there is a special opportunity for communities that have fiber telecommunication infrastructure. Since there are at least eleven “long haul” fiber routes cutting across the GDEDC District, it would be highly beneficial for communities near those lines (i.e., near Interstate 80 and Highway 30) to develop a technology park or, at a minimum, conduct the planning necessary to demonstrate a readiness to accommodate data centers and other telecommunication/technology companies. Telecommunication infrastructure improvements also enhance the opportunities for existing businesses to thrive.

### 2. Help existing businesses grow.

Along with infrastructure development, one of the most important economic development opportunities is to support the businesses that are already in the area. Programs that help them address workforce issues (training and education), identify new products or services, or that help them become more efficient are all needed.



3. Add value to existing industry clusters.

One of the best economic development techniques is to add value to existing industry clusters by developing businesses that enhance existing products, or that make a product more affordable by improving the supply chain. Thus, the trona industrial cluster could become stronger with more manufacturing of products made from trona. Similarly, new wind power



developments can drive the need for manufacturing of turbines or props, or perhaps a new training program for service technicians. There also seems to be a need for more hotel rooms and restaurants (particularly in Sweetwater County), which would enhance the existing travel and tourism industry. Sweetwater County, for example, has now established a foothold in the travel and tourism industry with the National High School Finals Rodeo. Adding more hotels and restaurants would allow more large events to take place there.

4. Entrepreneurship

Creating new businesses is the heart of economic growth. Yet, starting a new business can be a daunting task. To help entrepreneurs succeed, communities need to provide a good education, make financial capital available, and create an environment that fosters and supports creative productivity. Successful communities create an entrepreneurship program that includes public schools, community colleges, banks, and professionals. Some communities take a further step and establish a business incubator (a place where business start-ups can receive necessary assistance in a sheltered environment). Business incubators seem to have the most success when they are narrowly targeted to meet the needs of a particular industry (e.g., telecommunication/data technology).



## 5. Recruitment

The pinnacle of economic development is to recruit new businesses. Recruitment cannot be accomplished, though, without first having in place the other keys to economic development (discussed above). However, there appear to be several potential recruitment opportunities available to the GDEDC District, including:

- Wind power generation farms (especially in Carbon County)
- Coal-to-liquid facility (such as the DKRW effort in Carbon County)
- High-end tourism (Saratoga and other Carbon County sites)
- Data centers and other technologies dependent on fiber telecommunications (both counties)
- Tourism events/activities (both counties)
- Lodging facilities and RV parks (especially Sweetwater County)
- Full service and fast food restaurants (both counties)

In addition to opportunities, external forces also present a number of threats. The success of the agriculture industry is hugely dependent on the weather. The weather can also threaten the travel and tourism market. More significant, though, are the threats that are inherent in an unstable global economy.

The energy industry is in a state of flux. With aggressive legal actions, environmental activists have successfully prevented the construction of new coal-fired power generation facilities, citing protections in the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). NEPA and other government regulations have also largely prevented the construction of new gasoline refineries in the United States since the 1970s. Technological advances in drilling have greatly increased the supply of natural gas to the point where prices have fallen so far



that production has nearly come to a halt. Some of those drilling techniques (particularly hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking” as it has become known) may threaten the purity and safety of aquifers, from which domestic water supplies are drawn. Development of wind power generation is highly reliant on the continuation of large tax breaks and other government subsidies that may end soon. These threats all require an active response from the energy industry and the communities that rely upon them.

## **Partners for Economic Development**

Various organizations in the State of Wyoming represent potential partners that can work together with county and municipal agencies to pursue future development opportunities in Sweetwater and Carbon counties.

### **Economic Development Organizations**

The Great Divide District contains one regional economic development organization in Carbon County. The Carbon County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) is based in Rawlins. It is a non-profit organization supported by funds provided by county and municipal agencies, as well as various private companies. This organization encourages economic investments throughout Carbon County and its 10 municipalities. A board of directors comprises a wide variety of small business representatives; the board also includes membership of county and municipal representatives. An executive director staffs and supports the efforts of this organization.

Sweetwater Economic Development Association is no longer active, and therefore there is a growing gap in economic development services for Sweetwater County communities. Specifically, there is a lack of "ready to go" information to support efforts of Chambers of Commerce and/or communities when economic development opportunities or requests arise for location assistance, an inventory of sites, or other local support.

The Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce Enterprise Committee has a goal of staying apprised of legislation, regulation, and land issues that affect local industry. Rock Springs and Green River both have Main Street/Downtown Development Authority/Urban Renewal agencies that focus on downtown economic development.

In Carbon County, the Rawlins Main Street/Downtown Development Authority and the Saratoga-Platte Valley Chamber of Commerce in Saratoga promote economic development within specific communities.

### **Statewide Economic Development Support**

On a regional and statewide basis, the Wyoming Business Council (WBC) provides guidance and technical assistance to local communities pursuing economic development. A regional office of the WBC is located in Rock Springs where the WBC Southwest Wyoming regional director, Region 1 Small Business Development Center representative is based. A field representative, based in WBC's central office in Cheyenne, provides technical support to Carbon County and municipal governmental agencies, the Carbon County Economic Development Corporation, as well as chamber of commerce organizations in Rawlins and Saratoga. Carbon County clients that are referred to the Small Business Development Center are served by the SBDC office in Laramie. Other more specialized personnel provide occasional technical support for selected economic development issues such as telecommunications, minerals, transportation, and investment readiness.

### **Chamber of Commerce Organizations**

Four Chamber of Commerce organizations operate within the Great Divide District. These include:

- Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce;
- Green River Chamber of Commerce;
- Saratoga-Platte Valley Chamber of Commerce; and,
- Rawlins-Carbon County Chamber of Commerce.

Each organization is guided by a board of directors and supported by professional staffs. These organizations are traditionally more involved in regional marketing and the promotion of specific events or projects. However, professional staff and various members participate in the evaluation of economic development issues and opportunities. Chamber organizations in Carbon County tend to work independently and have limited coordination with the Carbon County Economic Development Corporation.

### **Sweetwater County Events Complex**

The Sweetwater County Events Complex promotes Sweetwater County and the Events Complex for a wide variety of events throughout the year such as trade shows, entertainment, and other special events. The Events Complex includes an exhibit hall, grandstands, several smaller halls, outdoor and indoor arenas, a midway, speedway, as well as moto-cross and BMX tracks, and RV facilities.

### **Community Planning and Development Departments**

The Sweetwater County Planning Office in Green River, as well as municipal planners at the City of Green River and City of Rock Springs provide guidance concerning local land use and related zoning issues.

The Carbon County Planning & Development staff facilitates and provides guidance concerning local land use, zoning and similar entitlement processes for development related applications that require County approval. Development applications typically include building permit applications, Conditional Use and Zone Change applications and Subdivision requests. The Planning Staff is responsible for understanding and administering the adopted Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Resolution and Subdivision Regulations and prepares staff reports for consideration by the Planning & Zoning Commissioners and Board of County Commissioners. The planning staff also provides technical assistance to the Carbon County Economic Development Cooperation concerning potential economic development opportunities.

The City of Rawlins Community Development Director offers similar information, as well as technical assistance concerning potential economic development opportunities.

Saratoga's Public Works Director/Engineer/Building Official provides land use and zoning information and provides building inspection services.

## **Resources for Economic Development**

County and municipal agencies support the operation of the economic development organizations in the Great Divide region.

Funds for project planning by CCEDC and within Sweetwater County are often supplemented by grants obtained from the Wyoming Business Council since this organization is the granting agency that administers HUD Community Development Block Grants in the State of Wyoming. The U.S. Small Business Administration provides financial and management assistance for new and existing entrepreneurs. Wyoming Small Business Development Centers represent a partnership of the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Wyoming Business Council. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Program, for Wyoming is based in Casper. This agency provides business and industrial loans, rural business enterprise grants, rural technology and cooperative development grants, rural economic development loans and grants, and housing loans. The Wyoming Industrial Development Corporation (WIDC) in Casper assists small businesses in structuring financial packages that utilize various financial sources and programs.

## **Vision: Where do we want to be?**

This section initially summarizes the process used by the Great Divide Economic Development Coalition (GDEDC) Board of Directors and staff to establish its economic goals and priorities. Subsequently, economic goals for the Great Divide district are presented along with the priorities determined by the GDEDC Board. The action plan identifies anticipated projects under each goal. Each project has a defined schedule for project completion, as well as assigned responsibilities for project implementation.

### **Goal Identification**

The GDEDC Carbon County representatives met in May 2012, the Sweetwater County representatives met in July 2012, and finally the entire board came together in October 2012 to update the priorities and goals that had been established in 2002 and to discuss and identify a vision statement and goals for future economic development. After considerable discussion, the GDEDC adopted the vision statement and goals presented in subsequent sections.

### **Economic Priorities**

The priorities associated with each goal were determined through an individual goal prioritization process that was developed and administered by Community Builders, Inc. (CBI). CBI developed and distributed a goal evaluation sheet that was transmitted to each individual member of the GDEDC Board. The sheet provided a convenient method for the rating the importance of each goal. This method was used to enable each board member to make his or her decisions independently. Each board member was requested to assign a numerical value, i.e., 1 to 5, for each goal. Board members were advised that:

- A rating of 1 would indicate a goal that has limited importance; and
- A rating of 5 would indicate that the goal was considered very important.

To determine the priority of each goal, the cumulative scores of all Board and staff participants were calculated and divided by the number of participating Board and staff members to determine an average score for each goal. The highest average score was assigned the number one priority. Descending priorities were established by identifying the next highest average score. A summary of the economic goals and related priorities determined from this process are summarized in the next section.

## Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives

### **Vision Statement**

The Great Divide Economic Development District will have a strong, diversified economic base achieved by retaining, expanding, and attracting new private and public commerce and industry with an emphasis on maintaining a high quality of life for all residents.

### Setting Priorities

GDDED rated each of the goals according to the following instructions:

*Instructions: Please review each goal in the context of how important you believe the goal is needed in the Great Divide planning area to accomplish the Coalition's adopted Vision Statement. Prioritize each of the following goals by assigning a rating from 1 to 5 for each goal. A rating of 1 indicates a goal that has limited importance; 5 would indicate you consider the goal very important.*

To determine the priority of each goal, the ratings were totaled. They were then prioritized. The highest priority was given to the goal with the highest score, and so on.

GOAL	TOTAL POINTS	PRIORITY
Encourage the development of infrastructure that helps attract and support economic investment and a stable tax base.	30	1
Manage impact of growth and potential adverse effects of large scale industrial projects on existing community resources and quality of life.	29	2
Encourage value-added industrial and commercial operations that make use of available natural resources, manufactured products or other features.	28	3
Encourage cooperative economic development programs that bring together the resources and efforts of the Great Divide District.	27	4
Support and promote the activities of employers to help sustain the economic benefits gained from existing investments.	26	5
Recruit workforce and promote training and educational programs that enhance workforce skills that generate a livable income.	25	6
Improve the financial viability of commercial retail activities and other small business services.	23	7
Enhance the physical attractiveness of our communities and counties to help encourage future economic investment.	23	7
Develop environment for delivery of quality healthcare.	22	9
Actively participate in the development of supportive private and public policies.	22	9
Promote an integrated travel and tourism industry that develops and coordinates the promotion of visitor attractions, accommodations, and other retail services.	21	10

Based upon recommendations of community leaders, the insights of the general public, and the experience of the consultant team, CBI developed an action plan that includes common project goals for both Sweetwater and Carbon Counties as well as individual projects within each county. The action plan was reviewed, discussed, and adopted by the Great Divide Economic Development Coalition Board on October 29, 2012.

## **Action Plan**

**Goal A: Encourage the development of infrastructure that helps attract and support economic investment and a stable tax base.**

### ***Objective A1: Increase community accessibility to broadband technology and fiber.***

*Scope:* Promote Carbon and Sweetwater County as a place of business for companies that develop and market technologies for various broadband applications. Identify and promote locations where data centers and other tech-based businesses can be established. Provide information to technology company leads. Identify areas where wireless cell phone coverage and high-speed internet services are lacking and evaluate opportunities for new 4G tower installation.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County Economic Development Corporation, Rock Springs Enterprise Committee, Saratoga/Platte Valley Chamber of Commerce and Wyoming Business Council, private businesses.

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

### ***Objective A2: Identify locations suitable for the establishment of industrial and commercial operations within each community and make them shovel-ready with all infrastructure to site.***

*Scope:* Encourage local communities to identify developable sites where industrial and commercial operations can readily be established. Site characteristics should be documented and incorporated into a community land use database and/or GIS. Local communities should extend available road access, water distribution, broadband service, sewer collection, and other improvements to potential light industrial and commercial areas. Business or industrial parks with shovel-ready sites should be developed.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Municipal planning commissions, City and Town Councils, Carbon County EDC, as well as municipal community development and public works representatives

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing.

### ***Objective A3: Explore public transportation opportunities throughout the region for shopping, healthcare, and recreation access.***

*Scope:* Evaluate public transportation funding opportunities to develop bus system for scheduled service throughout region to access necessary goods and services from smaller communities to retail, healthcare and recreational centers.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* WYDOT, GDEDC, Sweetwater County STAR, Senior Citizen Centers.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2015

**Objective A4: Encourage expanded air passenger service as well as potential development of additional commercial service for business access.**

*Scope:* Offer reasonable incentives and negotiate terms and conditions with interested airlines. Evaluate expansion capabilities of existing local airports for larger volume and size of aircraft served as well as additional commercial airline service. Explore possible rental car vendors to provide access to area by fly-in business and industry representatives. Pursue development of terminal buildings as appropriate.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Airport managers, counties, municipalities.

*Schedule for Completion:* ongoing

**Objective A5: Explore potential for development of existing or new rail spurs to access natural resources and value-added industries.**

*Scope:* Work with Union Pacific Railroad to evaluate ability to utilize existing or new rail spurs for transportation of value-added products.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Union Pacific Railroad, Carbon County EDC, GDEDC.

*Schedule for Completion:* ongoing

**Objective A6: Evaluate water and sewer needs for unincorporated population centers as well as incorporated communities in Great Divide.**

*Scope:* Based upon proposed commercial investments and anticipated residential growth in most areas of the Great Divide region, forecast potential water, and service demands for communities. Pursue and obtain funds for the planning, design and construction of community water and wastewater systems, including transmission and distribution lines, treatment and collection facilities, where needed.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Wyoming Water Development Commission, various communities, County Planning and Development offices, Water and Sewer Districts

*Schedule for Completion:* Evaluation and analysis - 2013; funding acquisition - 2014; construction - ongoing

**Objective A7: Evaluate ability to provide natural gas services to unincorporated population centers as well as incorporated communities in Great Divide region.**

*Scope:* Work with natural gas suppliers to evaluate economic viability of providing natural gas in communities without natural gas service. Encourage natural gas suppliers to extend franchise natural gas services.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Natural gas suppliers; various communities; CCEDC and GDEDC.

*Schedule for Completion:* Initial analysis - 2014

**Objective A8: Address lack of drainage and flood potential in smaller communities without paved streets or adequate drainage facilities.**

*Scope:* Analyze deficiencies in smaller communities throughout Great Divide Region to improve stormwater control and drainage. Evaluate cost of developing paved streets in higher traffic areas, curb, gutter and sidewalk and/or open ditches to move excess water away from private property.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Various communities, public works and engineering departments; Wyoming Department of Homeland Security (Flood Control).

*Schedule for Completion:* Begin evaluation - 2013; implementation - ongoing.

**Objective A9: Develop secondary access routes where limited roadway access presents public safety and emergency service and transportation circulation problems**

*Scope:* Analyze areas where physical and physiological barriers to emergency access exist because of geographic barriers (rivers or mountains); railroads; winter weather road closures and similar concerns. Explore funding opportunities for development of alternate routes where feasible; obtain funding and create improved traffic circulation routes.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Various communities and counties, public works and engineering departments; Wyoming Department of Transportation.

*Schedule for Completion:* Begin evaluation - 2013; implementation - ongoing.

**Goal B - Manage impact of growth and potential adverse effects of large-scale industrial projects on existing community resources and quality of life.**

**Objective B1: Develop a unified strategy to address the impact on health and human services of sudden or prolonged population growth that may occur due to energy or other industrial development.**

*Scope:* Areas within the Great Divide Region are subject to environmental, social, or economic stresses of such nature that the total local resources available are not sufficient to alleviate them. Great Divide communities should come together to develop a strategy to help mitigate the adverse effects of large-scale industrial development on health and human services, including health care services, social services, mental health, juvenile justice issues, public safety, fire protection, etc.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon and Sweetwater County Commissioners, various municipalities, Wyoming Industrial Siting Council.

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

**Objective B2: Continue to maintain and replace aging transportation, water, sewer and other infrastructure and facilities.**

*Scope:* The additional workers from continued energy development will add incremental stress to an already burdened infrastructure in the Great Divide Region. Streets, water mains, sewer mains, and recreational facilities must all be maintained and replaced while expanding infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population base. In recognition of aging water and sewer, distribution lines (40+ years old in many cases), pursue funding for replacement of aging infrastructure. Great Divide communities will focus on devoting adequate resources to the maintenance and replacement of existing infrastructure in all communities and throughout the region.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Various communities and counties, public works and engineering departments; Wyoming Department of Transportation, Wyoming Water Development Commission.

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

**Goal C - Encourage value-added industrial and commercial operations that make use of available natural resources, manufactured products or other features.**

**Objective C1: Emphasize integrated project planning to best prepare for large project development throughout Great Divide District.**

*Scope:* Develop a timeline of all known projects on the horizon and communicate between and among all stakeholders. Specific projects include, but are not limited to:

- Wind Energy Projects -
  - Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project (Carbon County) - 2,000 - 3,000 megawatt wind farm consisting of roughly 1,000 wind turbine generators.
  - Middlewood Wind Power Project - proposal for 270 wind turbines in southeastern Wyoming.

- Dry Creek Wind Power Project - 150 wind turbine, 351 MW proposal in southeastern Wyoming
- Sand Creek Wind Project - Big Wind Power Company considering wind energy project located in Shirley Basin area in northern portion of Carbon County
- Simpson Ridge Energy Project also in planning stages.
- Coal Technology -
  - Medicine Bow Fuel & Power Coal-to-Liquids Project -DKRW, partner with Arch Coal (Carbon County) - advanced fuels greenfield mine mouth coal to gas project.
- Natural Gas Projects -
  - Continental Divide - Creston Natural Gas Development Project (Carbon County);
  - Atlantic Rim Natural Gas Field Development Project (Carbon County) - Anadarko Petroleum Corporation exploration in Atlantic Rim area of Washakie Basin.
  - Desolation Flats Natural Gas Development Project
  - Seminoe Road Gas Development Project
  - South Baggs Area Natural Gas Development Project
- Uranium Mining and Processing Projects -
- Lost Creek Uranium In-Situ Recovery Project - UR Energy project at the Lost Creek site, south of Bairoil in Sweetwater County has been permitted and construction has begun.
- Electric Transmission -
- Gateway West Transmission Line Project - 1,100 miles of high voltage line between Glenrock and Melba, Idaho. Projected construction to begin in 2015.
- Gateway South Transmission Line Project - part of PacifiCorp's Energy Gateway Transmission Expansion; 400 miles of high-voltage line in southeastern Wyoming.
- TransWest Express Transmission Line Project - extra-high-voltage direct-current electric transmission system. designed to deliver clean, sustainable power to more than 1.8 million homes in densely populated areas of the country (impacts in both Carbon and Sweetwater County). 2014 anticipated start-up date for construction.
- Overland Transmission Project - above-ground 560 mile AC or DC transmission project between southern Idaho and eastern Wyoming being developed by Jade Energy Associates, LLC.
- Zephyr Transmission Line Project - 3,000 MW line from Wyoming to satisfy load growth in southwest. Duke American TransmissionCompany is developer.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County EDC, Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce Enterprise Committee; Wyoming Industrial Siting Commission; Great Divide EDC.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2013 and beyond.

**Objective C2: Explore options for development of regional landfill and evaluate recycling waste to fuels plan and facility feasibility in Great Divide region.**

*Scope:* Work with private developers and existing solid waste management operators to consider regional landfill options in each county. Explore feasibility of recycling of waste to fuels and utilization of waste to generate power.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County EDC; Sweetwater and Carbon County Planning and Development; Great Divide EDC; Solid Waste Management Facility operators. Wyoming DEQ.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2013 and beyond.

**Objective C3: Support recycling efforts to aid future economic development.**

*Scope:* Set goals for diverting wastes from landfill disposal, recycling wastes, reusing wastes, and providing safe waste disposal solutions for residents within the region. Reduction, reuse, and recycling are critical strategies that need to be implemented in order to effectively manage waste. Recycling efforts can supply valuable raw materials to industry, create jobs, and reduce the need for new landfills thereby conserving valuable open spaces.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Solid Waste Management Facilities, municipalities, GDEDC, Wyoming DEQ.

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

**Objective C4: Explore development of natural gas pump stations for alternative fuel source for automobiles.**

*Scope:* Work with private vendors and existing natural gas suppliers to create better supply and therefore better demand for clean, natural gas-driven automobiles.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County EDC; Carbon and Sweetwater County Planning and Development; Great Divide EDC, Governor's office

*Schedule for Completion:* 2013 and beyond.

**Objective C5: Encourage the preservation of open spaces and traditional agricultural industries critical to the region by seeking out value-added livestock industry applications.**

*Scope:* Work with ranchers and investors to explore Wyoming-branded agricultural products.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* GDEDC, Carbon County EDC, Wyoming Rural Development Council; Wyoming Business Council - Agricultural Marketing Division; Wyoming and Carbon County Stockgrowers Association, Sweetwater and Carbon County Woolgrowers Association, Wyoming Stockgrowers Agricultural Land Trust (WSGLT)

*Schedule for Completion:* 2013 and beyond.

**Objective C6: In Sweetwater County, encourage the development of potential value-added operations that are based, in part, upon the use of raw materials such as trona, natural gas and coal, as well as various locally manufactured products, e.g., fertilizers and baking soda, that are already produced by existing industries.**

*Scope:* Identify potential value-added industrial operations and other commercial business opportunities in Sweetwater County. Work with representatives of natural gas, coal, trona, fertilizer and other industries to help refine a list of potential value-added opportunities and encourage feasible private investments with targeted companies.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Local industry representatives, Wyoming Business Council

*Schedule for Completion:* 2015

**Objective C7: Support the development of wind energy facilities in Sweetwater County.**

*Scope:* Support wind energy projects and activities where appropriate. Pursue appropriate opportunities associated with wind energy projects, including the ongoing repair of wind turbines and manufacture of parts for repair. Determine incentives that could be offered to attract wind energy suppliers to locate in Sweetwater County, including tax increment, land write downs, assistance with relocation costs, etc.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Sweetwater County, Sweetwater County Planning and Development, various municipalities.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2013 and beyond.

**Objective C8: Support the continued development of wind energy facilities in Carbon County.**

*Scope:* Work with Power Company of Wyoming in the development of the 1,000-tower Chokecherry/Sierra Madre project. Continue to support other wind energy projects and activities. Pursue all opportunities associated with wind energy projects, including the ongoing repair of wind turbines and manufacture of parts for repair. Determine incentives that could be offered to attract wind energy suppliers to locate in Carbon County, including tax increment, land write downs, assistance with relocation costs, etc.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County EDC; Carbon County, Carbon County Planning and Development, City of Rawlins.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2013 and beyond.

**Objective C9: Plan and prepare for imminent power generation and transmission facilities in Carbon County.**

*Scope:* Explore potential interests of DKRW Medicine Bow Coal to Liquid Gasification Plant to support development of a mine-mouth plant in the Hanna Basin. Encourage future power transmission opportunities with PacifiCorp, TransWest Express, Duke Energy and other potential power transmission companies, and the Wyoming Infrastructure Authority. Develop inventory of all projects in one location.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County EDC, various municipalities, Carbon County Planning and Development.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2014

**Objective C10: Encourage the continued development of the sawmills in Encampment and Saratoga or the establishment of a small business that could use biomass or wood chips derived from sawmill operations.**

*Scope:* Work with sawmill owner to help identify financial and grant opportunities that would make the establishment of a facility more attractive, including equipment and the exploration of alternatives related to shipping of the raw products such as use of the railroad spur in county. Evaluate other business opportunities that might be created through the use of wood chips derived from sawmill operations.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County EDC; Forest Service; Union Pacific Railroad; communities; Laramie Economic Development Corporation; University of Wyoming Market Research Center.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2013 and beyond.

**Goal D - Encourage cooperative economic development programs that bring together the resources and efforts of the Great Divide District.**

**Objective D1: Explore potential roles, responsibilities and need for countywide economic development organization in Sweetwater County.**

*Scope:* Evaluate need for a countywide economic development organization to replace or recreate previous organization(s) in Sweetwater County. If concept seems poised to provide positive return on investment, identify roles and responsibilities of such

organization. Sweetwater County should also support community economic development organizations. This strategy should be coordinated, scheduled, and carried out in close cooperation with private industry and communities.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Great Divide Economic Development Organization, Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce Enterprise Committee, Green River Chamber of Commerce, Frontier Community Alliance, Rock Springs and Green River City Councils, Sweetwater County Commissioners

*Schedule for Completion:* 2014

**Goal E - Support and promote the activities of employers to help sustain the economic benefits gained from existing investments.**

**Objective E1: Maintain and establish a business retention and expansion program with representatives of primary industries and larger employers.**

*Scope:* Establish an executive leadership group that meets monthly and includes representatives from local government, schools, energy industry, counties, major employers, BLM, public works, downtown, and tourism. Contact industry and larger employer representatives on a quarterly basis to encourage and identify potential local investments and new employment generation, as well as issues that may present barriers to potential investments. An overall intent of this objective is to ensure that larger employers are aware that the community recognizes their importance to the local economy and is prepared to support future investments in the community. Establish committees in key areas of implementation - business park development, complementary industry expansion, financial tools, housing, visual appearance, etc.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce Enterprise Committee; Carbon County EDC, Great Divide EDC, various municipalities, Chambers of Commerce.

*Schedule for Completion:* Continue as an ongoing activity

**Objective E2: Provide technical assistance to local small business owners.**

*Scope:* Provide guidance to small business owners concerning marketing, financial management, site and facility planning, procurement, inventory control, and other day-to-day issues associated with local business operations.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Chambers of Commerce, Main Street/URA/DDA and Wyoming Small Business Development Center, Carbon County Economic Development Corporation.

*Schedule for Completion:* Establish program in 2013 and continue as an ongoing activity.



**Objective E3: Encourage workforce housing development at all levels.**

*Scope:* Conduct a housing needs assessment for Great Divide District. Work with developers and community leaders to provide for housing at all levels to meet workforce housing, low-income housing, and higher end housing needs. Redevelop existing deteriorating and condemned properties with higher-density development. Demolish blighted structures. Facilitate development of condo/townhome/apartment complexes in larger communities that is mid- to higher-end housing that will meet the quality needs of highly skilled/high earning workers. Annex additional land as necessary in order to provide room for more subdivision growth within designated growth areas.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Private developers, industry representatives, municipalities, counties, Carbon County Economic Development Corporation, Community Development Departments.

*Schedule for Completion:* Housing Needs Assessment - 2013 and continue as ongoing activity.

**Objective E4: Support affordable and available childcare options in Carbon County.**

*Scope:* Identify potential funding sources for childcare facility development. Identify potential sites and public/private partnerships to develop sustainable childcare facilities.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Private childcare providers, municipalities, county, Wyoming Business Council, Department of Family Services.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2013 and continue as ongoing activity.

**Goal F - Recruit workforce and promote training and educational programs that enhance workforce skills that generate a livable income.**

**Objective F1: Determine if available workforce training needs are being met in Great Divide region and work with education institutions to better meet those needs if necessary. Improve educational opportunities, including vocational training skills. Continue to make training opportunities available for small business entrepreneurs.**

*Scope:* Provide leadership training opportunities to local small business entrepreneurs. Make use of local resources such as regional Chambers of Commerce to provide training. Establish partnerships between education institutions and industry representatives to ensure that workforce training is being adequately provided in region. Coordinate and determine training needs with existing and potential employers. Design, schedule, and provide training programs that are relevant to employer needs, as well as ongoing and anticipated economic trends in the regional economy. Promote and assist with

development of Carbon County Higher Education Campus in Rawlins and coordinate with Western Wyoming College for industrial skills training.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County EDC, SBDC, Carbon County Higher Education; Department of Workforce Services; Carbon County and Sweetwater County Public Schools, DDA/Main Street programs, Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce Enterprise Committee; Great Divide EDC, Western Wyoming College

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

**Objective F2: Continue to provide hospitality and customer service training to retail and accommodations workforce.**

*Scope:* Continue to provide customer service training opportunities to those entering or considering working in the retail trade and visitor accommodations sectors. Continue to obtain local sponsors to help finance the cost of training materials and provide certification to those whom successfully complete training.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Chambers of Commerce; DDA/Main Street programs, Lodging Tax Travel and Tourism Boards.

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

**Goal G - Improve the financial viability of commercial retail activities and other small business services.**

**Objective G1: Renovate selected buildings in various Great Divide communities for retail trade and services, as well as office space.**

*Scope:* Identify selected buildings in Great Divide communities (including Green River and Rawlins), that may be suitable for renovation and commercial use. Determine interest and capability of the landowner(s) to invest in facility renovation. Seek federal, state, and municipal funds that can be used to support a portion of the planning, design, and construction costs, including use of tax increment funds for redevelopment.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County Economic Development Corporation, municipalities, private landowner (s), Wyoming Business Council, Rawlins DDA/Main Street, Green River Main Street/Urban Renewal Agency, Chambers of Commerce

*Schedule for Completion:* 2012-2013

**Objective G2: Prepare a redevelopment plan for selected commercial areas and sites in Great Divide communities.**

*Scope:* Develop a strategy for the redevelopment of selected commercial areas and sites that attempt to help revitalize commercial retail services in the downtown and entryway corridors of the communities. The strategy should consider needed physical improvements, opportunities for building renovations, promotional opportunities for businesses, vehicular parking, and public and private financing opportunities.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Various municipalities, Green River Main Street/Urban Renewal Agency, Rawlins DDA/Main Street, Rock Springs Main Street, local businesses.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2014 - planning; implementation ongoing.

**Objective G3: Continue exterior restoration of community historical downtown areas in Great Divide communities to stabilize and increase future commercial investments.**

*Scope:* Continue to organize volunteer efforts to cleanup building exteriors in historical downtown areas. Continue replacement of windows in selected buildings, exterior painting, and other exterior restoration efforts.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Rock Springs Department of Community Development, Rock Springs Community Development Committee, Downtown Advisory Board, Museum Board, Green River Main Street/URA, Rock Springs Main Street, Rawlins DDA/Main Street, Rawlins, Historic Preservation Commissions, small Town Councils and staff, as well as local businesses and landowners in the downtown areas.

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

**Objective G4: Increase the retail selection available in the City of Rawlins to enhance shopping opportunities throughout Carbon County.**

*Scope:* Develop an action plan to recruit and/or expand businesses fitting profile, especially grocery stores, convenience stores, and gasoline stations. Educate and market what goods and services are available locally. Develop appropriate economic incentives to attract retail business to the area. Create an economic recruitment/marketing flier showing strengths and opportunities. Encourage business incubation at the Rainbow Teton Entrepreneur Center or at other sites. Continue to support Downtown Development Authority.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County EDC; Rawlins DDA/Main Street, Rawlins Chamber of Commerce.

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing for implementation of action plan.

**Objective G5: Study and develop plan that addresses retail leakage in all Great Divide communities.**



*Scope:* Conduct retail leakage study to identify target businesses and markets that could be captured in communities. Develop an action plan to recruit and/or expand businesses fitting profile, especially grocery stores, convenience stores, and gasoline stations. Develop appropriate economic incentives to attract retail business to the area.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County EDC; Rawlins DDA/Main Street, Rawlins Chamber of Commerce, Rock Springs Main Street, Green River Main Street/URA, Sweetwater County, Chambers of Commerce, small towns.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2013 for retail leakage study; ongoing for implementation of action plan.

**Goal H - Enhance the physical attractiveness of our communities and counties to help encourage future economic investment.**

***Objective H1: Encourage residents to clean up unsightly areas within their communities that discourage potential private investment.***

*Scope:* Explore ways to encourage property owners to cooperate in maintaining their property. Evaluate programs like weed and seed and targeted clean-ups programs to move beyond a complaint driven code enforcement approach to a more proactive enhancement and development approach. Enforce municipal and county nuisance ordinances and adopt new regulations where necessary.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Municipalities, community organizations and local businesses.

*Schedule for Completion:* Initial campaign - 2013; subsequently, continued enforcement of ordinances and, at least, one voluntary cleanup campaign per year.

***Objective H2: Encourage public and private investments to eliminate unsightly properties and public rights-of-way, especially I-80 gateways into communities.***

*Scope:* Improve the appearance of gateways to communities using Enhancement Grants from Wyoming Business Council and increasing visual amenities, such as wayfinding signs and banners, and coordination with community branding and logos. Evaluate alternative incentives and code enforcement methods that can be used to encourage the voluntary cleanup of unsightly properties by landowners and commercial businesses. Organize more tree plantings and other landscaping enhancements within each community.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Natural Resources, Carbon County Economic Development Corporation, Main Street/DDA, Carbon and Sweetwater County Commissioners, and municipal town and city councils, WyDOT.

*Schedule for Completion:* Initial campaign (2013); continued long-term maintenance.

**Goal I - Develop environment for delivery of quality healthcare.**

**Objective I1 - Conduct feasibility studies and needs assessments for healthcare clinics in all communities with healthcare gaps.**

*Scope:* Evaluate healthcare gaps and possible solutions in all communities through an integrated analysis of healthcare needs. Evaluate possible partnerships with hub medical facilities in region. Focus on the provision of mental health and substance abuse prevention and wellness programs.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon and Sweetwater County Hospitals; County Health Departments; Carbon and Sweetwater Counties; various municipalities.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2014 and beyond

**Objective I2: Conduct an economic analysis and feasibility study of Aging in Place Options for the Great Divide region.**

*Scope:* Evaluate and review assessments and opportunities, and determine the general approach to project development for a variety of long-term care housing and aging in place needs in the region.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Municipalities; existing nursing homes and assisted living facilities, other long-term care facilities.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2014

**Objective I3: Improve image and quality of care of Carbon County Hospital by creating environment to recruit quality physicians and specialists to community.**

*Scope:* Quality of life concerns for potential physicians and specialists (and their spouses) to the Carbon County area poses a barrier to effective recruitment. Identifying unique features and attractions can help revitalize the image of Carbon County. Improvements must be made to the level of care provided at Memorial Hospital of Carbon County in order to improve user confidence.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Municipalities; Carbon County Hospital, Carbon County EDC; Carbon County.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2017

**Goal J - Actively participate in the development of supportive private and public policies.**

**Objective J1: Continue to monitor and promote policies that influence ongoing public investments.**

*Scope:* Encourage a long-term presence of State and federal agency operations in Great Divide region. Provide relevant information to the Governor, State legislature, State agencies, and the U.S. congressional delegation.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* GDEDC

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

**Objective J2: Continue to monitor and promote policies that influence ongoing private investments.**

*Scope:* Encourage public policies that help sustain and expand private investments associated with agriculture, mining, oil and gas production, and timber industries. Promote multiple land use strategies. Provide relevant information to the Governor, State legislature, State agencies, and the U.S. congressional delegation. Review building and development regulations to be more user friendly for business and industrial development. Develop "one-stop" shopping development package for construction and guidelines and regulations.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* GDEDC, municipalities, CCEDC, Wyoming Industrial Siting Council.

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

**Objective J3: Identify and zone more areas for mixed-use development.**

*Scope:* Encourage new residential development that is compact, mixed-use, and pedestrian friendly to create livable neighborhoods and healthy vibrant communities. Evaluate current land use and zoning codes and modify if necessary to allow for reinvestment and infill development in established areas of the community.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* community planning commissions, City Councils, private developers.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2014

**Goal K - Promote an integrated travel and tourism industry that develops and coordinates the promotion of visitor attractions, accommodations, and other retail services.**

**Objective K1: Market and promote cultural and recreational amenities that help sustain the attractiveness of local communities.**

*Scope:* Establish a regional visitor industry council that merges the efforts of both Carbon and Sweetwater counties. The regional council should annually develop a strategy for marketing regional outdoor recreational opportunities, events, accommodations, and retail services. This strategy should be coordinated, scheduled, and carried out in close cooperation with private industry, local chambers, and communities.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Representatives of visitor industry councils, Chamber of Commerce organizations, and accommodations in Sweetwater and Carbon counties, Wyoming Office of Tourism, GDEDC.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2014

**Objective K2: Establish and/or expand integrated visitor attractions where visitors can see and learn about historic and geological features of the region.**

*Scope:* Develop a visitor attraction strategy that incorporates the historic and unique geological features of the region. When funds become available, prepare site and facility plans, facility management, operation and maintenance plans, interpretative plans, and overall promotional programs that market the integrated attractions. Construct site and facility improvements and organize program management and promotion.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Sweetwater and Carbon County, Bureau of Land Management, Grazing Association, Wyoming Office of Tourism, municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Carbon County Visitor Council, Sweetwater County Joint Travel and Tourism Board

*Schedule for Completion:* ongoing

**Objective K3: Improve and/or expand regional opportunities for outdoor recreation and local events.**

*Scope:* Encourage future private and public investments for the development of expanded or new recreational opportunities, including the development of facilities, trails, amenities, and signage.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County Visitor Council, Sweetwater County Joint Travel and Tourism Board, ; Chambers of Commerce, Town of Saratoga, City of Green River, Town of Superior and other municipalities.

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing

**Objective K4: Designate and improve a recreational corridor along US 191 and State Highway 530 to establish a loop tour around Flaming Gorge National Recreational Area.**

*Scope:* Install signage and other improvements to better direct visitors to existing attractions in and around Flaming Gorge National Recreational Area.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce and Green River Chamber of Commerce, Sweetwater County Joint Travel and Tourism.

*Schedule for Completion:* 2015

**Objective K5: Establish a convention or multi-event center in Rawlins.**

*Scope:* Determine market demand and facility requirements; prepare conceptual site and facility plan. Evaluate future facility management options and anticipated costs of future management, operation and maintenance. Obtain funding for preparation of detailed design plans and preliminary construction cost estimates, and construction of the facility.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* City of Rawlins in cooperation with the Rawlins-Carbon County Chamber of Commerce, Carbon County Fair Board, and Carbon County Visitor Industry Council

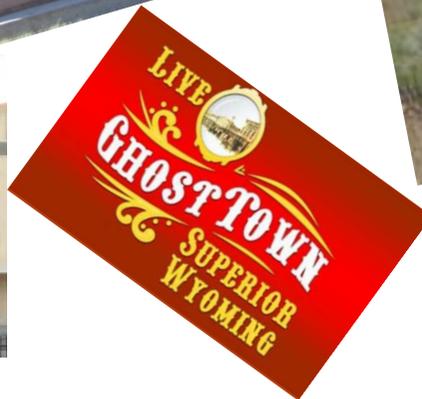
*Schedule for Completion:* Conceptual planning - 2016

**Objective K6: Create an identify package/brand usage and style for Carbon County.**

*Scope:* Complete a Carbon County Marketing, Branding and Design Action Plan similar to a document recently created by the City of Green River. Identifying unique tourism-related features and attractions can help revitalize the image of some parts of Carbon County.

*Primary Responsibility for Implementation:* Carbon County Convention and Visitor Bureau; Chambers of Commerce, Town of Saratoga

*Schedule for Completion:* Ongoing



# **Evaluation**

## **Performance Measures**

### **General Reporting Requirements**

Once USEDA has approved the final Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs), grantees funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (USEDA) are required to submit annual reports to USEDA. The annual report should include:

- any necessary revisions to the most recent CEDs report;
- a report on the previous year's economic development activities and document any
- significant changes in economic conditions;
- an evaluation of the effectiveness of meeting goals using performance measures outlined in the CEDs document; and,
- A schedule of economic development projects for the coming year using the same format presented in the CEDs.

The CEDs guidelines, dated November 2002, require the preparation of a new, updated, or revised CEDs document once every five years. The revision may be made sooner if the GDEDC board believes that the CEDs is inadequate due to significant changes in regional economic conditions or other circumstances, e.g., natural disaster.

### **Performance Measures**

There are a variety of approaches that can be used to measure the performance of plan implementation. To ensure effective progress toward the implementation of the CEDs, the progress associated with the completion of each project will need to be continually monitored. Coordination between local economic development partners will also be important to ensure steady progress and appropriately respond to project issues that may delay the completion of specific projects.

CBI recommends the following approach to ensure the completion of objectives under each goal presented in the CEDs.

### **Monitoring of Project Schedules**

The executive director of the Carbon County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) should be responsible for the monitoring of economic development projects in Carbon County. Sweetwater County will need to determine how best to monitor project schedules without a countywide economic development board. Spreadsheets, e.g., Excel, or other project management software that can reflect tasks, time, and the progress made toward project completion should be utilized.

### **Coordination of Project Completion with the GDEDC Board**

CCEDC (and the designated Sweetwater County entity), will also prepare quarterly reports that provide a brief status report of the progress made for each CEDS goal and related projects. These reports would be transmitted to the GDEDC board for their review at the end of each quarter, e.g., end of March, June, September, and December. Following their review, the GDEDC board will meet to discuss the progress made toward the completion of each goal. If the event that progress is not in keeping with scheduled outlined in the CEDS, the GDEDC board will either provide staff with its expectations for project completion and/or direct staff to obtain temporary help, additional staff, or consultant assistance to expedite project completion.

### **Monitoring of Project Completion by Other Economic Development Partners**

CCEDC and the designated Sweetwater County entity will also help expedite and encourage the completion of projects that are assigned to other economic development partners. Monthly meetings will be scheduled with appropriate partners, e.g., chamber of commerce directors, unless they are already attending monthly CCEDC board meetings. During the monthly meetings, representatives of economic development partner organizations will be requested to provide a status report for completion of specific economic development projects. When completion dates are out of the authority or control of the county, elected leaders of GDEDC board members will be requested to intervene. Elected leaders on the GDEDC board will subsequently meet with appropriate parties to discuss late project schedules, project management inter-agency problems, or other issues that may be impacting the completion of scheduled projects. These meetings will end with a specific commitment toward project completion.

### **Preparation of Annual Reports**

The executive director of CCEDC and the designated Sweetwater County entity will meet, at least, once per year to discuss and schedule the completion of the annual report. Preparation of the annual report will be a shared responsibility between both counties. The CCEDC executive director will, however, assume the lead responsibility for this effort.

# APPENDIX A

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

### **Why is Public Participation Important?**

A good listening process is critical, as it will lead to a more accurate description and understanding of regional economic development needs, the proposed CEDS strategy and its potential partners. Support can only come from people and organizations that are involved because they understand the importance of the project and their relationship to it. Effective public engagement is always important, but it also is becoming a legal requirement to secure resources. For example, The Wyoming Business Council now requires community and economic development grant applicants to "inform and educate the public and business community to the greatest extent possible about the proposed economic development project utilizing a variety of techniques and media."

### **What Makes a Successful Participation Plan?**

- **Results-focused** - The plan process needs to stick to a schedule. The end goal should always be kept front and center.
- **Informative** - the process should help educate people about choices and implications, building on an understanding of the project.
- **Transparent** - the process needs to be open and accessible to the public so that people can safely express themselves and see how their ideas are integrated.
- **Engaging for people** - the process needs to be interactive and interesting
- **Find the Champions** - It is vital to identify the champions in the community who are trusted to carry the vision. This group includes those with influence, interest, intelligence or who are impacted in some way by the issue.

### **What is the Project?**

The Great Divide Economic Development Coalition (GDEDC) has received a CDBG planning grant that is matched by Sweetwater and Carbon Counties. The purpose of the grant is to update the current Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) done in 2002 for Carbon and Sweetwater Counties, and compile the materials required to keep the official designation from the EDA as an economic development district. The GDEDC has contracted with Community Builders, Inc. (CBI), to update the 2002 CEDS.

A CEDS is a result of a local planning process designed to guide the economic growth of an area and is a prerequisite for designation as an economic development district and to qualify for Economic Development Administration (EDA) assistance under its public work,

economic adjustment and planning programs. The Great Divide CEDS has not been updated in nine years and needs updated to continue with EDA requirements.

The CEDS document will describe the problems, needs, potentials and resources of the area; present the community's vision and goals; set the direction for an action plan; establish priority programs and projects for implementation; and outline the standards for the annual evaluation and update of the process.

### **Who are the Stakeholders?**

- 1) Elected and appointed officials
  - a. Sweetwater County Commissioners – Wally Johnson, Chairman
  - b. Carbon County Commissioners – Terry Weickum, Chairman
  - c. City/Town Councils -
    - i. Bairol – Doug Reaser, Mayor
    - ii. Granger – Lenore Perry, Mayor
    - iii. Green River – Hank Castillon, Mayor
    - iv. Rock Springs – Carl Demshar, Mayor
    - v. Superior – Richelle Johnson/Sarah Page, Mayors
    - vi. Wamsutter - Colleen Eifealtdt, Mayor
    - vii. Baggs – Kathy Staman – Mayor
    - viii. Dixon – Matt Feldmann – Mayor
    - ix. Elk Mountain – Morgan Irene, Mayor
    - x. Encampment – Greg Salisbury, Mayor
    - xi. Hanna – Tony Poulos, Mayor
    - xii. Medicine Bow – Kevin Colman, Mayor
    - xiii. Rawlins – Kenneth Klouda, Mayor
    - xiv. Riverside – Ronald Bedwell, Mayor
    - xv. Saratoga – John Zeiger, Mayor
    - xvi. Sinclair – Michelle Serres, Mayor
  - d. City/Town Staff
  - e. City and County Planning and Zoning Commissions
  - f. State Elected Officials – Senators –
    - i. Stan Cooper, SD 14; John Hastert, SD 13; Larry Hicks, SD 11; Marty Martin, SD 12
  - g. State Elected Officials – Representatives –
    - i. Joseph Barbuto, HD 48; Stanley Blake, HD 39; Donald Burkhart, HD 15; Bernadine Craft, HD 17; Kathy Davison, HD 20; John Freeman, HD 60; Allen Jaggi, HD 18; Jeb Steward, HD 47
- 2) Community Groups/Boards
  - a. Chambers of Commerce
  - b. Main Street/URI/DDA Boards
  - c. Airport Boards
  - d. Key Business Representatives
  - e. Key Industry representatives

f. Key Labor groups

3) Economic Developers

- a. Carbon County Economic Development Corporation – Cindy Wallace, Executive Director
- b. Other Planning staff - Carbon County Planner Sid Fox; Rawlins Community Development Director Amy Bach;
- c. Wyoming Workforce Development – Connie Summers or Leigh Nation (Rawlins), and Sweetwater County staff

4) Educational Entities

- a. Western Wyoming College
- b. Carbon County Higher Education
- c. Public School Districts

5) Health Care Institutions

- a. Memorial Hospital of Carbon County
- b. Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County
- c. Public Health

6) State/Federal Agencies

- a. Wyoming Business Council – Pat Robbins, Regional Director
- b. Wyoming Workforce Services
- c. Wyoming DEQ
- d. Wyoming Department of Transportation
- e. Bureau of Land Management

7) Consultants

- a. Community Builders, Inc. (CBI) - Joe Coyne, Bobbe Fitzhugh

**How do we get the necessary individuals and entities involved?**

It is important to get citizens and stakeholders together in the same room to create the organizational framework. Goals in this process will include education, collecting information, mapping out the process, obtaining buy-in and identifying community champions.

A Steering Committee (expansion of the Great Divide Board is recommended), will provide ongoing advice and feedback throughout the planning process. This committee should include representatives of the elected and appointed officials as well as key business and industry leaders, planners, and existing economic developers. These community leaders will become the core leadership of the GDEDC.

Tasks to be undertaken as part of the Public Participation Plan by CBI include:

- 1) Interviewing these entities to identify and include their thoughts on economic development in the region and how best to structure private/public economic

development efforts. CBI will conduct these interviews either in person or via phone or email. An interview template was developed and utilized for these interviews.

- 2) Develop Survey Monkey link to obtain public input. Other public input methods will involve meeting with residents to obtain feedback at community events or typical gathering spots (coffee shops, bars, restaurants, etc.). (Survey Monkey survey template is attached)
- 3) Schedule and hold meetings at key decision points. The consultants would like to meet with the Steering Committee at least three times during the project schedule. Meetings could fall around Project Tasks as follows:
  - a. Overview of CEDS process, obtain community perspective and answer key questions
  - b. May 7th - Industry Roundtable - Rawlins - Jeffrey Center - 9:00-1:30 p.m.
  - c. May 16th - Carbon County Council of Governments
  - d. April-early-May - Sweetwater County
  - e. Meet in Rawlins on way to Sweetwater County meeting - 3:30 p.m.
  - f. Identification of projects, programs and activities
  - g. Presentation of Draft CEDS Report
- 4) Advertise results of meetings to get feedback from the public. Steering Committee members will play a key role in acting as a sounding board and feedback loop for their respective constituencies and clients to identify regional projects, programs and activities that implement the GDEDC goals and objectives.
- 5) Present to public. Results of Steering Committee recommendations will be presented to the public in a variety of ways, including public presentations, keypad polling, etc.

### **What are the proposed public outreach methods?**

- 1) Email notification, postcards, flyers, existing websites
  - a) Chambers of Commerce
  - b) Economic Development Organization
  - c) City of Green River
  - d) City of Rock Springs
  - e) Other city/town websites
  - f) City of Rawlins
  - g) Carbon County
  - h) Sweetwater County
- 2) Newspaper articles, newsletters, websites, radio station
  - a) The Rocket Miner
  - b) Green River Star
  - c) Rawlins Daily Times
  - d) Saratoga Sun
  - e) Baggs Newspaper - Linda Fleming
  - f) KTGA and KBDY – Toga Radio, Saratoga

- g) KRKK, KSIT, and KQSW – Big Thicket Broadcasting, Rock Springs
  - h) KUGR, KYCS, KZWB, and KFRZ – Wagon Wheel Communications, Green River
  - i) KYCS - Faith Broadcasting Corp., Green River
  - j) "Let's Talk" and "Big Foot" - talk show options
  - k) Existing Facebook pages
- 3) Hold community meetings to share thoughts, ideas and concerns about the project.
- a) Public Forums - community meetings to present alternatives, survey results
    - i. Carbon County location
    - ii. Sweetwater County location
- 4) Conduct at least one legally advertised public hearing. This assures that plan is acceptable to the public and meets any legal requirements of potential funding entities.

### **Schedule**

All project tasks are scheduled to be completed by August 15, 2012.

# Public Meetings

## Sweetwater County

March 22, 2012 - Great Divide Economic Development Coalition CEDS Scoping Meeting - Wamsutter  
August 21, 2012 - Sweetwater County Commissioners - Green River  
July 26, 2012 - Great Divide Economic Development Coalition meeting - Rock Springs

## Carbon County

May 16, 2012 - Carbon County Council of Governments - Encampment  
September 4, 2012 - Carbon County Commissioners - Rawlins

# Interviews

March 22, 2012 - Lisa Colson (Director) and Jimmy Wells (Board Member), Wamsutter Community, Inc. - Wamsutter

March 23, 2012 - Cindy Chace, Medicine Bow Town Council and GDEDC Board Member - Medicine Bow

March 23, 2012 - owner and patrons of Virginian Bar and Motel - Medicine Bow

March 23, 2012 - Cindy Wallace, Carbon County Economic Development Director - Rawlins

March 23, 2012 - Steve Golnar, City Administrator, City of Rawlins - Rawlins

May 17, 2012 - Mayor Tony Poulos and Town Council of Hanna, (Linda Wagner, Bill Klemola, Larry Korkow) - Hanna

May 16, 2012- Mayor John Zeiger and Saratoga Town officials - Charles Bartlett (Town Engineer/Zoning Officer), Suzie Cox (Town Clerk) - Saratoga

July 26, 2012 - Mayor Richelle Johnson, Town of Superior - Superior

July 26, 2012 - Green River City representatives - Laura Leigh (Director of Community Development), Bill Thompson (Acting City Administrator), Lisa Maes (City Council), Allan

Wilson (Parks/Recreation Director), Mike Nelson (Public Works Director), Rob Ness (Main Street/URI) - Green River

July 26, 2012 - Mayor Carl Demshar, City of Rock Springs, Lisa Tarufelli (Administrative Services Director) - Rock Springs

July 27, 2012 - Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce Enterprise Committee - Rock Springs

August 21, 2012 - Lisa Mueller (Frontier Community Alliance) - Green River

August 21, 2012 - Sweetwater County Commissioners

August 22, 2012 - Mayor Kathy Staman, Town of Baggs, Michelle Christopher (Public Works Director), Jennifer Evans (Clerk) - Baggs

August 22, 2012 - Doreen Harvey (Clerk/Treasurer), Town of Encampment

September 4, 2012 - Carbon County Commissioners

September 5, 2012 - Elk Mountain Town officials, Elk Mountain

Attachments:

- Scoping Meeting Agenda
- Scoping Meeting Sign-in
- Scoping Meeting Notes
- News Release
- May 2012 COG Agenda
- Interview Template
- Survey Monkey template
- Letters to Mayors requesting meeting (sample only)

# **APPENDIX B**

## **EXISTING PLANS, ASSESSMENTS, AND STUDIES**

- Carbon County Community Survey 2009
- Carbon County Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2010
- Carbon County EDC “Moving Forward Together” Plan 2011-2016
- Carbon County Fiber Optic Broadband Feasibility 2007
- Carbon County Higher Ed Facility Consolidation Evaluation 2008
- Carbon County Industrial and Natural Resource Projects 2011
- Carbon County Planning & Zoning Annual Report 2010
- DKRW/Medicine Bow Fuel & Power CTL Project Permit Application 2007
- Elk Mountain Community Assessment 2007
- Encampment Follow Up Assessment 2010
- Encampment/Riverside Community Assessment 2004
- Granger Community Assessment 2004
- Granger Master Plan 2009
- Great Divide Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2002
- Great Divide CEDS update notes 2008
- Green River Community Assessment 2004
- Green River I-80 East Interchange Feasibility Study 2005
- Green River Zoning Map 2010
- Green River Marketing, Branding and Design Action Plan 2012
- Green River Community Snapshot Comprehensive Master Plan 2012
- Hanna Community Assessment 2002
- Little Snake River Valley (Baggs, Dixon & Savery) Community Assessment 2005
- Medicine Bow Community Assessment 2001
- Medicine Bow Follow Up Assessment 2009
- PacifiCorp/Dunlap Energy Project Permit Application 2009
- PacifiCorp/Seven Mile Hill Wind Energy Project Permit Application 2007
- Rawlins Aging in Place Feasibility Study 2012
- Rawlins City Council Goals FY2012-13
- Rawlins Community Assessment 2001
- Rawlins Downtown Development Plan 2010
- Rawlins Follow Up Assessment 2006
- Rawlins Follow Up meeting report 2007
- Rawlins Housing Assessment 2007

- Rawlins Industry Roundtable 2012 Update
- Rawlins Master Plan 1981
- Rawlins Master Plan Update 1999
- Rawlins Tourism Assessment Report 2010
- Rawlins Master Economic Development Plan 2012
- Riverside Master Plan 2010
- Rock Springs Bike Trails 2009
- Rock Springs Bitter Creek Reconstruction Plan 2007
- Rock Springs Branding, Marketing and Development Action Plan 2007
- Rock Springs Community Assessment 2003
- Rock Springs Guide to Historic Structure Renovation 2009
- Rock Springs Historic Downtown Design Guidelines 2010
- Rock Springs Housing Master Plan 2007
- Rock Springs Mine Subsidence Risk Map 2006
- Rock Springs Senior Citizens Center Plan 2005
- Rock Springs Transportation Master Plan 2009
- Rock Springs Urban Renewal Plan 2006
- Rock Springs Zoning Map 2011
- Saratoga Community Assessment 2000
- Saratoga Follow Up Assessment 2008
- Superior Community Assessment 2006
- Superior Follow Up Assessment 2011
- Sweetwater County Comprehensive Plan 2002
- Sweetwater County CSBG study 2002
- Sweetwater County Events Complex Economic Impacts 2007
- Sweetwater County Events Complex Feasibility Report 2007
- Sweetwater County Facility Assessment for Child Development Center 2009
- Sweetwater County Growth Management Plan 2011
- Various reports and studies from the Wyoming Water Development Commission
- Wamsutter Community Assessment 2005
- Williams/Wamsutter Echo Springs Gas Plant Expansion Permit Application 2008
- WYDOT Automatic Traffic Recorder Report
- WYDOT Public Transportation State Management Plan 2010
- WYDOT STIP 2012 (and 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Addendum)
- WYDOT Vehicle Miles Report 2010 (2011 is online by month)
- Wyoming Business Plan & Strategic Plan 2009
- Wyoming Data Center Assessment 2012
- Wyoming Region 3 Broadband Investment Plan 2011
- Wyoming Statewide Airport Economic Impact Study 2009
- Wyoming Statewide Airport Inventory and Implementation Plan 2009
- Wyoming Workforce Development Council Strategic Plan 2010-2012

# APPENDIX C

## INDUSTRY ABBREVIATIONS

CBI Abbreviation	NAICS Code	NAICS Industry Description
AGR	11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
MIN	21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
UTL	22	Utilities
CON	23	Construction
MFR	31-33	Manufacturing
WHO	42	Wholesale Trade
RET	44-45	Retail Trade
TRA	48-49	Transportation and Warehousing
INF	51	Information
FIN	52	Finance and Insurance
REL	53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
PRO	54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
MGT	55	Management of Companies and Enterprises
ADM	56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services
EDU	61	Educational Services
HEA	62	Health Care and Social Assistance
ART	71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
ACC	72	Accommodation and Food Services
OTH	81	Other Services (except Public Administration)
PUB	92	Public Administration

“NAICS” is the North American Industry Classification System.