

**(Wyo.)-Wyo. Ranks Among Fastest-Growing States**

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CASPER, Wyo. (AP) - New census data show that Wyoming was one of the fastest-growing states in 2011 and 2012, but that trend might not hold and isn't consistent across the state.

State economist Wenlin Liu says slumping natural gas and coal prices are hurting jobs in Wyoming. Job losses typically cause people to move elsewhere.

Wyoming's latest population estimate is just over 576,000 people. Wyoming's population grew 1.6 percent from 2011 to 2012.

Only North Dakota, Washington, D.C., and Texas had higher rates of population growth.

Some of Wyoming's more sparsely populated counties lost population. The population in Niobrara County was down 1.3 percent. Weston and Lincoln counties lost about half a percent of their population in a year.