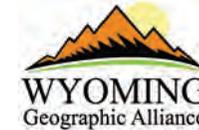
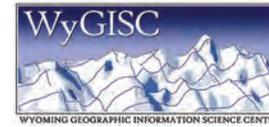


# Wyoming Student Atlas

Exploring our geography

# Acknowledgments

The *Wyoming Student Atlas* is a project of the University of Wyoming's Department of Geography, Wyoming Geographic Information Science Center, and Wyoming Geographic Alliance.



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**Credits:** Information on references, data sources, and image credits may be found on pages 53-55.

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## Introduction

Geography is about the study of place, asking the question “What’s where, and why?” The *Wyoming Student Atlas* is one way of studying the place we call Wyoming, providing an opportunity to learn about its people and landscapes and how they interact.

An atlas means maps, and this book has a lot of them, as well as some text and photographs. The maps in the *Wyoming Student Atlas* are designed to introduce you to the spatial patterns of a wide variety of physical and human phenomena and events in the state to help you understand how they relate to one another.

To help get started in working with maps and geographic information, the Atlas first describes different types of maps and their components, and two important mapping concepts: map projections and map scale.

The maps that follow are organized around major physical and human geography themes, ranging from geology, climate, and wildlife to human settlement, economic resources, and culture. Additional population data and a glossary of geographic terms are included at the back of the book, along with information on data and image sources, books, and other references used in creating the maps and text.

One way to begin exploring the Atlas is to think about the types of questions that its maps might help answer. For example:

- Page 13: to which ocean does water flow, if it falls in the Great Divide Basin?
- Page 15: what might cause average July temperatures to be highest in the northeastern part of the state?
- Page 18: in which Wyoming county would you be least likely to experience a tornado?
- Page 20: which is the most common type of vegetation found in Wyoming?
- Page 25: why did the route of explorer George Drouillard end in the Wind River Mountains?
- Page 29: which counties experienced the greatest population increase between 2000 and 2010? What may have caused this change?
- Page 33: why does Albany County have such a high percentage of people aged 20 to 29 years?
- Page 34: how would you describe the spatial pattern of private land across the state?
- Page 37: in which two counties do sheep outnumber cattle?
- Page 40: why are most of the coal mines in the state located in Campbell County?
- Page 42: based on this map, where would you find the highest winds in Wyoming?
- Page 46: what does the series of voting maps tell you about Wyoming voting preferences?

These are just a few of the questions you can find the answers to in the Atlas. While you’re at it, be sure to look closely for the hard-to-catch mythical jackalope who’s found his way onto one of the maps.

Can you find the map where he is hidden?



It is our hope that the *Wyoming Student Atlas* serves as a useful resource to educators for teaching students about Wyoming’s past and present physical and human geography. The maps and supporting information in this publication have been developed with a focus on learners in upper elementary through junior high grades. One guiding set of principles in designing the Atlas was the *National Geography Standards* for grades K through 12 published by the National Center for Geographic Education (NCGE) on behalf of the Geography Education National Implementation Program.<sup>1</sup>

First published in 1994 and revised in 2012, the *National Geography Standards* continue to serve as the foundation for geography curriculum design and instructional material development in many of the 50 states, including Wyoming. There are 18 Standards grouped according to six Essential Elements (see accompanying table). Grade-level knowledge themes and content, as well as corresponding student performance statements are specified for three grade bands (4th, 8th and 12th).

---

### National Geography Standards Essential Elements

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The World in Spatial Terms

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Places and Regions

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Physical Systems

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Human Systems

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Environment and Society

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The Uses of Geography

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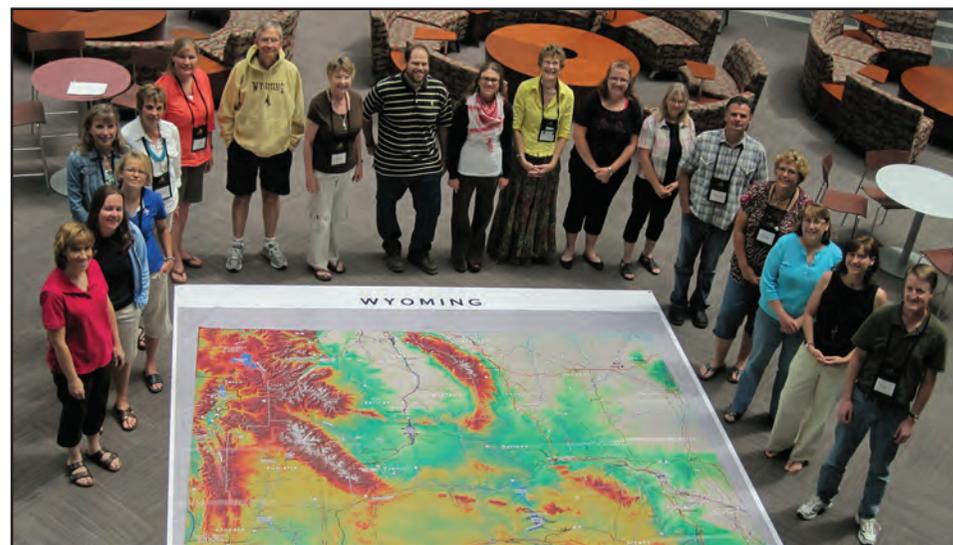
Source: Heffron and Downs 2012.

The *National Geography Standards’* content encompasses a wide range of human and physical geography topics, corresponding closely to the geography element (“People, Places and Environment”) of the most recent version of the *Wyoming Social Studies Content and Performance Standards*.<sup>2</sup> The *Standards* can also be related to components of the latest

(pending) update of the *Wyoming Science Content and Performance Standards* including content associated with “Earth’s Systems,” “Earth and Human Activity,” and “Ecosystems.”

Above all, the *Standards* embody the philosophy that “the goal of teaching geography is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and perspective to *do geography*” [emphasis added] (Heffron and Downs 2012, p. 13). That is, combining geographic information with geographic thinking to support well-reasoned decision making and successful problem solving. We believe the *Wyoming Student Atlas* supports this goal by combining factual geographic knowledge with visual geographic representations to help students better understand what is happening in our state, why it happens where it does, how it has changed from the past, and how it may change in the future.

We hope you find the Atlas useful in your teaching. More information about potential classroom uses of *Wyoming Student Atlas* may be found at the Wyoming Geographic Alliance web site ([www.uwyo.edu/wga](http://www.uwyo.edu/wga)), including digital versions of many of the Atlas maps, additional ancillary data, web resources, and sample lesson plans.



1 The National Geography Standards may be accessed from the NCGE at: <http://ncge.org/geography-for-life>

2 Current Wyoming K-12 education standards may be accessed from the Wyoming Department of Education web site: <http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/standards>

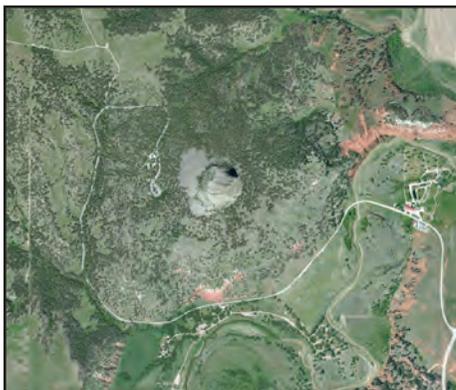
## Photograph of Devils Tower

A photograph gives a detailed real life perspective of an area or feature of interest, but not its location or relationship to features in the surrounding area.



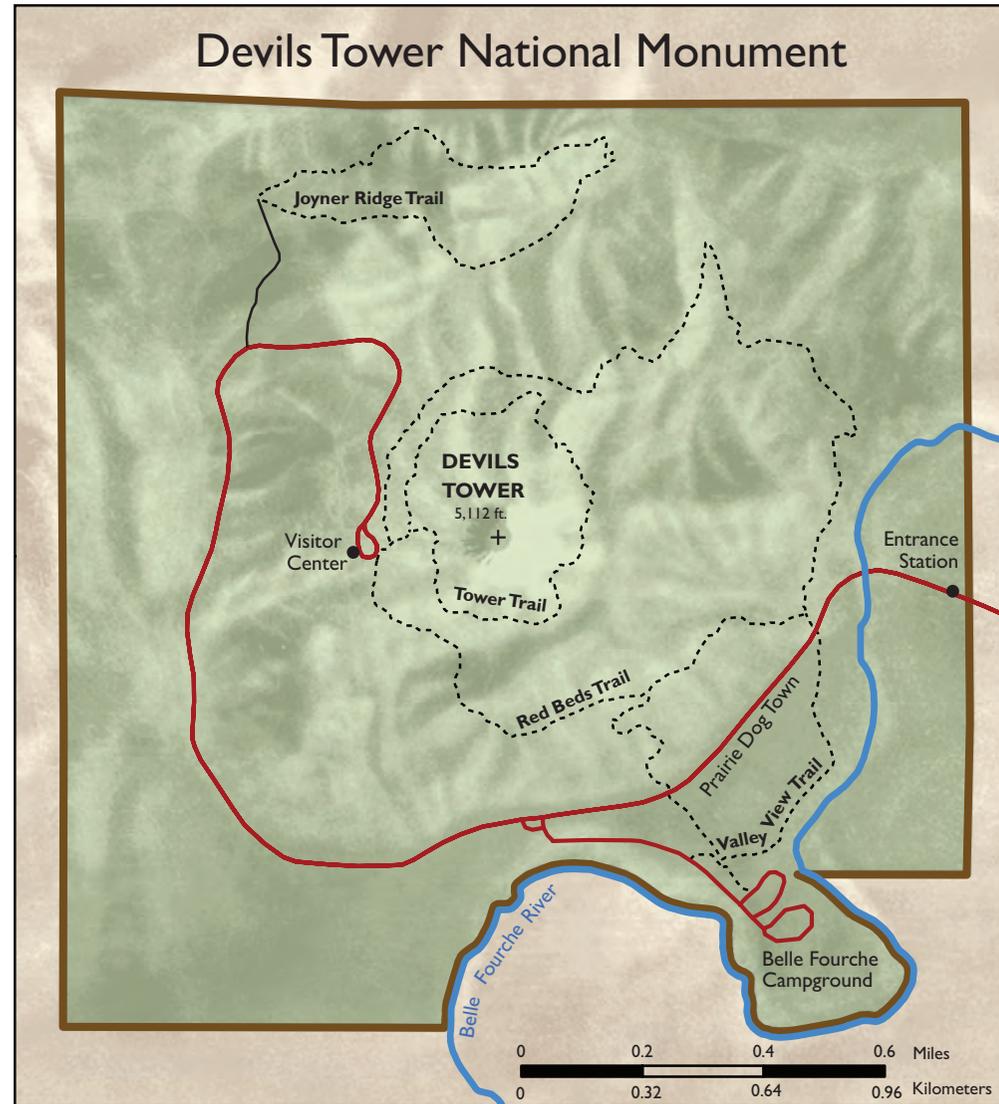
## Aerial photo of Devils Tower

An aerial photograph is a "bird's eye view" that shows the location of a feature in relation to the surrounding area, but it can be difficult to interpret.



## Map of Devils Tower

A map uses colors, symbols, and labels to locate and describe features within an area, including relationships between surrounding features such as roads, streams, and differences in elevation. Maps can also highlight patterns or trends in an area, or between different areas.



## Elements of a map

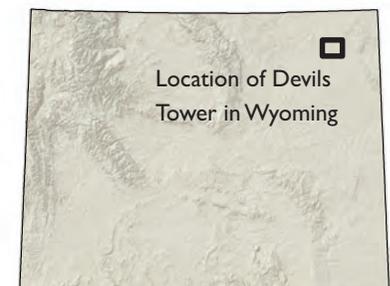
Map elements include a title, legend (also called a map key), labels, symbols, and a scale bar or other description of scale. Unless a map is part of a larger publication, it should include an author and date.

Maps can also include other elements to aid in understanding and interpreting the features or theme of the map. These can include directional arrows, descriptive text, inset maps, location maps, images, graphs, and lines of latitude and longitude or other coordinates.

## Legend

- Building
- Paved Road
- Unpaved Road
- - - Hiking Trail
- River
- ▭ Park Boundary

## Location map



## Reference maps

A reference map shows the location of specific features such as roads, cities, and streams. Types of reference maps include political maps (locations of countries, states, cities), physical maps (locations of streams, lakes, mountains), topographic maps (natural and human-made features), and road maps.

### Wyoming reference map



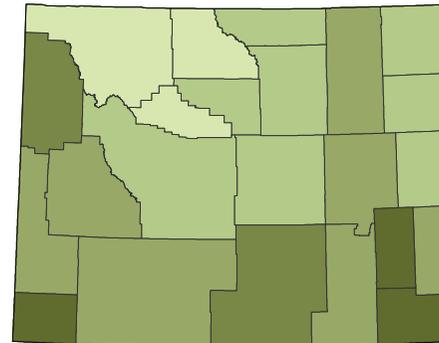
- ★ Capital
- Major cities and towns
- Major roads
- Counties

## Thematic maps

A thematic map focuses on one specific topic or theme. Thematic maps are either qualitative or quantitative. Cellular towers per square mile, height of cellular towers, and elevation contours are examples of quantitative maps with numeric values. The categorical map of cellular phone service is an example of a qualitative map where values are non-numeric. See the glossary for more types of thematic maps.

## Four types of thematic maps

Choropleth

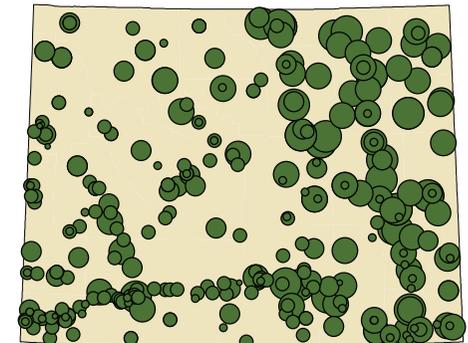


Cellular towers per 500 square miles

- Fewer than 1
- 1.0–1.5
- 1.6–2.0
- 2.1–2.5
- More than 2.5

Different shades of color represent ranges or classifications of numeric values applied to predefined areas, such as counties. See data classification entry in glossary.

Graduated symbol

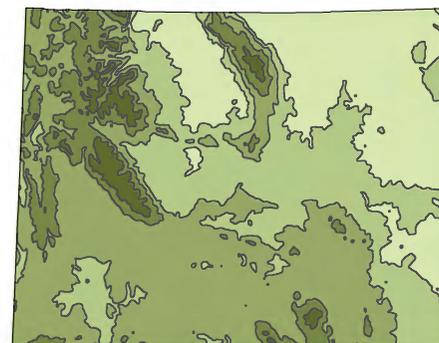


Cellular tower height (feet)

- Under 10
- 10–30
- 31–50
- 51–80
- Above 80

Symbols change in size according to a numeric value. In this case, larger circles represent taller cellular towers.

Contour (Isoline)



Elevation (meters)

- 4000
- 3500
- 3000
- 2500
- 2000
- 1500

Isolines joining points of equal elevation are called contours. The interval for this elevation map is 500 meters. Isolines can also be used to map many other continuous types of data.

Categorical



Cellular service

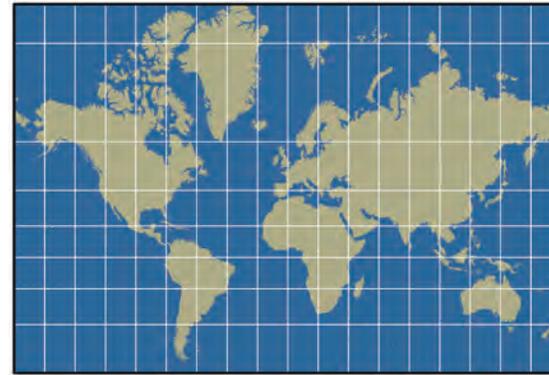
- Available
- Unavailable

By combining cellular tower heights with ground elevation, we can derive categories where cellular service may be available and areas that are “out of range.”

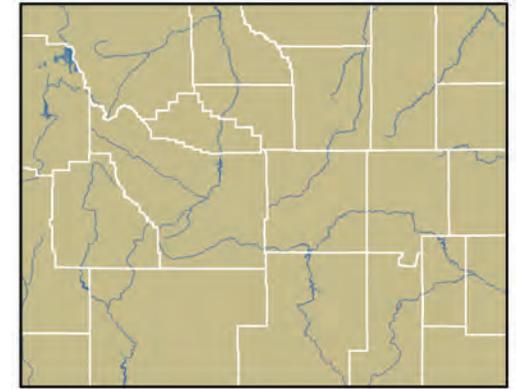
A globe is the most common 3D representation of the Earth. Any place on the Earth's surface can be accurately located using the intersection of latitude (north and south of the equator) and longitude (east and west of the prime meridian).



Cylindrical projection

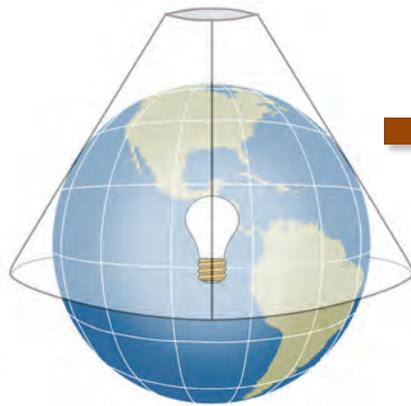


The Mercator projection is a cylindrical projection used for navigation, as it provides accurate angular measurement and direction. The size of land masses is accurate at the equator, but distorted in the northern and southern latitudes.



When using a Mercator projection, lines of latitude and longitude intersect at 90-degree angles to accurately portray direction. Unfortunately, this also distorts the spherical properties of the Earth, giving Wyoming the inaccurate appearance of a rectangle with squared-off corners.

A globe can be projected in three different ways: onto a cylinder, a cone, or a plane (not shown).



Conic projection



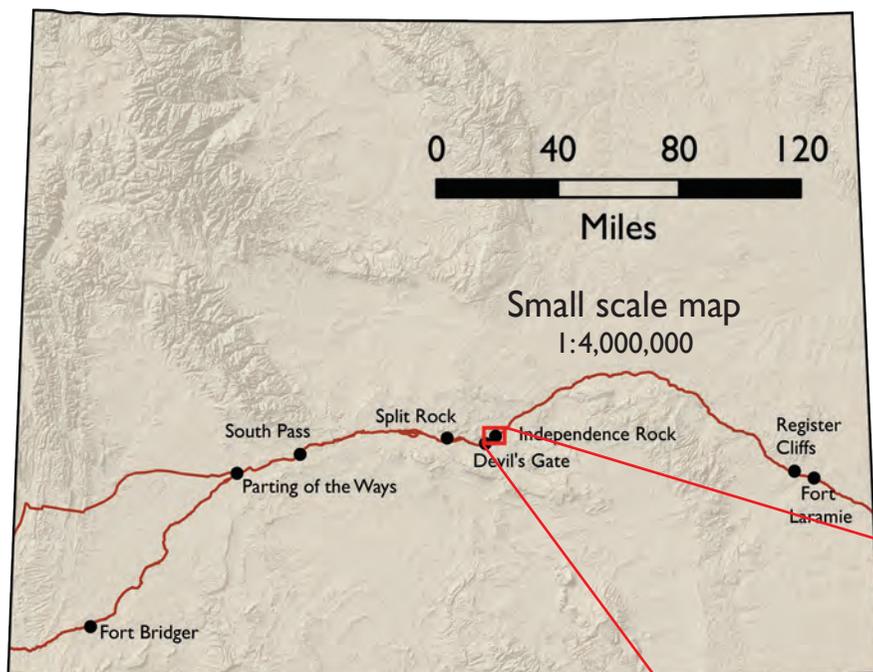
The Lambert Conformal Conic projection can be adjusted to project the United States of America with an accurate shape and minimally distorted area. However, it has increasing distortion to the north and south of the U.S.



The Lambert Conformal Conic projection provides an accurate shape and reasonable area for Wyoming. All the maps in this Atlas use the Lambert Conformal Conic projection adjusted for Wyoming.

A flat map is usually easier to work with than a globe. Features on a globe are transformed to a 2D surface mathematically, but we can think of this process as similar to shining a light source through a transparent globe to a surface.

## Historic landmarks along the Emigrant Trail in Wyoming



Map scale describes how large an area of the Earth a map displays and helps you to determine the actual size of features on the map and the distances between them.

Three different ways to represent map scale:

### Graphic scale:



### Verbal scale:

1 inch = 2 miles

### Representative fraction:

1:125,000

### Small map scale

Independence Rock is a famous historical landmark used by pioneers to guide them on the California/Oregon/Mormon Trail. On a map of Wyoming, the half-mile long rock is best represented as a small point.

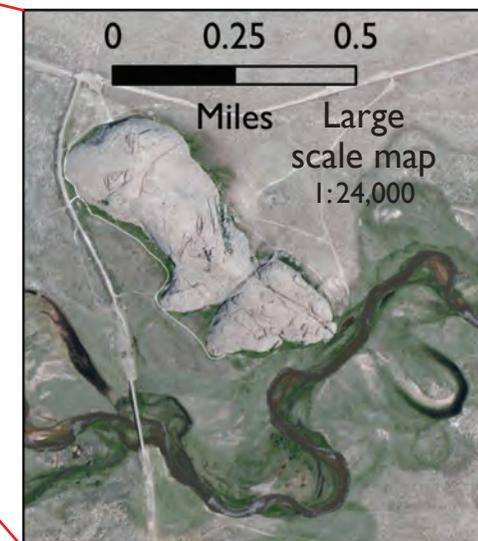
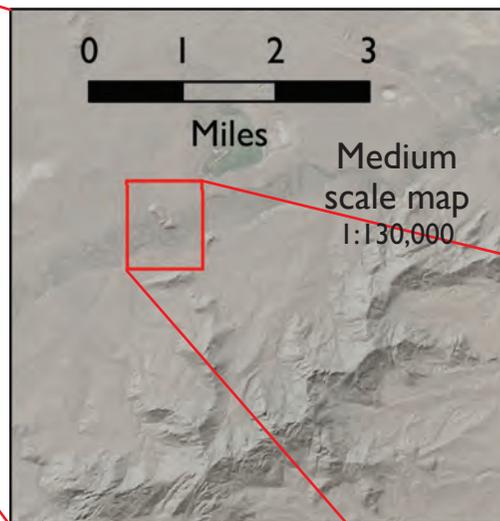
### Medium scale map

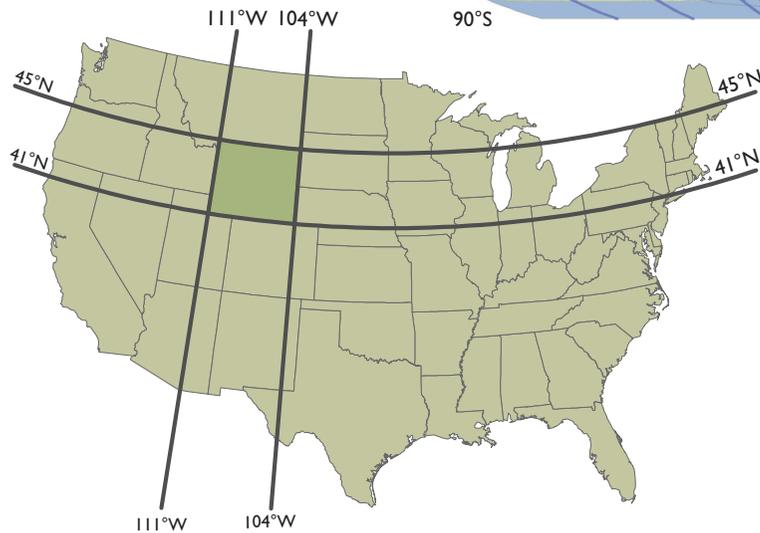
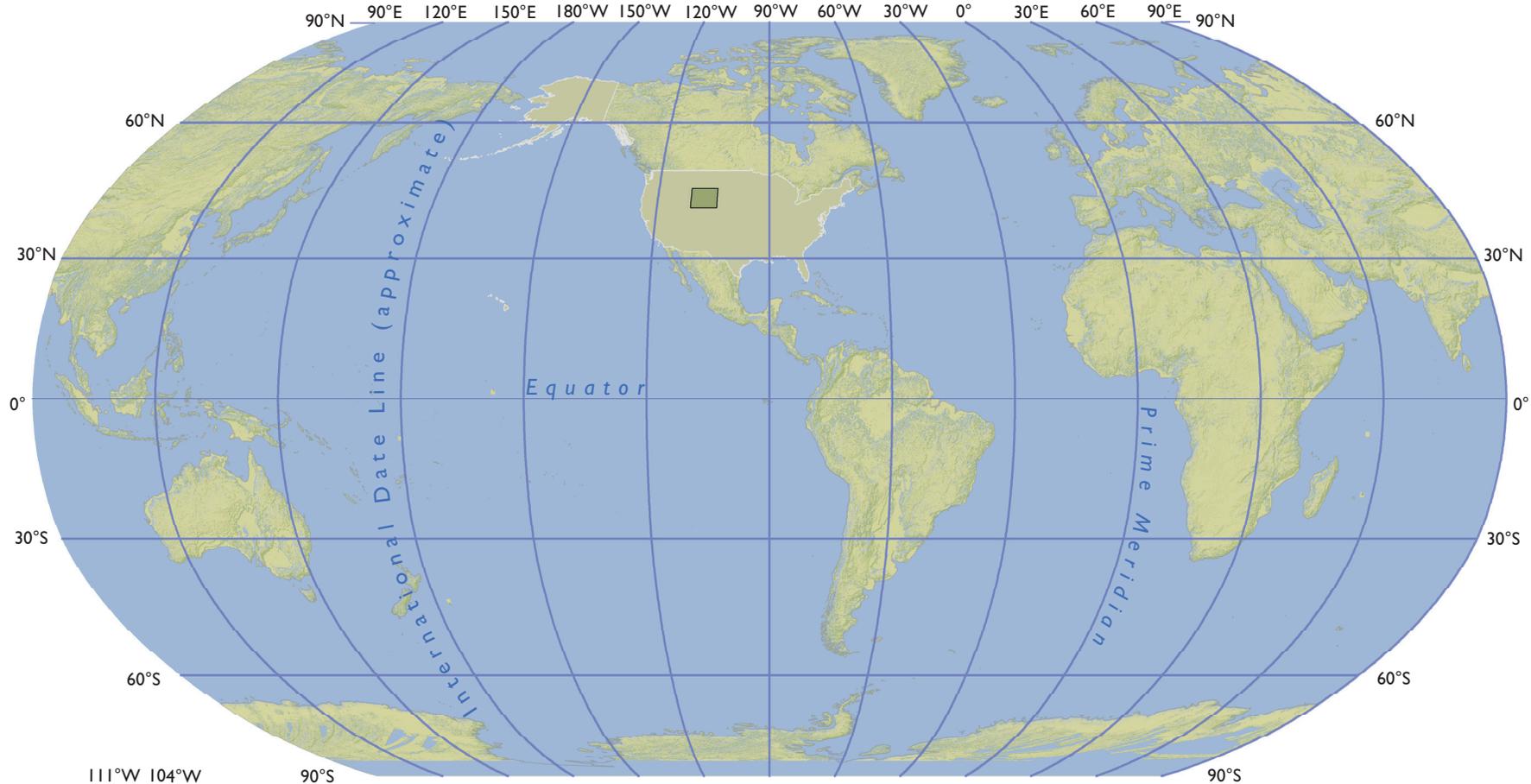
On a more detailed medium scale map, the size of the rock becomes more apparent.

### Large scale map

On a large scale map the precise shape of the rock is easy to see.

The maps of Wyoming in this Atlas are all in the small scale range, from 1:3,200,000 to 1:15,000,000 scale.





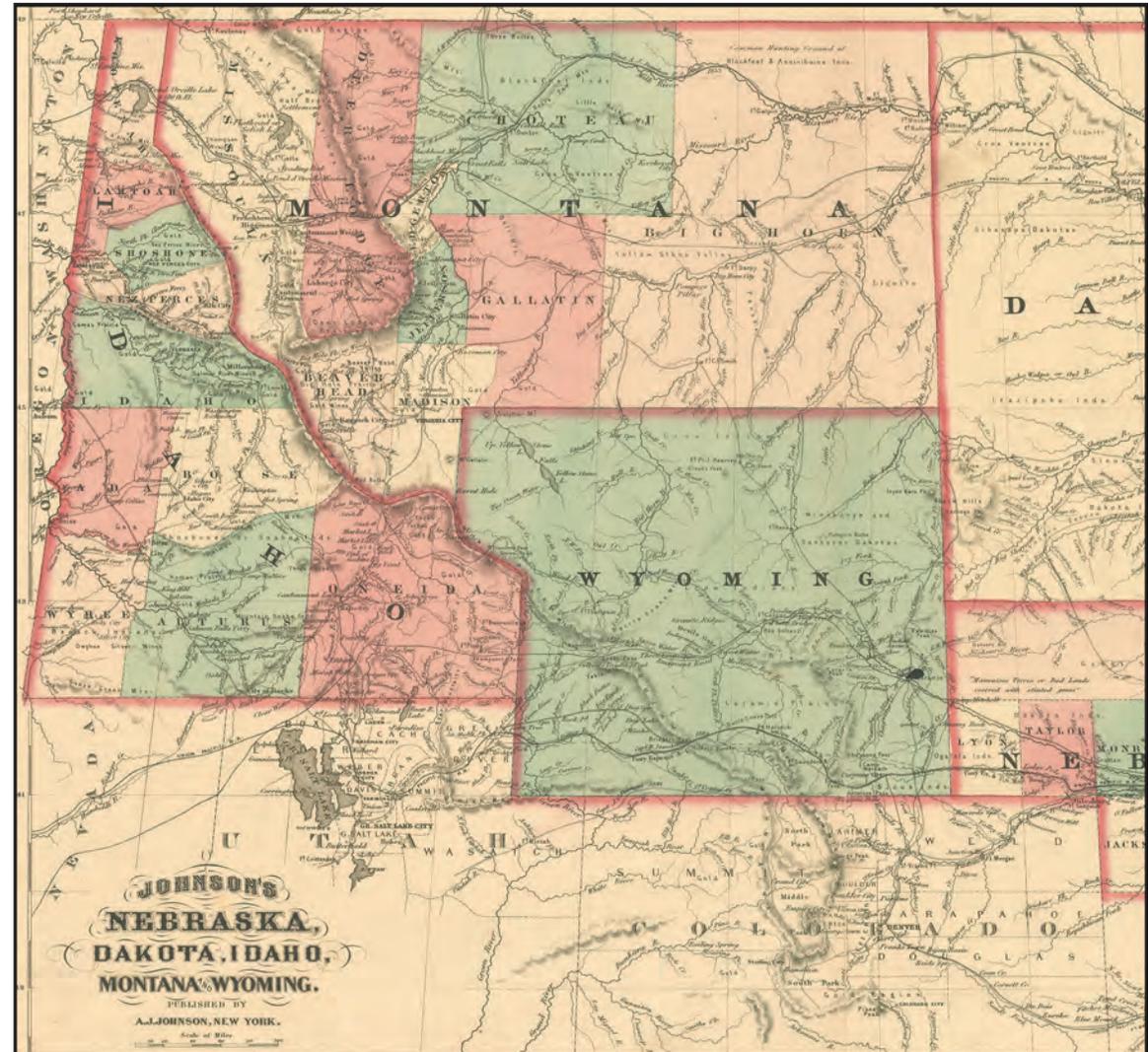
The state of Wyoming is located in the central part of the North American continent, bounded between 104 and 111 degrees west longitude and 41 and 45 degrees north latitude.

Wyoming straddles the Continental Divide and the Rocky Mountains, with the Great Plains to the east and the Intermountain Basin region to the west. Wyoming shares a border with six surrounding states.



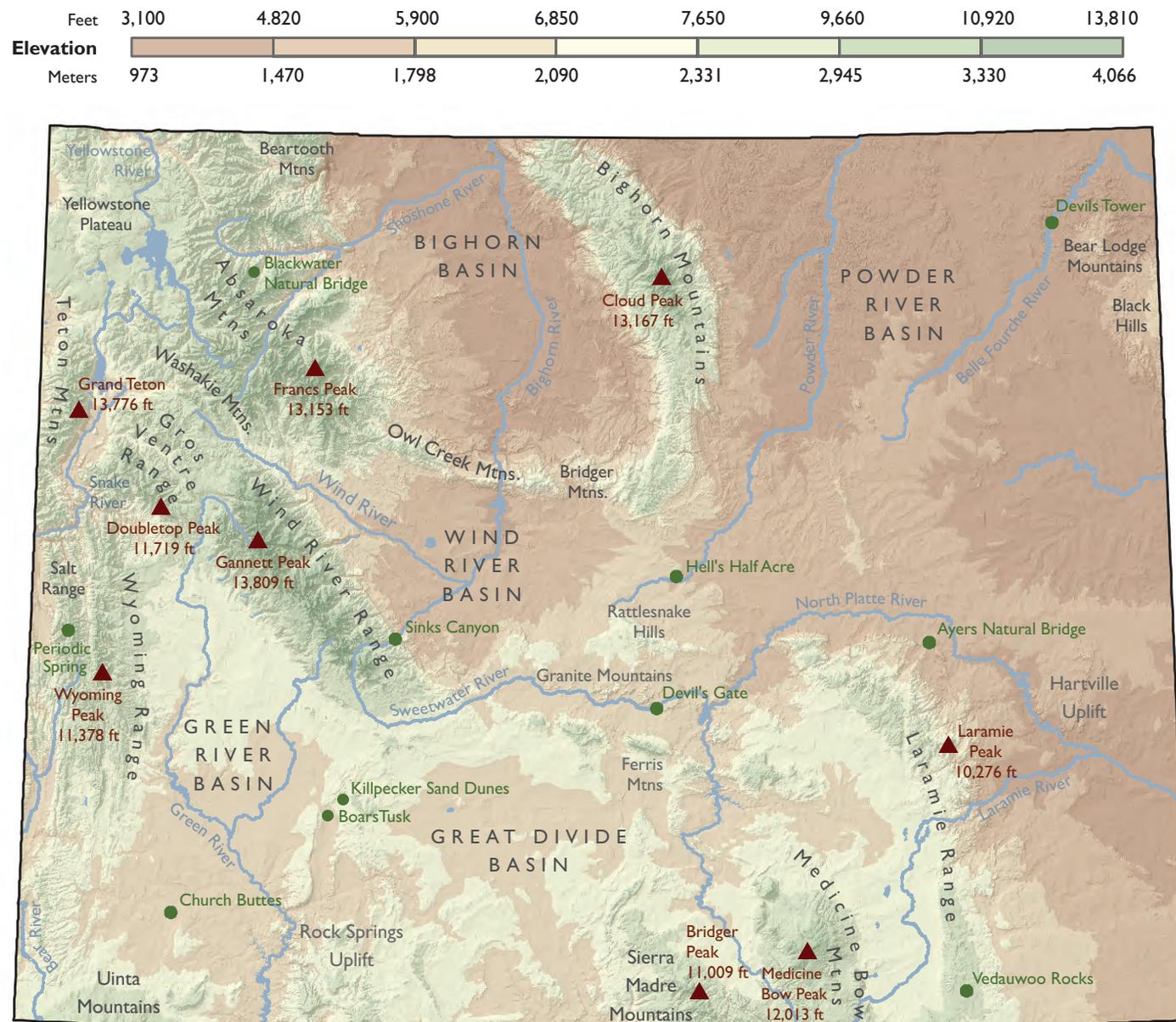
The name “Wyoming” may be derived from the Delaware Indian word “Maughwauwama” which means “large plains.” The name first appeared on a map for the proposed Wyoming Territory in 1865.

- ▶ Nicknames: Equality State, Big Wyoming, Cowboy State
- ▶ Motto: Equal Rights
- ▶ The Wyoming Territory was organized in 1868
- ▶ The Wyoming Territory was carved out from the Dakota, Utah, and Idaho Territories
- ▶ Date admitted to the Union: July 10, 1890 as the 44th state
- ▶ Population: 563,626, the smallest total population among the states (2010)
- ▶ Population density: 5.9 people per square mile, second least dense state after Alaska
- ▶ Size: 97,814 square miles (253,348 km<sup>2</sup>), 10th largest state
- ▶ Highest point: Gannett Peak, 13,809 feet (4,209 meters)
- ▶ Lowest point: Belle Fourche River, 3,100 feet (945 meters)
- ▶ Average annual temperature: 44.8°F (7.1°C)
- ▶ Percent of days that are sunny: 66%
- ▶ Average annual rainfall (Cheyenne): 15.45 inches (39.24 cm)
- ▶ Average wind speed: 10.1 miles/hour (16.25 km/hour)
- ▶ The Wyoming Territory’s Constitution was the first to give women the right to vote in 1869
- ▶ Wyoming was the first state to elect a woman governor, Nellie Tayloe Ross, in 1924



Detail of Johnson’s 1865 map of the Nebraska, Dakota, Idaho and Montana territories was the first map to use the name Wyoming.

- ▶ Yellowstone National Park was the first U.S. national park (1872)
- ▶ Shoshone National Forest was the first U.S. national forest (1891)
- ▶ Devils Tower was the first U.S. national monument (1906)



- ▲ Highest peak in each mountain range
- Other natural landmarks

The highest point in Wyoming is Gannett Peak at 13,809 feet (4,209 meters), in the Wind River Range. There are more than 40 other named peaks taller than 13,000 feet in the Wind River Range, including many near Titcomb Basin, pictured below.



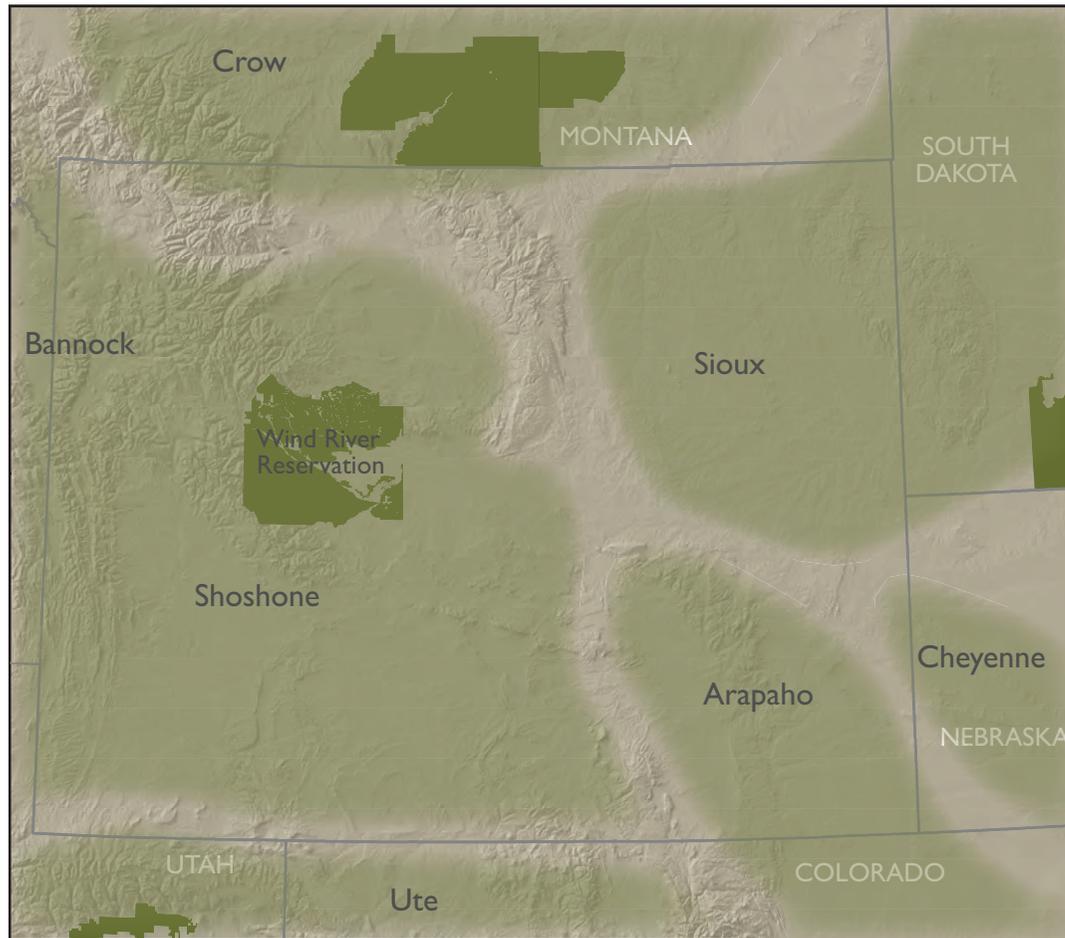
The lowest point in the state is where the Belle Fourche River flows out of Wyoming into South Dakota, at 3,099 feet (945 meters).



The eastern part of Wyoming is dominated by high plains. The middle and western parts of the state have several distinct ranges of the Rocky Mountains, divided by large basins. Even the basins have relatively high elevations, averaging 6,200 feet (1,890 meters). Wyoming's basins include many remarkable natural features such as the Killpecker Sand Dunes, one of the largest active dune systems in North America.

Approximate territories of Native American tribes in 1850

 Present day native lands

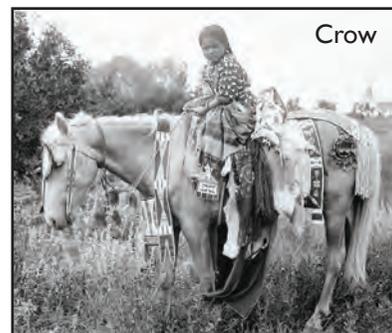


The arrival of the Spanish in the 1500s brought the domesticated horse into North America. By the 1700s, the horse became an integral part of some Native American cultures and allowed them to migrate deeper into the Great Plains, expand their hunting ranges, and to focus their hunting on bison. Before the arrival of Europeans the dominant Native American groups inhabiting Wyoming were the Shoshone, Crow, Cheyenne, and Arapaho. The Sioux Nation joined this list in the 1830s when they were invited to trade at Fort William (later Fort Laramie).

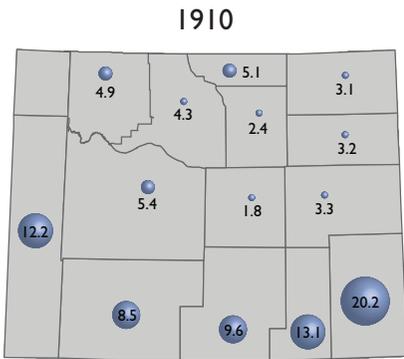
By the mid-1800s, established emigration routes like the Oregon and Bozeman trails brought increasing numbers of European Americans to settle in Wyoming. As a result, hostilities between the local tribes and settlers often escalated into open disputes where the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho defended their territories. These disputes led to a number of treaties between the Native Americans and the U.S. government to protect European settlers on what had been tribal lands.

Initially the Fort Laramie Treaty (1868) promised the Cheyenne, Crow, Arapaho, and Sioux all lands of the Powder River area and the Black Hills. The Shoshone were allotted the lands in the Wind River Valley by the Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868. By 1877, the U.S. government had seized the lands of northeastern Wyoming from the Sioux and the Crow, and relocated the Arapaho to the Wind River Reservation (1878) to live with the Shoshone, their traditional enemy.

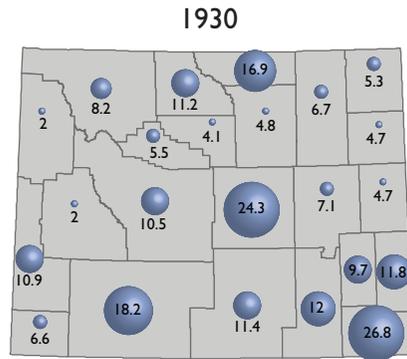
Today, many Shoshone and Arapaho live on the Wind River Reservation in central Wyoming; the Crow and Northern Cheyenne are on reservations in southeastern Montana; and the Sioux Nation is split between reservations in South Dakota, North Dakota, and Nebraska.



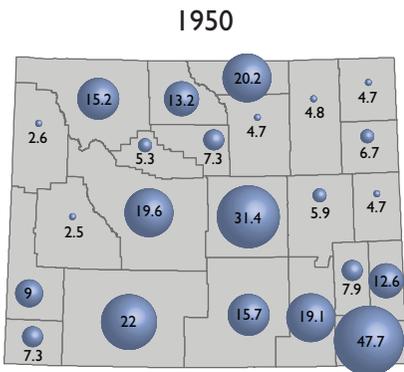
Numbers correspond to thousands of people



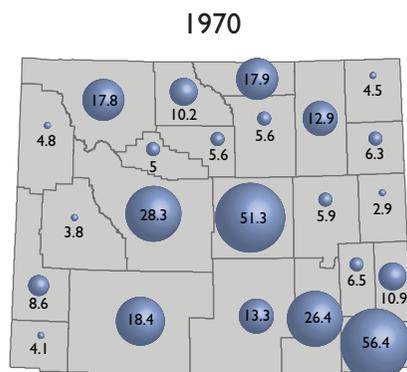
145,965 total population



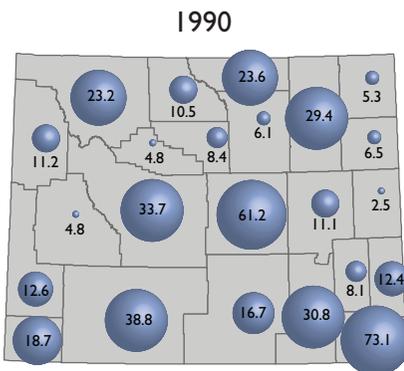
225,565 total population



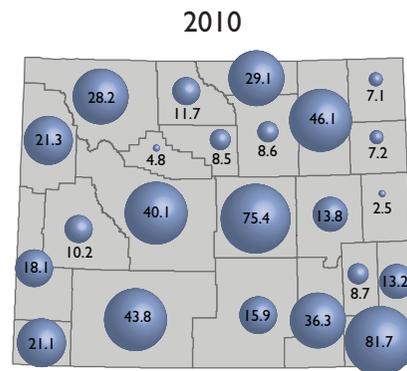
290,529 total population



332,416 total population



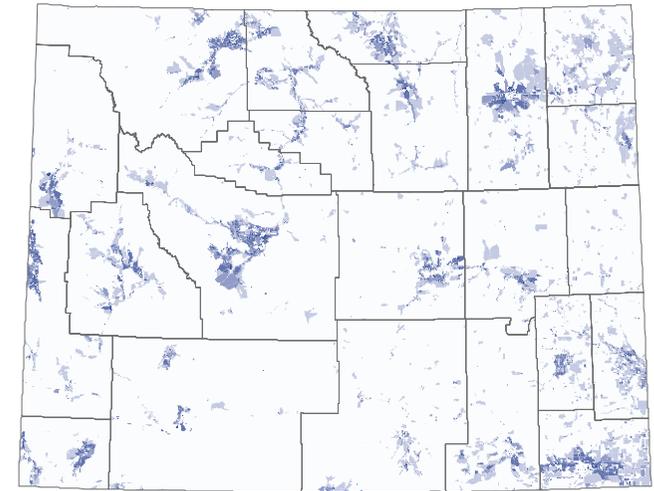
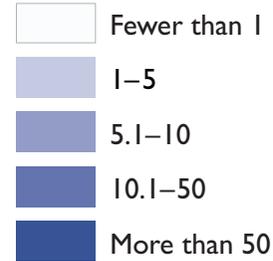
453,588 total population



563,626 total population

## Population density (2010)

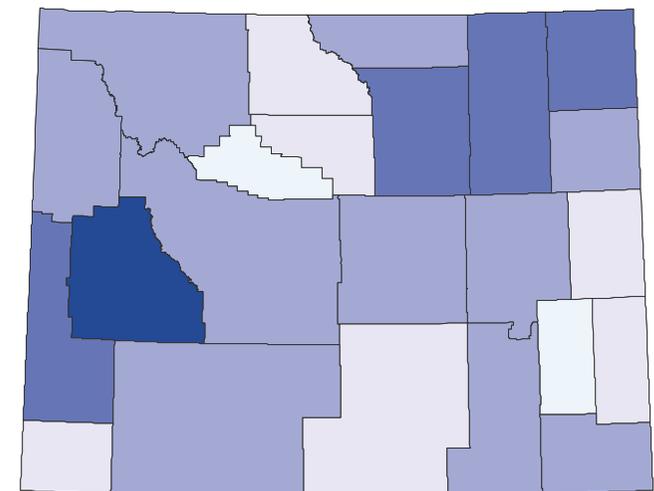
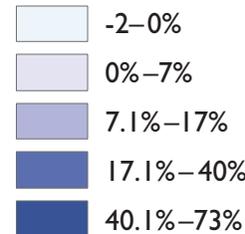
People per square mile



Wyoming has a population density of fewer than six people per square mile. Conversely, New Jersey, the U.S.'s most densely populated state, has 1,205 people per square mile. At that density, the entire country's population could be packed into an area equaling the combined size of Wyoming and Montana.

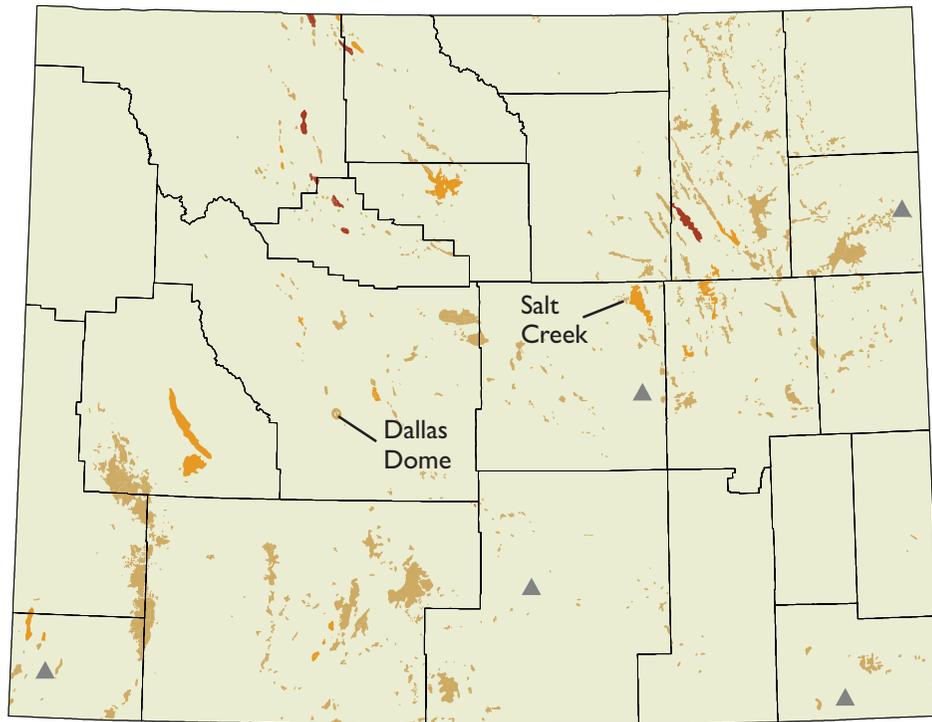
## Population change (2000–2010)

Percentage change 2000–2010

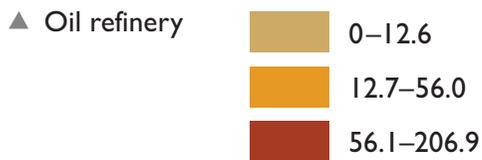


Sublette and Campbell counties have both experienced rapid growth in recent years due to the presence of oil, gas and coal extraction. From 2000 to 2010, Sublette saw a 73 percent increase, while Campbell grew by 37 percent.

## Oil production



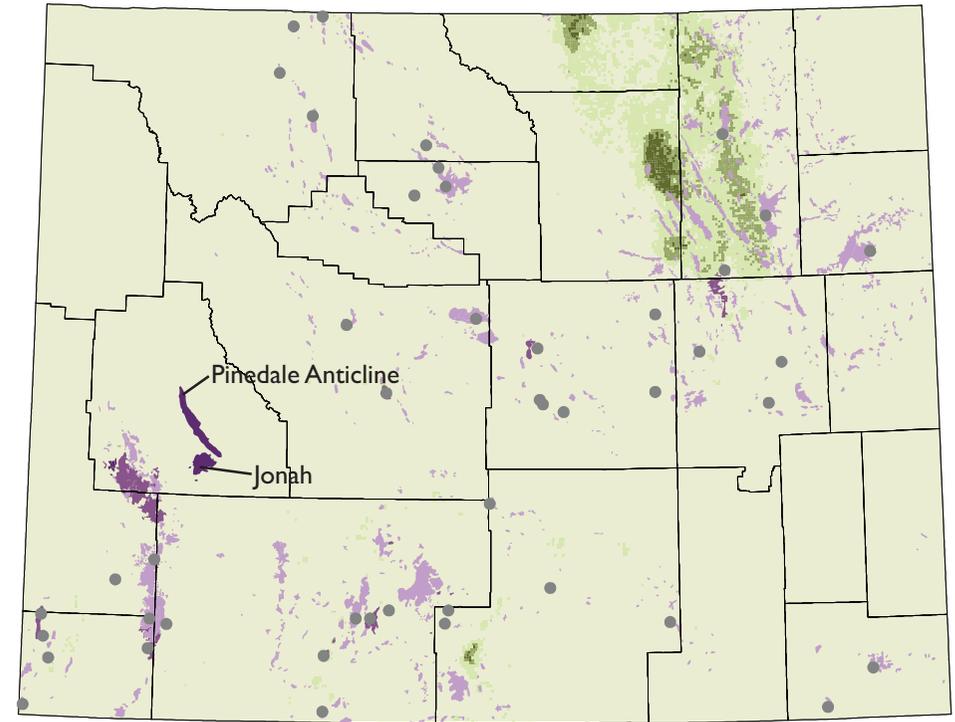
Total production in millions of barrels 1978–2013. Production is mapped by “fields,” areas which have a high density of wells.



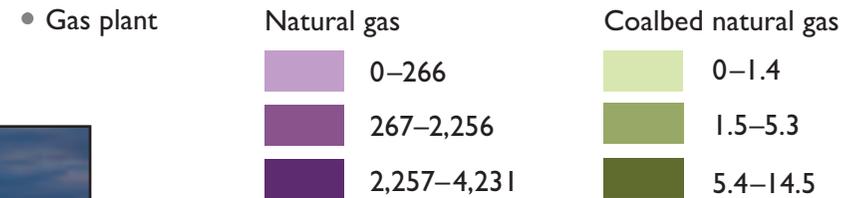
The first oil well drilled in Wyoming was at Dallas Dome in 1883, followed by Salt Creek. Salt Creek is the most productive field in Wyoming’s history, producing over 696 million barrels since 1889. Wyoming’s oil boom peaked in 1970, but production has been increasing again since 2009, in part due to enhanced oil recovery. Wyoming ranks ninth in production of crude oil in the nation.



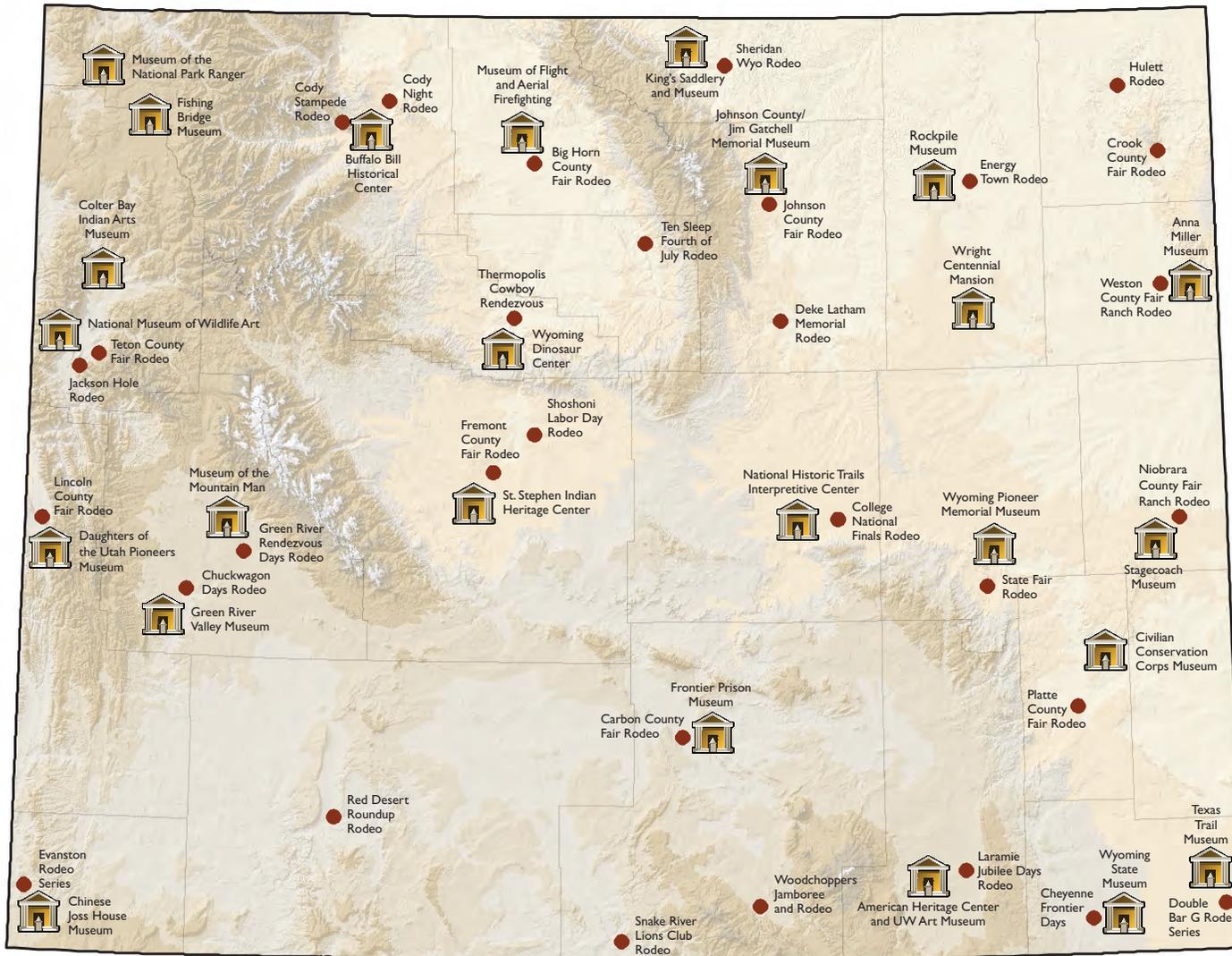
## Natural gas production



Total production in millions of cubic feet 1978–2013. Natural gas is mapped by field, coalbed natural gas is mapped by section.



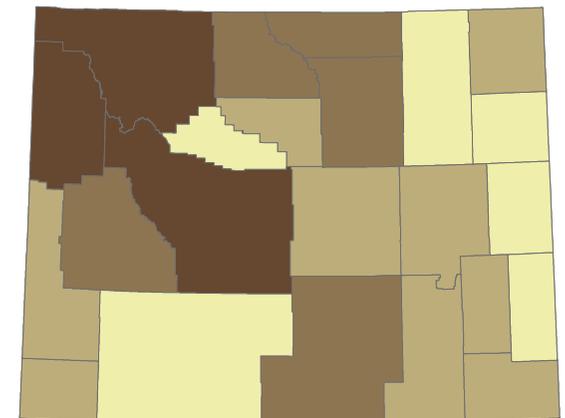
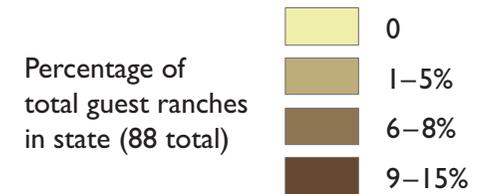
Wyoming ranks fifth in the nation in the production of natural gas. Recent advancement in drilling technology may mean significant numbers of new wells in Wyoming’s Green River and Wind River basins, in addition to the large Pinedale Anticline (pictured) and Jonah fields. Coalbed natural gas production in the Powder River Basin has declined since 2009 after a decade-long boom.



Rodeos across the state are a lasting legacy of Wyoming's ranching roots. Wyoming's many museums—a selection of which are mapped on this page—further illustrate the diverse nature of its Western cultural landscape.

## Guest ranches (2014)

Guest ranches allow tourists to experience the bygone days of the "Old West" and rural lifestyle aspects of Wyoming. Guest ranches vary in accommodations and to whom they cater, ranging from working cattle ranches to upscale resorts or spas.



### Buffalo Bill Historical Center

This complex of five museums is named after Buffalo Bill Cody (1846–1917), who gained fame with his "Wild West Show," a theatrical embellishment of the mythic Wild West.



### Cheyenne Frontier Days

Nicknamed the "Daddy of 'em All," Cheyenne Frontier Days has been a staple of Wyoming rodeo culture since its inception in 1897. The Frontier Days Rodeo is one of the biggest events on the professional rodeo circuit, attracting some of the world's best competitors.

County	Population 2000	Population 2010	Absolute Change	Percent Change (%)	Area (square miles)	License Plate Number*
Albany	32,014	36,299	4,285	13.4	4,309	5
Big Horn	11,461	11,668	207	1.8	3,159	9
Campbell	33,698	46,133	12,435	36.9	4,807	17
Carbon	15,639	15,885	246	1.6	7,964	6
Converse	12,052	13,833	1,781	14.8	4,265	13
Crook	5,887	7,083	1,196	20.3	2,865	18
Fremont	35,804	40,123	4,319	12.1	9,266	10
Goshen	12,538	13,249	711	2.9	2,232	7
Hot Springs	4,882	4,812	-70	-1.4	2,006	15
Johnson	7,075	8,569	1,494	21.1	4,175	16
Laramie	81,607	91,738	10,131	12.4	2,668	2
Lincoln	14,573	18,106	3,533	24.2	4,095	12
Natrona	66,533	75,450	8,917	13.4	5,376	1
Niobrara	2,407	2,484	77	3.2	2,628	14
Park	25,786	28,205	2,419	9.4	6,967	11
Platte	8,807	8,667	-140	-1.6	2,111	8
Sheridan	26,560	29,116	2,556	9.6	2,527	3
Sublette	5,920	10,247	4,327	73.1	4,936	23
Sweetwater	37,613	43,806	6,193	16.5	10,491	4
Teton	18,251	21,294	3,043	16.7	4,216	22
Uinta	19,742	21,118	1,376	7	2,088	19
Washakie	8,289	8,533	244	2.9	2,243	20
Weston	6,644	7,208	564	8.5	2,400	21

\*the first digit(s) on Wyoming license plates denote the county where the car is registered. These numbers were the ranking of each county's assessed land value during the 1920s.

## Comparison between selected Wyoming counties and similarly sized countries



Sweetwater County  
Size: 10,491 sq mi  
Population: 37,631 (2010)



Burundi,  
Region: Central Africa  
Size: 10,747 sq mi  
Population: 10,163,000 (2013)



Carbon County  
Size: 7,946 sq mi  
Population: 15,693 (2010)



Slovenia  
Region: Europe  
Size: 7,827 sq mi  
Population: 2,061,919 (2013)



Lincoln County  
Size: 4,095 sq mi  
Population: 14,573 (2010)



Lebanon  
Region: Middle East  
Size: 4,036 sq mi  
Population: 4,822,000 (2013)

# Wyoming state symbols



**State symbol**



**State flag**



**State seal**



**State flower**  
Indian paintbrush



**State mammal**  
American bison



**State gemstone**  
Jade



**State bird**  
Western meadowlark



**State fossil**  
Knightia



**State coin**  
Sacajawea dollar



**State sport**  
Rodeo



**State tree**  
Plains cottonwood



**State insect**  
Sheridan's green hairstreak



**State fish**  
Cutthroat trout



**State reptile**  
Short horned lizard



**State dinosaur**  
Triceratops



**State grass**  
Western wheatgrass



# Wyoming Student Atlas

