



Rock Springs, WY



Rock Springs, Wyoming, is located in Sweetwater County in the southwestern part of the state. Ben Holladay's Overland Stage Company developed the area in 1862 as a stage stop because the springs were a valuable source of water in the midst of the desert. In 1868, Archibald and Duncan Blair took over the stage stop and established the first coal mine in Rock Springs to supply the new coal-driven Union Pacific Railroad. Over the next century, more than 100 million tons of coal were hauled out of mines that ran for miles underneath the city.

The Rock Springs Historical Museum is located in the original Rock Springs City Hall. The museum's many exhibits focus on the history of Rock Springs with special emphasis on its coal mining and multi-national heritage.

Western Wyoming Community College holds a massive collection of fossils from Lake Gosiute, an ancient lake that once covered much of Sweetwater County. The collection includes 5 life-sized dinosaur displays that are placed in various campus locations.

The Community Fine Arts Center offers a permanent collection and changing displays of fine art. The changing exhibitions feature traditional and nontraditional displays of American contemporary art by local, regional, and national artists. In addition to its art exhibitions, the Community Fine Arts Center hosts the symphony; ballet; dramatic and children's theater; jazz, classical, pop, and ethnic music; and opera performances.

Other local performance venues include the Broadway Theater, which hosts live performances, special events, and celebrations throughout the year, and Western Wyoming Community College Theatre, which offers dance, performing arts, and musical theater productions. Evening concerts in the Bunning Park occur from June through August.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Downtown Rock Springs is not a residential area.

Many of Rock Springs' early neighborhoods were focused around the mines. The No. 4 Mine neighborhood consists mainly of 3 subdivisions: UPCC 4th Addition, Lowell Addition, and Kruljac Addition. Housing styles include small bungalows, ranchers, and two-story Colonials that vary in age. The East Flat Neighborhood is located east of downtown in a relatively flat portion of the city where small houses were constructed between 1910 and 1919 on small lots. More than half of the homes in West Flat were constructed during the 1920s and 1930s. This neighborhood also contains small houses.

Housing in the hilly Prairie Addition neighborhood dates from the 1970s and 1980s and was built in a wide range of architectural styles. The homes in this neighborhood are larger than in older neighborhoods, with most exceeding 2,000 square feet. Other neighborhoods that date from the 1970s and 1980s are James Addition, which features small bungalows and ranchers, and Pioneer Addition, which contains larger ranch-styles, split-levels, and two-story houses on larger lots. Both neighborhoods are also hilly.

Since 2006, when the oil and gas boom propelled the local economy to even greater heights, several new developments have been under construction, primarily on the west and north ends of town, with single-family custom built homes. Gunsight Estate features a range of home sizes, options, prices, and builders. Sweetwater Station's covenants require a minimum house size of 2,000 square feet.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Rock Springs has 25 parks and 2 recreation centers that include the Family Recreation Center, which has an indoor pool and Ice Arena. The 320-acre Paul J. Wataha Recreational Complex features the 27-hole White Mountain Golf Course and a ball field complex.

Other community parks include Garnet Park, which has tennis courts, a basketball court, spray pad, horseshoe pits, and a playground. At 8 acres, Blairtown Park has a ball field, wading pool, playground, cable ride, a winter sledding hill, and large grass areas. Kiwanis Field is a 3-acre park with lighted Little League baseball and football fields, concession stand, and playground. Veterans Park has horseshoe pits, a soccer field, playground, full ADA access, and a skate park.

Several specialty parks are also available in the city: Bitter Creek Bark Park (an off-leash city dog park), Arthur Park (a 9-hole disc golf course), RC Raceway, and Paintball Park.

The 27,230-acre Seedskafee National Wildlife Refuge in Sweetwater County protects riparian, wetland, and upland shrub habitats along 36 miles of the Green River, which is vital for more than 250 species of resident and migrant wildlife. The White Mountain Petroglyphs are a permanent reminder of the Plains and Great Basin American Indians who resided in the area more than 200 years ago and etched images of bison and elk hunts into the stone surface. Killpecker Sand Dunes encompass approximately 109,000 acres and are home to wild horses that are descendants of horses brought to the New World by the Spanish in the 16th century. The 91-mile Flaming Gorge Lake on the Green River in the Ashley National Forest is known for its excellent trout fishing and water activities, including boating and jet skiing.

Farther away, Fossil Butte National Monument contains some of the world's best preserved fossils of fish, insects, plants, reptiles, birds, and mammals.

Wyoming's Big Show-The Sweetwater County Fair occurs each summer at Rock Springs' Sweetwater Events Complex, which also hosts horse, livestock, motorsports, and BMX events.

EDUCATION

Sweetwater County School District #1 educates approximately 5,400 students in Rock Springs in 7 elementary schools (grades kindergarten through 4), 2 elementary schools (grades 5 and 6), a junior high school (grades 7 and 8), a high school (grades 9 through 12), and an alternative high school. The district operates additional schools that serve the communities of Farson-Eden and Wamsutter.

Higher education is available at Western Wyoming Community College, which offers certificates and 2-year degrees in many occupational programs for business and industry as well as programs for transfer to 4-year universities.

HEALTH CARE

Rock Springs is served by the following health care facilities:
Aspen Mountain Medical Center LLC: 16 licensed beds.
Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County: 99 licensed beds.

CITY STATS

2014

City Population	28,185
Metropolitan Statistical Area Population	56,395
Per Capita Personal Income, Rock Springs, WY Micropolitan Statistical Area	\$52,323