

Natrona County, Wyoming

# Natural Resource Management Plan

2020



# What we are doing?

- Creating a Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) that focuses on resources that are reliant on public lands that influence custom, culture, and economics within the county.
  - House Bill 54 authorized expenditure of state funds to “take actions specified in response related to federal land, water, air, mineral and other natural resource policies which may affect the tax base of the state, wildlife management, state species, recreation, private property rights, water rights or leasehold rights” (HB0054 9-4-218(a)).

# Why?

- A Natrona County natural resource plan will serve as a basis for communicating and coordinating with the federal government and its agencies on land and natural resource management issues.
- This plan considers the current conditions of federal resources, county objectives for each resource, and how the county would like to see those objectives achieved.

**Legal Framework:** Federal laws require federal agencies (BLM, USFS) to *consider* state and local land use plans and to explain deviations from these plans in decision documents to abide by the following statutes;

- The **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**
- The **Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA)**
- The **National Forest Management Act (NFMA)**

# NRMP Format



Each Chapter will include **Resource Assessments** with detailed information, **Resource Management Objectives** and goals, and specific **Priorities** to address those goals.



- Chapter 1: Custom and Culture
- Chapter 2: Land Use
- Chapter 3: Geology, Mining and Air
- Chapter 4: Water Resources
- Chapter 5: Wildlife and Fisheries
- Chapter 6: Economics & Society
- Chapter 7: Agriculture

**Custom and Culture** is defined by the activities and values – past, present, and future – that influence the character and economics of a place.

What makes Natrona County unique?



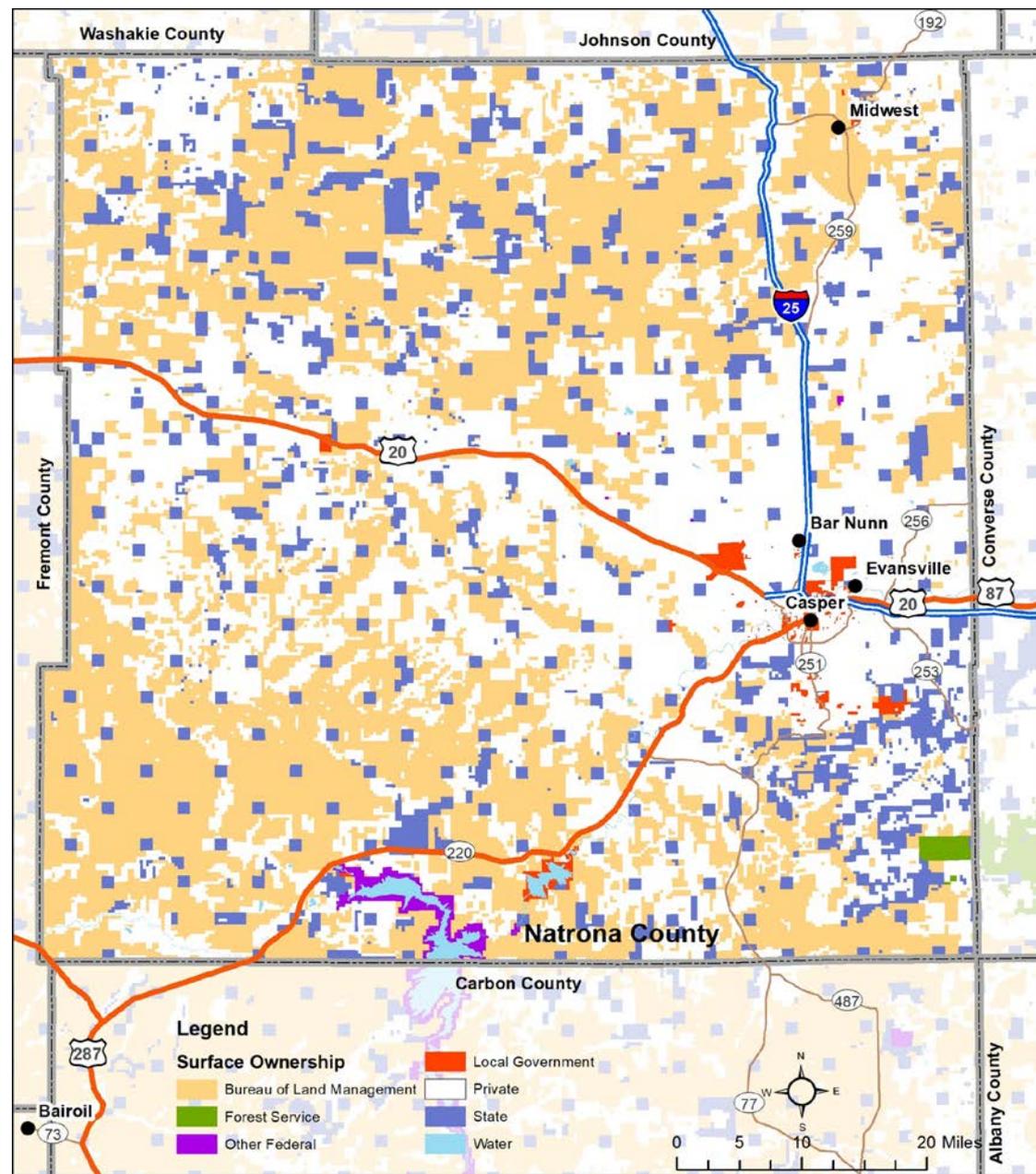
Photos courtesy of WyoHistory.org



# Land Use

## Surface Land Ownership

	Acres	Percent
<b>US Government</b>		
Forest Service	5,552	0.2%
BLM	1,421,765	41.3%
Fish and Wildlife Service	7,727	0.2%
Bureau of Reclamation	4,681	0.1%
Other Federal	201	< 0.1%
<b>Wyoming</b>		
State Lands Commission	388,355	11.3%
Recreation Commission/ Game & Fish	561	< 0.1%
<b>Other</b>		
Local Government	18,592	0.5%
Private Lands	1,572,604	45.7%
Surface Water	18,803	0.5%
<b>Total Federal and State Lands</b>	<b>1,828,842</b>	<b>53.2%</b>
<b>Total Area</b>	<b>3,438,842</b>	<b>100%</b>

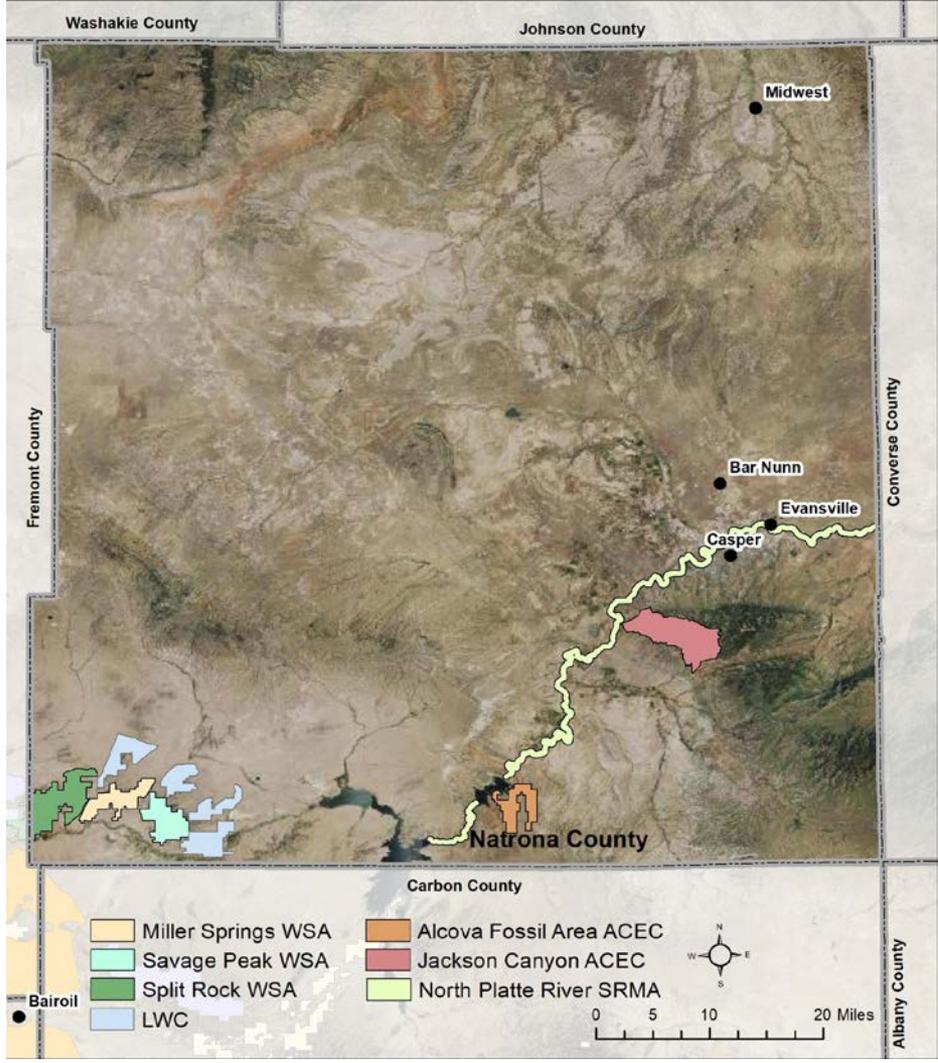


Source: WyGIS (2019)

# Special Management Areas (SMAs)

The Sweetwater Rocks Complex, consisting of four contiguous Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), lying in both Natrona and/or Fremont Counties and entirely within the BLM’s Lander Field Office jurisdiction, will be addressed as a single unit. In this process, as part of the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative (WPLI), Natrona County will be participating through the Fremont County established committee.

Special Management Areas	Area (GIS acres)
Miller Springs WSA	6,695
Savage Peak WSA	7,167
Split Rock WSA	14,119
Sweetwater Rocks (Lankin Dome) WSA (Fremont County)	6,366
<b>Sweetwater Rocks Complex (Total)</b>	<b>34,347</b>
Alcova Fossil Area ACEC	5,977
Jackson Canyon ACEC	14,348
North Platte River SRMA	12,803
Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	19,213
<b>Total SMA Acres</b>	<b>86,688</b>



### Other Land Management Designations:

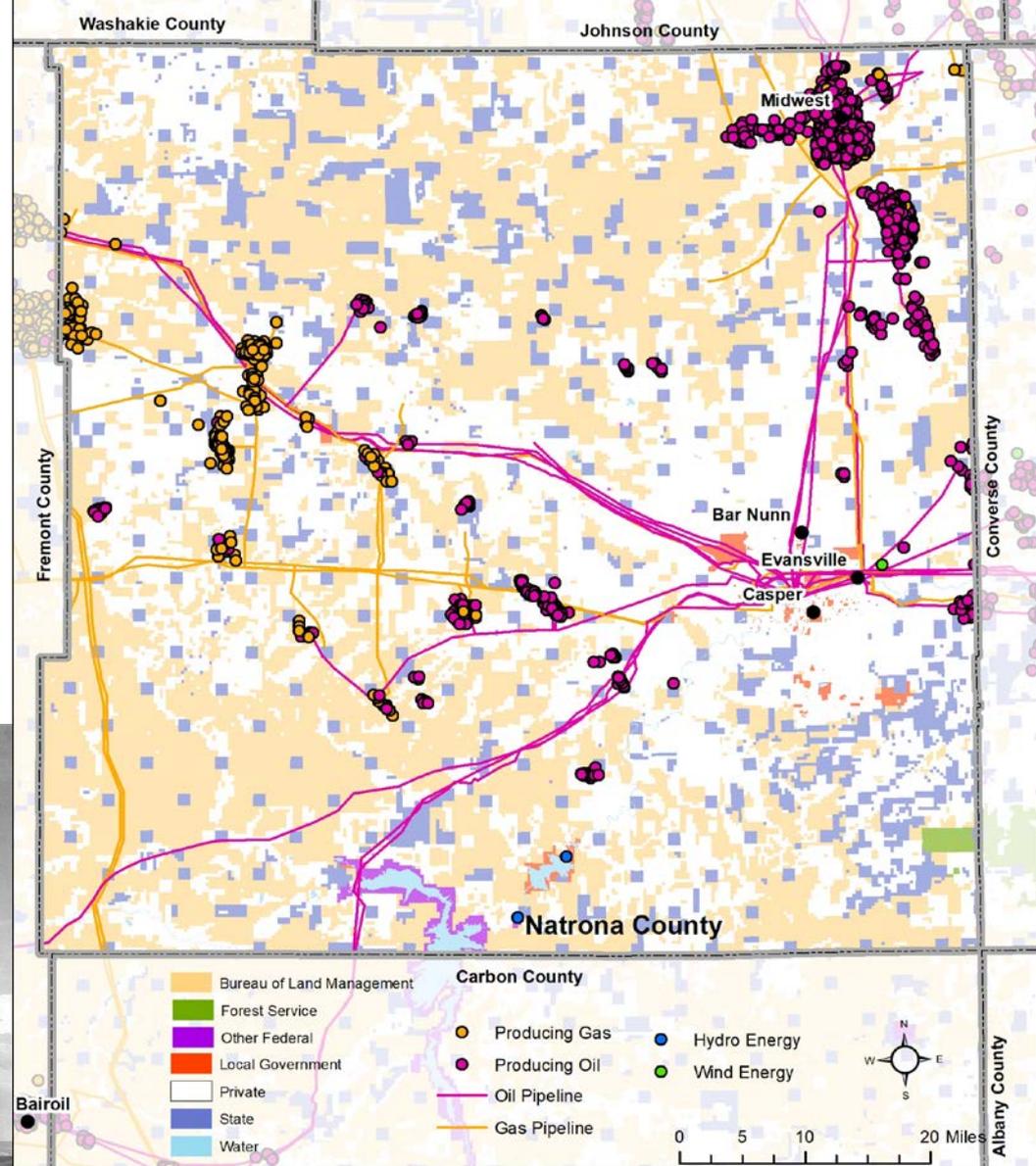
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)
- Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC)
- Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA)

Sources: USDI Bureau of Land Management

# Geology, Mining and Air

## Energy Resource Extraction on Federal Lands

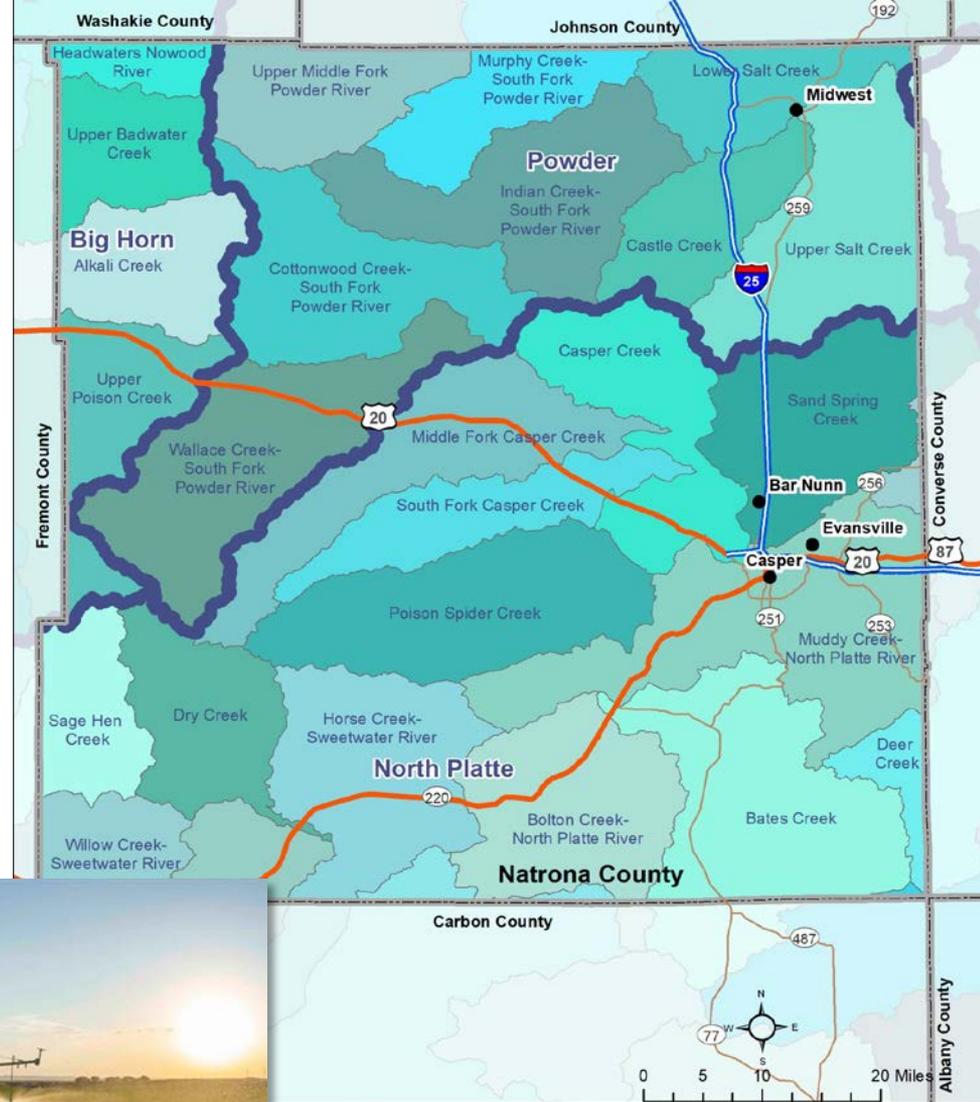
	Producing Wells	Pipeline (miles)
Gas	297	575
Oil	1,612	788



Sources: Wyoming Oil & Gas Conservation Commission (2019), Wyoming State Geological Survey (2012)

# Water Resources

28 Watersheds (5<sup>th</sup> Level Hydrologic Unit Code) within Big Horn, Powder and North Platte Basins.

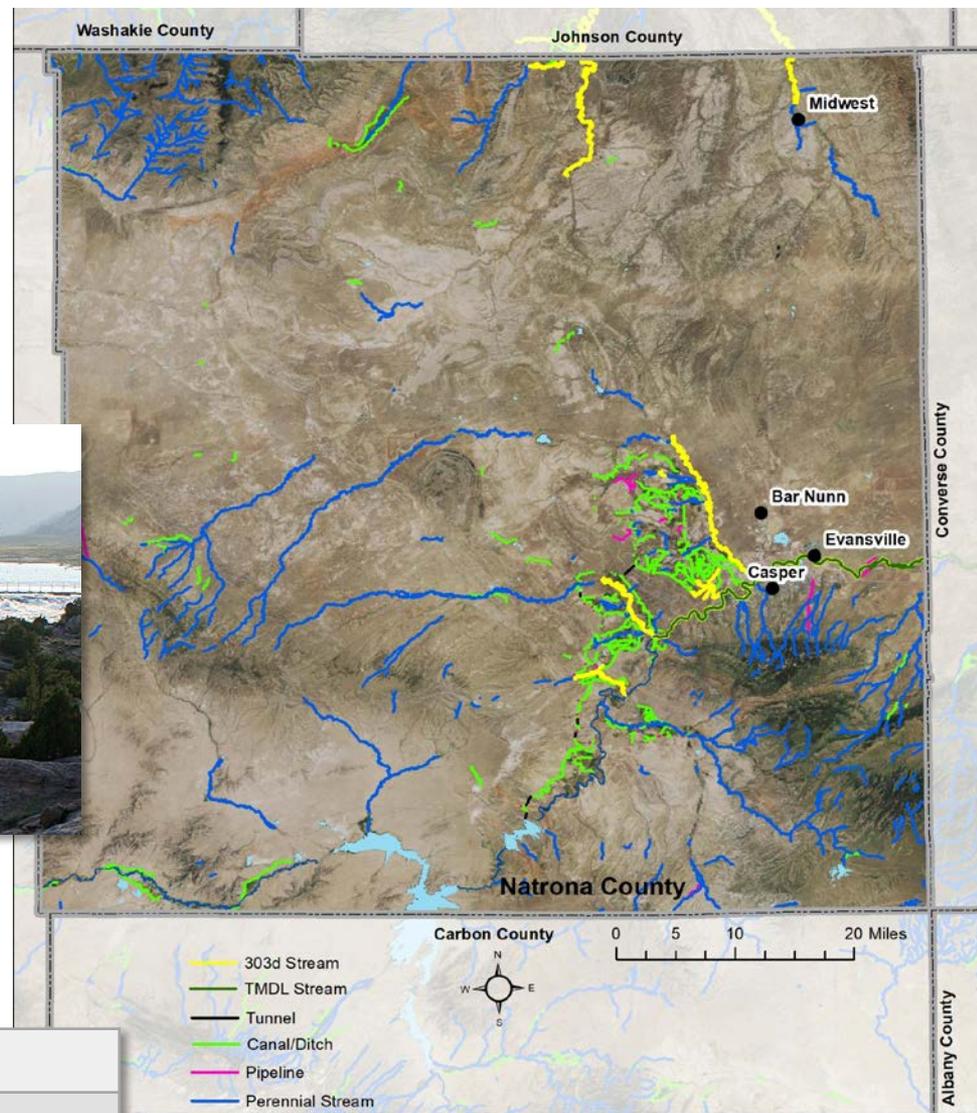


Source: National Hydrography Dataset (2019)

# Surface Water



Pathfinder Reservoir, Dam and spillway on the North Platte River. Tom Rea photo



Sources: National Hydrography Dataset (2019), EPA ATAINS Program (2015)

Impaired Stream Status	Length in Miles
303d Impairment-Selenium (naturally occurring)	125
TMDL for Ammonia, Chlorine, and Fecal Coliform	109

# Wildlife

## Big Game Species

- Migration between seasonal ranges is an adaptive response to the seasonal or geographic variation of resources. These migrations often provide animals with more favorable conditions of temperature, food, or water.
- A population or portion of a population of animals migrate to more suitable habitats called **seasonal ranges**. Descriptions, according to the Wyoming Game and Fish Dept. (WGFD) are as follows:

**Winter-** Only during the winter (variable, but commonly between 11/15 and 4/30).

**Winter/Yearlong-** Used on a year-round basis. During the winter months (commonly between 11/15 and 4/30), there is a significant influx of additional animals into the area.

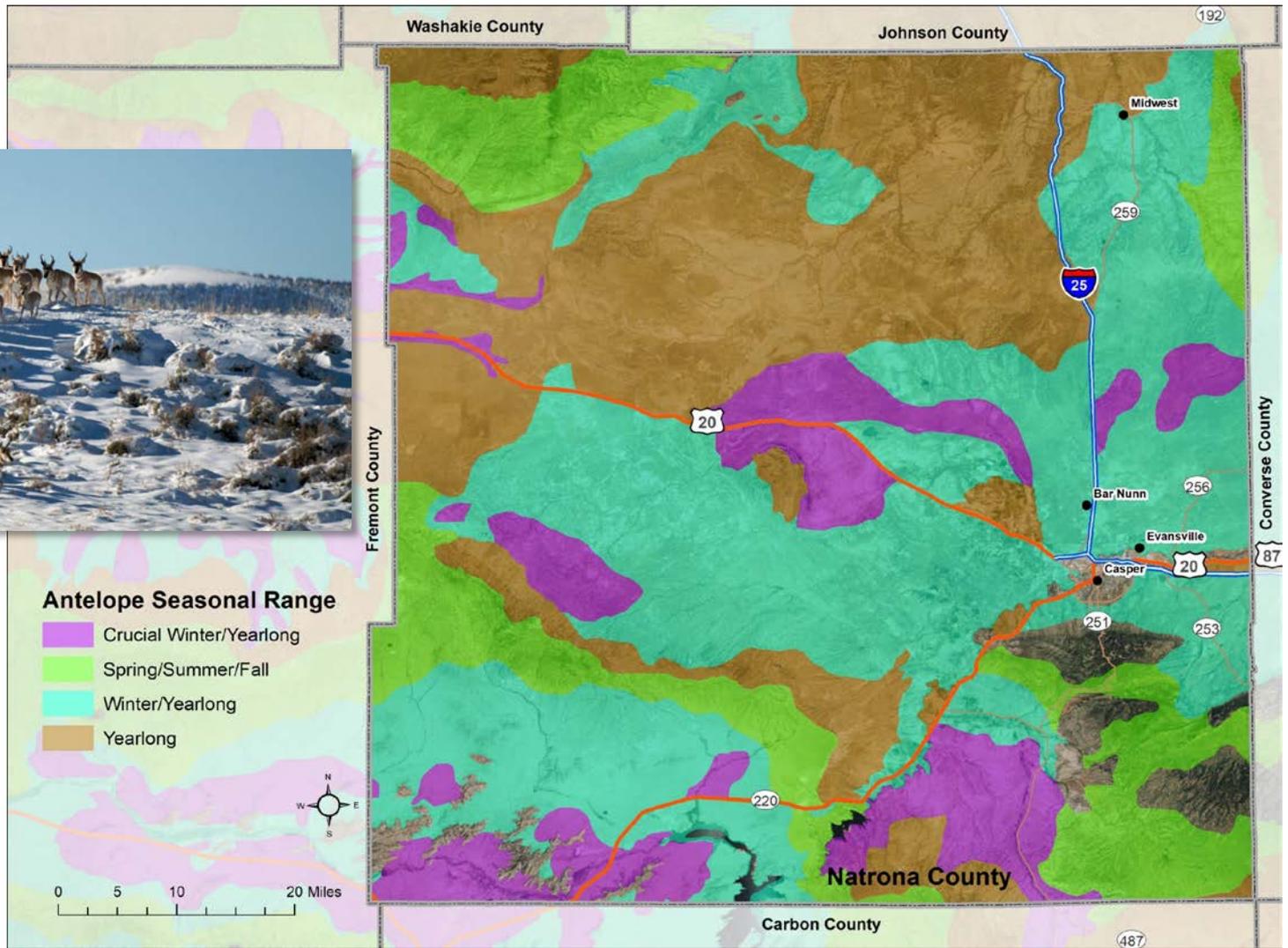
**Yearlong-** Used on a year-round basis.

**Summer or Spring – Summer-Fall-**

Used only (from the previous winter) to the onset of persistent winter conditions (5/1 and 11/30 or shorter in Wyoming).



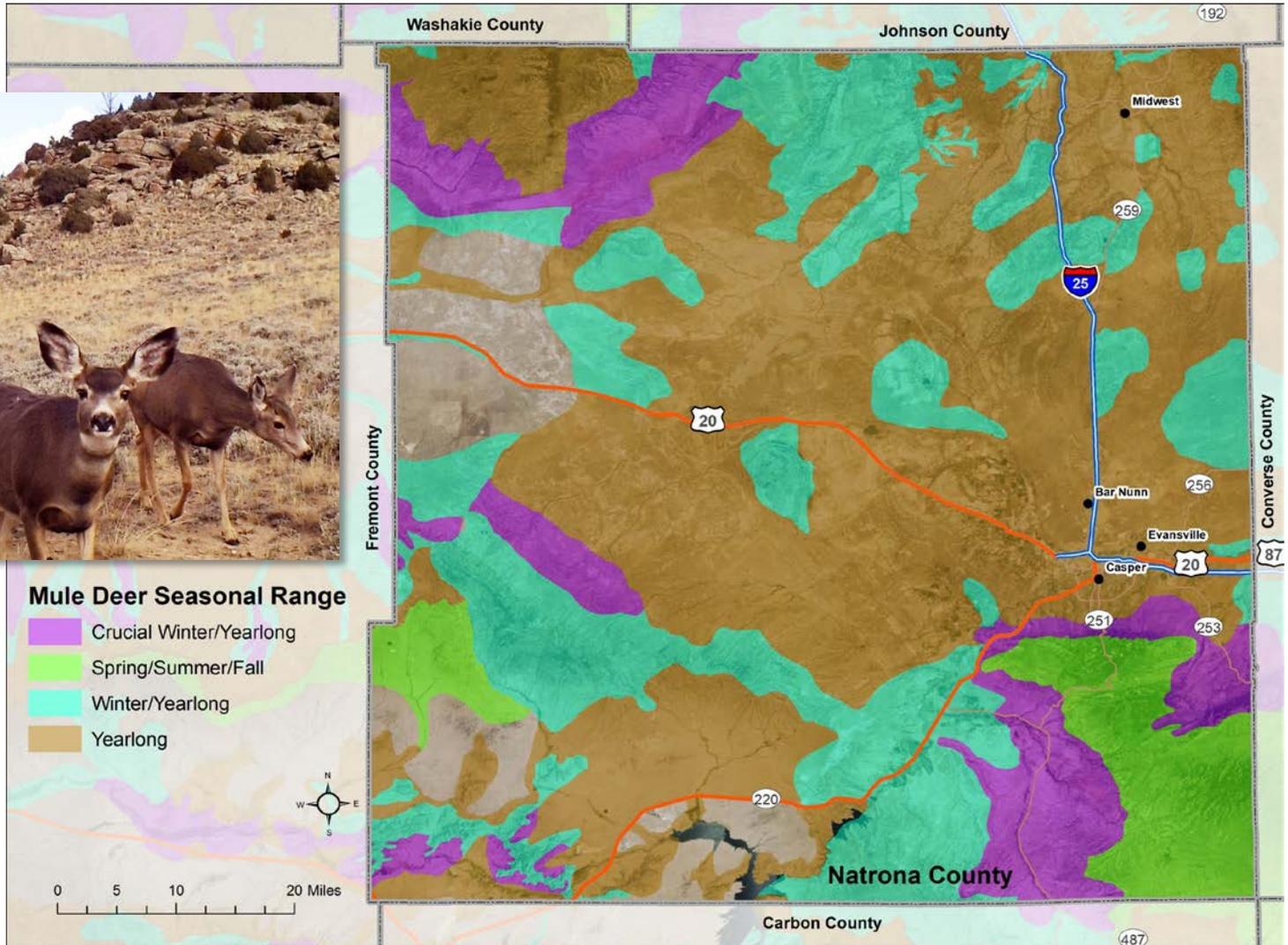
**Crucial-** Describes any particular seasonal range or habitat component (often winter or winter/yearlong range in Wyoming) but describes that component which has been documented as the determining factor in a population's ability to maintain itself at a certain level over the long term.



Source for big game ranges: WGFD (2019)

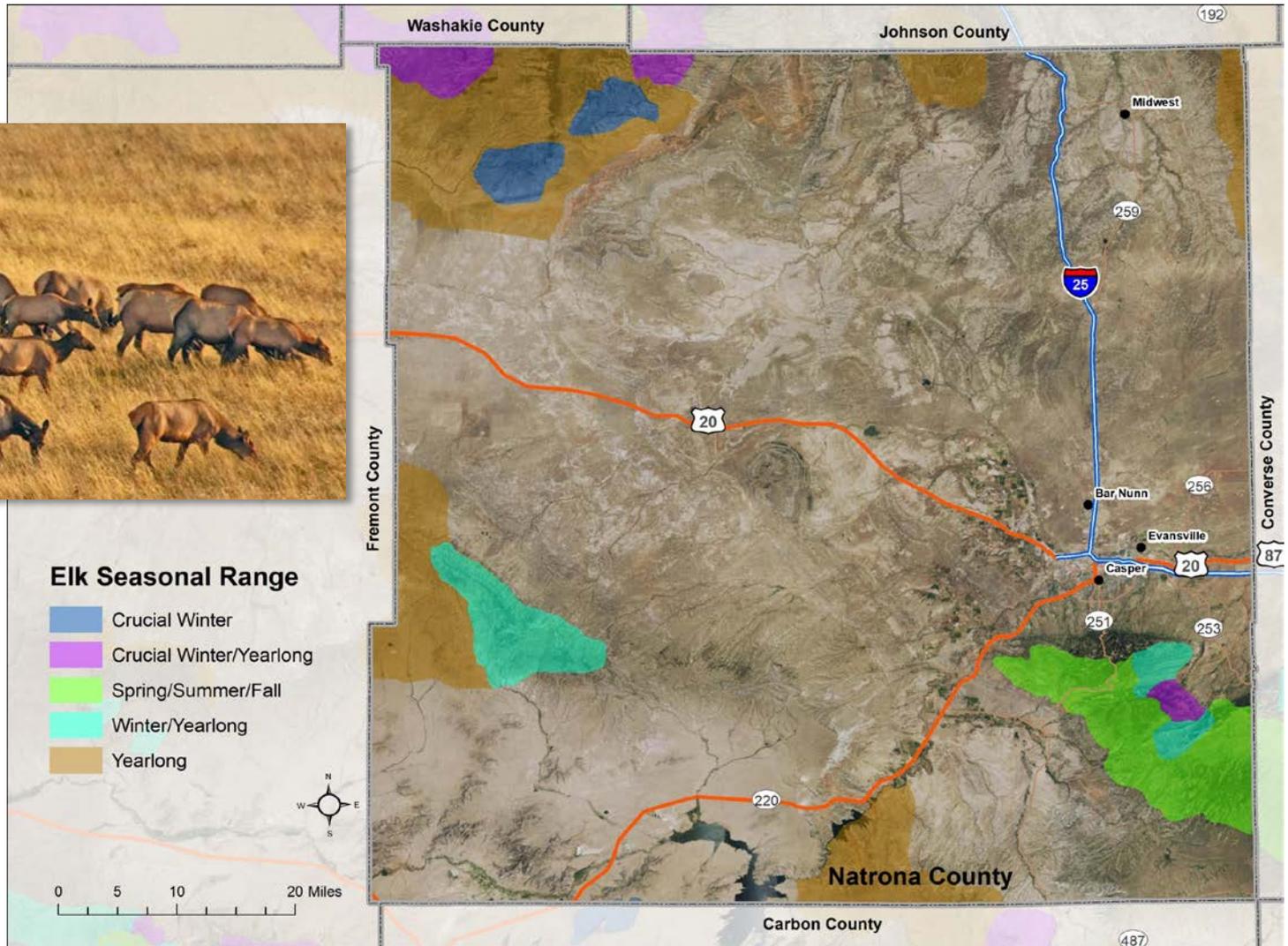
## Acres of Seasonal Ranges-Antelope

Crucial Winter/Yearlong	Spring/Summer/ Fall	Winter/ Yearlong	Yearlong	Total Acres
411,318	494,820	1,359,313	1,013,607	<b>3,279,058</b>



### Acres of Seasonal Ranges-Mule Deer

Crucial Winter/Yearlong	Spring/Summer/Fall	Winter/ Yearlong	Yearlong	Total Acres
377,154	230,771	834,535	1,746,806	3,189,266

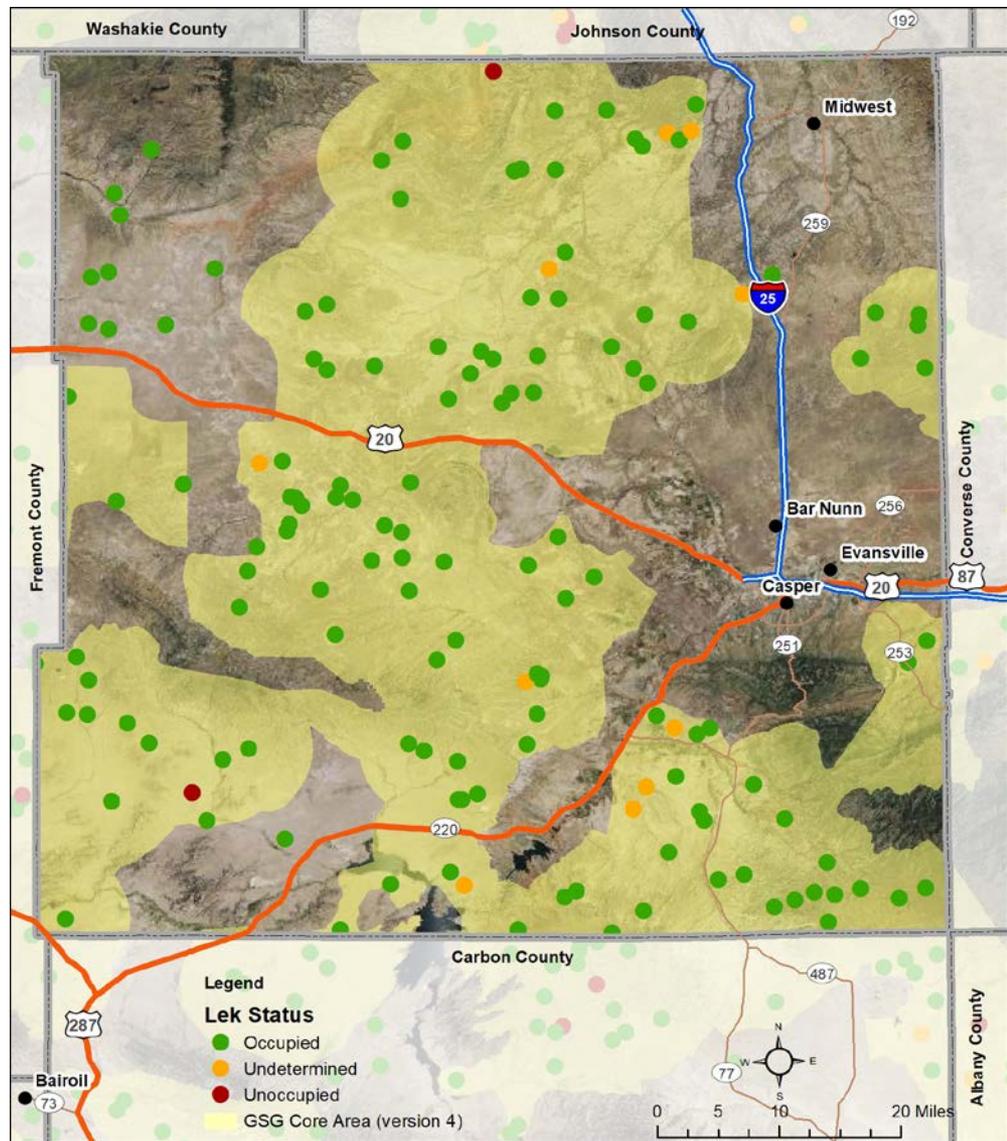


## Acres of Seasonal Ranges-Elk

Crucial Winter	Crucial Winter/ Yearlong	Spring/Summer/ Fall	Winter/ Yearlong	Yearlong	Total Acres
34,671	35,949	94,774	66,934	307,225	539,553

# Greater Sage Grouse

**Lek:** An area where sage-grouse congregate in the spring and males perform their courtship display. Typically, these areas are sparsely vegetated for easy viewing by females.



Sources: Wyoming Sage-Grouse Implementation Team, Local Working Groups, WFGD

**Occupied Leks**

**132**

**Unoccupied Leks**

**2**

**Acres of Greater Sage Grouse  
(GSG) Core Area**

**1,933,320**

# Wildlife

## Fisheries

-Blue ribbon trout streams have greater than or equal to 600 pounds of trout per stream mile (Wyoming Game and Fish Dept.)

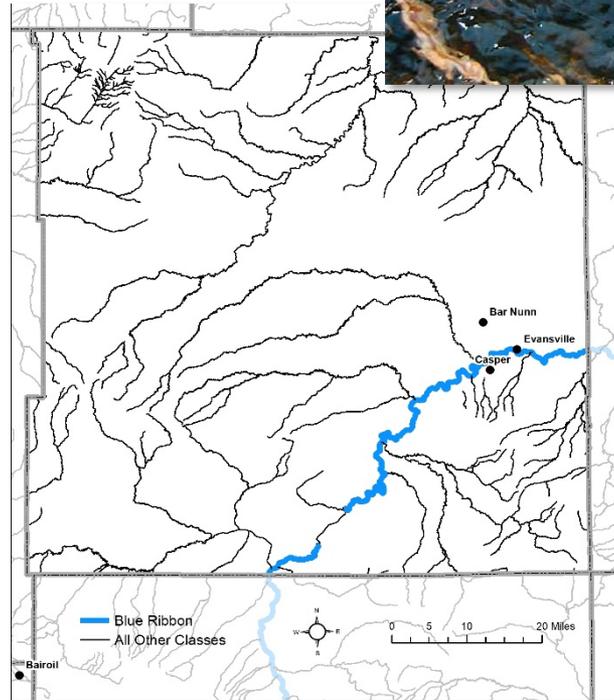
-North Platte River

- Blue ribbon stream
- Numerous public fishing access points
- Fremont Canyon

-Alcova and Pathfinder Reservoirs

-Species in Natrona County:

- Rainbow trout
- Brown trout
- Cutthroat trout
- Kokanee salmon
- Walleye
- Perch



\*Source: WGFD (2015)



# Economics and Society



## Natrona County, WY Population

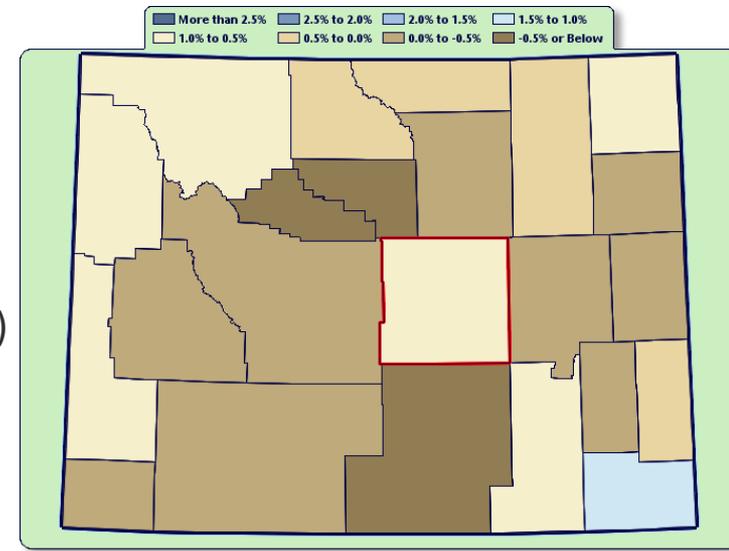
75,450 (2010 U.S. Census)

79,115 (2017 U.S. Census Est.)

## Avg. Annual % Change 2010-2018

Natrona County: **0.57%**

Wyoming: **0.35%**



Sources: Wyoming REAProject.org, Regional Income Division, BEA (2019)

## Incorporated Towns

Town:	Population:
Casper (county seat)	55,316
Bar Nunn	2,213
Evansville	2,544
Mills	3,461
Edgerton	195
Midwest	404

## Unincorporated Communities

Alcova	Hiland
Natrona	Powder River
Waltman	

## Employment by Sector

## Population

Agriculture	490
Mining, Oil, and Gas Extraction	5,610
Federal, state, local gov't	6,151
Construction	4,484
Retail	6,632
Transport / Warehouse	ND
Health care / Social assistance	6,206
Food & Lodging	3,973
Finance / Insurance / Real Estate	5,140
Other sectors	17,236
<b>Total</b>	<b>55,922</b>

ND=not disclosed to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but estimates included in totals. Sources: Wyoming Division of Economic Analysis Equality State Almanac, County Profiles, Wyoming DEA summary of decennial U. S. Census data, Wyoming DEA Employment, Income, and Gross Domestic Product Report, 2010 Census Summary Report for Wyoming, 2011 county population estimates

## • Recreation

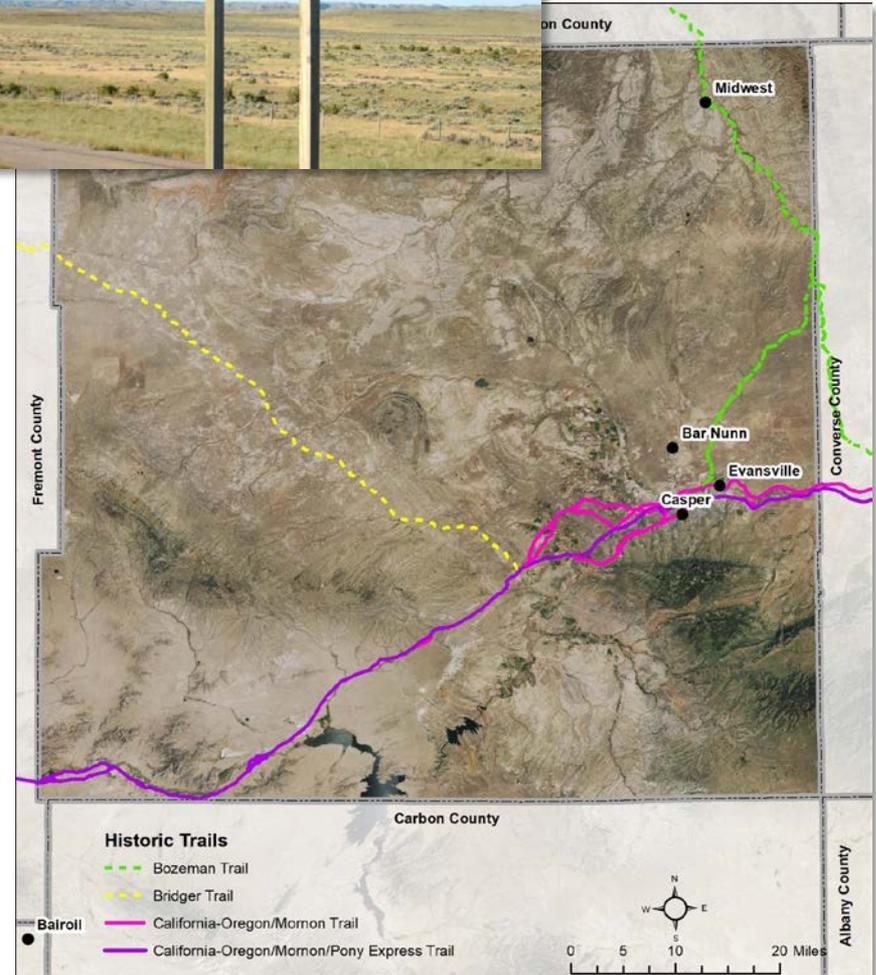
- Big Game Hunting
  - Mule Deer, White-Tailed Deer, and Pronghorn, Elk and Black Bear
- Fishing opportunities
  - North Platte River
  - Alcova and Pathfinder Reservoirs
- Winter Recreation
  - Skiing, Snowboarding, Snowshoeing at Casper Mountain

## • Tourism in 2018

- Travel Spending Total: \$295.2 Million
- Earnings: \$75.6 Million
- Employment (Jobs): 2,600
- Tax Receipts (Local and State): \$14.5 Million\*

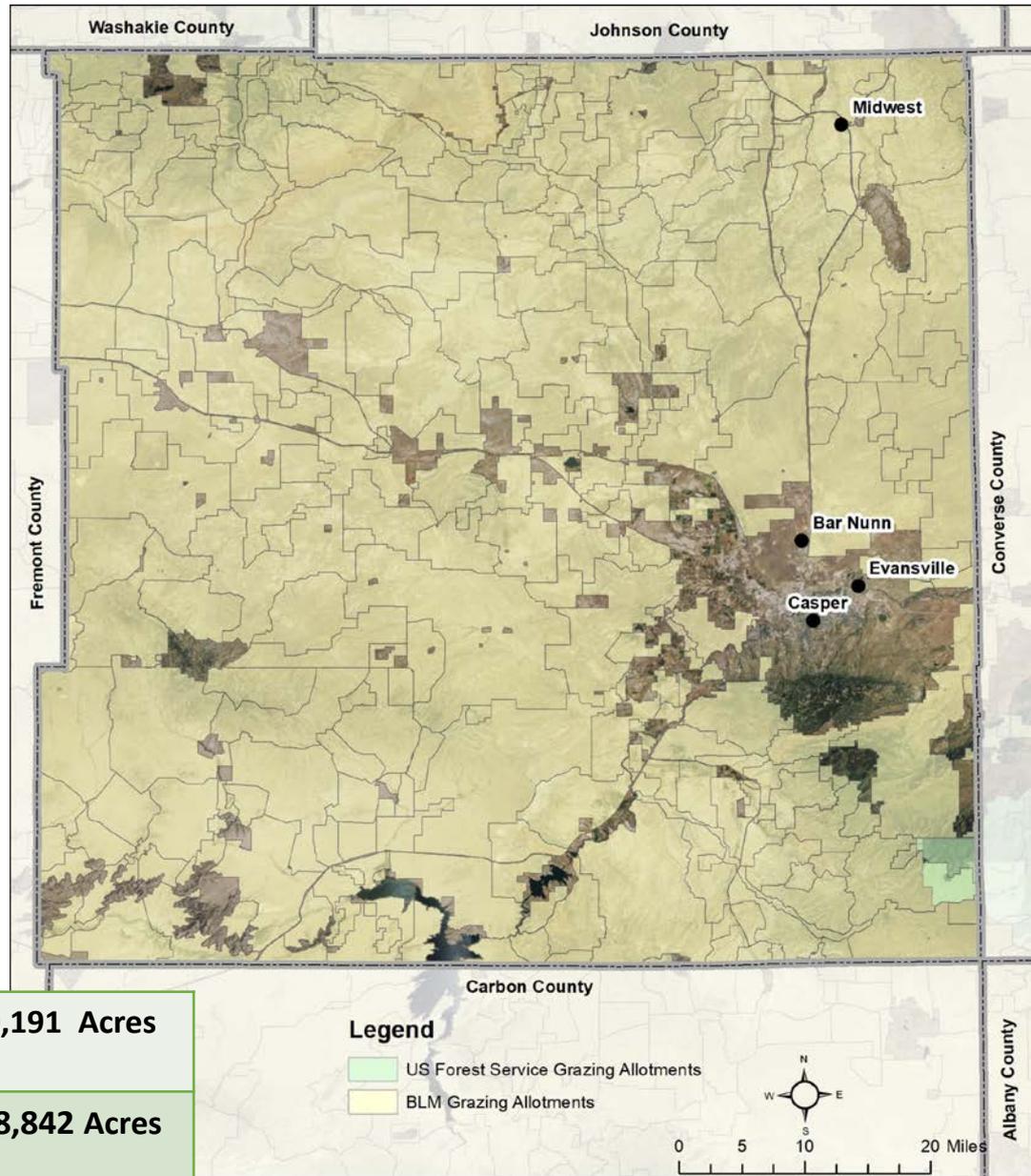
## • Historic Trails

- Bozeman Trail
- Bridger Trail
- California-Oregon/Mormon Trail
- California-Oregon/Mormon/Pony Express Trail



\* Source: Wyoming Travel Impacts 2018

# Agriculture on Federal Lands



Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, USFS, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, BLM (2019)

<b>Grazing Allotments (288)</b>	<b>3,070,191 Acres</b>
<b>Natrona County</b>	<b>3,438,842 Acres</b>
<b>Total Percentage Grazing Acres Managed by BLM and USFS</b>	<b>89%</b>

# Noxious and Invasive Species

Natrona County-WY Weed and Pest Council (2019)

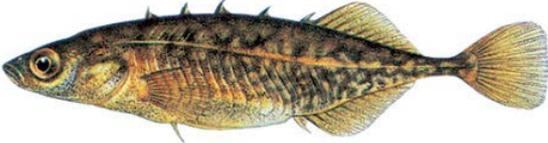
- Buffalobur
- Bulbous bluegrass
- Cheatgrass
- Common cocklebur
- Curly dock
- Curlycup gumweed
- Cutleaf viper grass
- Dame's rocket
- Foxtail barley
- Halogeton
- Mosquito
- Northern pocket gopher
- Puncturevine
- Western salsify
- Wild licorice



## Aquatic Invasive Species

WY AIS Program (2018)

- Brook Stickleback
- Curly Pondweed



“[Early Detection Rapid Response] EDRR aims to utilize a variety of surveying methods in order to detect new invasive species. This prevents these species from becoming established and becoming difficult to control or eradicate. Following the detection of a new infestation an appropriate rapid response is enacted. This often includes repeated monitoring and if necessary recurrent treatments to ensure successful eradication.”

*-Wyoming Weed and Pest Control*



Buffalobur-*Solanum rostratum*



Northern pocket gopher-*Thomomys talpoides*

