



CHAPTER TWO

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

2.1 GENERAL

Chapter Two evaluates demographic and economic trends in the Town of Star Valley Ranch and the surrounding area. This evaluation is based upon data from within the municipal boundary of the Town of Star Valley Ranch, the Zip Code area of 83127 (Figure 2-1), Star Valley, and Lincoln County.

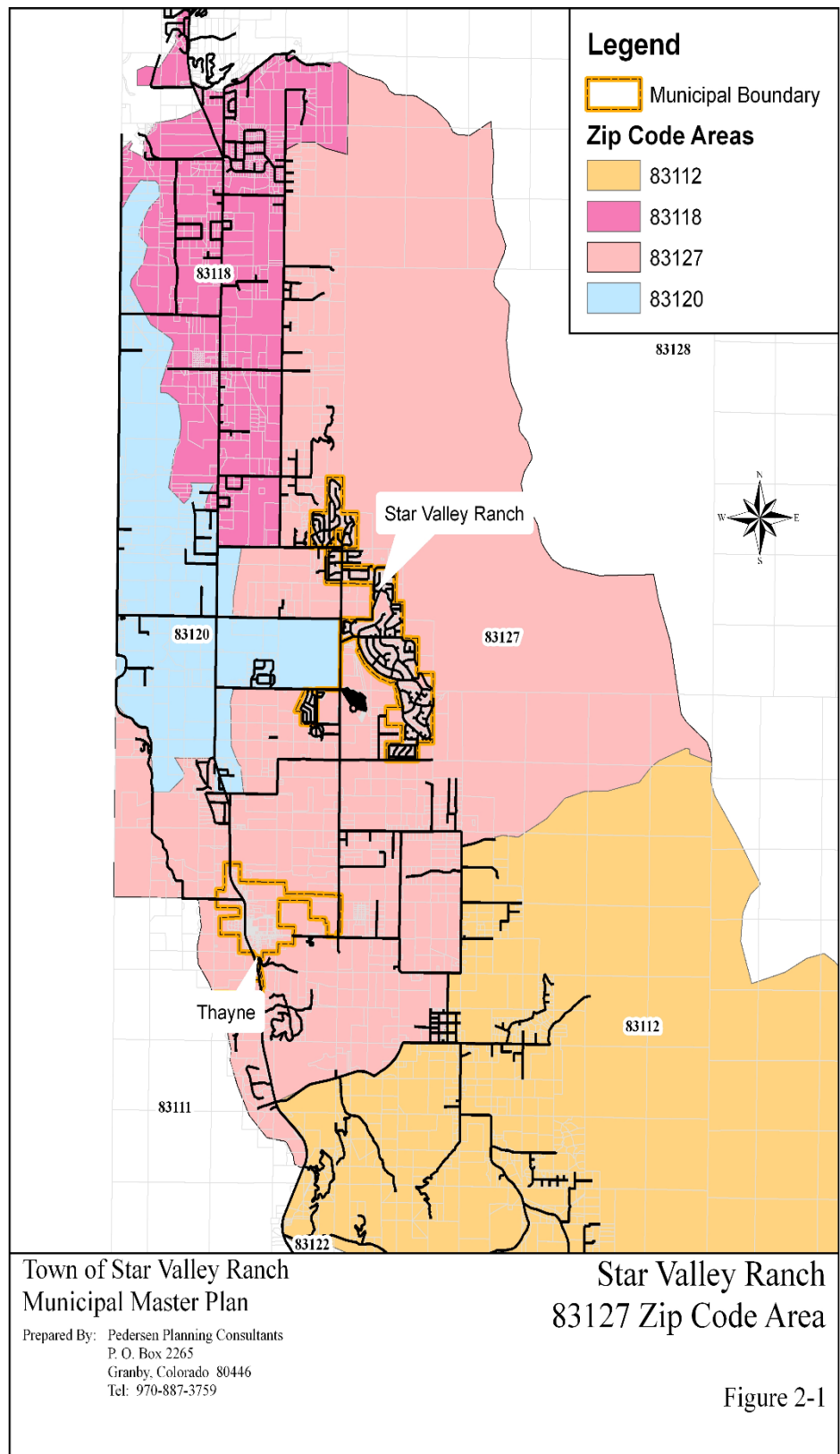
Zip Code area 83127 includes the population centers of the Town of Star Valley Ranch and the Town of Thayne, as well as some adjacent agricultural and rural residential lands in the unincorporated area of Lincoln County. Star Valley area extends from Salt River Pass, which is south of Smoot, to Palisades Reservoir, immediately north of the Town of Alpine.

2.2 POPULATION SIZE AND RECENT POPULATION GROWTH

2.2.1 April 2010 Population

The Town of Star Valley Ranch has both seasonal and full-time residents. The most recent decennial census of the U.S. Census Bureau enumerated a resident population of 1,503 residents in the Town of Star Valley Ranch in April 2010. This contrasts with the original special census of July 2006 that recorded a resident population of 1,465 persons (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). This change reflects a 2.6 percent growth in population between July 2006 and April 2010.

The recreational orientation and seasonal use of private properties in the Town of Star Valley Ranch prompts a need to consider both seasonal and full-time resident populations of the Town. The seasonal population can be estimated from the Lincoln County property tax rolls which list the mailing address of each developed tax parcel. Seasonal residents were assumed to have out-of-state mailing addresses or a non-local Wyoming mailing address. Permanent residents were assumed to have mailing addresses in the Towns of Alpine, Afton, Thayne, or Jackson, or the communities of Bedford, Etna, and Freedom.



2.2.2 More Recent Population Estimates

Following completion of its April 2010 decennial census count, the U.S. Census Bureau made more recent annual estimates of the Town's resident population (Table 2-1).

The April 1, 2010 decennial census documented 612 occupied housing units and calculated an average household size of 2.46 persons per household. Between April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2013, the Town of Star Valley Ranch issued 11 building permits for new single-family residences. Assuming a continuing average household size of 2.46 persons per household, the addition of 11 new homes suggests a growth of about 27 persons to the resident population during this period, or a population of 1,530 residents. Consequently, the July 1, 2013 estimate of 1,527 persons appears very plausible.

TABLE 2-1 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU POPULATION ESTIMATES TOWN OF STAR VALLEY RANCH JULY 1, 2010 THROUGH JULY 1, 2013	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Population Estimate (number of persons)</i>
July 1, 2010	1,499
July 1, 2011	1,494
July 1, 2012	1,493
July 1, 2013	1,527
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2013.	

2.3 AGE CHARACTERISTICS

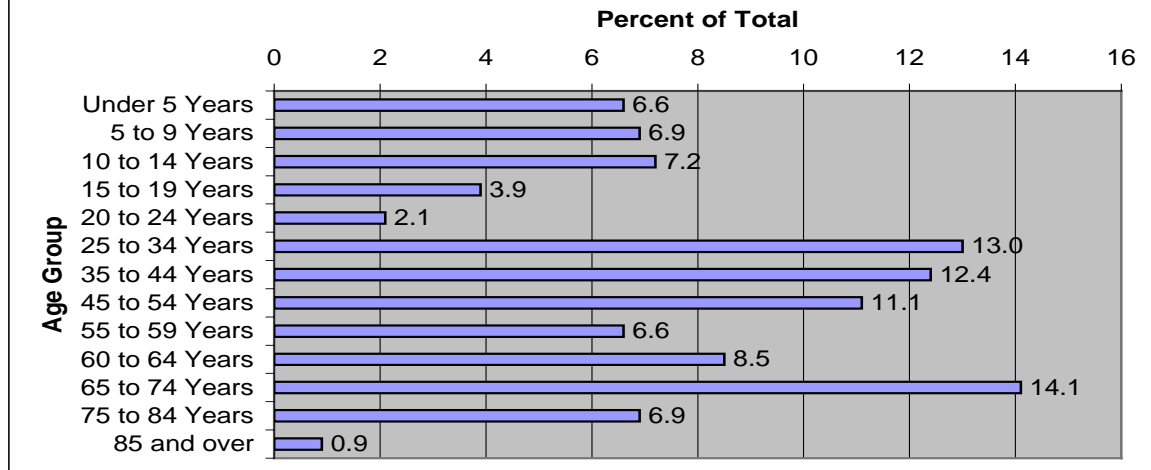
The age distribution of the resident population (Table 2-2) in April 2010 provides some insight into the demographic characteristics of the Town of Star Valley Ranch. These characteristics also represent an important factor that influences the type of services and amenities that are delivered by a municipal government.

Available age distribution data (Figure 2-2) from the April 2010 Census indicates the following characteristics:

- Children and young adults, ranging between 0 to 19 years of age, comprised almost 25 percent of the Star Valley Ranch resident population. This proportion compares to a proportion of almost 35 percent in the Town of Afton, 30 percent in the Town of Thayne, and approximately 23 percent in the Town of Alpine.

TABLE 2-2 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENT POPULATION TOWN OF STAR VALLEY RANCH		
April 2010	Apr-10	
<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Population (Persons)</i>	<i>Proportion of Total (Percent)</i>
Under 5 Years	99	6.6
5 to 9 Years	104	6.9
10 to 14 Years	108	7.2
15 to 19 Years	58	3.9
20 to 24 Years	32	2.1
25 to 34 Years	196	13
35 to 44 Years	185	12.4
45 to 54 Years	166	11.1
55 to 59 Years	99	6.6
60 to 64 Years	128	8.5
65 to 74 Years	212	14.1
75 to 84 Years	103	6.9
85 and over	13	0.9
All Ages	1,503	100.0
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2010.		

Figure 2-2
Age Distribution Table
Town of Star Valley Ranch
Proportion of Total Population (Percent)
April 2010



Source: U. S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

- Young adults, between 20 and 24 years of age, represented only two percent of the resident population. This proportion of this age group compares to a proportion of about six percent in the Town of Alpine, almost six percent in the Town of Thayne, and almost five percent in the Town of Afton. The lower proportion of persons in this age group is not surprising as young adults often migrate away from the Town for higher education, new jobs or travel.
- The primary working age population in Star Valley Ranch, ranging between 25 and 54 years of age, represented approximately 36 percent of the total resident population. This proportion compares to almost 55 percent in the Town of Alpine which contains a significantly higher proportion of residents in the primary working age population. The proportional size of the primary working age population in the Town of Star Valley Ranch is more comparable to the Town of Thayne (40 percent) and the Town of Afton (35 percent).
- Adults nearing or in their retirement years (55 years and older) accounted for almost 37 percent of the Star Valley Ranch Population in 2010. This proportion is considerably higher than the size of this age group in Afton (almost 26 percent), Thayne (24 percent) and Alpine (17 percent). This data indicates that the Town's population is atypical in that it has proportionally fewer young and working age individuals and more retirement-age individuals. But, the proportional size of this age group has diminished five percent since 2006 with the influx of younger families to the Town of Star Valley Ranch.

2.4 FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

The population of the Town of Star Valley Ranch consists of both seasonal and full-time residents. The distinction between these categories is important to the planning process. When possible, the following descriptions distinguish differences between the characteristics of full-time and seasonal residents.

2.4.1 Household Characteristics

The 2010 decennial census counted 612 households in the Town of Star Valley Ranch in April 2010. These households included both family and non-family households. The average household was inhabited by 2.46 persons.

2.4.2 Family Households

Families represented 75 percent of the households in the Town. The average family household comprised about 2.83 persons. Seventy percent of the family households were married couples and almost 33 percent of them had children less than 18 years of age (U.S. Census Bureau, Census, 2010).

Female households with no husband present comprised almost four percent of all family households. Sixty-one percent of these households included female mothers with children less than 18 years of age (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census).

2.4.3 Non-Family Households

In April 2010, 151 non-family households, or households without children, comprised almost 25 percent of all households in the Town. Almost 80 percent of these non-family households included a single householder who lived alone. Approximately 35 percent of all non-family households included a householder that was, at least, 65 years of age (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census).

2.5 HOUSING OCCUPANCY AND TENURE

The recreational orientation and seasonal use of private properties in the Town of Star Valley Ranch prompts a need to consider both seasonal and full-time resident populations of the Town. Housing occupancy rates determined from the 2010 decennial census provide some insight to that question.

The 2010 decennial census recorded 954 housing units in the Town of Star Valley Ranch. Sixty-four percent, or 612 housing units, were observed, or known to be, occupied at the time of the survey. Since most seasonal residents return to the Town in May or June, it appears that roughly 64 percent of Town residents live in Star Valley Ranch on a full-time basis.

The total housing vacancy rate in April 2010 was almost 36 percent (342 housing units). About 85 percent (290 housing units) of the vacant housing units in April 2010 were due to seasonal, recreational or occasional use (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census).

Home owners occupied almost 89 percent (544 housing units) of all occupied housing units (612 housing units). Sixty-eight renter-occupied housing units represented about eleven percent of all occupied housing units (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census).



2.6 ANTICIPATED RESIDENT POPULATION: 2015-2024

2.6.1 Approach Used to Develop Population Forecast

Pedersen Planning Consultants typically prepares population forecasts for Wyoming communities that are based upon assumptions related to anticipated increases and declines in regional employment, natural growth rates, and net migration. Since a significant proportion of the Star Valley Ranch population does not participate in the economies of Lincoln County or Teton County, Wyoming, this approach is not appropriate and was not used.

Existing covenants, conditions, and restrictions associated with all private property in the Town of Star Valley Ranch require that private property within the Town can be used only for the development and use of a single-family housing unit and some accessory buildings. For this reason, future population growth within the municipal boundary is controlled by the amount of land that is available for future residential expansion. In this context, a population forecast range was made through the development and application of assumptions regarding the future extent of potential build-out in the Town and the potential rate of home occupancy.

Two thousand twenty-four residential lots are distributed throughout 21 platted, residential subdivisions within Star Valley Ranch (Table 2-3). A September 2007 land use inventory, which was completed for the 2008 Star Valley Ranch Master Plan, revealed that 925 (46 percent) of all residential lots in the Town of Star Valley Ranch were developed. From October 2007 through December 2013, 35 additional lots were improved with the construction of new single family residences (Table 2-3). Consequently, 960 (47 percent) of all residential lots in the Town of Star Valley Ranch were developed by the end of 2013 and 1,064 lots (53 percent) remained available for future residential expansion.

TABLE 2-3
DEVELOPED AND VACANT LOTS BY SUBDIVISION PLAT
TOWN OF STAR VALLEY RANCH
December 2013

Subdivision Plat	Total Number of Lots	Number of Developed Lots	Number of Vacant Lots	Percent Build-Out
Star Valley Ranch 1	86	29	57	34%
Star Valley Ranch 2	61	29	32	48%
Star Valley Ranch 3	125	61	64	49%
Star Valley Ranch 4	13	6	7	46%
Star Valley Ranch 5	161	77	84	48%
Star Valley Ranch 6	132	64	68	48%
Star Valley Ranch 7	117	57	60	49%
Star Valley Ranch 8	66	28	38	42%
Star Valley Ranch 9	96	53	43	55%
Star Valley Ranch 10	100	58	42	58%
Star Valley Ranch 11	17	7	10	41%
Star Valley Ranch 12	104	50	54	48%
Star Valley Ranch 13	87	55	32	63%
Star Valley Ranch 14	88	40	48	45%
Star Valley Ranch 15	79	37	42	47%
Star Valley Ranch 16	93	50	43	54%
Star Valley Ranch 17	124	58	66	47%
Star Valley Ranch 18	188	71	117	38%
Star Valley Ranch 21	114	49	65	43%
Star Valley Ranch 22	68	29	39	43%
Star Valley Ranch 20/Prater Canyon 4	105	52	53	50%
All Subdivisions	2,024	960	1,064	47%

Sources: Lincoln County GIS, 2014; Town of Star Valley Ranch, 2014; Pedersen Planning Consultants, 2014.

2.6.2 Population Growth Scenarios

The population forecast range included three population growth scenarios that reflect potential low, moderate, and high growth during the next decade.

- The low growth scenario assumes that the proportion of developed residential lots would increase from 47 percent in 2013 to 50 percent by 2024. Further, it was assumed that the rate of full-time home occupancy rate would remain at about 64 percent. The average household size would remain at 2.46 persons per household.
- The moderate growth scenario assumes that the proportion of developed residential lots would rise to 55 percent by 2024. The rate of full-time home occupancy rate would increase to 67 percent. The average household size would remain at 2.46 persons per household.
- The high growth scenario assumes that the proportion of developed residential lots in the Town would increase to 60 percent by 2024. The rate of full-time home occupancy would increase to 70 percent. The average household size would remain at 2.46 persons per household.

None of the scenarios assumed the annexation of residential properties that are currently situated adjacent to the municipal boundary.

2.6.3 Population Forecast within the Present Municipal Boundary

Using low, medium and high growth assumptions, population forecasts were calculated for each scenario (Table 2-4). These calculations suggest a future resident population that will range between 2,490 and 2,987 residents by the year 2024.

TABLE 2-4 ANTICIPATED POPULATION GROWTH TOWN OF STAR VALLEY RANCH LOW, MODERATE, AND HIGH GROWTH SCENARIOS 2024							
<i>Growth Scenario</i>	<i>Proportion of Developed Residential Lots (percent)</i>	<i>Number of Developed Lots with Homes</i>	<i>Proportion of Homes Occupied on Full-Time Basis (percent)</i>	<i>Average Household Size (Persons)</i>	<i>Anticipated Resident Population (Persons)</i>		
					<i>Full-Time</i>	<i>Seasonal</i>	<i>Total</i>
Low	50	1,012	64%	2.46	1,594	896	2,490
Moderate	55	1,113	67%	2.46	1,834	904	2,738
High	60	1,214	70%	2.46	2,091	896	2,987

Source: Pedersen Planning Consultants, 2014.

The preceding forecast is considerably more conservative than earlier forecasts made for the 2008 Star Valley Ranch Master Plan. While the Lincoln County has clearly made some recovery from the recent recession, the lingering effects of the recession are expected to generate a sluggish increase in the construction of new single family homes in the Town of Star Valley Ranch during the coming decade.

2.7 OVERVIEW OF THE SURROUNDING ECONOMY

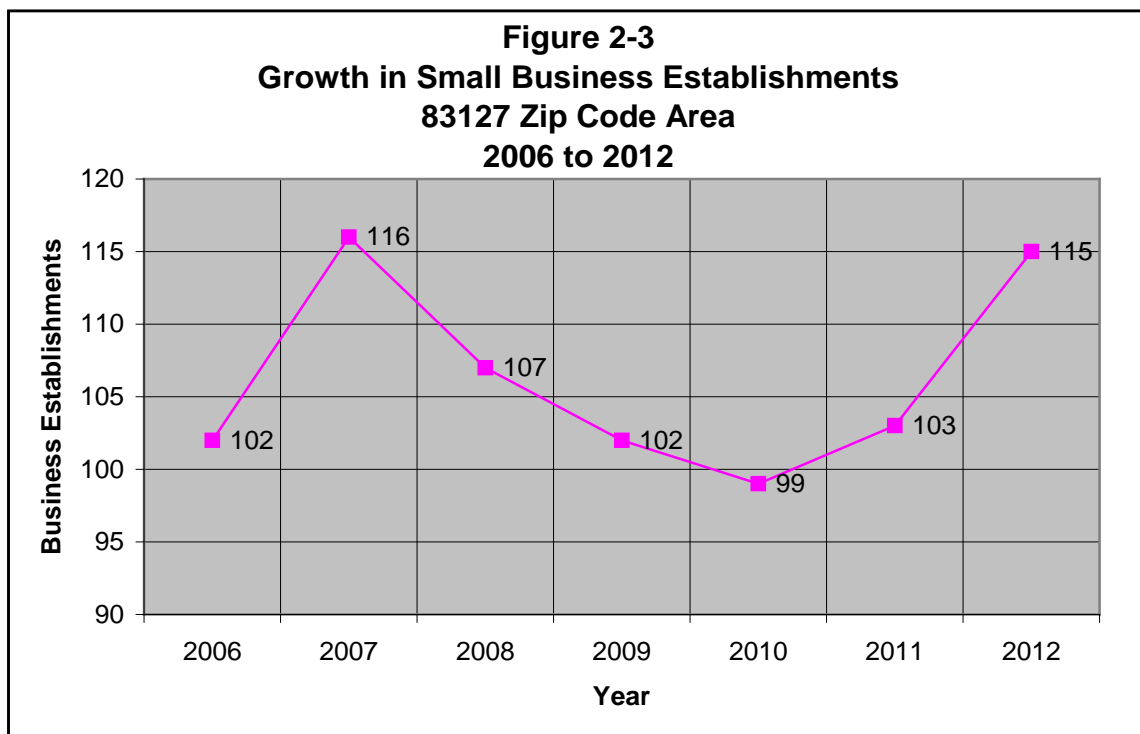
2.7.1 Introduction

An examination of the small business trends in the vicinity of Star Valley Ranch provides insight into the local economy, as well as factors influencing the extent of future community growth. Economic data is available for the 83127 zip code area. As stated earlier, this area includes the towns of Star Valley Ranch and Thayne, as well as unincorporated lands within their vicinity (Figure 2-1). The U.S. Census Bureau provides data for business establishments other than sole proprietorships that operate in zip code area 83127.

2.7.2 Growth in Business Establishments

The number of small business establishments (not including sole proprietorships) ranged between 102 and 116 businesses between 2006 and 2012. Following several years of continued growth, the number of business establishments gradually dropped from 116 establishments in 2007 to 99 establishments in 2010.

This decline reflected the impact of the past national and regional recessions upon the Lincoln County economy (Figure 2-3). Following these recessionary periods, the number of business establishments rebounded to 103 establishments in 2011 and 115 businesses in 2012 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).



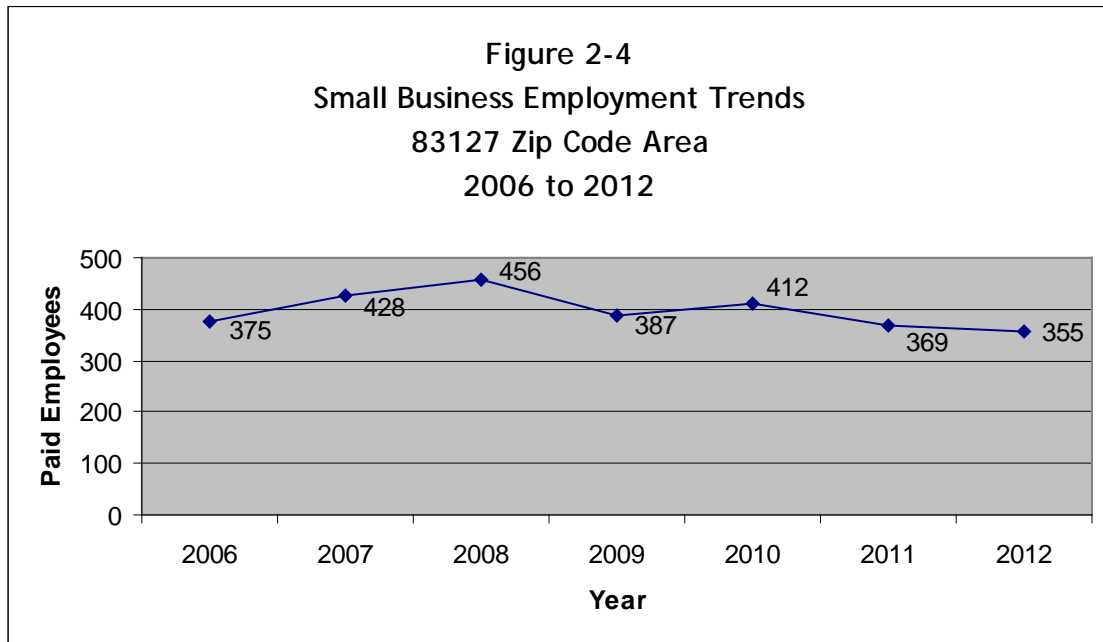
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014.

2.7.3 Employment and Payroll Expenditures

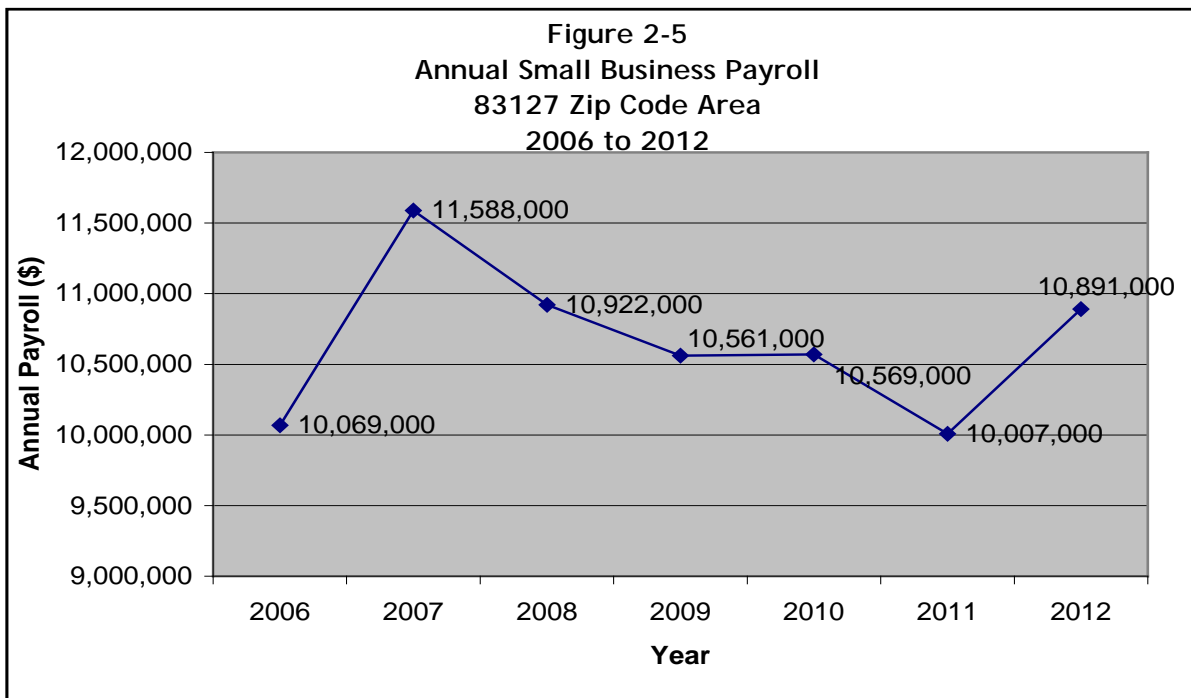
During the 2006-2012 period, small business employment in the 83127 zip code area initially rose from about 375 paid employees in 2006 to 456 employees in 2008 (Figure 2-4). Subsequently, the number of paid employees dropped to 387 employees in 2009, rose again to 412 employees in 2010, and then fell to 355 employees in 2012. The decline in employment likely reflects the loss of some business establishments, e.g. construction, between 2008 and 2010, and perhaps the hiring of some laid-off employees to other companies between 2010 and 2012.

Private sector business establishments, other than non-employer businesses, provided a cumulative annual payroll that ranged between just over \$10.0 million and almost \$11.6 million between 2006 and 2012 (Figure 2-5). The size of annual payrolls was again impacted by both the national and regional recessions and the related loss of some business establishments between 2008 and 2011.

Since annual payroll estimates provided by the U.S. Census Bureau do not include income derived from sole proprietor establishments, the overall income generated from small business activity in the 83127 zip code area is significantly higher.



Source: U. S. Census Bureau, 2014.

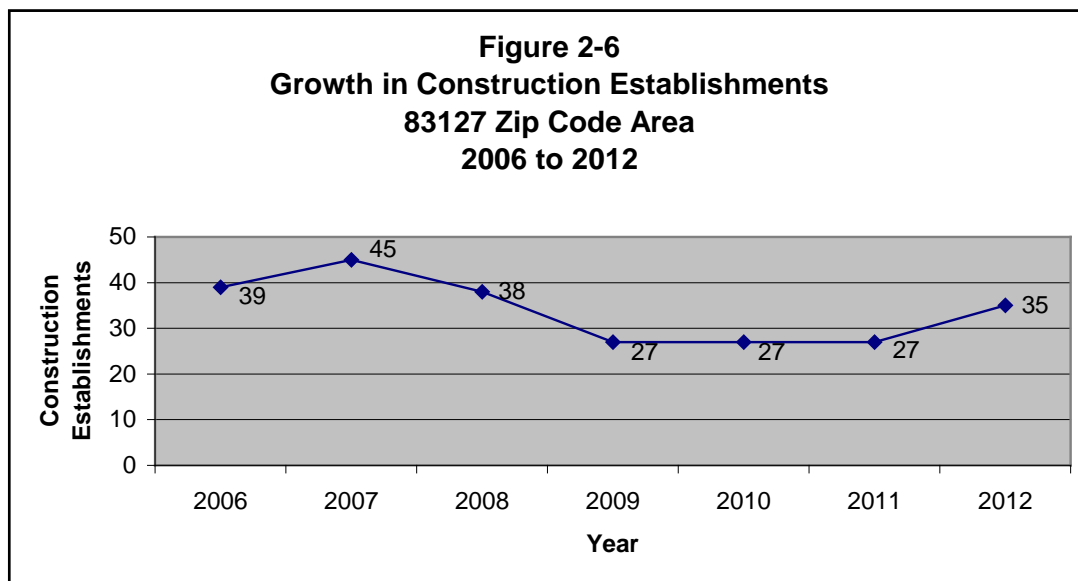


Source: U. S. Census Bureau, 2014.

2.7.4 Construction

Small business data suggests that the construction industry is the primary source of employment in the local economy. In 2006, the 39 construction companies were more than double the number of companies in any other single industry. Thirty construction companies employed between one and four people and seven companies employed five to nine people. Two construction companies employed between 10 and 19 persons.

The construction industry was characterized by significant growth in the number of establishments since 2001, and this trend continued through 2007 when the number of construction companies with paid employees increased to 45 companies (Figure 2-6). But, with the emergence of the national and regional recession, the number of construction companies began to fall in 2008 and continued to slide downward through 2011. Fortunately, the number of construction companies with paid employees rose from 27 companies in 2011 to 35 companies in 2012, an indication that the regional recession ended in Lincoln County sometime in 2011.



Source: U. S. Census Bureau, 2014.

2.7.5 Retail Trade

Companies associated with retail trade included 17 enterprises in 2006. Ten of these companies operated with one to four employees. Four companies included five to nine employees and one company maintained 10 to 19 employees.

The number of retail establishments with paid employees slid to 15 companies in 2007 and further declined to 11 retail businesses from 2008 through 2011. Reductions in personal discretionary spending clearly impacted the financial viability of some retail trade establishments during this period. But, in 2012, the number of retail business rose to 14 enterprises as increased consumer expenditures returned to the Lincoln County economy.

2.7.6 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

Twelve professional, scientific, and technical service companies operated in the 83127 zip code area in 2006. Nine of the companies employed one to four persons; three companies operated with five to nine employees. Small businesses in this industry include enterprises such as veterinary services, engineering and drafting services, and computer support services.

The number of professional, scientific, and technical service companies slipped to 10 or 11 businesses from 2007 through 2009, but returned to 12 companies in 2010 and 2011. In 2012, the number of professional, scientific and technical service companies rose to 15 establishments.

2.7.7 Accommodation and Food Services

In 2006, there were only four companies with paid employees in the 83127 zip code area that provided accommodations and food services. Two of the companies operated with one to four employees. One company had five to nine employees; another company included 20 to 49 employees.

The number of accommodation and food service businesses doubled to eight companies in 2007. Nine or ten businesses remained in operation between 2008 and 2010. Subsequently, there were 12 accommodation and food services businesses with paid employees in 2011 which fell slightly to 11 companies in 2012.

2.7.8 Health Care and Social Assistance Services

From 2006 through 2008, the number of health care and social assistance services industry grew from nine or ten privately-owned companies with paid employees to 14 companies between 2009 and 2011. In 2012, the number of health care and social assistance companies fell only slightly to 13 companies. It is interesting to note that the growth in health care and social assistance services remained upward despite the consequences of the national and regional recessions that impacted other industries in the 83127 zip code area between 2008 and 2011.

2.8 WORKER COMMUTER PATTERNS

The resort and service-oriented economy of Teton County, Wyoming provides a large number of jobs to residents of Star Valley. The Teton County economy may well be the largest employer of Star Valley residents because of available employment opportunities in Teton County and the differences in housing affordability between Lincoln and Teton counties.

The Research and Planning Division of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services monitors the commuting patterns of workers within each Wyoming county, between counties, as well as the inflow of workers from other states. The most recent available data for the third quarter of 2011 indicates the following:

- The primary inflow of workers to Lincoln County from other states primarily included workers from Utah, Idaho, and California.
- 1,698 residents from other Wyoming counties commuted to jobs in Lincoln County. These workers primarily included workers commuting from Uinta (258), Teton (121), Sublette (116), and Sweetwater (91) counties.
- 2,278 Lincoln County residents commuted to jobs outside of Lincoln County. 900 of the jobs (43 percent) were located in neighboring Teton County. Lincoln County residents also commuted to jobs in Sweetwater County (280), Sublette County (243), Uinta County (202) and, to a significantly lesser degree, several other Wyoming counties.
- 5,067 Lincoln County residents commuted to jobs inside Lincoln County.

The preceding findings suggest that about three of every 10 Lincoln County residents, who commute to work, travel to jobs in Teton County. The remaining workers commute to jobs within Lincoln County.

The future commuting patterns of Star Valley Ranch residents will continue to be influenced by housing costs, the cost of commuting, the availability of public transportation, and employment opportunities in Teton County. A reasonable assumption is that a growing number of Star Valley Ranch residents will commute to Teton County unless equally attractive job opportunities can be found in Star Valley.