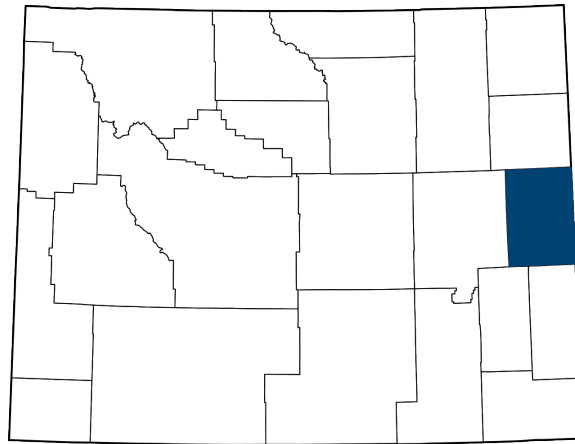


# A Niobrara County Profile: Socioeconomics



## **Niobrara County Board of County Commissioners**

Richard Ladwig, Chair

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The goal of this document is to provide an accurate picture of Niobrara County's socioeconomic attributes. Accomplishing this requires verifiable and universally accepted substantive data that is objectively incorporated into a narrative format.

Those requirements provide the foundation for this document. The resulting document not only serves the county as it moves forward with its own educational and planning efforts, but also serves to inform state and federal educational and planning efforts as well.

*This socioeconomic profile of Niobrara County is made possible  
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## INTRODUCTION

In a rapidly changing world, timely and accurate information is essential to good decision making. Local officials, state government, federal agencies, and the general public need information on the structure and trends within a region's economy in order to more effectively conduct and participate in public policy decision-making processes. Information describing regional economic conditions can aid in the public policy decision-making process by providing a perspective on economic structure and changes over time. In addition, the identification of long-term trends can help residents, local official, state government, and federal agencies plan for the future. This report has been developed to provide baseline information on the structure and trends of the Niobrara County economy.

Four types of information are discussed in this report, including: 1) Demographics; 2) Land Characteristics; 3) County Government Finances; and 4) Natural Resource Based Industry Profiles. The Demographic section provides information on the characteristics of the residents of Niobrara county. The Land Characteristics section provides a perspective on the physical setting of the county. The County Government Finances section considers county government's ability to meet the needs of residents in terms of public services and public infrastructure. The Industry profile section discusses the economic importance of natural resource based industries in the county.

Each type of information is discussed separately in the report. To put Niobrara County's information in perspective, the county data is compared to corresponding data for Wyoming and the United States. A variety of data sources were used to development this socio-economic profile including the Wyoming Department of Administration & Information – Economic Analysis Division's Wyoming County Profiles. The most current data available from these data sources was used in the report. All time series data involving dollars were adjusted for inflation to 2009 dollars since these deflators are the latest that are currently available. This report is part of an ongoing cooperative effort between the University of Wyoming, the Wyoming County Commissioners Association, and the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information to develop a socio-economic database for Wyoming Counties.

# **COUNTY SUMMARY**

## Demographics

Population growth is an important indicator of the vitality of a county's economy. Overall Niobrara County experienced moderate population growth between 2000 and 2016, increasing from 2,396 residents in 2000 to 2,480 in 2016 (+3 percent). The county's population growth rate was significantly less than either the Wyoming population growth rate (18 percent) or the U.S. population growth rate (14 percent) between 2000 and 2016 (Figure 1). Over this time the county's population has fluctuated decreasing by 5 percent from 2,396 residents to 2,280 residents between 2000 and 2003; then increasing by 12 percent from 2,280 to 2,546 residents between 2003 and 2013; and then leveling off at just under 2,500 residents since 2014.

Population increases can occur in one of two ways: 1) Natural Increase (more births than deaths) or 2) Net In-Migration (more people moving in than moving out). Between 2000 and 2015 Niobrara County experienced population growth due to positive Net Migration and population loss due to negative natural increase. In terms of net in-migration the county's population growth rate was comparable to the Wyoming rate (8 percent vs. 9 percent). However the negative natural increase rate was in sharp contrast to the Wyoming rate of natural increase (-5 percent vs. + 10 percent). The county's negative population growth rate from natural increase was probably due to the older age of the county's population which will be discussed later in this report. The county's somewhat lower population growth rate from Net Migration was probably due to the county's lower job growth rate.

People move to an area for a variety of reasons ranging from economic to aesthetic. Data from the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership for 2000 through 2016 indicates that the most frequent reason given by new residents to Niobrara County for moving to Wyoming were job related factors (39 percent). Job related factors included Job Transfers, New Jobs, Better Employment Opportunities, and Starting or Expanding a Business. The second most frequent reason was some other factor. The third most frequent reason was that friends or relatives already resided in the area (18 percent). About 12 percent of new residents surveyed indicated that a better quality of life was the primary reason for moving to the county. This data is from the Housing Needs Assessment Survey conducted by the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership in cooperation with the Wyoming Department of Transportation. The survey results are based on a random sample of new residents who were exchanging their previous state's driver's licenses for a Wyoming drivers licenses.

In 2015, the largest age groups for Niobrara County residents were adults 45 to 64 years old (27 percent) and adults 25 to 44 years old (26 percent). Combined, these two age groups represented more than one-half of the total county population. The next largest age group was adults 65 years of age and older (21 percent), followed by youth 5 to 17 (14 percent), young adults 18 to 24 (7 percent) and lastly youth under 5 (5 percent). The population distribution for the county was over represented at the lower end of the age spectrum relative to Wyoming and the U.S. Compared to Wyoming and the U.S., the county had a lower proportion of its overall population in the less than 5 age category, the 5 to 17 age category, the adults 18 to 24 and the adults 25 to 44 age groups. On the older end of the age spectrum, the county had a higher proportion of its overall population in the older age group of 45 to 65 and a

substantially higher proportion of the 65 and over age category. The median age for the county in 2015 (42.9 years) was 16 percent older than the median age for Wyoming (36.9 years) and 13 percent older than the median age for the U.S. (37.8 years).

White is the predominate category of race in Niobrara County, accounting for 95 percent of the total population. The percentage of the population that is White in the county is 2 percentage points higher than the percentage for Wyoming (93 percent) and 17 percent points higher than the percentage for the U.S. (78 percent). The other five races identified by the federal government account for the remaining 5 percent with Two or More Races (2.2 percent) and Native American (1.3 percent) being the most common, followed by Black (1.0 percent), Asian (0.6 percent), and Pacific Islanders (0.0 percent). The proportion of the county's population that was Black (1.0 percent versus 1.4 percent and 13.0 percent), Asian (0.6 percent versus 1.0 percent and 4.9 percent), or Pacific Islander (0.0 percent versus 0.1 percent and 0.2 percent) was less than either Wyoming or the U.S. The proportion of the county's population that was Native American was less than Wyoming but higher than the U.S. (1.3 percent versus 2.7 percent versus 1.2 percent). The proportion of the county's population that was Two or More Races was higher than Wyoming but lower than the U.S. (2.2 percent vs. 2.1 percent vs. 2.3 percent).

The federal government defines the term "Hispanic" as an ethnicity rather than a specific race. Thus Hispanics can be individuals of any race that self-identify themselves as "Hispanic" or "Latino" based on heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or person's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. In Niobrara County the percentage of the population classifying themselves as Hispanic (3 percent) was 70 percent lower than the percentage for Wyoming (10 percent) and 83 percent lower than the percentage for U.S. (18 percent).

Per capita income can serve as a general indicator of the economic well-being of a county's population. In 2000, per capita income in Niobrara County was \$31,291 in 2009 dollars. The per capita income for the county in 2000 was 11 percent below Wyoming's per capita income (\$35,373) and 16 percent below the U.S. per capita income (\$37,371). From 2000 to 2015, after adjusting for inflation, per capita income for the county increased by 35 percent to \$42,129. As a result of this increase, in 2015 the county's per capita income was still 17 percent lower than Wyoming's (\$50,984), but was only 4 percent below the U.S. average (\$43,739).

There are three sources of per capita income: 1) net labor earnings including wages, salaries, and proprietor (self-employed) income, 2) government transfer payments such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and various income assistance program payments, and 3) investment income representing property income in the form of dividends, interest, and rents. The majority of the growth in the county's per capita income between 2000 and 2015 was the result of growth of net labor earnings (68 percent) with 25 percent coming from increased transfer payments and 7 percent coming from increased investment income. Transfer payments were the fastest growing individual source of per capita income between 2000 and 2015 increasing by 52 percent, while labor earnings increased by 44 percent and investment income increased by 8 percent. In 2000, net labor earnings represented 54 percent of total per capita income, with investment income representing 29 percent, and transfer payments

representing 17 percent. In 2015 net labor income represented 57 percent of total per capita income, investment income represented 23 percent, and transfer payments represented 19 percent.

In 2015, per capita income for Niobrara County was \$46,341 in 2015 dollars. This level of income was 17 percent below per capita income for Wyoming (\$56,081) and 4 percent below per capita income for the U.S. (\$48,112). Among the three regions, the county had the lowest per capita labor earnings (\$26,638) which was 18 percent below per capita labor earnings for Wyoming (\$32,578) and 13 percent below per capita labor earnings for the U.S. (\$30,729). In 2015, the county had per capita transfer payments of \$8,801 which was 25 percent higher than per capita transfer payments for Wyoming (\$7,061), and 6 percent higher than per capita transfer payments for the U.S. (\$8,334). The county's per capita investment income (\$10,902) was 34 percent below per capita investment income for Wyoming (\$16,442), and 20 percent higher than per capita investment income for the U.S. (\$9,049).

The county's 2015 unemployment rate (3.0 percent) was lower than Wyoming's unemployment rate (4.2 percent) and lower than the U.S. unemployment rate (5.3 percent). While total per capita income for the county was 17 percent below the state average, the Wyoming Economic Analysis Division estimates that the county's cost-of-living for the second quarter of 2015 was 12 percent below the state average. This difference suggests that, on average, county residents were economically slightly worse-off than the rest of the state in 2015. Similarly, the percent of the county's population that was below the poverty level (13.3 percent) was higher than the Wyoming's rate (10.6 percent) and only slightly lower than the U.S. rate (13.5 percent).

Overall, the educational attainment of Niobrara County's population in terms of a high school degree or higher (90 percent) was slightly lower than Wyoming's (92 percent) and higher than the U.S. (87 percent). The county's population was somewhat less educated in terms of college bachelors or advanced degrees than Wyoming or the U.S. (21 percent vs. 26 percent vs. 30 percent). The percentage of the county population without a high school degree (9 percent) was higher than Wyoming's (8 percent) and lower than the U.S. (13 percent). The percentage of the county's population with only a high school degree (28 percent) was lower than Wyoming's (29 percent) and similar to the U.S. (28 percent). The percentage of the county's population with some college (31 percent) was higher than Wyoming's (27 percent) and the U.S. (21 percent). The percentage of the county's population with an associate degree (10 percent) was similar to Wyoming (10 percent) and higher than the U.S. (8 percent). The percentage of the county's population with a bachelors (17 percent) was similar to Wyoming (17 percent) and the lower than the U.S. (18 percent). The percentage of the county's population with a graduate or professional degree (4 percent) was substantially below both Wyoming (9 percent) and the U.S. (11 percent).

In terms of access to educational resources, the county has one public school district with a total of 4 schools and a 2015 fall enrollment of 978. The enrollment numbers for the school district include students enrolled in the Wyoming Virtual Academy which is a statewide tuition free online public school program available through the local school district. The school district has indicated that it currently has 307 traditional "brick and mortar school" students enrolled in the district. The presence of these

“virtual students” makes it difficult to compare the graduation rate for the district with the state average. The public school system had 70 certified teachers, 9 certified staff, 7 administrators, and 33 classified staff. Total general fund expenditures for the county’s public school system was \$12.5 million in 2015 with an operating cost of \$14,801 per average daily membership. This compares with an average operating cost of \$17,476 per average daily membership for the state.

Overall, Niobrara County experienced only moderate employment growth between 2000 and 2015. Total employment in the county increased by 12 percent from 2000 through 2015 growing going from 1,630 jobs in 2000 to 1,823 jobs in 2015. During this time period Wyoming employment increased by 25 percent and the U.S. employment increased by 15 percent. Although the U.S. and Wyoming economies were negatively affected by 2008 recession, there was no apparent drop-off in county employment during the recession. In fact, county employment continued to grow until 2013 peaking at 1,868 jobs. However, since 2013 county employment has declined by 2 percent.

From 2000 to 2015, employment in Niobrara County increased by 12 percent. This increase was only 46 percent of the employment increase for Wyoming (25 percent) and 79 percent of the employment increase for the U.S. (15 percent) during the same time period. About two-thirds of the growth in employment in the county between 2000 and 2015 was in self-employment jobs (+7 percent) with about one-third coming from growth in wage and salary jobs (+4 percent). At the state level, wage and salary jobs represented 61 percent of the employment growth (+16 percent) with 39 percent coming from growth in self-employment jobs (+10 percent). At the national level, the ratio was 40 percent from wage and salary jobs (6 percent) to 60 percent from self-employment jobs (9 percent). Comparatively, the county had a higher proportion of its overall job growth from increases in self-employed jobs rather than wage and salary jobs than either Wyoming or the U.S. between 2000 and 2015.

State and Local Government, which includes all employment associated with state government, county government, towns and city government in the county, and the county’s public school districts, was the largest source of employment in Niobrara County representing 24 percent of total county employment. Following Local Government was Agriculture (15%). Other major sources of employment were Mining (8 percent), Retail Trade (7 percent), Accommodations & Food Service (6 percent), Transportation & Warehousing (6 percent), and Construction (5 percent). Combined these seven sectors represent nearly three-fourths of the total employment in the county.

The location quotients (LQ), in the fourth column of Figure 12, were used to identify Defining Industries in the county. A location quotient is the ratio of an industry’s share of total employment in the region relative to the industry’s share of total employment at the national level. A large location quotient is an indication of specialization within the county’s economy. Defining Industries are important because they play a significant role in a region’s growth over time. The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City considers Defining Industries as those with a locational quotient of at least 1.25 that account for at least 0.2 percent of total employment in the region. Based on this definition Niobrara County has five Defining Industries including: Agriculture (10.09), Mining (9.76), State and Local Government (8.12), Utilities



(2.79), and Transportation & Warehousing (1.55). These five sectors are relatively more important in the county's economy than they are at the national level.

Employment in Niobrara County increased by 12 percent from 2001 through 2015. The largest increases in employment came from State & Local Government (+148 jobs) and Mining (+72 jobs). On the other hand, the two sectors with the largest loss in employment between 2001 and 2015 were Agriculture (-52 jobs) and Retail Trade (-35 jobs). In terms of individual sectors the fastest growing sectors were Finance & Insurance (+104 percent) and Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support (+100 percent), although both were growing from a relatively small base.

In addition to the number of jobs, the labor earnings associated with those jobs is an important consideration. Overall average earnings per job are a general measure of the economic well-being of the local workforce. Niobrara County, like many counties in Wyoming, have had continuing difficulty over time in generating relatively high paying jobs. In 2000, the average earnings per job for the county was \$24,883, in 2009 dollars, which was 32 percent below the Wyoming average earnings per job (\$36,862) and 49 percent below the U.S. average earnings per job (\$48,821). From 2000 through 2015, after adjusting for inflation, county average earnings per job increased by 44 percent to \$35,946. Despite this increase, 2015 county average earnings per job was still 27 percent below the Wyoming average earnings per job (\$48,978) and 32 percent below the U.S. average earnings per job (\$52,936). While county average earnings per job was 27 percent below the state average in 2015, the Wyoming Economic Analysis Division estimates that the county's cost-of-living for the second quarter of 2015 was only 12 percent below the state average. This difference suggests that, on average, the county's workforce was economically somewhat worse-off than the rest of the state in 2015.

Average earnings per job (AEPJ), which includes employer paid benefits, varies substantially by sector. In 2015 AEPJ in Niobrara County ranged from over \$108,000,000 for the Transportation & Warehousing sector to slightly more than \$5,500 for the Accommodations & Food Services sector. After Transportation & Warehousing, the next highest AEPJ was in the State & Local Government sector (\$65,173), Utilities (\$62,647), and Federal - Civilian (\$58,083). Of the 23 sectors in the county's economy 4 had AEPJ greater or comparable to the Wyoming average (\$53,875) and the U.S. average (\$58,228). The 4 sectors with AEPJ greater than or comparable to the Wyoming and U.S. averages represented only about one-third of the total employment in the county resulting in the overall lower AEPJ for the county.

The combination of the number of jobs and the average earnings per job determines the relative importance of individual sectors in terms of total labor earnings in the Niobrara County economy. Labor earnings are important because they represent the major source of personal income for county residents. Overall county employment generated \$72.1 million in labor earnings in 2015. State & Local Government, due to its relatively large number of employees and above average earnings per job was the largest source of labor earnings for the county (40 percent). Following State & Local Government was Transportation & Warehousing (16 percent), Agriculture (9 percent), Construction (6 percent), and Mining (5 percent). Combined these five sectors represented 75 percent of total county labor earnings.

## Land Characterisitcs

Niobrara County contains 1.7 million acres of land. Private land is the largest category of landownership in the county, accounting for 83 percent of the land area (1.4 million acres). Federal land represents 7 percent of the land area (124,736 acres). Of this total the BLM manages 99 percent (123,840 acres) and the Forest Service manages less than one percent (896 acres). State land represents 9 percent of the county's land area (159,104 acres); with all this land being state trust land. Local government owns less than one percent of the county's land area (893 acres) with 86 percent owned by the city (768 acres), 7 percent owned by the school districts (64 acres), and 7 percent owned by the county (64 acres). Information from the Wyoming Department of Revenue on acres taxed as agricultural land indicates that 97 percent of the private land in the county is in agricultural use (1.3 million acres). Of this total 96 percent is classified as range land (slightly less than 1.3 million acres), 3 percent is classified as dry crop land (39,592 acres) and one percent is classified as irrigated crop land (11,979 acres).

Federal lands are managed for different purposes under differing statutory authority. Three categories of designation are considered: 1) Protected, 2) Restricted., and 3) General Use.

- Protected Areas include National Parks and Preserves (NPS), Wilderness (NPS, FWS, FS, BLM), National Conservation Areas (BLM), National Monuments (NPS, FS, BLM), National Recreation Areas (NPS, FS, BLM), National Wild and Scenic Rivers (NPS, FS, BLM), Water Fowl Protection Areas (FWS), Wildlife Management Areas (FWS), Research Natural Areas (FS, BLM), Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (BLM), and National Wildlife Refuges (FWS).
- Restricted Areas include Wilderness Study Areas (NPS, FWS, FS, BLM) and Inventoried Roadless Areas (FS).
- General Use Areas include Public Domain Lands (BLM) and National Forests and Grasslands (FS).

This data was obtained from the Economic Profile System – Human Dimension Toolkit (NPS = National Park Service, FWS = Fish and Wildlife, FS = Forest Service, and BLM = Bureau of Land Management).

In Niobrara County, Economic Profile System data indicates that 100 percent of Federal lands in the county are designated for general use. In comparison, 21 percent of total Federal lands in Wyoming are classified as protected, 13 percent are classified as restricted and 66 percent are classified as general use.

## County Government Finances

Wyoming Department of Audit information indicates that the total revenue for Niobrara County Government was \$4.2 million in FY2016. Of this total, the largest sources were Taxes which included property taxes and any optional sales tax revenue (50 percent) and State Aid which included the county's share of the 4 percent sales and use tax revenue (38 percent). Combined these two sources represented 88 percent of the total county government revenue in FY2016. Following Taxes and State Aid were Miscellaneous Revenue (6 percent), Charges for Services (4 percent), Direct Federal Aid (1

percent) and Other Local Government (less than 1 percent). Combined these revenue sources represented 12 percent of the total county government revenue in FY2016.

Compared to all counties in Wyoming, the county had a comparable proportion of revenue from Taxes (50 percent vs. 52 percent). The county's proportion of revenue from State Aid was substantially higher relative to all counties in the state (38 percent vs. 24 percent). Other sources of revenue were lower compared to all other counties in the state in terms of Miscellaneous Revenue (6 percent vs. 7 percent), Charges for Services (4 percent vs. 7 percent), Direct Federal Aid (1 percent vs. 6 percent), and Other Government Revenue (less than 1 percent vs 4 percent). Overall, the county's per capita revenue (\$1,680) was 21 percent above the average for all counties in Wyoming (\$1,385).

The total assessed valuation for Niobrara County in 2016 was \$106.4 million. Forty percent of the total valuation was from Utilities primarily railroads and pipelines. Following Utilities was Mineral Production (33 percent), Residential Property (12 percent), Agricultural Property (10 percent), Commercial Property (3 percent), and Industrial Property (2 percent). The county's per capita assessed valuation (\$42,892) was 20 percent above Wyoming's per capita assessed valuation (\$35,752)

Compared to Wyoming, the county had a much higher proportion of assessed valuation from Utilities (40 percent vs. 7 percent). The county's proportion of assessed valuation from Mineral Production was substantially lower than that for Wyoming's (33 percent vs. 50 percent), the assessed valuation from Residential Property was also lower than Wyoming's (12 percent vs. 24 percent), the assessed valuation from Agricultural Property was the substantially higher than that for Wyoming's (10 percent vs. 2 percent), the assessed valuation from Commercial Property was lower than Wyoming's (3 percent vs. 7 percent) and the assessed valuation from Industrial Property was lower than Wyoming's (2 percent vs. 10 percent). In terms of Mineral Production, crude oil represented 96 percent of total county mineral assessed valuation, natural gas represented 3 percent of total county mineral assessed valuation, and sand and gravel represented less than 1 percent of total county mineral assessed valuation.

In FY2016 Niobrara County's sales and use tax generated \$3.3 million in tax revenue. Of this total, 46 percent (\$1.5 million) was retained by state government and 54 percent (\$1.8 million) was returned to local governments in the county. In FY2016 county government's share of the returned sales and use tax revenue was approximately \$1.0 million (55 percent) with the remaining \$800,000 (45 percent) going to municipal governments in the county. Twenty-one percent of the county's total sales and use tax revenue came from Retail Trade. Following Retail Trade was Mining (19 percent), Public Administration (17 percent), and Leisure & Hospitality (10 percent). Combined these four sectors contributed 68 percent of the county's total sales and use tax revenue. Public Administration represents sales and use tax revenue on motor vehicle purchases which are collected at the time of registration in Wyoming. Construction, Wholesale Trade, Utilities, Financial Activities, Other Services, and Other combined contributed the remaining 32 percent of total county sales and use tax revenue.

Compared to total sales and use tax revenue for Wyoming, the county had a lower proportion of sales and use tax revenue from Retail Trade (21 percent vs. 32 percent). The county's proportion of sales and

use tax revenue from Mining was higher than Wyoming's (19 percent vs. 13 percent), from Public Administration was higher than Wyoming's (17 percent vs. 10 percent), and from Leisure & Hospitality was lower than Wyoming's (10 percent vs. 12 percent). Per capita sales and use tax revenues for the county (\$1,322) were 10 percent lower than per capital sales and use tax revenues for Wyoming (\$1,475).

The Economic Profile System-Human Dimensions Toolkit indicates that federal land payments to local governments in Niobrara County totaled \$367,953 in FY2015. The largest source of federal land payments to the county was Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) representing 87 percent of the total amount (\$320,597). PILT payments are intended to compensate county governments for non-taxable federal lands within their borders. It is based on a maximum per-acre payment reduced by other federal revenue sharing payments and subject to a per capita population cap. The second largest source of federal payments to the county was BLM Payments representing 12 percent of the total amount (\$44,121). BLM payments represent revenue sharing funds including grazing fees through the Taylor Grazing Act. The third source of federal payments to the county was Forest Service payments representing 1 percent of the total amount (\$3,253). Forest Service payments can include 25 Percent Revenue Sharing funds, Secure Rural School & Community Self Determination Act funds, and Bankhead-Jones Forest Grasslands funds. Of the \$367,953 in Federal land payments to the county in FY2015, 88 percent went to county government (\$323,832) and 12 percent (\$44,121) to grazing districts. In FY2015 Federal Land Payments to the county represented \$2.55 per eligible acre of Federal land. The average for Wyoming was \$0.92 per eligible acre of Federal land.

The total cost of maintaining county government for Niobrara County in FY2016 was \$4.8 million. This represents a per capita cost of \$1,921.84 which was 62 percent above the average for all counties in Wyoming (\$1,184.25). The largest cost categories were Construction (22 percent), County Sheriff (13 percent), Road & Bridge (8 percent), and Capital purchases (8 percent). These four cost categories represented 51 percent of the total cost of maintaining county government.

### **Natural Resource Based Industry Profiles**

In 2015, the Mining sector in Niobrara County produced 908,239 million barrels of crude oil and 925,239 mcf of natural gas, and 115,649 tons of sand and gravel. The mining production in the county had an assessed valuation of \$34.7 million dollars in 2016 (2016 assessed valuation for mineral production is based on 2015 production). This valuation represented 33 percent of the total assessed valuation for the county. Based on the county mill levy, the mineral industry generated \$2.4 million in property tax revenue in 2016. Of this total, 64 percent went to K-12 schools (\$1.5 million), 17 percent went to county government (\$416,832), and 18 percent went to county special districts (\$442,884). Special districts in the county included: Hospital, Conservation, and Senior Citizens' Services. In 2015 the mining industry in the county supported 152 jobs with labor earnings of \$3.5 million. This represented 8 percent of total employment and 5 percent of total labor earnings in the county. The percent of total employment in mining for the county was nearly 10 times the national percentage (0.9 percent) indicating that Mining was an area of specialization within the county's economy. The average earnings per job for mining in the county were \$22,757 which was 58 percent of the county average (\$39,540). The mining industry

ranked 3rd out of 23 sectors in the county's economy in terms of total employment and 5<sup>th</sup> out of 23 sectors in terms of total labor earnings.

In 2012 there were 234 agricultural operations in Niobrara County. These operations managed 1.4 million acres in the county. Included in this acreage is 97 percent of the private land in the county. Of the total land in agriculture, 93 percent is classified as grazing land, 5 percent as cropland, less than 1 percent as woodlands, and less than 1 percent as farmsteads and buildings. The average size of an agricultural operation in the county was 5,807 acres. The total cattle and sheep inventory in the county was 49,015 head including 46,264 head of cattle and calves and 2,751 head of sheep and lambs. In 2014, the county ranked 15<sup>th</sup> out of 23 counties in Wyoming in terms of cattle and calves inventory and 15<sup>th</sup> out of 23 counties in terms of sheep and lambs inventory. It also ranked 15<sup>nd</sup> in alfalfa hay production and 12<sup>th</sup> in other hay production. In terms of investment by agricultural operators, the estimated total market value of lands, buildings, and equipment for agriculture in the county was \$756.9 million. This total included \$728.2 million in land and buildings and \$28.7 million for equipment and machinery. The average investment per agricultural operation was \$3.2 million. In 2012 agricultural operations in the county paid \$1.1 million in property taxes.

The gross revenue for the agricultural industry in the county in 2015 was \$50.5 million. Of this total 75 percent was from cash receipts for livestock, 13 percent was from cash receipts for crops, 6 percent was from miscellaneous sources, and 6 percent was from government payments. Total employment for agriculture in 2015 was 276 jobs with labor earnings of \$6.3 million. This represented 15 percent of the total jobs in the county and 9 percent of the labor earnings. The percent of total employment in agriculture for the county was more than 10 times the national percentage (1.5 percent) indicating that agriculture was an area of specialization within the county's economy. The average earnings per job for agriculture in the county were \$22,688 which was 57 percent of the county average (\$39,540). Average earnings per job in agriculture tend to be lower because most employment is self-employed and includes a large number of small part-time and lifestyle operations that generate limited labor earnings. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data may be a better indicator of average earnings per job for commercial agricultural employment in the county. For 2015, BLS data indicates that the average earnings per job for agricultural employment in the County were \$32,423. The county's agriculture industry ranked 2<sup>th</sup> out of 23 sectors in the county's economy in terms of total employment and 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 23 sectors in terms of total labor earnings.

In addition to jobs and income, agriculture also provides important natural resource amenities such as open space. Open space offers landscapes, lifestyles, and wildlife habitat that can have value to both residents and visitors. Open space is particularly important because it determines the character of the landscapes surrounding a community. Out of economic necessity, most agricultural operations in the county cover large areas of land; as a result, agriculture can contribute substantially to maintaining open spaces on private lands in a region. As noted above, 97 percent of the private land in county is in agricultural use. Due to the natural resource amenities associated with agricultural land there is public support for the retention of lands in agriculture. For example, a recent survey sponsored by the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy,

and the University of Wyoming found that nearly 80 percent of Wyoming residents felt that they personally benefit from the presence of farms and ranches in Wyoming. In addition, 76 percent of respondents were concerned with the loss of family farms and ranches in the State. Other issues of serious concerns to respondents included the availability of water for farming and ranching (71 percent), and natural areas and ranchland being split up by new development (66 percent).

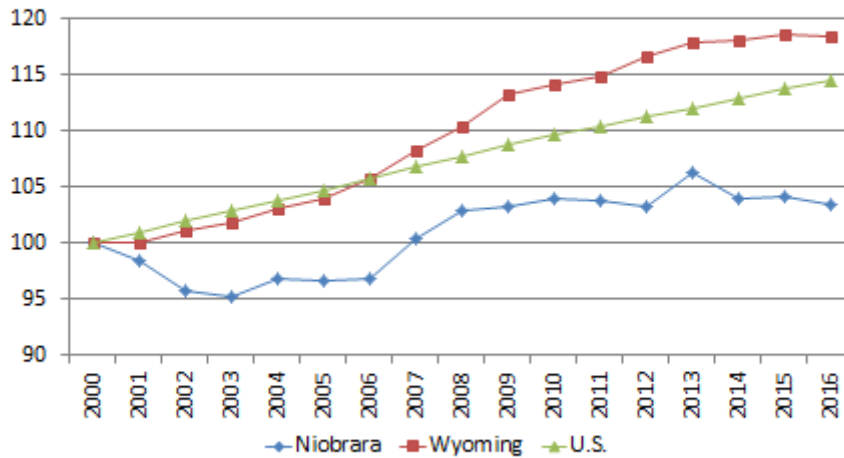
Dean Runyan Associates estimates that visitors spent \$8.9 million while in Niobrara County in 2016 (Figure 26). In terms of accommodations, 53 percent of this spending was by visitors staying in hotels/motels, 29 percent by visitors staying in campgrounds, 10 percent was by visitors staying in private homes, 3 percent was by visitors staying in vacation homes, and 4 percent was by visitors not staying overnight. In terms of purchases, 26 percent was spent on accommodation, 23 percent was spent on food services, 16 percent was spent on arts/entertainment/recreation, 13 percent was spent on retail sales, 13 percent was spent on local transportation and gas, and 8 percent was spent at food stores.

Dean Runyan estimated that the travel industry generated 140 direct jobs in the county in 2016. This represents 8 percent of total employment in the county. Seventy-one percent of these jobs were in the accommodations and food service sector, 14 percent were in the arts/entertainment/recreation sector, and 14 percent were in the retail trade sector. The labor earnings associated with this employment was estimated to be \$3.6 million. This represents 5 percent of the total labor earnings for the county. Average earnings per job for the travel industry in the county for 2015 were \$25,714. Average earnings per job for the travel industry were 65 percent the county average (\$39,540).

The tax revenue associated with the county's travel industry is estimated to be \$0.5 million with \$0.2 million (40 percent) going to local government and \$0.3 million (60 percent) going to state government.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 1.  
Population Growth Index: 2000-2016

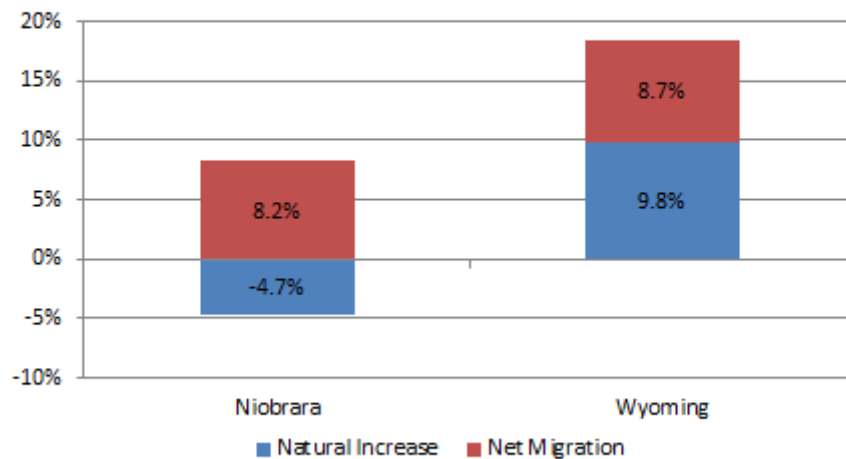


Population growth is an important indicator of the vitality of a county’s economy. Overall Niobrara County experienced moderate population growth between 2000 and 2016, increasing from 2,396 residents in 2000 to 2,480 in 2016 (+3 percent). The county’s population growth rate was significantly less than either the Wyoming population growth rate (18 percent) or the U.S. population growth rate (14 percent) between 2000 and 2016 (Figure 1). Over this time the county’s population has fluctuated decreasing by 5 percent from 2,396 residents to 2,280 residents between 2000 and 2003; then increasing by 12 percent from 2,280 to 2,546 residents between 2003 and 2013; and then leveling off at just under 2,500 residents since 2014.

**Data Sources:** Wyoming Department of Administration and Information. 2017. Economic Analysis Division, Table 1. Intercensal Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties of Wyoming: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2010 and Table 1. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties of Wyoming: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016.



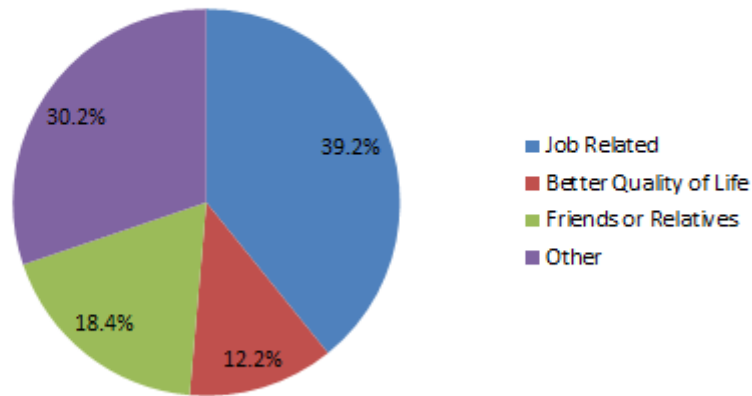
Figure 2.  
Comparison of Source of Population Change: 2000-2015



Population increases can occur in one of two ways: 1) Natural Increase (more births than deaths) or 2) Net In-Migration (more people moving in than moving out). Between 2000 and 2015 Niobrara County experienced population growth due to positive Net Migration and population loss due to negative natural increase (Figure 2). In terms of net in-migration the county's population growth rate was comparable to the Wyoming rate (8 percent vs. 9 percent). However the negative natural increase rate was in sharp contrast to the Wyoming rate of natural increase (-5 percent vs. + 10 percent). The county's negative population growth rate from natural increase was probably due to the older age of the county's population which will be discussed later in this report. The county's somewhat lower population growth rate from Net Migration was probably due to the county's lower job growth rate which will also be discussed later in the report.

**Data Source:** Wyoming Department of Administration and Information. 2017. Economic Analysis Division, Annual Births, Deaths, and Net Migration by County of Residence: 1971-2015.

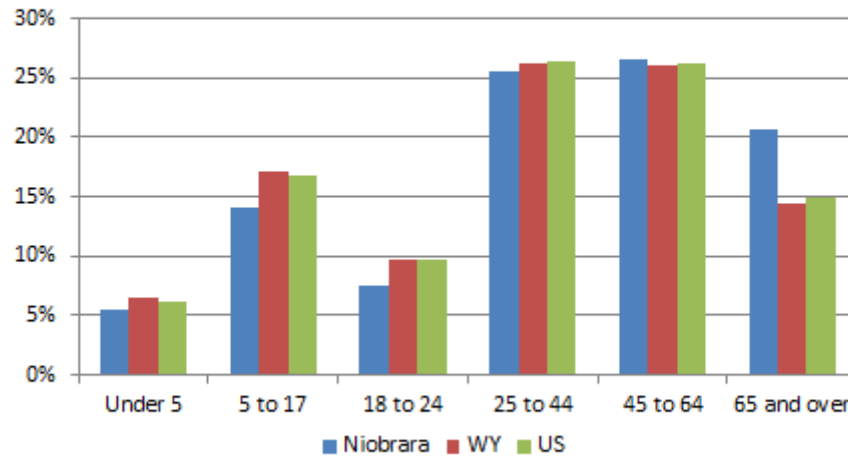
Figure 3.  
Primary Reason for Moving to Niobrara County: 2000-2016



People move to an area for a variety of reasons ranging from economic to aesthetic. Data from the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership for 2000 through 2016 (Figure 3) indicates that the most frequent reason given by new residents to Niobrara County for moving to Wyoming were job related factors (39 percent). Job related factors included Job Transfers, New Jobs, Better Employment Opportunities, and Starting or Expanding a Business. The second most frequent reason was some other factor. The third most frequent reason was that friends or relatives already resided in the area (18 percent). About 12 percent of new residents surveyed indicated that a better quality of life was the primary reason for moving to the county. This data is from the Housing Needs Assessment Survey conducted by the Wyoming Housing Database Partnership in cooperation with the Wyoming Department of Transportation. The survey results are based on a random sample of new residents who were exchanging their previous state's driver's licenses for a Wyoming drivers licenses.

**Data Source:** Wyoming Community Development Authority. 2017. Wyoming Housing Database Partnership, Wyoming Profile of Demographics, Economics, and Housing; Volume II: Technical Appendix, Semiannual Report, Appendix G: Housing Needs Assessment Survey Data, 2000-2016.

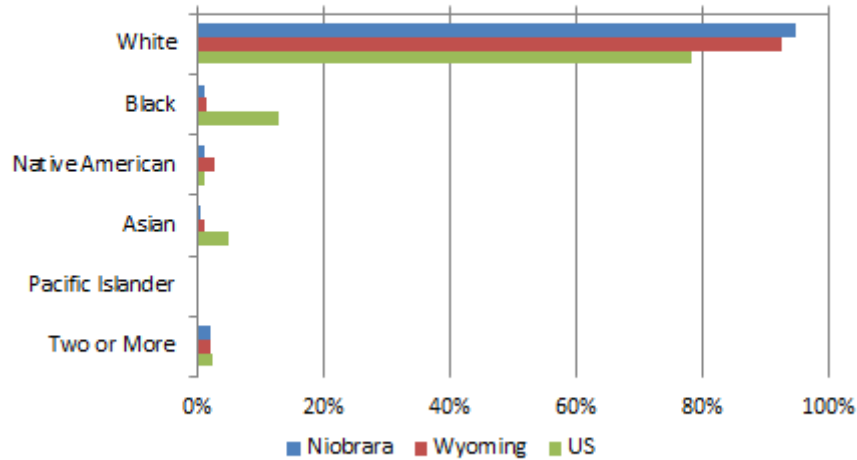
Figure 4.  
Comparison of Population Age Distribution: 2015



In 2015 the largest age groups for Niobrara County residents were adults 45 to 64 years old (27 percent) and adults 25 to 44 years old (26 percent). Combined, these two age groups represented more than one-half of the total county population (Figure 4). The next largest age group was adults 65 years of age and older (21 percent), followed by youth 5 to 17 (14 percent), young adults 18 to 24 (7 percent) and lastly youth under 5 (5 percent). The population distribution for the county was over represented at the lower end of the age spectrum relative to Wyoming and the U.S. Compared to Wyoming and the U.S., the county had a lower proportion of its overall population in the less than 5 age category, the 5 to 17 age category, the adults 18 to 24 and the adults 25 to 44 age groups. On the older end of the age spectrum, the county had a higher proportion of its overall population in the older age group of 45 to 65 and a substantially higher proportion of the 65 and over age category. The median age for the county in 2015 (42.9 years) was 16 percent older than the median age for Wyoming (36.9 years) and 13 percent older than the median age for the U.S. (37.8 years).

**Data Source:** Wyoming Department of Administration and Information. 2017. Economic Analysis Division, Annual Estimation of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex for Wyoming: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015.

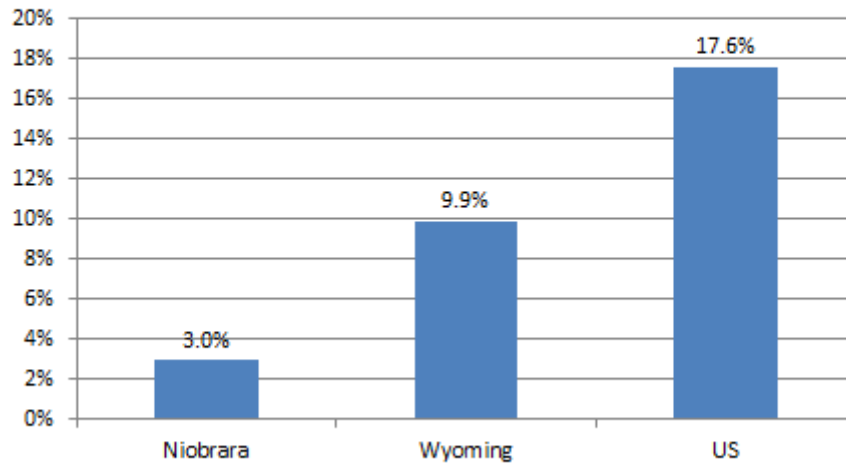
Figure 5.  
Comparison of Population by Race: 2015



White is the predominate category of race in Niobrara County, accounting for 95 percent of the total population (Figure 5). The percentage of the population that is White in the county is 2 percentage points higher than the percentage for Wyoming (93 percent) and 17 percent points higher than the percentage for the U.S. (78 percent). The other five races identified by the federal government account for the remaining 5 percent with Two or More Races (2.2 percent) and Native American (1.3 percent) being the most common, followed by Black (1.0 percent), Asian (0.6 percent), and Pacific Islanders (0.0 percent). The proportion of the county’s population that was Black (1.0 percent versus 1.4 percent and 13.0 percent), Asian (0.6 percent versus 1.0 percent and 4.9 percent), or Pacific Islander (0.0 percent versus 0.1 percent and 0.2 percent) was less than either Wyoming or the U.S. The proportion of the county’s population that was Native American was less than Wyoming but higher than the U.S. (1.3 percent versus 2.7 percent versus 1.2 percent). The proportion of the county’s population that was Two or More Races was higher than Wyoming but lower than the U.S. (2.2 percent vs. 2.1 percent vs. 2.3 percent).

**Data Source:** Wyoming Department of Administration and Information. 2017. Economic Analysis Division, Table 6. Annual Estimate of the Resident Population by Race for the United States, Wyoming, and Counties: July 1, 2015.

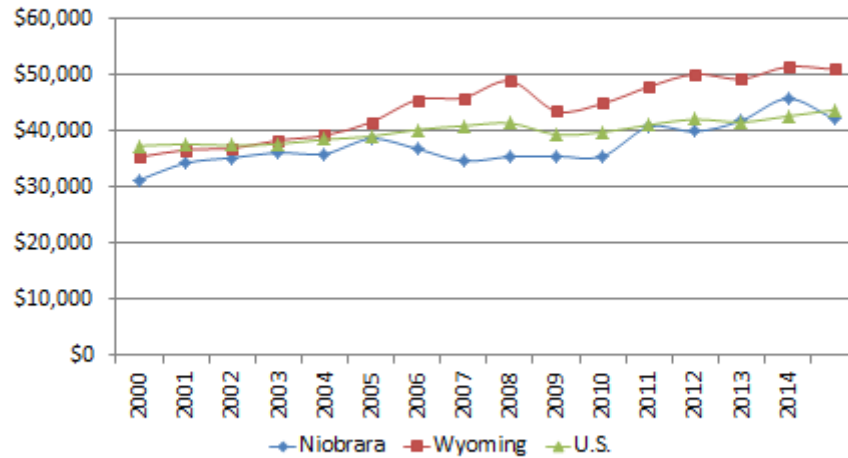
Figure 6.  
Comparison Percent of Population Hispanic: 2015



The federal government defines the term “Hispanic” as an ethnicity rather than a specific race. Thus Hispanics can be individuals of any race that self-identify themselves as “Hispanic” or “Latino” based on heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or person’s parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. In Niobrara County, as shown in Figure 6, the percentage of the population classifying themselves as Hispanic (3 percent) was 70 percent lower than the percentage for Wyoming (10 percent) and 83 percent lower than the percentage for U.S. (18 percent).

**Data Source:** Wyoming Department of Administration and Information. 2017. Economic Analysis Division, Table 6. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Race and Hispanic Origin for the United States, Wyoming, and Counties: July 1, 2015.

Figure 7.  
Per Capita Income: 2000-2015  
(Adjusted for Inflation)

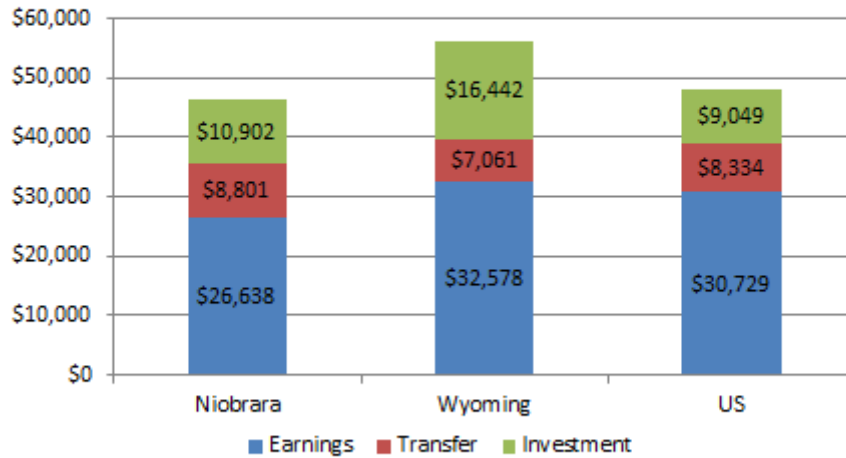


Per capita income can serve as a general indicator of the economic well-being of a county’s population. In 2000, per capita income in Niobrara County was \$31,291 in 2009 dollars (Figure 7). The per capita income for the county in 2000 was 11 percent below Wyoming’s per capita income (\$35,373) and 16 percent below the U.S. per capita income (\$37,371). From 2000 to 2015, after adjusting for inflation, per capita income for the county increased by 35 percent to \$42,129. As a result of this increase, in 2015 the county’s per capita income was still 17 percent lower than Wyoming’s (\$50,984), but was only 4 percent below the U.S. average (\$43,739).

There are three sources of per capita income: 1) net labor earnings including wages, salaries, and proprietor (self-employed) income, 2) government transfer payments such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and various income assistance program payments, and 3) investment income representing property income in the form of dividends, interest, and rents. The majority of the growth in the county’s per capita income between 2000 and 2015 was the result of growth of net labor earnings (68 percent) with 25 percent coming from increased transfer payments and 7 percent coming from increased investment income. Transfer payments were the fastest growing individual source of per capita income between 2000 and 2015 increasing by 52 percent, while labor earnings increased by 44 percent and investment income increased by 8 percent. In 2000, net labor earnings represented 54 percent of total per capita income, with investment income representing 29 percent, and transfer payments representing 17 percent. In 2015 net labor income represented 57 percent of total per capita income, investment income represented 23 percent, and transfer payments represented 19 percent.

**Data Source:** U.S. Department of Commerce. 2017. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Table CA30.

**Figure 8.**  
**Comparison of Per Capita Income by Source 2015**

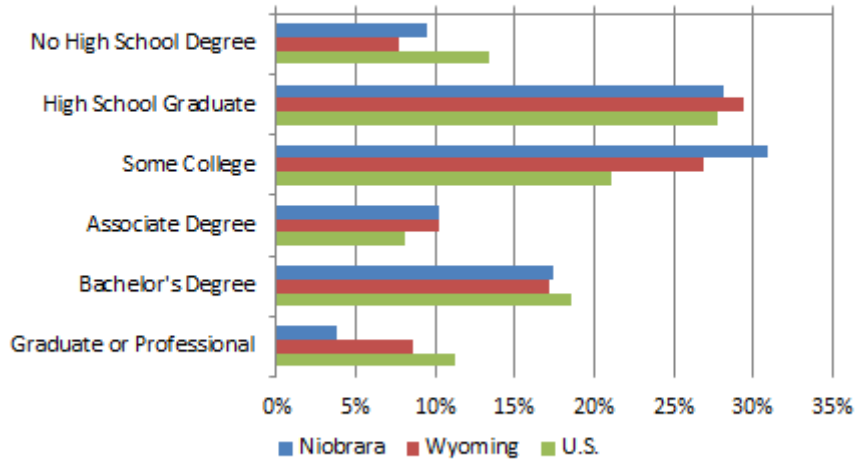


In 2015 per capita income for Niobrara County was \$46,341 in 2015 dollars (Figure 8). This level of income was 17 percent below per capita income for Wyoming (\$56,081) and 4 percent below per capita income for the U.S. (\$48,112). Among the three regions, the county had the lowest per capita labor earnings (\$26,638) which was 18 percent below per capita labor earnings for Wyoming (\$32,578) and 13 percent below per capita labor earnings for the U.S. (\$30,729). In 2015, the county had per capita transfer payments of \$8,801 which was 25 percent higher than per capita transfer payments for Wyoming (\$7,061), and 6 percent higher than per capita transfer payments for the U.S. (\$8,334). The county's per capita investment income (\$10,902) was 34 percent below per capita investment income for Wyoming (\$16,442), and 20 percent higher than per capita investment income for the U.S. (\$9,049).

The county's 2015 unemployment rate (3.0 percent) was lower than Wyoming's unemployment rate (4.2 percent) and lower than the U.S. unemployment rate (5.3 percent). While total per capita income for the county was 17 percent below the state average, the Wyoming Economic Analysis Division estimates that the county's cost-of-living for the second quarter of 2015 was 12 percent below the state average. This difference suggests that, on average, county residents were economically slightly worse-off than the rest of the state in 2015. Similarly, the percent of the county's population that was below the poverty level (13.3 percent) was higher than the Wyoming's rate (10.6 percent) and only slightly lower than the U.S. rate (13.5 percent).

**Data Source:** U.S. Department of Commerce. 2017. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Table CA30.

**Figure 9.**  
**Level of Educational Attainment, 2011-2015**  
**(Population 25 Years or Older)**



Overall, the educational attainment of Niobrara County’s population in terms of a high school degree or higher (90 percent) was slightly lower than Wyoming’s (92 percent) and higher than the U.S. (87 percent). The county’s population was somewhat less educated in terms of college bachelors or advanced degrees than Wyoming or the U.S. (21 percent vs. 26 percent vs. 30 percent). The percentage of the county population without a high school degree (9 percent) was higher than Wyoming’s (8 percent) and lower than the U.S. (13 percent). The percentage of the county’s population with only a high school degree (28 percent) was lower than Wyoming’s (29 percent) and similar to the U.S. (28 percent). The percentage of the county’s population with some college (31 percent) was higher than Wyoming’s (27 percent) and the U.S. (21 percent). The percentage of the county’s population with an associate degree (10 percent) was similar to Wyoming (10 percent) and higher than the U.S. (8 percent). The percentage of the county’s population with a bachelors (17 percent) was similar to Wyoming (17 percent) and the lower than the U.S. (18 percent). The percentage of the county’s population with a graduate or professional degree (4 percent) was substantially below both Wyoming (9 percent) and the U.S. (11 percent).

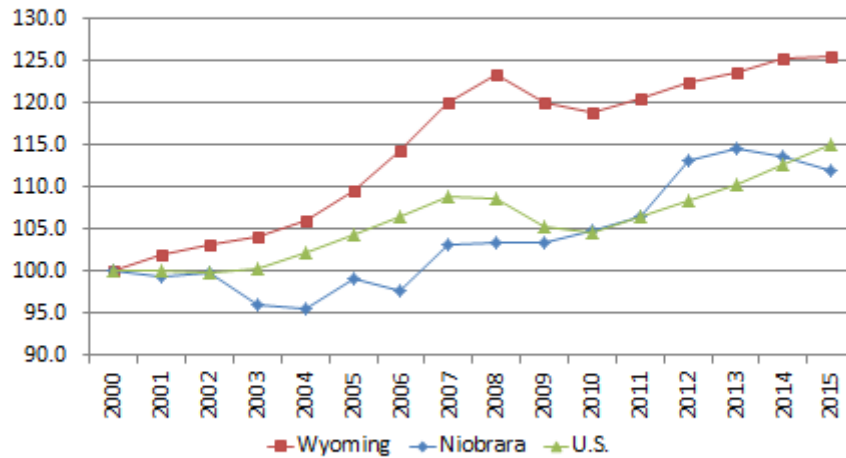
In terms of access to educational resources, the county has one public school district with a total of 4 schools and a 2015 fall enrollment of 978. The enrollment numbers for the school district include students enrolled in the Wyoming Virtual Academy which is a statewide tuition free online public school program available through the local school district. The school district has indicated that it currently has 307 traditional “brick and mortar school” students enrolled in the district. The presence of these “virtual students” makes it difficult to compare the graduation rate for the district with the state average. The public school system had 70 certified teachers, 9 certified staff, 7 administrators, and 33 classified staff. Total general fund expenditures for the county’s public school system was \$12.5 million



in 2015 with an operating cost of \$14,801 per average daily membership. This compares with an average operating cost of \$17,476 per average daily membership for the state.

**Data Source:** Wyoming Department of Administration and Information. 2017. Economic Analysis Division, Wyoming County Profiles 2016.

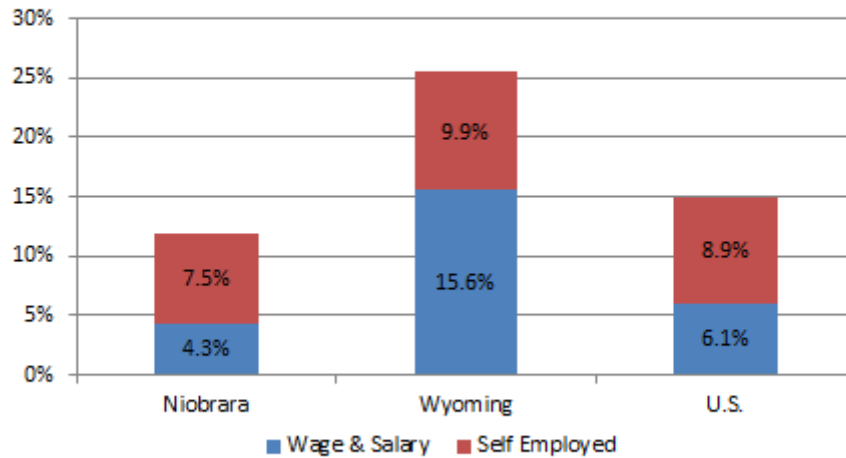
Figure 10.  
Employment Growth Index: 2000-2015



Overall, Niobrara County experienced only moderate employment growth between 2000 and 2015. Total employment in the county increased by 12 percent from 2000 through 2015 growing going from 1,630 jobs in 2000 to 1,823 jobs in 2015 (Figure 10). During this time period Wyoming employment increased by 25 percent and the U.S. employment increased by 15 percent. Although the U.S. and Wyoming economies were negatively affected by 2008 recession, there was no apparent drop-off in county employment during the recession. In fact, county employment continued to grow until 2013 peaking at 1,868 jobs. However, since 2013 county employment has declined by 2 percent.

**Data Source:** U.S. Department of Commerce. 2017. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Table CA25.

Figure 11.  
Comparison of Employment Growth: 2000-2015



From 2000 to 2015, employment in Niobrara County increased by 12 percent (Figure 11). This increase was only 46 percent of the employment increase for Wyoming (25 percent) and 79 percent of the employment increase for the U.S. (15 percent) during the same time period. About two-thirds of the growth in employment in the county between 2000 and 2015 was in self-employment jobs (+7 percent) with about one-third coming from growth in wage and salary jobs (+4 percent). At the state level, wage and salary jobs represented 61 percent of the employment growth (+16 percent) with 39 percent coming from growth in self-employment jobs (+10 percent). At the national level, the ratio was 40 percent from wage and salary jobs (6 percent) to 60 percent from self-employment jobs (9 percent). Comparatively, the county had a higher proportion of its overall job growth from increases in self-employed jobs rather than wage and salary jobs than either Wyoming or the U.S. between 2000 and 2015.

**Data Source:** U.S. Department of Commerce. 2017. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Table CA25.

**Figure 12.**

**Niobrara County Employment by Sector: 2015**

Sector	Jobs	Percent	LQ
State & Local Government	445	24.4%	8.12
Agriculture	276	15.1%	10.09
Mining	152	8.3%	9.76
Retail Trade*	137	7.5%	0.69
Accommodations & Food Service*	117	6.4%	0.81
Transportation & Warehousing*	106	5.8%	1.55
Construction	91	5.0%	0.88
Other Services*	72	3.9%	0.63
Health Care & Social Assistance*	67	3.7%	0.30
Manufacturing*	64	3.5%	0.47
Professional Services*	61	3.3%	0.44
Finance & Insurance	51	2.8%	0.51
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	48	2.6%	0.53
Wholesale Trade*	27	1.5%	0.38
Management Services*	19	1.0%	0.13
Utilities*	17	0.9%	2.79
Educational Services*	17	0.9%	0.35
Information*	15	0.8%	0.43
Federal - Civilian	12	0.7%	0.41
Military	12	0.7%	0.59
Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support*	10	0.5%	1.00
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation*	7	0.4%	0.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,823</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>N.A.</b>

State and Local Government, which includes all employment associated with state government, county government, towns and city government in the county, and the county's public school districts, was the largest source of employment in Niobrara County representing 24 percent of total county employment (Figure 12). Following Local Government was Agriculture (15%). Other major sources of employment were Mining (8 percent), Retail Trade (7 percent), Accommodations & Food Service (6 percent), Transportation & Warehousing (6 percent), and Construction (5 percent). Combined these seven sectors represent nearly three-fourths of the total employment in the county.

The location quotients (LQ), in the fourth column of Figure 12, were used to identify Defining Industries in the county. A location quotient is the ratio of an industry's share of total employment in the region relative to the industry's share of total employment at the national level. A large location quotient is an indication of specialization within the county's economy. Defining Industries are important because they play a significant role in a region's growth over time. The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City considers Defining Industries as those with a locational quotient of at least 1.25 that account for at least 0.2 percent of total employment in the region. Based on this definition Niobrara County has five Defining

Industries including: Agriculture (10.09), Mining (9.76), State and Local Government (8.12), Utilities (2.79), and Transportation & Warehousing (1.55). These five sectors are relatively more important in the county's economy than they are at the national level. In Figure 12, sectors followed by an asterisk represent sectors where the employment was not disclosed in the U.S. Department of Commerce data. For these sectors employment estimates were obtained from Woods & Poole Economics.

**Data Source:** U.S. Department of Commerce. 2017. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Table CA25 and Woods & Poole Economics. 2017. 2017 State Profile: State and County Projections to 2050, Washington, D.C.

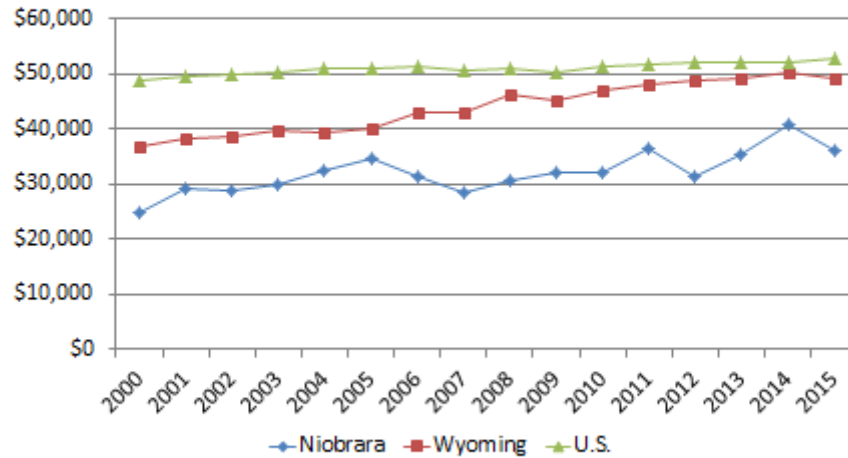
**Figure 13.****Change in Niobrara County Employment by Sector: 2001-2015**

Sector	2001	2015	Change 2001-2015	Percent of Change	Percent Change
State & Local Government	297	445	148	72.9%	49.8%
Mining	80	152	72	35.5%	90.0%
Finance & Insurance	25	51	26	12.8%	104.0%
Manufacturing*	39	64	25	12.3%	64.1%
Professional Services*	38	61	23	11.3%	60.5%
Health Care & Social Assistance*	49	67	18	8.9%	36.7%
Other Services*	62	72	10	4.9%	16.1%
Utilities*	10	17	7	3.4%	70.0%
Educational Services*	10	17	7	3.4%	70.0%
Management Services*	13	19	6	3.0%	46.2%
Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support*	5	10	5	2.5%	100.0%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation*	4	7	3	1.5%	75.0%
Military	13	12	-1	-0.5%	-7.7%
Information*	17	15	-2	-1.0%	-11.8%
Construction	94	91	-3	-1.5%	-3.2%
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	52	48	-4	-2.0%	-7.7%
Wholesale Trade*	32	27	-5	-2.5%	-15.6%
Federal - Civilian	24	12	-12	-5.9%	-50.0%
Transportation & Warehousing*	122	106	-16	-7.9%	-13.1%
Accommodations & Food Service*	134	117	-17	-8.4%	-12.7%
Retail Trade*	172	137	-35	-17.2%	-20.3%
Agriculture	328	276	-52	-25.6%	-15.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,620</b>	<b>1,823</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>

Employment in Niobrara County increased by 12 percent from 2001 through 2015 (Figure 13). The largest increases in employment came from State & Local Government (+148 jobs) and Mining (+72 jobs). On the other hand, the two sectors with the largest loss in employment between 2001 and 2015 were Agriculture (-52 jobs) and Retail Trade (-35 jobs). In terms of individual sectors the fastest growing sectors were Finance & Insurance (+104 percent) and Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support (+100 percent), although both were growing from a relatively small base. In Figure 13, sectors followed by an asterisk represent sectors where the employment was not disclosed in the U.S. Department of Commerce data. For these sectors employment estimates were obtained from Woods & Poole Economics.

**Data Source:** U.S. Department of Commerce. 2017. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Table CA25 and Woods & Poole Economics. 2017. 2017 State Profile: State and County Projections to 2050, Washington, D.C.

Figure 14.  
Comparison of Average Earnings Per Job: 2000-2015  
(Adjusted for Inflation)



In addition to the number of jobs, the labor earnings associated with those jobs is an important consideration. Overall average earnings per job are a general measure of the economic well-being of the local workforce. Figure 14 illustrates the continuing difficulty that the Niobrara County economy, like many other counties in Wyoming, has had over time in generating relatively high paying jobs. In 2000, the average earnings per job for the county was \$24,883, in 2009 dollars, which was 32 percent below the Wyoming average earnings per job (\$36,862) and 49 percent below the U.S. average earnings per job (\$48,821). From 2000 through 2015, after adjusting for inflation, county average earnings per job increased by 44 percent to \$35,946. Despite this increase, 2015 county average earnings per job was still 27 percent below the Wyoming average earnings per job (\$48,978) and 32 percent below the U.S. average earnings per job (\$52,936). While county average earnings per job was 27 percent below the state average in 2015, the Wyoming Economic Analysis Division estimates that the county's cost-of-living for the second quarter of 2015 was only 12 percent below the state average. This difference suggests that, on average, the county's workforce was economically somewhat worse-off than the rest of the state in 2015.

**Data Source:** U.S. Department of Commerce. 2017. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Table CA30.

**Figure 15.****Average Earnings Per Job for Niobrara County: 2015**

Sector	Jobs	Earnings	
		(\$1,000)	AEPJ
Transportation & Warehousing*	106	\$11,485	\$108,349
State & Local Government	445	\$29,002	\$65,173
Utilities*	17	\$1,065	\$62,647
Federal - Civilian	12	\$697	\$58,083
Construction	91	\$4,089	\$44,934
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation*	7	\$297	\$42,429
Other Services*	72	\$2,748	\$38,167
Health Care & Social Assistance*	67	\$2,228	\$33,254
Manufacturing*	64	\$2,090	\$32,656
Military	12	\$347	\$28,917
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	48	\$1,297	\$27,021
Professional Services*	61	\$1,625	\$26,639
Educational Services*	17	\$433	\$25,471
Information*	15	\$352	\$23,467
Mining	152	\$3,459	\$22,757
Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support*	10	\$227	\$22,700
Agriculture	276	\$6,262	\$22,688
Finance & Insurance	51	\$1,062	\$20,824
Wholesale Trade*	27	\$485	\$17,963
Retail Trade*	137	\$2,076	\$15,153
Management Services*	19	\$109	\$5,737
Accommodations & Food Service*	117	\$647	\$5,530
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,823</b>	<b>\$72,082</b>	<b>\$39,540</b>

Average earnings per job (AEPJ), which includes employer paid benefits, varies substantially by sector. In 2015 AEPJ in Niobrara County ranged from over \$108,000,000 for the Transportation & Warehousing sector to slightly more than \$5,500 for the Accommodations & Food Services sector (Figure 15). After Transportation & Warehousing, the next highest AEPJ was in the State & Local Government sector (\$65,173), Utilities (\$62,647), and Federal - Civilian (\$58,083). Of the 23 sectors in the county's economy 4 had AEPJ greater or comparable to the Wyoming average (\$53,875) and the U.S. average (\$58,228). The 4 sectors with AEPJ greater than or comparable to the Wyoming and U.S. averages represented only about one-third of the total employment in the county resulting in the overall lower AEPJ for the county.

**Data Sources:** U.S. Department of Commerce. 2016. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Tables CA25 & CA5 and Woods & Poole Economics. 2017. 2017 State Profile: State and County Projections to 2050, Washington, D.C.



**Figure 16.****Total Labor Earnings for Niobrara County: 2015**

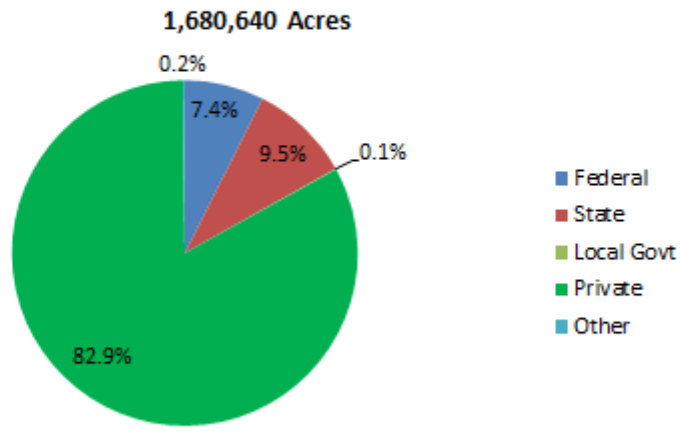
Sector	Jobs	AEPJ	Earnings	
			(\$1,000)	Percent
State & Local Government	445	\$65,173	\$29,002	40.2%
Transportation & Warehousing*	106	\$108,349	\$11,485	15.9%
Agriculture	276	\$22,688	\$6,262	8.7%
Construction	91	\$44,934	\$4,089	5.7%
Mining	152	\$22,757	\$3,459	4.8%
Other Services*	72	\$38,167	\$2,748	3.8%
Health Care & Social Assistance*	67	\$33,254	\$2,228	3.1%
Manufacturing*	64	\$32,656	\$2,090	2.9%
Retail Trade*	137	\$15,153	\$2,076	2.9%
Professional Services*	61	\$26,639	\$1,625	2.3%
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	48	\$27,021	\$1,297	1.8%
Utilities*	17	\$62,647	\$1,065	1.5%
Finance & Insurance	51	\$20,824	\$1,062	1.5%
Federal - Civilian	12	\$58,083	\$697	1.0%
Accommodations & Food Service*	117	\$5,530	\$647	0.9%
Wholesale Trade*	27	\$17,963	\$485	0.7%
Educational Services*	17	\$25,471	\$433	0.6%
Information*	15	\$23,467	\$352	0.5%
Military	12	\$28,917	\$347	0.5%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation*	7	\$42,429	\$297	0.4%
Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support*	10	\$22,700	\$227	0.3%
Management Services*	19	\$5,737	\$109	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,823</b>	<b>\$39,540</b>	<b>\$72,082</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The combination of the number of jobs and the average earnings per job determines the relative importance of individual sectors in terms of total labor earnings in the Niobrara County economy (Figure 16). Labor earnings are important because they represent the major source of personal income for county residents. Overall county employment generated \$72.1 million in labor earnings in 2015. State & Local Government, due to its relatively large number of employees and above average earnings per job was the largest source of labor earnings for the county (40 percent). Following State & Local Government was Transportation & Warehousing (16 percent), Agriculture (9 percent), Construction (6 percent), and Mining (5 percent). Combined these five sectors represented 75 percent of total county labor earnings.

**Data Sources:** U.S. Department of Commerce. 2017. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Tables CA25 & CA5 and Woods & Poole Economics. 2017. 2017 State Profile: State and County Projections to 2050, Washington, D.C.

# **LAND CHARACTERISTICS**

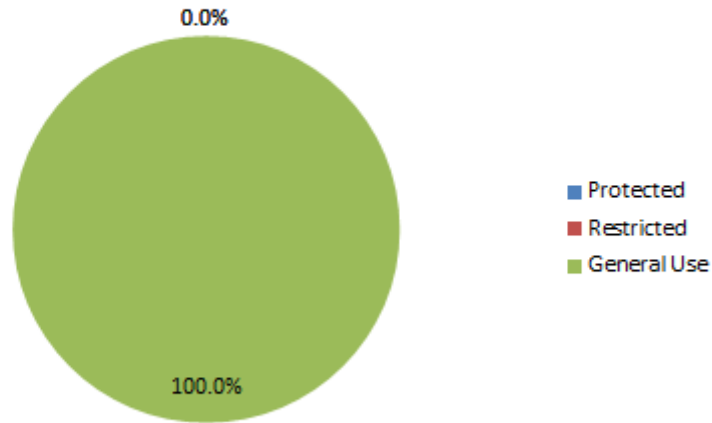
Figure 17.  
Land Ownership in Niobrara County: 2012



Niobrara County contains 1.7 million acres of land (Figure 17). Private land is the largest category of landownership in the county, accounting for 83 percent of the land area (1.4 million acres). Federal land represents 7 percent of the land area (124,736 acres). Of this total the BLM manages 99 percent (123,840 acres) and the Forest Service manages less than one percent (896 acres). State land represents 9 percent of the county’s land area (159,104 acres); with all this land being state trust land. Local government owns less than one percent of the county’s land area (893 acres) with 86 percent owned by the city (768 acres), 7 percent owned by the school districts (64 acres), and 7 percent owned by the county (64 acres). Information from the Wyoming Department of Revenue on acres taxed as agricultural land indicates that 97 percent of the private land in the county is in agricultural use (1.3 million acres). Of this total 96 percent is classified as range land (slightly less than 1.3 million acres), 3 percent is classified as dry crop land (39,592 acres) and one percent is classified as irrigated crop land (11,979 acres).

**Data Source:** Wyoming Department of Administration and Information. 2017. Wyoming and County Profiles 2016.

Figure 18.  
Management Designation of Federal Lands in Niobrara County



Federal lands are managed for different purposes under differing statutory authority. Three categories of designation are presented in Figure 18: 1) Protected, 2) Restricted., and 3) General Use.

- Protected Areas include National Parks and Preserves (NPS), Wilderness (NPS, FWS, FS, BLM), National Conservation Areas (BLM), National Monuments (NPS, FS, BLM), National Recreation Areas (NPS, FS, BLM), National Wild and Scenic Rivers (NPS, FS, BLM), Water Fowl Protection Areas (FWS), Wildlife Management Areas (FWS), Research Natural Areas (FS, BLM), Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (BLM), and National Wildlife Refuges (FWS).
- Restricted Areas include Wilderness Study Areas (NPS, FWS, FS, BLM) and Inventoried Roadless Areas (FS).
- General Use Areas include Public Domain Lands (BLM) and National Forests and Grasslands (FS).

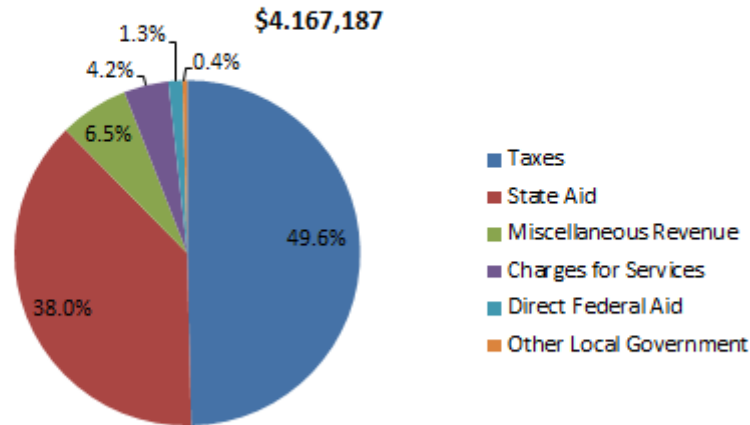
This data was obtained from the Economic Profile System – Human Dimension Toolkit (NPS = National Park Service, FWS = Fish and Wildlife, FS = Forest Service, and BLM = Bureau of Land Management).

In Niobrara County, Economic Profile System data indicates that 100 percent of Federal lands in the county are designated for general use. In comparison, 21 percent of total Federal lands in Wyoming are classified as protected, 13 percent are classified as restricted and 66 percent are classified as general use.

**Data Source:** Headwaters Economics. 2016. Economic Profile System-Human Dimension Toolkit, A Profile of Land Use (page 3).

# **County Government Finances**

Figure 19.  
Niobrara County Government Revenue: FY2016

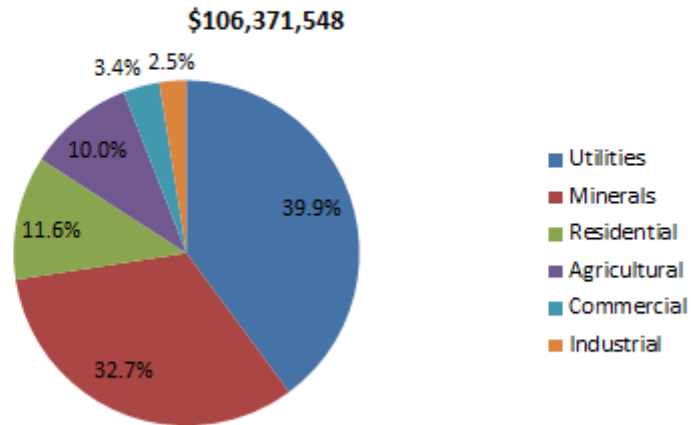


Wyoming Department of Audit information indicates that the total revenue for Niobrara County Government was \$4.2 million in FY2016 (Figure 19). Of this total, the largest sources were Taxes which included property taxes and any optional sales tax revenue (50 percent) and State Aid which included the county’s share of the 4 percent sales and use tax revenue (38 percent). Combined these two sources represented 88 percent of the total county government revenue in FY2016. Following Taxes and State Aid were Miscellaneous Revenue (6 percent), Charges for Services (4 percent), Direct Federal Aid (1 percent) and Other Local Government (less than 1 percent). Combined these revenue sources represented 12 percent of the total county government revenue in FY2016.

Compared to all counties in Wyoming, the county had a comparable proportion of revenue from Taxes (50 percent vs. 52 percent). The county’s proportion of revenue from State Aid was substantially higher relative to all counties in the state (38 percent vs. 24 percent). Other sources of revenue were lower compared to all other counties in the state in terms of Miscellaneous Revenue (6 percent vs. 7 percent), Charges for Services (4 percent vs. 7 percent), Direct Federal Aid (1 percent vs. 6 percent), and Other Government Revenue (less than 1 percent vs 4 percent). Overall, the county’s per capita revenue (\$1,680) was 21 percent above the average for all counties in Wyoming (\$1,385).

**Data Source:** Wyoming Department of Audit. 2016. Cost of Maintaining County Government in Wyoming: For Fiscal Year July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016: As prepared from Reports submitted to the Department of Audit Public Funds.

Figure 20.  
Niobrara County Assessed Valuation: 2016

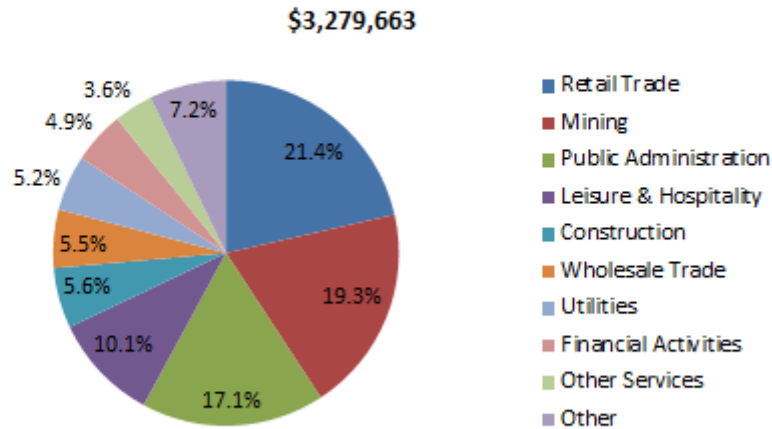


The total assessed valuation for Niobrara County in 2016 was \$106.4 million (Figure 20). Forty percent of the total valuation was from Utilities primarily railroads and pipelines. Following Utilities was Mineral Production (33 percent), Residential Property (12 percent), Agricultural Property (10 percent), Commercial Property (3 percent), and Industrial Property (2 percent). The county’s per capita assessed valuation (\$42,892) was 20 percent above Wyoming’s per capita assessed valuation (\$35,752)

Compared to Wyoming, the county had a much higher proportion of assessed valuation from Utilities (40 percent vs. 7 percent). The county’s proportion of assessed valuation from Mineral Production was substantially lower than that for Wyoming’s (33 percent vs. 50 percent), the assessed valuation from Residential Property was also lower than Wyoming’s (12 percent vs. 24 percent), the assessed valuation from Agricultural Property was the substantially higher than that for Wyoming’s (10 percent vs. 2 percent), the assessed valuation from Commercial Property was lower than Wyoming’s (3 percent vs. 7 percent) and the assessed valuation from Industrial Property was lower than Wyoming’s (2 percent vs. 10 percent). In terms of Mineral Production, crude oil represented 96 percent of total county mineral assessed valuation, natural gas represented 3 percent of total county mineral assessed valuation, and sand and gravel represented less than 1 percent of total county mineral assessed valuation.

**Data Sources:** Wyoming Department of Revenue. 2017. 2016 Annual Report.

Figure 21.  
Niobrara County Sales & Use Tax Revenue: FY2016



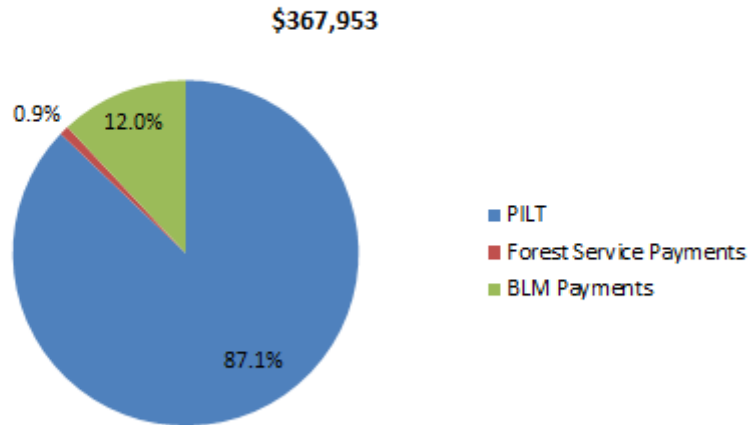
In FY2016 Niobrara County's sales and use tax generated \$3.3 million in tax revenue (Figure 21). Of this total, 46 percent (\$1.5 million) was retained by state government and 54 percent (\$1.8 million) was returned to local governments in the county. In FY2016 county government's share of the returned sales and use tax revenue was approximately \$1.0 million (55 percent) with the remaining \$800,000 (45 percent) going to municipal governments in the county. Twenty-one percent of the county's total sales and use tax revenue came from Retail Trade. Following Retail Trade was Mining (19 percent), Public Administration (17 percent), and Leisure & Hospitality (10 percent). Combined these four sectors contributed 68 percent of the county's total sales and use tax revenue. Public Administration represents sales and use tax revenue on motor vehicle purchases which are collected at the time of registration in Wyoming. Construction, Wholesale Trade, Utilities, Financial Activities, Other Services, and Other combined contributed the remaining 32 percent of total county sales and use tax revenue.

Compared to total sales and use tax revenue for Wyoming, the county had a lower proportion of sales and use tax revenue from Retail Trade (21 percent vs. 32 percent). The county's proportion of sales and use tax revenue from Mining was higher than Wyoming's (19 percent vs. 13 percent), from Public Administration was higher than Wyoming's (17 percent vs. 10 percent), and from Leisure & Hospitality was lower than Wyoming's (10 percent vs. 12 percent). Per capita sales and use tax revenues for the county (\$1,322) were 10 percent lower than per capital sales and use tax revenues for Wyoming (\$1,475).

**Data Sources:** Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division. 2016. Wyoming Sales, Use, and Lodging Tax Revenue Report, 41st Edition.



Figure 22.  
Niobrara County Federal Land Payment: FY2015



The Economic Profile System-Human Dimensions Toolkit indicates that federal land payments to local governments in Niobrara County totaled \$367,953 in FY2015 (Figure 22). The largest source of federal land payments to the county was Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) representing 87 percent of the total amount (\$320,597). PILT payments are intended to compensate county governments for non-taxable federal lands within their borders. It is based on a maximum per-acre payment reduced by other federal revenue sharing payments and subject to a per capita population cap. The second largest source of federal payments to the county was BLM Payments representing 12 percent of the total amount (\$44,121). BLM payments represent revenue sharing funds including grazing fees through the Taylor Grazing Act. The third source of federal payments to the county was Forest Service payments representing 1 percent of the total amount (\$3,253). Forest Service payments can include 25 Percent Revenue Sharing funds, Secure Rural School & Community Self Determination Act funds, and Bankhead-Jones Forest Grasslands funds. Of the \$367,953 in Federal land payments to the county in FY2015, 88 percent went to county government (\$323,832) and 12 percent (\$44,121) to grazing districts. In FY2015 Federal Land Payments to the county represented \$2.55 per eligible acre of Federal land. The average for Wyoming was \$0.92 per eligible acre of Federal land.

**Data Source:** Headwaters Economics. 2016. Economic Profile System-Human Dimension Toolkit, A Profile of Federal Land Payments (page 1).

**Figure 23.****Niobrara County Government Costs, FY2016**

Costs	Amount	Percent	Per Capita
Construction	\$1,037,264	21.8%	\$418.25
County Sheriff	\$619,946	13.0%	\$249.98
Road and Bridge	\$401,750	8.4%	\$162.00
Capital	\$393,394	8.3%	\$158.63
Library	\$287,154	6.0%	\$115.79
Jail	\$286,413	6.0%	\$115.49
County Clerk	\$195,645	4.1%	\$78.89
County Attorney	\$185,003	3.9%	\$74.60
County Administration	\$179,258	3.8%	\$72.28
County Hospital	\$178,609	3.7%	\$72.02
Fair	\$156,815	3.3%	\$63.23
County Assessor	\$149,746	3.1%	\$60.38
Distict Court	\$140,315	2.9%	\$56.58
County Treasurer	\$132,118	2.8%	\$53.27
Courthouse	\$118,256	2.5%	\$47.68
County Commissioners	\$75,963	1.6%	\$30.63
Agricultural Department	\$73,685	1.5%	\$29.71
Finacial Administration	\$43,800	0.9%	\$17.66
Health (Not Hospital)	\$34,122	0.7%	\$13.76
County Coroner	\$21,609	0.5%	\$8.71
Other Expenses	\$17,803	0.4%	\$7.18
Circuit/Drug Court	\$12,000	0.3%	\$4.84
Elections	\$10,163	0.2%	\$4.10
Social Services	\$8,743	0.2%	\$3.53
Civil Defense/Emergency	\$6,581	0.1%	\$2.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,766,155</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$1,921.84</b>

The total cost of maintaining county government for Niobrara County in FY2016 was \$4.8 million (Figure 23). This represents a per capita cost of \$1,921.84 which was 62 percent above the average for all counties in Wyoming (\$1,184.25). The largest cost categories were Construction (22 percent), County Sheriff (13 percent), Road & Bridge (8 percent), and Capital purchases (8 percent). These four cost categories represented 51 percent of the total cost of maintaining county government.

**Data Source:** Wyoming Department of Audit. 2016. Cost of Maintaining County Government in Wyoming: For Fiscal Year July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016, As prepared from Reports submitted to the Department of Audit Public Funds

# **NATURAL RESOURCE BASED INDUSTRY PROFILES**

**Figure 24.**  
**Niobrara County Mining Industry**

	Amount
<u>Mineral Production (2015)</u>	
Crude Oil (Barrels)	908,239
Natural Gas (MCF)	925,531
Sand & Gravel (Tons)	115,649
<u>Tax Revenue (2016 from 2015 Production)</u>	
Assessed Valuation	\$34,736,023
Property Tax Revenue	\$2,388,102
<u>Employment (2015)</u>	
Full & Part-time Jobs	152
Labor Earnings	\$3,459,000
Average Earnings Per Job	\$22,757

In 2015, the Mining sector in Niobrara County produced 908,239 million barrels of crude oil and 925,239 mcf of natural gas, and 115,649 tons of sand and gravel (Figure 24). The mining production in the county had an assessed valuation of \$34.7 million dollars in 2016 (2016 assessed valuation for mineral production is based on 2015 production). This valuation represented 33 percent of the total assessed valuation for the county. Based on the county mill levy, the mineral industry generated \$2.4 million in property tax revenue in 2016. Of this total, 64 percent went to K-12 schools (\$1.5 million), 17 percent went to county government (\$416,832), and 18 percent went to county special districts (\$442,884). Special districts in the county included: Hospital, Conservation, and Senior Citizens' Services. In 2015 the mining industry in the county supported 152 jobs with labor earnings of \$3.5 million. This represented 8 percent of total employment and 5 percent of total labor earnings in the county. The percent of total employment in mining for the county was nearly 10 times the national percentage (0.9 percent) indicating that Mining was an area of specialization within the county's economy. The average earnings per job for mining in the county were \$22,757 which was 58 percent of the county average (\$39,540). The mining industry ranked 3rd out of 23 sectors in the county's economy in terms of total employment and 5<sup>th</sup> out of 23 sectors in terms of total labor earnings.

**Data Sources:** Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. 2016. OnLine Stats Book, 2015 County Report. Wyoming Department of Revenue. 2016. 2016 Annual Report, State Assessed Valuation: Production Year 2015. U.S. Department of Commerce. 2016. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Table CA25 & CA5.

**Figure 25.**  
**Niobrara County Agricultural Industry**

	Amount
<u>Assets (2012)</u>	
Total Land in Agriculture (Acres)	1,358,802
Cattle Inventory (Head)	46,264
Sheep Inventory (Head)	2,751
Investment – Land, Buildings, Equipment	\$756,936,000
Property Taxes Paid	\$1,121,000
<u>Gross Revenue (2015)</u>	
	\$50,504,000
<u>Employment (2015)</u>	
Jobs	276
Labor Earnings	\$6,262,000
Average Earnings Per Job	\$22,688

In 2012 there were 234 agricultural operations in Niobrara County. These operations managed 1.4 million acres in the county (Figure 25). Included in this acreage is 97 percent of the private land in the county. Of the total land in agriculture, 93 percent is classified as grazing land, 5 percent as cropland, less than 1 percent as woodlands, and less than 1 percent as farmsteads and buildings. The average size of an agricultural operation in the county was 5,807 acres. The total cattle and sheep inventory in the county was 49,015 head including 46,264 head of cattle and calves and 2,751 head of sheep and lambs. In 2014, the county ranked 15<sup>th</sup> out of 23 counties in Wyoming in terms of cattle and calves inventory and 15<sup>th</sup> out of 23 counties in terms of sheep and lambs inventory. It also ranked 15<sup>nd</sup> in alfalfa hay production and 12<sup>th</sup> in other hay production. In terms of investment by agricultural operators, the estimated total market value of lands, buildings, and equipment for agriculture in the county was \$756.9 million. This total included \$728.2 million in land and buildings and \$28.7 million for equipment and machinery. The average investment per agricultural operation was \$3.2 million. In 2012 agricultural operations in the county paid \$1.1 million in property taxes.

The gross revenue for the agricultural industry in the county in 2015 was \$50.5 million. Of this total 75 percent was from cash receipts for livestock, 13 percent was from cash receipts for crops, 6 percent was from miscellaneous sources, and 6 percent was from government payments. Total employment for agriculture in 2015 was 276 jobs with labor earnings of \$6.3 million. This represented 15 percent of the total jobs in the county and 9 percent of the labor earnings. The percent of total employment in agriculture for the county was more than 10 times the national percentage (1.5 percent) indicating that agriculture was an area of specialization within the county's economy. The average earnings per job for agriculture in the county were \$22,688 which was 57 percent of the county average (\$39,540). Average earnings per job in agriculture tend to be lower because most employment is self-employed and includes a large number of small part-time and lifestyle operations that generate limited labor earnings.

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data may be a better indicator of average earnings per job for commercial agricultural employment in the county. For 2015, BLS data indicates that the average earnings per job for agricultural employment in the County were \$32,423. The county's agriculture industry ranked 2<sup>th</sup> out of 23 sectors in the county's economy in terms of total employment and 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 23 sectors in terms of total labor earnings.

In addition to jobs and income, agriculture also provides important natural resource amenities such as open space. Open space offers landscapes, lifestyles, and wildlife habitat that can have value to both residents and visitors. Open space is particularly important because it determines the character of the landscapes surrounding a community. Out of economic necessity, most agricultural operations in the county cover large areas of land; as a result, agriculture can contribute substantially to maintaining open spaces on private lands in a region. As noted above, 97 percent of the private land in county is in agricultural use. Due to the natural resource amenities associated with agricultural land there is public support for the retention of lands in agriculture. For example, a recent survey sponsored by the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy, and the University of Wyoming found that nearly 80 percent of Wyoming residents felt that they personally benefit from the presence of farms and ranches in Wyoming. In addition, 76 percent of respondents were concerned with the loss of family farms and ranches in the State. Other issues of serious concerns to respondents included the availability of water for farming and ranching (71 percent), and natural areas and ranchland being split up by new development (66 percent).

**Data Sources:** USDA. 2015. National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2012 Census of Agriculture: Wyoming State and County Data, Volume 1, Geographic Series Part 50, AC-12-A-50, Table 1. County Summary Highlights: 2012 and Table 8. Farms, Land in Farms, Value of Land and Buildings, and Land Use: 2012 and 2007. U.S. Department of Commerce. 2016. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income & Employment, Tables CA45, CA25, & CA5. Freedman, K.S. and N.M. Koranta. 2014. Public Opinion on Natural Resource Conservation in Wyoming: Wyoming Open Space Initiative, Ruckelshaus Institute, A Division of the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources, UW Extension B-1258, October 2014.

**Figure 26.**  
**Niobrara County Travel Industry, 2016**

	Amount
Visitor Spending	\$8.9 Million
Employment	140 Jobs
Labor Income	\$3.6 Million
Average Earnings Per Job	\$25,714
Local Tax Revenue	\$0.2 million
State Tax Revenue	\$0.3 million

Dean Runyan Associates estimates that visitors spent \$8.9 million while in Niobrara County in 2016 (Figure 26). In terms of accommodations, 53 percent of this spending was by visitors staying in hotels/motels, 29 percent by visitors staying in campgrounds, 10 percent was by visitors staying in private homes, 3 percent was by visitors staying in vacation homes, and 4 percent was by visitors not staying overnight. In terms of purchases, 26 percent was spent on accommodation, 23 percent was spent on food services, 16 percent was spent on arts/entertainment/recreation, 13 percent was spent on retail sales, 13 percent was spent on local transportation and gas, and 8 percent was spent at food stores.

Dean Runyan estimated that the travel industry generated 140 direct jobs in the county in 2016. This represents 8 percent of total employment in the county. Seventy-one percent of these jobs were in the accommodations and food service sector, 14 percent were in the arts/entertainment/recreation sector, and 14 percent were in the retail trade sector. The labor earnings associated with this employment was estimated to be \$3.6 million. This represents 5 percent of the total labor earnings for the county. Average earnings per job for the travel industry in the county for 2015 were \$25,714. Average earnings per job for the travel industry were 65 percent the county average (\$39,540).

The tax revenue associated with the county's travel industry is estimated to be \$0.5 million with \$0.2 million (40 percent) going to local government and \$0.3 million (60 percent) going to state government.

**Data Source:** Dean Runyan Associates. 2016. Wyoming Travel Impacts: 2000-2015, Prepared for Wyoming Office of Tourism, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

# **TABLES**



<b>Table 1. Population 2000-2016</b>			
Year	Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.
2000	2,396	494,300	282,162,411
2001	2,357	494,657	284,968,955
2002	2,293	500,017	287,625,193
2003	2,280	503,453	290,107,933
2004	2,319	509,106	292,805,298
2005	2,315	514,157	295,516,599
2006	2,321	522,667	298,379,912
2007	2,407	534,876	301,231,207
2008	2,467	546,043	304,093,966
2009	2,475	559,851	306,771,529
2010	2,492	564,513	309,348,193
2011	2,487	567,725	311,663,358
2012	2,474	576,765	313,998,379
2013	2,546	582,684	316,204,908
2014	2,491	583,642	318,563,456
2015	2,497	586,555	320,896,618
2016	2,480	585,501	323,127,513
Change	84	91,201	40,965,102
Percent	3.5%	18.5%	14.5%
Source (2015)	Niobrara	Wyoming	
Natural Increase	-113	48,391	
Net Migration	197	42,810	
Total Change	84	91,201	

Source: WY Department of A&I - Economic Analysis Division

**Table 2. Primary Reason for Moving to Niobrara County, 2000-2016**

Reason	Number	Percent
Job Related	91	39.2%
Better Quality of Life	28	12.2%
Friends or Relatives	43	18.4%
Other	70	30.2%
Total	233	100.0%

Source: Wyoming Community Development Authority

<b>Table 3. Age of Population, 2015</b>						
				Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.
Age	Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.	Percent	Percent	Percent
Under 5	140	38,395	19,907,281	5.5%	6.6%	6.2%
5 to 17	360	100,500	53,737,830	14.2%	17.1%	16.7%
18 to 24	190	56,514	31,219,892	7.5%	9.6%	9.7%
25 to 44	651	153,641	84,726,985	25.6%	26.2%	26.4%
45 to 64	677	152,358	84,065,980	26.6%	26.0%	26.2%
65 and over	524	84,699	47,760,852	20.6%	14.5%	14.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,542</b>	<b>586,107</b>	<b>321,418,820</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Median Age	42.9	36.9	37.8			

Source: WY Department of A&I - Economic Analysis Division

<b>Table 4. Race and Ethnicity of Population 2015</b>						
				Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.
Race	Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.	Percent	Percent	Percent
White	2,412	543,292	251,868,011	94.9%	92.7%	78.4%
Black	26	8,286	41,902,829	1.0%	1.4%	13.0%
Native American	32	15,757	3,893,004	1.3%	2.7%	1.2%
Asian	16	6,072	15,781,779	0.6%	1.0%	4.9%
Pacific Islander	0	676	702,317	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%
Two or More	56	12,024	7,270,880	2.2%	2.1%	2.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,542</b>	<b>586,107</b>	<b>321,418,820</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
				Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.
Ethnicity	Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.	Percent	Percent	Percent
Hispanic	75	58,207	56,592,793	3.0%	9.9%	17.6%
Non-Hispanic	2,467	527,900	264,826,027	97.0%	90.1%	82.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,542</b>	<b>586,107</b>	<b>321,418,820</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: WY Department of A&I - Economic Analysis Division

<b>Table 5. Per Capita Income 2015</b>						
				Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.
Type	Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.	Percent	Percent	Percent
Net Earnings	\$26,638	\$32,578	\$30,729	57.5%	58.1%	63.9%
Transfer Payments	\$8,801	\$7,061	\$8,334	19.0%	12.6%	17.3%
Investment	\$10,902	\$16,442	\$9,049	23.5%	29.3%	18.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$46,341</b>	<b>\$56,081</b>	<b>\$48,112</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
	Deflated	Deflated	Deflated	Deflated	Deflated	Deflated
	Niobrara	Niobrara	Niobrara	Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.
Year	Earnings	Transfer	Investment	Total	Total	Total
2000	\$16,861	\$5,277	\$9,153	\$31,291	\$35,373	\$37,371
2001	\$20,095	\$5,243	\$8,952	\$34,290	\$36,632	\$37,658
2002	\$20,202	\$5,817	\$9,212	\$35,232	\$36,943	\$37,412
2003	\$20,182	\$6,221	\$9,734	\$36,138	\$38,351	\$37,692
2004	\$21,128	\$6,470	\$8,344	\$35,941	\$39,244	\$38,505
2005	\$23,581	\$6,704	\$8,335	\$38,620	\$41,562	\$39,031
2006	\$20,525	\$6,926	\$9,349	\$36,800	\$45,571	\$40,230
2007	\$18,591	\$7,010	\$9,046	\$34,647	\$45,942	\$40,910
2008	\$19,677	\$7,727	\$8,045	\$35,449	\$48,910	\$41,394
2009	\$20,145	\$8,108	\$7,251	\$35,504	\$43,549	\$39,376
2010	\$20,342	\$8,066	\$7,099	\$35,506	\$44,901	\$39,791
2011	\$24,042	\$7,978	\$8,734	\$40,754	\$47,892	\$41,092
2012	\$22,053	\$7,918	\$9,937	\$39,908	\$50,125	\$42,073
2013	\$24,224	\$8,042	\$9,602	\$41,869	\$49,271	\$41,587
2014	\$28,156	\$7,842	\$9,764	\$45,762	\$51,461	\$42,649
2015	\$24,217	\$8,001	\$9,911	\$42,129	\$50,984	\$43,739
Change	\$7,356	\$2,724	\$758	\$10,838	\$15,611	\$6,368
Percent of Total	67.9%	25.1%	7.0%	100.0%	N.A.	N.A.
Percent Change	43.6%	51.6%	8.3%	34.6%	44.1%	17.0%
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis						

<b>Table 6. Educational Attainment Level (Population 25 years and over), 2011-2015</b>						
Degree	Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.	Niobrara Percent	Wyoming Percent	U.S. Percent
No High School Degree	177	29,566	28,229,094	9.5%	7.7%	13.3%
High School Graduate	524	112,872	58,722,528	28.1%	29.4%	27.8%
Some College	575	103,479	44,529,161	30.9%	26.9%	21.1%
Associate Degree	190	39,555	17,029,467	10.2%	10.3%	8.1%
Bachelor's Degree	325	65,787	39,166,047	17.5%	17.1%	18.5%
Graduate or Professional	71	33,013	23,786,225	3.8%	8.6%	11.2%
<b>Total Population 25 Yrs or Older</b>	<b>1,862</b>	<b>384,272</b>	<b>211,462,522</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
High School Degree or Higher	1,685	354,706	183,233,428	90.5%	92.3%	86.7%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	396	98,800	62,952,272	21.3%	25.7%	29.8%
Source: WY Department of A&I - Economic Analysis Division						
<b>Table 7. Employment, 2000-2015</b>						
Year	Niobrara W&S Jobs	Niobrara SE Jobs	Niobrara Total	Wyoming Total	U.S. Total	
2000	983	647	1,630	324,018	165,370,800	
2001	990	630	1,620	330,154	165,519,200	
2002	986	640	1,626	334,232	165,159,100	
2003	955	610	1,565	337,010	166,026,500	
2004	942	615	1,557	343,853	169,036,700	
2005	980	634	1,614	354,786	172,557,400	
2006	974	618	1,592	370,803	176,123,600	
2007	1,006	675	1,681	389,074	179,885,700	
2008	1,023	662	1,685	399,728	179,639,900	
2009	1,036	650	1,686	388,641	174,233,700	
2010	1,025	684	1,709	385,217	173,034,700	
2011	1,057	678	1,735	390,568	176,278,700	
2012	1,090	756	1,846	396,774	179,081,700	
2013	1,096	772	1,868	400,424	182,408,100	
2014	1,094	758	1,852	406,028	186,168,100	
2015	1,053	770	1,823	406,576	190,195,400	
Percent Change 2000-2015	7.1%	19.0%	11.8%	25.5%	15.0%	
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis						

Sector	Jobs	Percent	LQ
State & Local Government	445	24.4%	8.12
Agriculture	276	15.1%	10.09
Mining	152	8.3%	9.76
Retail Trade*	137	7.5%	0.69
Accommodations & Food Service*	117	6.4%	0.81
Transportation & Warehousing*	106	5.8%	1.55
Construction	91	5.0%	0.88
Other Services*	72	3.9%	0.63
Health Care & Social Assistance*	67	3.7%	0.30
Manufacturing*	64	3.5%	0.47
Professional Services*	61	3.3%	0.44
Finance & Insurance	51	2.8%	0.51
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	48	2.6%	0.53
Wholesale Trade*	27	1.5%	0.38
Management Services*	19	1.0%	0.13
Utilities*	17	0.9%	2.79
Educational Services*	17	0.9%	0.35
Information*	15	0.8%	0.43
Federal - Civilian	12	0.7%	0.41
Military	12	0.7%	0.59
Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support*	10	0.5%	1.00
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation*	7	0.4%	0.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,823</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>N.A.</b>
* Estimates from Woods & Poole Economics			
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis			

Sector	2001	2015	Change 2001-2015	Percent of Change	Percent Change
State & Local Government	297	445	148	72.9%	49.8%
Mining	80	152	72	35.5%	90.0%
Finance & Insurance	25	51	26	12.8%	104.0%
Manufacturing*	39	64	25	12.3%	64.1%
Professional Services*	38	61	23	11.3%	60.5%
Health Care & Social Assistance*	49	67	18	8.9%	36.7%
Other Services*	62	72	10	4.9%	16.1%
Utilities*	10	17	7	3.4%	70.0%
Educational Services*	10	17	7	3.4%	70.0%
Management Services*	13	19	6	3.0%	46.2%
Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support*	5	10	5	2.5%	100.0%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation*	4	7	3	1.5%	75.0%
Military	13	12	-1	-0.5%	-7.7%
Information*	17	15	-2	-1.0%	-11.8%
Construction	94	91	-3	-1.5%	-3.2%
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	52	48	-4	-2.0%	-7.7%
Wholesale Trade*	32	27	-5	-2.5%	-15.6%
Federal - Civilian	24	12	-12	-5.9%	-50.0%
Transportation & Warehousing*	122	106	-16	-7.9%	-13.1%
Accommodations & Food Service*	134	117	-17	-8.4%	-12.7%
Retail Trade*	172	137	-35	-17.2%	-20.3%
Agriculture	328	276	-52	-25.6%	-15.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,620</b>	<b>1,823</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>
* Estimates from Woods & Poole Economics					
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis					

**Table 10. Average Earnings Per Job, 2000-2015**

	Deflated	Deflated	Deflated
Year	Niobrara	Wyoming	U.S.
2000	\$24,883	\$36,862	\$48,821
2001	\$29,301	\$38,189	\$49,618
2002	\$28,639	\$38,761	\$49,904
2003	\$29,900	\$39,639	\$50,395
2004	\$32,241	\$39,392	\$51,086
2005	\$34,757	\$39,997	\$50,786
2006	\$31,435	\$42,786	\$51,158
2007	\$28,421	\$43,041	\$50,670
2008	\$30,702	\$46,293	\$51,011
2009	\$32,188	\$45,203	\$50,184
2010	\$32,073	\$47,005	\$51,247
2011	\$36,581	\$48,173	\$51,568
2012	\$31,468	\$48,667	\$52,225
2013	\$35,481	\$48,963	\$51,902
2014	\$40,752	\$50,166	\$52,233
2015	\$35,946	\$48,978	\$52,936
Percent Change	44.5%	32.9%	8.4%
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis			

**Table 10a. Average Earnings Per Job by Sector for Niobrara County, 2015**

Sector	Jobs	Earnings	
		(\$1,000)	AEPJ
Transportation & Warehousing*	106	\$11,485	\$108,349
State & Local Government	445	\$29,002	\$65,173
Utilities*	17	\$1,065	\$62,647
Federal - Civilian	12	\$697	\$58,083
Construction	91	\$4,089	\$44,934
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation*	7	\$297	\$42,429
Other Services*	72	\$2,748	\$38,167
Health Care & Social Assistance*	67	\$2,228	\$33,254
Manufacturing*	64	\$2,090	\$32,656
Military	12	\$347	\$28,917
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	48	\$1,297	\$27,021
Professional Services*	61	\$1,625	\$26,639
Educational Services*	17	\$433	\$25,471
Information*	15	\$352	\$23,467
Mining	152	\$3,459	\$22,757
Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support*	10	\$227	\$22,700
Agriculture	276	\$6,262	\$22,688
Finance & Insurance	51	\$1,062	\$20,824
Wholesale Trade*	27	\$485	\$17,963
Retail Trade*	137	\$2,076	\$15,153
Management Services*	19	\$109	\$5,737
Accommodations & Food Service*	117	\$647	\$5,530
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,823</b>	<b>\$72,082</b>	<b>\$39,540</b>
* Estimates from Woods & Poole Economics			
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis			



<b>Table 11. Total Labor Earning for Niobrara County, 2015</b>				
			Earnings	
Sector	Jobs	AEPJ	(\$1,000)	Percent
State & Local Government	445	\$65,173	\$29,002	40.2%
Transportation & Warehousing*	106	\$108,349	\$11,485	15.9%
Agriculture	276	\$22,688	\$6,262	8.7%
Construction	91	\$44,934	\$4,089	5.7%
Mining	152	\$22,757	\$3,459	4.8%
Other Services*	72	\$38,167	\$2,748	3.8%
Health Care & Social Assistance*	67	\$33,254	\$2,228	3.1%
Manufacturing*	64	\$32,656	\$2,090	2.9%
Retail Trade*	137	\$15,153	\$2,076	2.9%
Professional Services*	61	\$26,639	\$1,625	2.3%
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	48	\$27,021	\$1,297	1.8%
Utilities*	17	\$62,647	\$1,065	1.5%
Finance & Insurance	51	\$20,824	\$1,062	1.5%
Federal - Civilian	12	\$58,083	\$697	1.0%
Accommodations & Food Service*	117	\$5,530	\$647	0.9%
Wholesale Trade*	27	\$17,963	\$485	0.7%
Educational Services*	17	\$25,471	\$433	0.6%
Information*	15	\$23,467	\$352	0.5%
Military	12	\$28,917	\$347	0.5%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation*	7	\$42,429	\$297	0.4%
Forestry, Fishing, & Ag Support*	10	\$22,700	\$227	0.3%
Management Services*	19	\$5,737	\$109	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,823</b>	<b>\$39,540</b>	<b>\$72,082</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
* Estimates from Woods & Poole Economics				
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis				

<b>Table 12. Land Ownership in Niobrara County</b>			
Owner	Acres	Percent of Total	Percent of Type
National Park Service	0	0.0%	0.0%
Forest Service	896	0.1%	0.7%
BLM	123,840	7.4%	99.3%
Bureau of Reclamation	0	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total Federal</b>	<b>124,736</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
State Trust Lands	159,104	9.5%	100.0%
Recreation Commission	0	0.0%	0.0%
Fish & Game	0	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total State</b>	<b>159,104</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
County	64	0.0%	7.1%
Cities	768	0.0%	85.7%
School Dist. & Colleges	64	0.0%	7.1%
<b>Total Local Government</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Total Private</b>	<b>1,392,640</b>	<b>82.9%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>3,264</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Total Land Area</b>	<b>1,680,640</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Source: Wyoming County Profiles 2015

<b>Table 13. Acres of Taxable Agricultural Land in Niobrara County</b>		
Classification	Acres	Percent
Irrigate Land	11,979	0.9%
Dry Farm Land	39,592	2.9%
Range Lands	1,294,447	96.2%
<b>Total Land</b>	<b>1,346,018</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue 2012 Annual Report

<b>Table 14. Management Designations of Federal Land in Niobrara County</b>		
Type	Acres	Percent
Protected	0	0.0%
Restricted	0	0.0%
General Use	124,850	100.0%
<b>Total Federal</b>	<b>124,850</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Economic Profile System - Human Dimensions Toolkit

**Table 15. Niobrara County Government Revenue, FY2016**

Source	Amount	Percent
Taxes	\$2,068,593	49.6%
State Aid	\$1,582,266	38.0%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$269,356	6.5%
Charges for Services	\$174,199	4.2%
Direct Federal Aid	\$54,554	1.3%
Other Local Government	\$18,219	0.4%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$4,167,187</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Source: Wyoming Department of Audit		

**Table 16. Niobrara County Assessed Valuation, 2016**

Property Type	Amount	Percent
Utilities	\$42,415,486	39.9%
Minerals	\$34,736,023	32.7%
Residential Property	\$12,325,306	11.6%
Agricultural Lands	\$10,597,410	10.0%
Commercial Property	\$3,611,130	3.4%
Industrial Property	\$2,686,193	2.5%
<b>Total Valuation</b>	<b>\$106,371,548</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Crude Oil	\$33,529,427	96.5%
Natural Gas	\$991,127	2.9%
Coal	\$0	0.0%
Bentonite	\$0	0.0%
Sand & Gravel	\$215,469	0.6%
<b>Total Minerals</b>	<b>\$34,736,023</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue		

Industries	Sales Tax	Use Tax	Sales & Use	Percent
Retail Trade	\$690,020	\$13,128	\$703,148	21.4%
Mining	\$620,699	\$12,896	\$633,595	19.3%
Public Administration	\$309,148	\$253,281	\$562,429	17.1%
Leisure & Hospitality	\$328,237	\$1,373	\$329,610	10.1%
Construction	\$38,813	\$146,475	\$185,288	5.6%
Wholesale Trade	\$177,587	\$1,363	\$178,950	5.5%
Utilities	\$167,956	\$2,251	\$170,207	5.2%
Financial Activities	\$161,112	\$143	\$161,255	4.9%
Other Services	\$119,501	\$6	\$119,507	3.6%
Transport & Warehouse	\$654	\$90,600	\$91,254	2.8%
Information	\$84,097	\$3,338	\$87,435	2.7%
Manufacturing	\$39,668	\$17	\$39,685	1.2%
Pro & Business Services	\$16,462	\$190	\$16,652	0.5%
Education & Health	\$396	\$101	\$497	0.0%
Agr & Other	\$150	\$1	\$151	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,754,500</b>	<b>\$525,163</b>	<b>\$3,279,663</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Wyoming Economic Analysis Division

Source	Amount	Percent
PILT	\$320,579	87.1%
Forest Service Payments	\$3,253	0.9%
BLM Payments	\$44,121	12.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$367,953</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Distributions	Amount	Percent
County Government	\$323,832	88.0%
Local School Districts	\$0	0.0%
Grazing Districts	\$44,121	12.0%
Resource Advisory Councils	\$0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$367,953</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Economic Profile System - Human Dimension Toolkit

**Table 19. Niobrara County Government Costs, FY2016**

County Costs	Amount	Percent	Per Capita
Construction	\$1,037,264	21.8%	\$418.25
County Sheriff	\$619,946	13.0%	\$249.98
Road and Bridge	\$401,750	8.4%	\$162.00
Capital	\$393,394	8.3%	\$158.63
Library	\$287,154	6.0%	\$115.79
Jail	\$286,413	6.0%	\$115.49
County Clerk	\$195,645	4.1%	\$78.89
County Attorney	\$185,003	3.9%	\$74.60
County Administration	\$179,258	3.8%	\$72.28
County Hospital	\$178,609	3.7%	\$72.02
Fair	\$156,815	3.3%	\$63.23
County Assessor	\$149,746	3.1%	\$60.38
Distict Court	\$140,315	2.9%	\$56.58
County Treasurer	\$132,118	2.8%	\$53.27
Courthouse	\$118,256	2.5%	\$47.68
County Commissioners	\$75,963	1.6%	\$30.63
Agricultural Department	\$73,685	1.5%	\$29.71
Finacial Administration	\$43,800	0.9%	\$17.66
Health (Not Hospital)	\$34,122	0.7%	\$13.76
County Coroner	\$21,609	0.5%	\$8.71
Other Expenses	\$17,803	0.4%	\$7.18
Circuit/Drug Court	\$12,000	0.3%	\$4.84
Elections	\$10,163	0.2%	\$4.10
Social Services	\$8,743	0.2%	\$3.53
Civil Defense/Emergency	\$6,581	0.1%	\$2.65
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$4,766,155</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$1,921.84</b>
Source: Wyoming Department of Audit			

<b>Table 20. Niobrara County Mining Industry</b>						
<b>Mineral Production 2015</b>						
	Production					
Oil (Barrels)	908,239					
Gas (MCF)	925,531					
Sand & Gravel (Tons)	115,649					
Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue						
<b>Tax Revenue 2016 (2015 Production)</b>						
	Assessed		County	K-12	Special	Total
	Valuation	Percent	Revenue	Revenue	Districts	Revenue
			(12.000 Mills)	(44.000 Mills)	(12.751 Mills)	(68.751 Mills)
Crude Oil	\$33,529,427	96.5%	\$402,353	\$1,475,295	\$427,500	\$2,305,148
Natural Gas	\$991,127	2.9%	\$11,894	\$43,610	\$12,637	\$68,140
Sand & Gravel	\$215,469	0.6%	\$2,586	\$9,481	\$2,747	\$14,813
Total Minerals	\$34,736,023	100.0%	\$416,832	\$1,528,385	\$442,884	\$2,388,102
Percent			17.5%	64.0%	18.5%	100.0%
Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue						
<b>Employment 2015</b>						
	Mining	Total	Percent			
			Mining			
Jobs	152	1,823	8.3%			
Labor Income	\$3,459,000	\$72,082,000	4.8%			
Average Earnings/Job	\$22,757	\$39,540	57.6%			
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis						

<b>Table 21. Niobrara County Agricultural Industry, 2012</b>				
<b>Physical Characteristics</b>				
Land Use	Acres	Percent	Number of Farms	Average Size (Acres)
Total Cropland	75,354	5.5%		
Total Woodland	8,874	0.7%		
Grazing Land	1,265,598	93.1%		
Farmstead	8,976	0.7%		
<b>Total Land</b>	<b>1,358,802</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>5,807</b>
	Cattle & Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Total Head	
Inventory	46,264	2,751	49,015	
	Land & Buildings	Machinery & Equipment	Combined Investment	
Market Value	\$728,218,000	\$28,718,000	\$756,936,000	
Average Per Farm	\$3,112,043	\$122,726	\$3,234,769	
Property Tax Paid	\$1,121,000			
Source: 2012 Census of Agriculture				
<b>Gross Revenue 2015</b>				
Cash Receipts - Livestock	\$38,088,000	75.4%		
Cash Receipts - Crops	\$6,504,000	12.9%		
Government Payments	\$2,831,000	5.6%		
Miscellaneous Income	\$3,081,000	6.1%		
<b>Total Gross Revenue</b>	<b>\$50,504,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis				
<b>Employment 2014</b>				
	Agriculture	County Total	Percent Agriculture	
Jobs	276	1,823	15.1%	
Labor Income	\$6,262,000	\$72,082,000	8.7%	
Average Earnings/Job	\$22,688	\$39,540	57.4%	
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis				

**Table 22. Niobrara County Travel Industry, 2016**

<b>Visitor Spending</b>					
	Amount				
Accommodation	(Million\$)	Percent			
Hotel, Motel	\$4.7	52.8%			
Campground	\$2.6	29.2%			
Private Home	\$0.9	10.1%			
Vacation Home	\$0.3	3.4%			
Day Travel	\$0.4	4.5%			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8.9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
	Amount				
Purchases	(Million\$)	Percent			
Accommodations	\$2.3	25.8%			
Food Service	\$2.1	23.6%			
Food Stores	\$0.7	7.9%			
Local Tran. & Gas	\$1.2	13.5%			
Art, Ent. & Rec	\$1.4	15.7%			
Retail Sales	\$1.2	13.5%			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8.9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
<b>Employment</b>					
Sector	Jobs	Percent	Earnings (Million\$)	Percent	Ave. Earn Per Job
Accom & Food Service	100	71.4%	\$2.7	75.0%	\$27,000
Arts, Ent. & Rec.	20	14.3%	\$0.4	11.1%	\$20,000
Retail	20	14.3%	\$0.4	11.1%	\$20,000
Ground Tran	0	0.0%	\$0.0	0.0%	N.A.
Other Travel	0	0.0%	\$0.1	2.8%	N.A.
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$3.6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$25,714</b>
<b>Tax Revenue</b>					
	Amount				
	(Million\$)	Percent			
Local Tax Revenue	\$0.2	40.0%			
State Tax Revenue	\$0.3	60.0%			
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$0.5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
Source: Dean Runyan Associates					