

UC Berkeley

California Journal of Politics and Policy

Title

“Disciplined Savings and Stewardship”

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0bh4p76k>

Journal

California Journal of Politics and Policy, 16(1)

Authors

McConnell, Jason

Schuhmann, Robert

Publication Date

2024

DOI

10.5070/P2cjpp16163070

Copyright Information

Copyright 2024 by the author(s). All rights reserved unless otherwise indicated. Contact the author(s) for any necessary permissions. Learn more at <https://escholarship.org/terms>

Peer reviewed

“Disciplined Savings and Stewardship”¹

Jason McConnell
School of Politics, Public Affairs, and International Studies
University of Wyoming
jasonmac@uwyo.edu

Robert A. Schuhmann
School of Politics, Public Affairs, and International Studies
University of Wyoming
robert.schuhmann@uwyo.edu

Abstract

What to do with a windfall? That question loomed large in Wyoming’s 2023 general legislative session, after a 2022 budget session focused on revenue shortfalls and budget reductions. As such, Wyoming’s rich history of “boom-and-bust” economics continues, albeit with increasing skepticism among the state’s elected officials. The 2023 legislative session saw notable new spending in areas such as property tax relief and public employee wages but also produced significant financial investment in many of Wyoming’s “rainy day” funds.

Introduction

Wyoming operates on a biennial budget cycle, with even numbered years reserved for its 20-day budget session and odd-numbered years reserved for the 40-day general session. As such, the 67th Wyoming Legislature’s general legislative session was convened Tuesday, January 10, 2023, for the beginning of its work in Cheyenne. This year, outside of its typical legislative work, Wyoming officials passed a supplemental budget package worth close to \$2 billion. This amount is the result of surplus dollars earned through unanticipated coal, oil, and gas revenues along with \$120.5 million in leftover American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. To place this number into context, Wyoming’s entire biennium budget for 2023-24 was \$2.8 billion. Of the total \$2 billion surplus (one of the largest surpluses in state history), approximately \$1.4 billion would be plowed back into savings (both permanent and expendable). As Governor Gordon noted, the remainder of the \$2 billion would be spent to support, “the Property Tax Refund Program, support for the state’s energy industries and a market adjustment for state employees and teachers to offset the impacts of inflation” (Gordon, 2023). Both the governor and

¹ Rep. Bob Nicholas, R-Cheyenne. Wyoming Tribune Eagle. February 17th, 2023.

legislators were quick to remark that “for every dollar of state revenue spent in the supplemental budget, it [the supplemental budget] saves roughly \$3.50” (Hall, Lawmakers See Impactful Legislation Come Out of General Session, 2023).

The lion’s share of Wyoming’s elected officials take pride in the lack of a state income tax. State revenues, fueled primarily by sales tax, severance tax, and interest income derived from the Permanent Wyoming Mineral Trust Fund (PWMTF), rely heavily on the PWMTF to act as a shock absorber for the volatility associated with the revenues from extractive industries. As such, of the \$1.4 billion placed in savings this year, close to \$350 million was invested back into the corpus of the PWMTF and another \$350 million into the corpus of the Common School Permanent Land Fund. The remainder, approximately \$1.1 billion, was divided evenly into the state’s “savings reserve accounts” which are not permanent funds and can be accessed in the event of need (Hall, Supplemental Budget Bill Saves Record \$1.4 Billion, 2023). As Rep. Clark Stith noted, “the whole game here is to avoid income tax” (Mullen, 2023).

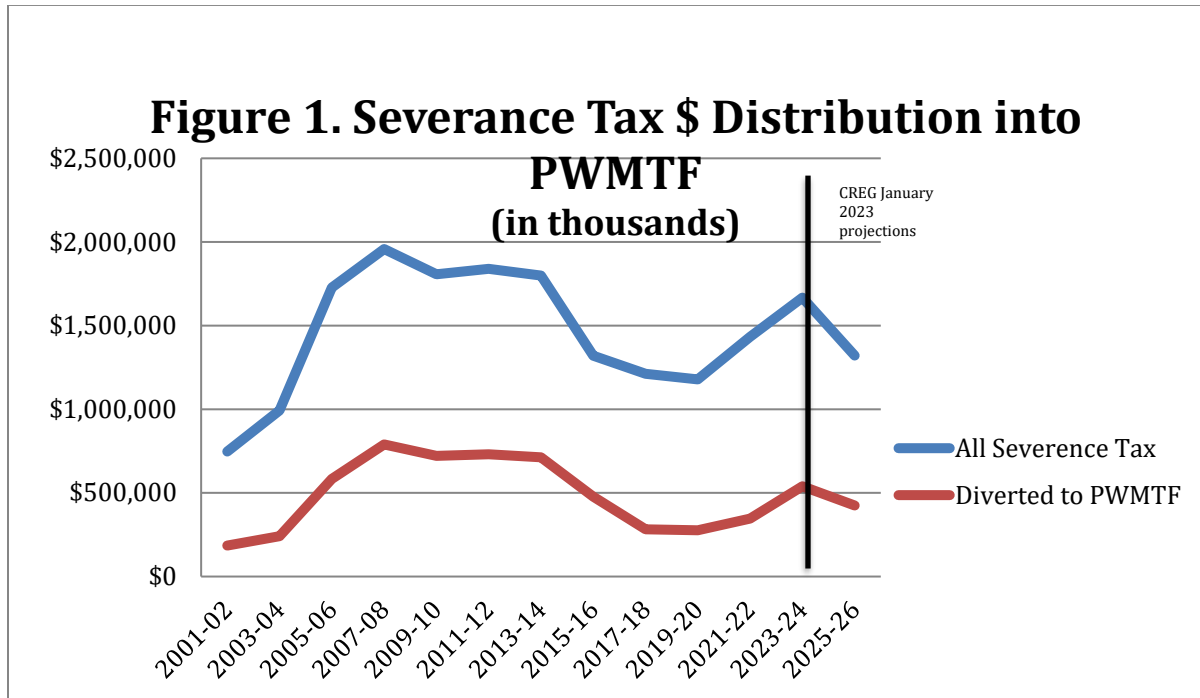
Demographic and Economic Context

Wyoming’s economy tends to run counter to the economic trends experienced by the national economy. As the nation booms, Wyoming’s economy lags behind. As the nation’s economy cools, Wyoming’s fiscal situation often improves – and 2023’s supplemental budget is another reflection of this pattern. Wyoming’s economy remains supported by three primary industries: agriculture, tourism, and extractive industries such as minerals/oil/gas. According to the January 2023 Consensus Revenue Estimating Group (CREG) Report, the most significant change to this year’s fourth quarter revenue forecast (from the October 2022 forecast to the January 2023 forecast) is a decrease of \$99.9 million in PWMTF investment income and an increase forecast price of natural gas by \$0.40 per thousand cubic feet (mcf) in calendar year 2022 and a decrease in the forecast price by \$0.15 in calendar year 2023. With 2022 natural gas prices increasing and 2023 prices decreasing, there is an overall severance tax revenue increase to the General Fund of \$6.5 million for 2023 and a decrease by \$3.6 million for fiscal year (FY) 2024. In total, CREG forecasts a total decrease in the FY 2023-24 biennium General Fund by \$89.2 million. Interestingly, CREG reports that the decrease in interest income from the PWMTF is the result of a transition to safer securities that yield lower dividends while the stock market, in general, is yielding lower returns than it has over the past half-decade.

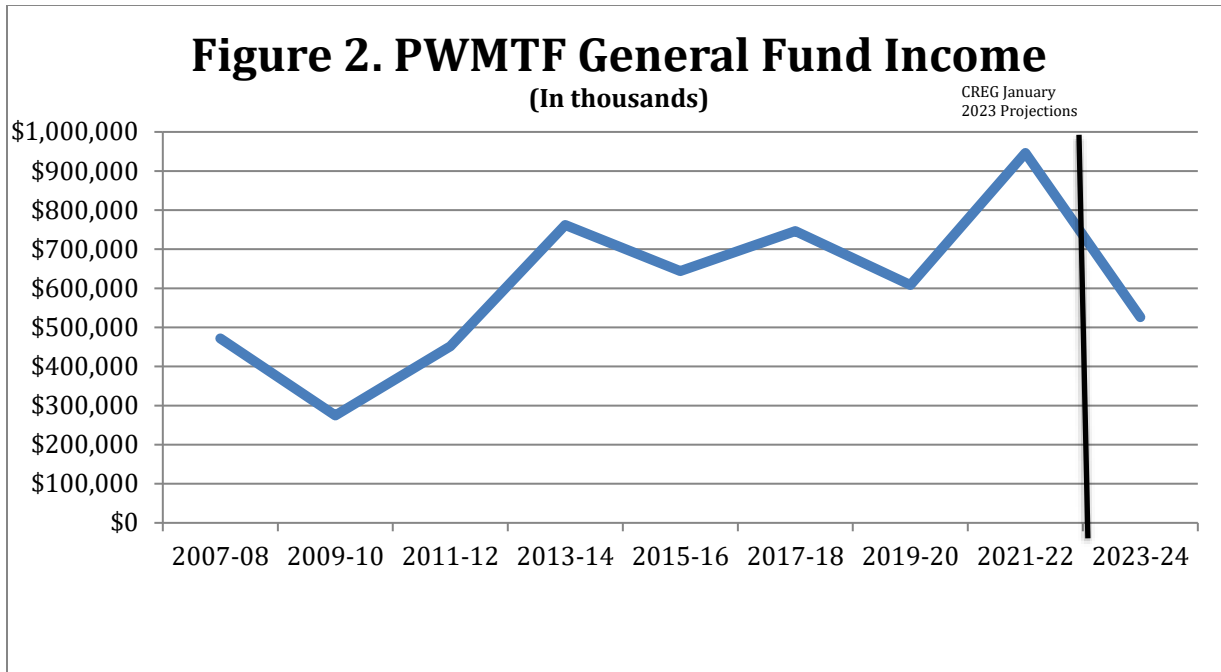
As noted above, one of the most important sources of income for the Wyoming budget is the Permanent Wyoming Mineral Trust Fund (PWMTF). In 1975, when the Trust Fund was first established, the intent was to provide a much-needed revenue stabilizing force (the PWMTF was created by a constitutional amendment passed in 1974). Interest from the Fund was to be utilized as a relatively consistent and predictable revenue stream for the General Fund, the state’s main operating account. Legislators viewed this as something vitally necessary for the boom-and-bust cycles inherent in an economy built largely on mineral extraction (Western, 2012).

According to the office of the Wyoming State Treasurer’s 2022 Annual Report, in June of 2022 the market value of the Fund was \$ 8,834,499,093 which places this fund among the top five largest U.S. Sovereign Wealth Funds in the country behind the Alaska Permanent Fund, the Texas Permanent School Fund, the Texas Permanent University Fund, and the New Mexico

State Investment Council Investment Funds (Caroll, 2021). Significant revenue from pre-pandemic years of the boom cycle, when natural gas prices reached an all-time high, was diverted to the Fund in an effort to increase its corpus and hedge off the effects of the bust cycle. As noted, this year almost \$400 million of the 2023 surplus was also diverted to this Fund’s corpus. Article 15, Sec. 19 of the Wyoming Constitution guarantees that a tax of 1.5 percent be imposed on the value of all minerals extracted and that this tax flow automatically into the corpus, but an additional 1 percent tax is currently deposited there at lawmakers’ discretion (State of Wyoming). In terms of the value of all severance tax dollars collected each year, of those, in 2021-2022 roughly 24 percent were deposited directly into the PWMTF, and 23.4% were directly allocated to the General Fund budget (see Figure 1 below) (Consensus Revenue Estimating Group, 2023).



Source: CREG January 2023, Table 5



Source: CREG January 2023, Table 2.

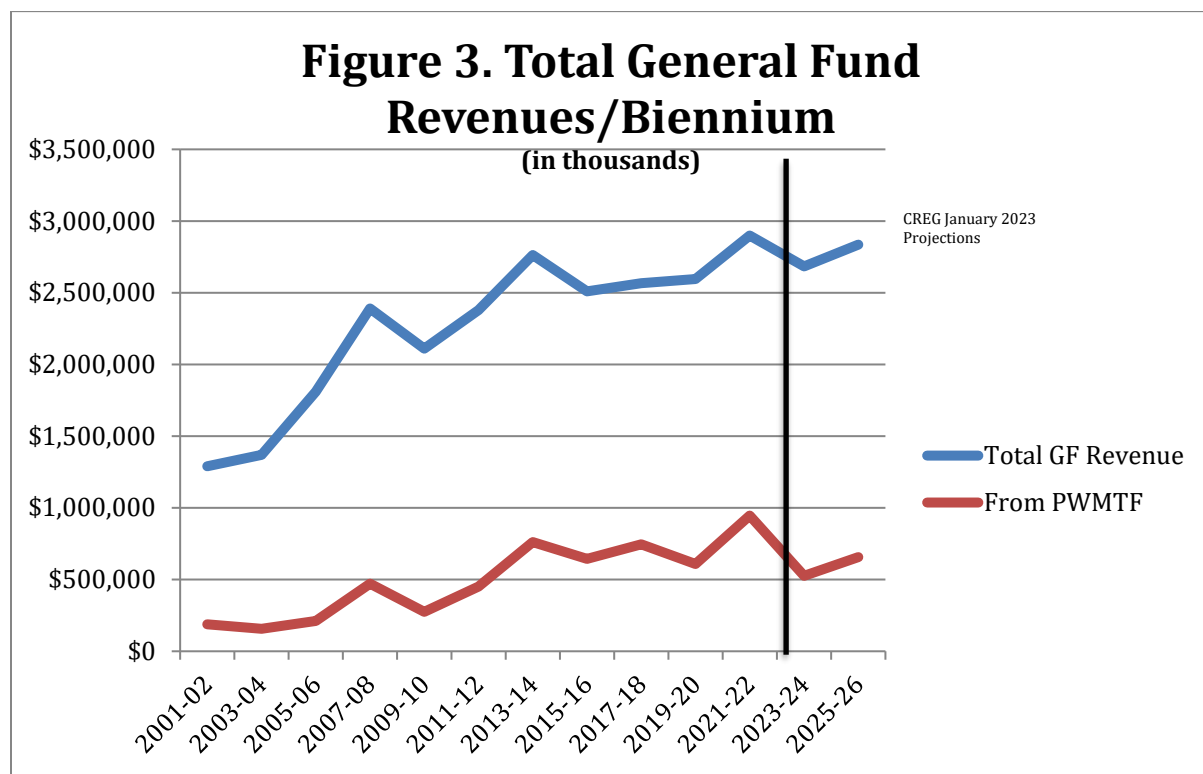
A number of economists indicate that the percentage of revenues earned from the PWMTF that go into to the General Fund is relatively high. Here, according to Boettner, Kriesky, McIlmoil, and Paulhus (2012), only Wyoming and North Dakota deposit all fund earnings into their general fund (11). Current sentiment is that Wyoming simply has no other stable revenue stream, and current revenue forecasts confirm this point. Samuel Western’s analysis “shows that between 1987-2011 interest from the WPMTF has supplied an average of 18.6% of the general fund revenue” (2012). In 2018, interest from the WPMTF accounted for 29% of all General Fund revenue, while in 2020 that number was 23.5% and 32% for 2022. Related, direct severance tax collections, which are deposited directly into the General Fund, accounted for an additional 20% of General Fund revenue during Western’s period of analysis, with a slight dip to 16% in 2014, 14.7% in 2016, 13% in 2018, 19% during the 2020 biennium, and 11.6% for the 2022 biennium (Consensus Revenue Estimating Group, 2023). Importantly, every 20-million-barrel reduction in oil production equals \$12 million less in direct severance tax revenue (Reynolds, 2020).

The 2022 Wyoming State Treasurer’s Annual Report showed that the market value of the PWMTF had grown by 15.8% over the past 5 years – from \$7.6 billion in 2018 to \$8.8 billion in 2022. Some argue this creates an attitude of complacency within the state in terms of economic and tax diversification (which seems to be reflected in the most recent legislative session, despite the pandemic and the volatility of our extractive industries). There seems little political incentive to diversify the tax structure with the relatively high percentage of interest from the PWMTF being deposited in the General Fund.

In addition to the PWMTF, the state has another, smaller, rainy-day account created in 2005 labeled as the Legislative Stabilization and Reserve Account (LSRA) that is funded by excess revenue during “boom” periods. During periods of lower revenue from oil and gas extraction, the state dips into its “rainy-day account” and, as such, the fund was used during pandemic years

when oil and gas prices were down, and drilling had all but stopped. The size of the LRSA fluctuated significantly in recent years, ranging from \$1.7 billion as of 2018, to a low of \$1.5 billion as of 2021. By mid-summer 2022, the fund had recovered and reached \$1.8 billion (Wyoming State Treasurer, 2022).

Measuring economic diversity using the Hachman Index (HI), compared to the United States as a whole, in 2021 (the most recent year for complete data) Wyoming continued to have the least economically diverse economy in the nation (even the District of Columbia has greater economic diversity). By comparison, Utah, which borders Wyoming on the southwest corner, is #1 in terms of economic diversity. Hachman scores range from 97.3 (highest) to 32.1 (lowest). In looking at the actual index, Wyoming’s score is 32.1, New Mexico 57.8, Colorado 93.8, Arizona 96.1, and Utah 97.3. The score closest to Wyoming’s is Alaska with 38.5 (Tagliafierro, 2022).



Source: CREG January 2023, Table 2

In terms of the overall Wyoming tax structure, much of the state remains business-friendly, and continues to have a supportive business/tax environment. According to Fritts and Walczak from the Tax Foundation, the 2023 State Business Tax Climate Index ranks Wyoming 1st (i.e., best) in how supportive their tax system is for businesses. Here, regionally, Alaska ranked 3rd, South Dakota 2nd, Montana 5th, Oregon 24th, Utah 8th, and Nevada 7th (1) (Fritts & Walczak, 2023).

Currently, Wyoming collects no tax on intangible assets (bank accounts, stocks, or bonds), no tax on retirement income earned and received from other states, and no personal income tax, corporate income tax, or business inventory tax. A review of state gas taxes shows that

Wyoming's gas tax is currently near the middle of the pack, ranked 24th at .24/gallon (Colorado .23/gal, UT .32/gal, MT .33/gal, ID .33/gal). In both the 2021 non-budget legislative session and in the 2022 budget session lawmakers advanced bills to increase the state's fuel tax (9 cent increase in 2021 and 15 cents in 2022). The proposed fuel tax would have been phased in and bring Wyoming's fuel tax slightly ahead of our border neighbors. The increased tax would have brought in an additional \$60 million each year (Steurer, 2022). This bill was ultimately not considered by the House or Senate in 2021 nor did it find its way to the legislative floor during last year's 2022 legislative session. Given the state's surplus, this tax increase was not introduced at all in 2023.

In addition, Wyoming is 28th for unemployment taxes, 34th for property taxes as a share of personal income, and 6th for sales and use taxes as share of personal income² (Fritts & Walczak, 2023). With no personal or corporate income tax, sales tax exemptions for groceries and prescriptions, and only mid-tier fuel taxes Wyoming is more reliant on the few taxes it does have and becomes more susceptible to price fluctuations for those commodities that it does tax. In addition, the state becomes more reliant on property and sales taxes to fund the costs of state and local government (and these taxes tend, therefore, to be slightly higher as noted above).

Natural Gas

According to the January 2023 CREG Report, natural gas will continue to be a significant contributor to Wyoming's revenue stream, accounting for 34.5% of the state's total severance tax distribution in 2022 (compared to 20.3% of the state's total severance tax distribution in 2020) (Table 6). This places natural gas as the second largest income producer after crude oil, with coal revenue production a distant 3rd (which is different from 2020 when natural gas was the third largest income producer after both oil and coal) (Consensus Revenue Estimating Group, 2023).

According to one analysis, natural gas prices are the less stable of the state's commodities (Western, 2012). The price for natural gas in mid-December 2016 was \$3.90/mcf, but by January 2017 it had fallen to \$3.10/mcf. As of January 2022, the price per mcf is \$4.75 which is more than twice what it was in 2020 (Consensus Revenue Estimating Group, 2023). Today, the price of natural gas has climbed to \$7.40/mcf which is at its recent peak. Here, each \$1 change in the price per mcf of natural gas equates to approximately \$120 million (up or down) in the state general fund. Unfortunately for Wyoming, changing natural gas prices coupled with variable demand keeps the legislature on pins and needles.

Oil

Crude oil is the largest contributor to the state's mineral taxes, accounting for 43.5% of the total severance tax distribution in 2022 (compared to 45.0% of the total severance tax distribution in 2020). As the pandemic was unfolding in 2020, oil production was predicted to decline in 2021, and remain below levels seen in 2000 until at least 2023. However, in the most recent CREG report, oil production has regained its footing and the number of barrels produced in 2021 were equal to those produced in 2020. Production is estimated to remain steady at 90 million barrels through 2023 and rise to 95 million barrels through the end of the decade (Table 3). Wyoming

² A rank of 1 is best, 50 is worst.

forecasts that OPEC pricing and production, changes in the federal regulatory environment, and increased investment in renewable energy infrastructure will all weigh heavily on our extractive industries (coal in particular). Indeed, the U.S. generated more electricity from renewables than coal for the first time in 2022 (Pollack, 2023). These predictions, however, did not account for accelerating economic growth, post-pandemic, and increased demand pursuant to the war between Russia and Ukraine. At the end of 2022 there were an average of 22 active oil rigs operating in the state compared with 15 a year ago, and 6 active rigs the year before that (2020). Nevertheless, current production is still down from the 30 wells in operation during most of 2019 (TCI Business Capital, 2023).

Coal

After seeing its production initially decline in 2009, Wyoming's coal industry bounced back a decade ago as prices and demand regained strength along with the national economy. Wyoming's coal production began to stabilize after 2011, with 2015 production levels near 375 million tons and prices stabilizing near \$13.50/ton. Since that time, production has dropped off and remains below 2015 levels at approximately 235-240 million tons and with prices near \$14.25/ton. Demand for coal has clearly declined as natural gas prices sank and companies switched from coal to gas in search of cleaner and less expensive technologies. However, in keeping with its volatile nature, during recent months natural gas prices began to rise and coal looked once again more cost effective. This roller-coaster in both price and production was attributed to the idea that as natural gas prices begin to climb, power generation plants were switching back to coal from natural gas. In the end, the expectation is that coal will remain an important but declining contributor of mineral severance taxes to the Wyoming budget throughout the next decade (see Appendix Table 2). In the current biennium, coal's tax contributions to the General Fund are 19.2% of all severance taxes, still making it the third highest producer to this critical revenue stream (Consensus Revenue Estimating Group, 2023).

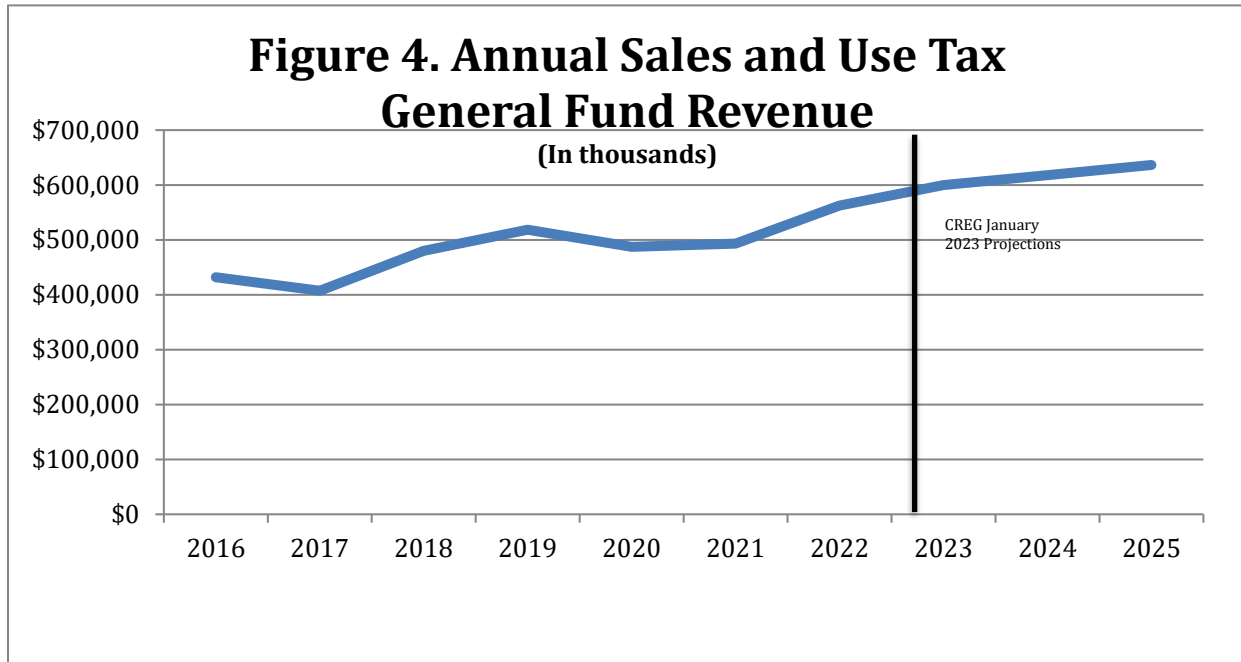
Trona

Although it is little known, Wyoming has the largest deposit of trona in the world (trona is a compound processed into soda ash or baking soda). Making up approximately 2.3% of the state's severance taxes, trona production levels dropped from 2019 levels and are expected to stabilize for the near future. Prices are expected to stay at \$75-80 per ton generating a smaller, yet much needed, portion of the state's severance tax contribution (Consensus Revenue Estimating Group, 2023).

Sales and Use Tax

Sales and use taxes occupy the number one category of General Fund revenue, followed very closely by PWMTF, and direct severance taxes as a distant third (36.40%, 32.6%, and 11.6% respectively). Current (2022) sales and use tax collections are similar to those from the 2020 biennium. Projections indicate a 15% rise through the 2024 biennium and then stable into the 2026 biennium (Consensus Revenue Estimating Group, 2023). CREG believes that 2023 will show significant increases in travel and tourism activities in the Cowboy State along with high inflation during the upcoming year, both of which will contribute to growing revenue in this

category. Sales and use taxes during 2022 remained solid in large part due to the rebound of the mining industry, which offset reductions in travel and tourism.



Source: CREG January 2023, Table 2

Political Context

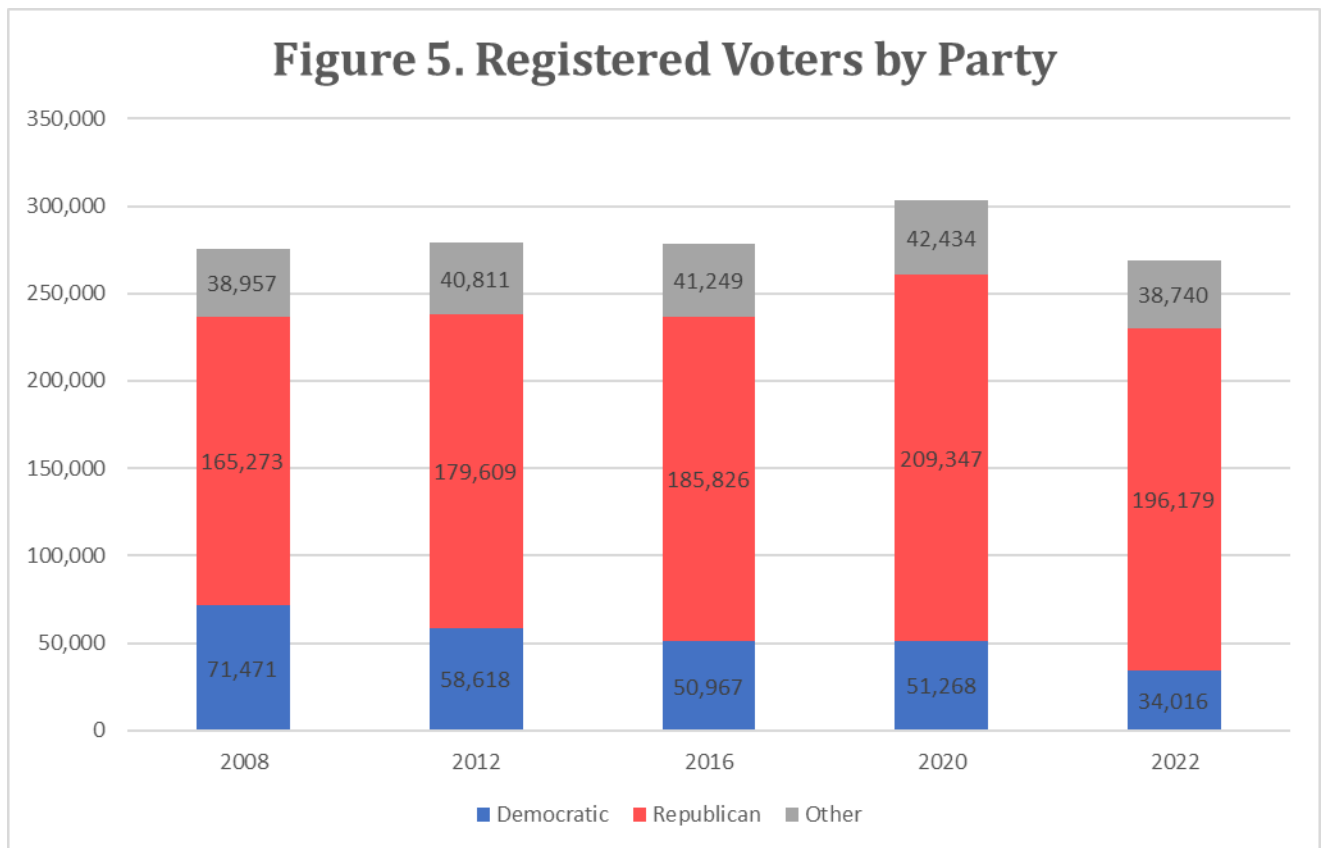
The election of 2022 saw both change and continuity in Wyoming’s executive branch of government. Incumbent Governor Mark Gordon (R) handily won reelection by a margin of roughly 60%, over challenger Theresa Livingston. Two incumbents, Treasurer Curt Meier (R) and Auditor Kristi Racines (R) won reelection, after facing no challenger in the general election. Chuck Gray (R), a former member of the legislature, was elected secretary of state, after running unopposed. Megan Degenfelder (R) was elected state superintendent of public instruction, besting Sergio Maldonado (D) (Wyoming Secretary of State, 2022).

In the 2022 legislative elections, the state’s Republican Party added one member to its caucus in the state senate, benefitting from the new seat created through last year’s redistricting process. Thus, of the state’s now thirty-one state senators, twenty-nine are Republicans and two are Democrats. The Republican supermajority in the House of Representatives also benefited from defeats of two Democratic Party incumbents, as well as an incumbent legislator of the Libertarian Party. As such, the current makeup of the 62-member Wyoming House is fifty-seven seats filled by Republican representatives, while the remaining five are Democrats (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2023).

These electoral outcomes are best understood in the context of the party identification of the state’s voters. Strong voter turnout in the 2022 election tracks with other midterm election

results, where state-wide office elections draw significant interest at the ballot box. (See illustration below.) Consistent with trends over the preceding decade, Wyoming’s Democratic Party continued to lose ground to the state’s Republican Party in the most recent election cycle (Wyoming Secretary of State, 2023).

Wyoming’s Constitution (Art. 3, Sec. 6) limits general legislative sessions (odd years) to forty working days and budget sessions (even years) to a mere twenty days. Thus, compared to other states, Wyoming’s legislature is in session a remarkably limited amount of time each year. In recent years, the legislature has relied, increasingly, on committee work while the body is not in session. This allows for progress to be made on myriad policy initiatives, which the Senate and House can then build upon once the legislative session begins. For example, many of the Legislature’s standing committees used the waning days of the legislative session to identify issues to focus on during the “off-session,” ranging from state investments policy and mental health (Joint Management Council) to school choice (Education), property taxes (Interim Revenue Committee), and sales tax collection on the Wind River Reservation (Select Committee on Tribal Relations) (Wolfson, Wyoming Legislature: Joint Management Council Identifies Interim Topics for Off-Session, 2023).



Source: Wyoming Secretary of State

Summary of Budget as Introduced

Governor Mark Gordon characterized his proposed \$354 million supplemental budget as a means to address pressing issues while also investing in the state's financial future. As extraction royalties have declined over time, the state's economy has shown increasing signs of diversification (Wolfson, Gordon Presents \$354 Million Supplemental Budget, Calls It "Conservative And Bold", 2022). The Governor proposed allocating much of an unexpected \$739 million windfall in increased revenue to permanent trust funds, with the remaining funds allocated to an array of initiatives, including pay raises for state workers and increased retirement contributions by the state for those employees. Notably, much of the budget proposal was couched in language justifying the expenditures as a means of combating inflation (Office of Governor Mark Gordon, 2022).

Summary of Budget Battles within the Legislature

This year's general legislative session saw both agreement and acrimony across issues facing the state. As noted at the outset of this paper, one notable area of agreement was the state's supplemental budget, which allocated \$1.4 billion to savings while appropriating an additional \$383 million to shore up existing programs that had experienced funding cuts in recent years, including significant expenditures for K-12 education (Wolfson, 2023). Nevertheless, tensions flared as the Wyoming Speaker of the House, Albert Sommers, exercised the powers of the office to prevent an unprecedented number of bills from advancing to floor votes, infuriating many who saw the speaker's actions as short-circuiting the democratic process (Kudelska, 2023). With that context in mind, the following are updates on an array of legislative activities, arranged by topic.

In recent state history, "crossover voting" has drawn increasing scrutiny, both by the state's citizenry and its elected officials. Crossover voting is the practice whereby voters change their voter registration, for the strategic reason of influencing an upcoming general election by voting in the primary election of the party that would otherwise be the voter's ideological opposition. Indeed, allegations of crossover voting were rampant, if unverified, in the wake of Mark Gordon's primary win four years ago (Drake, 2023). The fact Gordon went on to win the subsequent general election did nothing to quell concerns about state Democrats changing their party ID to influence Republican primary races. While previous attempts to prevent crossover voting through legislation failed, this year's legislative session produced *House Bill 103 – Political party affiliation and changes*, and Governor Gordon allowed it to become law without signature. The new statute forbids voters from changing party affiliation during the 96 days prior to a primary election. This year's legislative action on crossover voting was no doubt spurred in part by former U.S. Representative Liz Cheney's public call for state Democrats to change their affiliation, in order to be able to support her in the 2022 primary (Palmeri, 2022). Cheney ultimately lost that election by a 37% margin (Wyoming Secretary of State, 2022).

Last year, Governor Gordon vetoed the Legislature's attempt to create the state's own digital currency, yet this year in signing the revised legislation into law the governor lauded the re-envisioned stable coin as a meaningful attempt to develop a payments system that avoids credit

card fees (Wyoming Stable Token Act, 2023). Third party payment processors are already in discussions regarding the logistics of transitioning their payment systems to Wyoming's stable token. The financial potential for this could be a windfall for the state if projections are eventually realized, with some speculating state revenue in the billions of dollars per year. However, regulatory hurdles remain, in the form of ongoing skepticism and competing policy objectives by both the U.S. Treasury and the Securities and Exchange Commission (Jean, 2023).

From Saturday, March 18th, through Wednesday, March 22nd, nearly all abortions were illegal in Wyoming, as the *Life is a Human Right Act* took effect and then was blocked by Teton County District Court Judge Melissa Owens. The Act banned all abortions with exemptions for rape, incest, and other health issues (Life is a Human Right Act, 2023). In blocking the statute's enforcement, Judge Owens cited a 2012 amendment to the Wyoming Constitution which enumerated a Wyoming citizen's fundamental right to make their own healthcare decisions (Thuermer, 2023). Litigation on the constitutionality of the statute is ongoing.

Conclusion

The implications of anchoring the state budget to the boom-and-bust cycle of the extractive industries have born themselves out again this year. At the end of the 2020 biennium the state was expected to have a \$1.5 billion shortfall due to the consequences of COVID-19 and the changes to oil, gas, and coal revenues. By 2021 the state had clawed back half of that shortfall and now, by January 2023 the state has a \$2.0 billion surplus – almost equal to the state's entire biennial budget of \$2.9 billion. As a result, this year, the state invested \$1.4 billion of its surplus into both permanent and expendable savings and any appetite for revenue diversification had evaporated. As questions remain about the country's use of oil and gas, time will tell whether Wyoming will consider diversifying its revenue stream. Renewable energy sources are getting traction while coal is seen as a dinosaur of the energy-producing industry. During the pandemic, state officials figured out how to “right-size” government to fit available revenue, with this session seeing efforts to backfill some of those draconian cuts. Elected officials' current attitude suggests an income tax is nowhere in our future and there is little appetite from voters, as well. As a result, we'll hold onto our ticket to ride the rollercoaster that is the Wyoming economy.

References

- Ballotpedia. (2022, March 4). *Party control of Wyoming state government*. Retrieved from Ballotpedia: https://ballotpedia.org/Party_control_of_Wyoming_state_government
- Biteman, Boner, Bouchard, Driskill, French, Hicks, . . . Neiman. (2022). *SF0097 - Change in party affiliation*. Retrieved from State of Wyoming Legislature: <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0097>
- Boettner, T., Kriesky, J., McIlmoil, R., & Paulhus, E. (2012). *Creating an Economic Diversification Trust Fund*. Retrieved from http://www.downstreamstrategies.com/documents/reports_publication/ds_economic_diversification_trust_fund.pdf
- Caroll, R. E. (2021). *National Interest*. Retrieved from All You Need to Know About America's Sovereign Wealth Funds: <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/all-you-need-know-about-america%E2%80%99s-sovereign-wealth-funds-187436>
- Choi, J. (2022, January 23). *Cheney challenger wins Wyoming Republican activists' straw poll*. Retrieved from The Hill: <https://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/590969-cheney-challenger-wins-wyoming-republican-activists-straw-poll>
- Cillizza, C. (2022, February 7). *Can Liz Cheney's massive fundraising save her?* Retrieved from CNN.com: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/02/02/politics/liz-cheney-fundraising-gop/index.html>
- Consensus Revenue Estimating Group. (2014, January). *Wyoming State Government Revenue Forecast*. Cheyenne.
- Consensus Revenue Estimating Group. (2021). *Wyoming State Government Revenue Forecast: Fiscal Year 2021 - Fiscal Year 2026*.
- Consensus Revenue Estimating Group. (2023). *Wyoming State Government Revenue Forecast: Fiscal Year 2023 - Fiscal Year 2028*.
- Drake, K. (2023, March 7). With 'Crossover Voting' Ban, GOP Got More Than it Bargained for. *WyoFile*. Retrieved from <https://wyofile.com/with-crossover-voting-ban-gop-got-more-than-it-bargained-for/>
- Driskill, Cooper, Dockstader, Hicks, Hutchings, Kolb, . . . Paxton. (2022). *SF0062 - Civics Transparency Act*. Retrieved from State of Wyoming Legislature: <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0062>
- Eavis, V. (2022, March 3). *Redistricting process hits snag, raising prospect of court challenge or special session*. Retrieved from Casper Star Tribune: <https://trib.com/news/state-and->

regional/redistricting-process-hits-snap-raising-prospect-of-court-challenge-or-special-session/article_12e50c52-35bf-518c-bd8a-cd998063f6dc.html

- Fritts, J., & Walczak, J. (2023). *State Business Tax Climate Index*. Retrieved from TaxFoundation.org: <https://taxfoundation.org/2023-state-business-tax-climate-index/>
- Hall, J. (2023, March 4). Lawmakers See Impactful Legislation Come Out of General Session. *Casper Star Tribune*. Retrieved from https://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/govt-and-politics/lawmakers-see-impactful-legislation-come-out-of-general-session/article_4fc25b18-ba26-11ed-879c-87d811dc6d07.html
- Hall, J. (2023, February 17). Supplemental Budget Bill Saves Record \$1.4 Billion. *Wyoming News*. Retrieved from https://www.wyomingnews.com/news/local_news/supplemetnal-budget-bill-saves-record-1-4-billion/article_cfbb3c7c-af27-1led-8983-ff5b27caaf47.html
- HB0152. (2023). Wyoming: Sixty-Seventh Legislature of the State of Wyoming. Retrieved from <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2023/HB0152>
- Jean, R. (2023, 3 17). Wyoming Will Be First State in Nation with its Own Digital Coin. *Cowboy State Daily*. Retrieved from <https://cowboystatedaily.com/2023/03/17/wyoming-will-be-first-state-in-nation-with-its-own-digital-coin/>
- King, J. D., Garner, A., McConnell, J. B., & Schuhmann, R. A. (2020). *The Equality State: Government and Politics in Wyoming* (9th ed.). Hayden-McNeil.
- Kudelska, K. (2023, 2 28). Wyoming Speaker of the House Responds to National Critique of Not Introducing Certain Bills. *Wyoming Public Radio*. Retrieved from <https://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/politics-government/2023-02-28/wyoming-speaker-of-the-house-responds-to-national-critique-of-not-introducing-certain-bills>
- LaChance, B. (2022, November 8). Report: Wyoming oil rig count reaches pre-pandemic levels, but gas rig count still down. *Oil City News*. Retrieved from <https://oilcity.news/community/energy-community/2022/11/08/report-wyoming-oil-rig-count-reaches-pre-pandemic-levels-but-gas-rig-count-still-down/>
- Legacy Fund Earnings Committee. (2019). *Overview of the U.S. Sovereign Wealth Funds*. North Dakota Legislature. Retrieved from https://www.ndlegis.gov/files/committees/66-2019/21_5066_03000appendixgg.pdf
- McKeown, Biteman, Bouchard, Hutchings, James, Fortner, . . . Wharff. (2022). *SF0103 - Education-limitations on teaching critical race history-2*. Retrieved from State of Wyoming Legislature: <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0103>
- Mullen, M. (2023, March 2). With Budget Governor, Legislature Land on Same Fiscal Page. *WyoFile.com*. Retrieved from <https://wyofile.com/with-budget-governor-legislature-land-on-same-fiscal-page/>

- National Conference of State Legislatures. (2022, March 4). *NCSL Legislatures At-A-Glance*. Retrieved from National Conference of State Legislatures: <https://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/legislatures-at-a-glance.aspx>
- National Conference of State Legislatures. (2023, March 4). *NCSL Legislatures At-A-Glance*. Retrieved from National Conference of State Legislatures: <https://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/legislatures-at-a-glance.aspx>
- National Governors Association. (2022, March 4). *Former Wyoming Governors*. Retrieved from National Governors Association: <https://www.nga.org/former-governors/wyoming/>
- Office of Governor Mark Gordon. (2022, November 18). *Governor Gordon's Budget Proposal Mixes Conservatism and Vision*. Retrieved from Governor Mark Gordon - Press Releases: <https://governor.wyo.gov/news-releases/governor-gordon-s-budget-proposal-mixes-conservatism-and-vision>
- Palmeri, T. (2022, 3 14). Liz Cheney Turns to Democrats to Save Her Hide. *Politico*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/03/14/liz-cheney-democrats-wyoming-00016905>
- Pollack, N. (2023, March 27). Renewable Electricity Production Outpaces Coal for First Time in U.S. *Casper Star Tribune*. Retrieved from <https://trib.com/business/energy/renewable-electricity-production-outpaces-coal-for-first-time-in-us>
- Ramsey, S. (2018, October 21). More than 12,000 Wyo. voters switched parties around primary. *Wyoming Tribune Eagle*. Retrieved from https://www.wyomingnews.com/news/local_news/more-than-12-000-wyo-voters-switched-parties-around-primary/article_a034fd9a-d4f6-11e8-b185-739ed0753a80.html
- Reynolds, N. (2020, April 20). What Does Oil's Negative Price Mean for Wyoming? *Casper Star Tribune*. Retrieved from https://trib.com/business/energy/what-does/oils-negative-price-mean-for-wyoming/article_235e94a0-54c4-5ec2-87ac-8283dff95d51.html
- Rothfus, Nethercott, Olsen, & Yin. (2022). *SF0106 - Wyoming stable token act*. Retrieved from State of Wyoming Legislature: <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0106>
- Select Committee on Blockchain, Financial Technology and Digital Innovation Technology. (2021). *SF0056 - Lottery amendments*. Retrieved from State of Wyoming Legislature: <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0056>
- Select Committee on Blockchain, Financial Technology and Digital Innovation Technology. (2021). *SF0056 - Lottery amendments*. Wyoming: Legislature. Retrieved from <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0056>

Select Committee on Blockchain, Financial Technology and Digital Innovation Technology. (2022). SF0068 - Decentralized autonomous organizations - amendments. Wyoming: Legislature. Retrieved from <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0068>

Select Committee on Blockchain, Financial Technology and Digital Innovation Technology. (2022). SF0068 - Decentralized autonomous organizations-amendments. Retrieved from State of Wyoming Legislature: <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0068>

Select Committee on Capital Financing & Investments. (2022). HJ0006 - Common school account - investments and distributions. Wyoming: Legislature. Retrieved from <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0098d>

Select Committee on Capital Financing & Investments. (2022). HJ0006 - Common school account-investments and distributions. Retrieved from State of Wyoming Legislature: <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/HJ0006>

Senate Appropriations Committee. (2022). SF0098 - Federal emergency COVID-19 relief funding - limitations. Wyoming: Legislature. Retrieved from <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0098>

Senate Appropriations Committee. (2022). SF0098 - Federal emergency COVID-19 relief funding-limitations. Retrieved from State of Wyoming Legislature: <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2022/SF0098>

SF0127. (2023). Sixty-Seventh Legislature of the State of Wyoming. Retrieved from <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2023/SF0127>

State of Wyoming. (n.d.). Constitution. Cheyenne, Wyoming. Retrieved from <https://www.wyoleg.gov/StateStatutes/StatutesConstitution?tab=0>

State of Wyoming Legislature. (2022, March 4). *Select and Task Forces*. Retrieved from State of Wyoming 66th Legislature: <https://www.wyoleg.gov/Committees/List/2022/SE>

State of Wyoming, Treasure's Office. (2013). *Wyoming State Investment Portfolio*. Cheyenne: Wyoming State Treasurer's Office.

Steurer, M. (2022, February 25). Bill to Raise Wyoming's Fuel Tax 15 Cents Per Gallon Won't be Heard This Session. *Casper Star Tribune*. Retrieved from https://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/bill-to-raise-wyomings-fuel-tax-15-cents-per-gallon-wont-be-heard-this-session/article_50cda688-198e-591e-b9b6-9ecbf2b12205.html

Tagliafierro, J. (2022). *Featured Indicator: The Hachman Index*. Camoin Associates. Retrieved from <https://camoinassociates.com/resources/featured-indicator-the-hachman-index/>

TCI Business Capital. (2023). *Current Active Drilling Rigs Report*. Retrieved from <https://www.tccapital.com/tci-insights/active-drilling-rigs/>

- Thuermer, A. M. (2023, 3 22). Judge Blocks Abortion Ban Citing Separation of Powers. *WyoFile*. Retrieved from <https://wyofile.com/judge-blocks-abortion-ban-citing-separation-of-powers/>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021). *Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject*. Retrieved from https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/SMS56000001000000001?amp%253bdata_tool=XGtable&output_view=data&include_graphs=true
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021). *Economy at a Glance - Wyoming*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/regions/mountain-plains/wyoming.htm#eag>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021, March 19). *Unemployment rates lower in January 2021 in 33 sstates*. Retrieved from TED: The Economics Daily: <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2021/unemployment-rates-lower-in-january-2021-in-33-states.htm>
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2022, March 4). *Census Quick Facts - Wyoming*. Retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/WY>
- Western, S. (2012, February 21). Wyoming's Permanent Mineral Trust Fund Can't Entirely Protect the Budget from Volatile Commodity Prices. *WyoFile*. Retrieved from <https://wyofile.com/wyomings-permanent-mineral-trust-fund-cant-entirely-protect-the-budget-from-volatile-commodity-prices/>
- Wolfson, L. (2022, December 9). Gordon Presents \$354 Million Supplemental Budget, Calls It “Conservative And Bold”. *Cowboy State Daily*. Retrieved from <https://cowboystatedaily.com/2022/12/09/gordon-wyoming-must-make-hay-with-financial-windfall/>
- Wolfson, L. (2023, 2 16). Legislature Signs Off on \$1.8 Billion Budget Package, Including \$1.4 Billion in Savings. *Cowboy State Daily*. Retrieved from <https://cowboystatedaily.com/2023/02/16/legislature-signs-off-on-1-8-billion-budget-package-including-1-4-billion-in-savings/>
- Wolfson, L. (2023, 3 23). Wyoming Legislature: Joint Management Council Identifies Interim Topics for Off-Session. *Cowboy State Daily*. Retrieved from <https://cowboystatedaily.com/2023/03/23/woke-capitalism-to-remain-a-main-target-for-wyoming-legislature-during-interim/>
- Wyoming GOP. (2022, January 7). *WY GOP Responds to Cheney Rant*. Retrieved from Wyoming.gop: <https://www.wyoming.gop/post/wy-gop-responds-to-cheney-rant>
- Wyoming Legislature. (2022, March 22). Select and Task Forces. Cheyenne, Wyoming. Retrieved from <https://www.wyoleg.gov/Committees/List/2022/SE>

- Wyoming Republican Party. (2022). *WY GOP Responds to Cheney Rant*. Wyoming Republican Party. Retrieved from <https://www.wyoming.gop/post/wy-gop-responds-to-cheney-rant>
- Wyoming Secretary of State. (2021). *Wyoming State Investment Portfolio*. Cheyenne. Retrieved from <https://statetreasurer.wyo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Packet-10312021.pdf>
- Wyoming Secretary of State. (2022). *2022 Official Election Results*. Cheyenne. Retrieved from <https://sos.wyo.gov/Elections/ElectionResults.aspx>
- Wyoming Secretary of State. (2022, March 4). *Voter Registration Statistics*. Retrieved from Wyoming Secretary of State: <https://sos.wyo.gov/Elections/VRStats.aspx>
- Wyoming Secretary of State. (2023, March 4). *Voter Registration Statistics*. Retrieved from Wyoming Secretary of State: <https://sos.wyo.gov/Elections/VRStats.aspx>
- Wyoming Sense. (2021). *What is the CARES Act?* Retrieved from Wyoming Sense: <https://www.wyomingsense.gov/cares-act>
- Wyoming State Treasurer. (2021). *Wyoming State Investment Portfolio*. Retrieved from Wyoming State Treasurer: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpajpcglclefindmkaj/<https://statetreasurer.wyo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Packet-07312021.pdf>
- Wyoming State Treasurer. (2022, June 30). *Annual Report*. Retrieved from Wyoming State Treasurer: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpajpcglclefindmkaj/<https://statetreasurer.wyo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Annual-Report-FY2022-Annual-Report-July-1-2021-to-June-30-2022.pdf>

APPENDIX

Table 1
General Fund Revenues
Fiscal Year Collections by Source
(in thousands)

Fiscal Year	Severance Tax	Sales and Use Tax	PWMTF Income	Pooled Income	Charges-Sales and Services	Franchise Tax	Revenue from Others	Penalties and Interest	Federal Aid and Grants	All Other	Total
2010	\$226,995	\$412,845	\$139,451	\$117,296	\$33,255	\$23,806	\$21,432	\$13,963	\$10,686	\$46,344	\$1,046,072
2011	\$230,313	\$470,906	\$215,756	\$90,719	\$35,503	\$23,211	\$29,554	\$12,001	\$11,388	\$55,716	\$1,175,066
2012	\$221,153	\$497,684	\$235,847	\$112,353	\$38,219	\$24,446	\$7,603	\$11,230	\$10,066	\$45,244	\$1,203,844
2013	\$210,280	\$481,431	\$366,636	\$189,834	\$38,868	\$26,889	\$6,346	\$9,304	\$0	\$51,616	\$1,381,205
2014	\$234,557	\$521,103	\$395,337	\$86,425	\$41,170	\$36,257	\$5,865	\$11,536	\$0	\$50,126	\$1,382,377
2015	\$200,735	\$544,030	\$494,234	\$114,227	\$43,580	\$39,314	\$7,111	\$11,441	\$0	\$54,417	\$1,509,089
2016	\$185,476	\$432,009	\$149,823	\$88,844	\$46,839	\$35,442	\$6,438	\$6,260	\$0	\$50,121	\$1,001,252
2017	\$167,012	\$407,316	\$298,790	\$85,972	\$54,609	\$34,793	\$9,067	\$4,442	\$0	\$111,044	\$1,173,046
2018	\$176,617	\$480,044	\$447,650	\$79,025	\$50,275	\$34,728	\$10,135	\$3,796	\$0	\$111,282	\$1,393,551
2019	\$271,369	\$51,8522	\$365,081	\$86,660	\$51,777	\$37,471	\$8,973	\$5,111	\$0	\$49,322	\$1,394,285
2020	\$221,360	\$487,233	\$243,286	\$78,585	\$62,289	\$39,560	\$8,594	\$4,570	\$0	\$55,840	\$1,201,316
2021	\$149,773	\$493,102	\$489,907	\$83,868	\$63,010	\$48,447	\$16,541	\$4,884	\$0	\$57,755	\$1,407,287
2022	\$185,897	\$562,550	\$456,264	\$89,683	\$68,410	\$48,972	\$9,028	\$12,547	\$0	\$58,378	\$1,491,730
Projected											
2023	\$219,900	\$600,000	\$210,200	\$59,500	\$74,500	\$46,000	\$9,000	\$7,000	\$0	\$57,000	\$1,283,100
2024	\$194,300	\$618,000	\$316,000	\$79,000	\$74,500	\$46,000	\$9,000	\$7,000	\$0	\$57,000	\$1,400,800
2025	\$177,900	\$636,500	\$324,900	\$76,000	\$74,500	\$46,000	\$9,000	\$7,000	\$0	\$57,000	\$1,408,800
2026	\$168,600	\$654,300	\$332,000	\$78,100	\$74,500	\$46,000	\$9,000	\$7,000	\$0	\$57,000	\$1,426,500

source: CREG, January 2023 Report, Table 1

Table 2
Mineral Severance Taxes to All Accounts
Fiscal Year Distribution by Mineral
(in thousands)

	Oil	Gas	Coal	Trona	Others	Total
2010	\$173,078	\$468,964	\$269,081	\$14,090	\$2,748	\$927,961
2011	\$204,335	\$427,092	\$294,279	\$15,555	\$4,038	\$945,298
2012	\$236,554	\$342,373	\$293,110	\$17,170	\$4,502	\$893,709
2013	\$238,395	\$296,789	\$282,081	\$18,257	\$4,311	\$839,833
2014	\$322,191	\$340,431	\$274,042	\$18,488	\$4,499	\$959,651
2015	\$256,105	\$237,010	\$269,521	\$18,864	\$5,443	\$786,943
2016	\$153,285	\$139,726	\$217,752	\$18,858	\$4,000	\$533,621
2017	\$161,071	\$179,418	\$218,013	\$18,697	\$3,140	\$580,339
2018	\$232,689	\$177,952	\$198,836	\$18,929	\$3,068	\$631,473
2019	\$279,293	\$191,730	\$183,195	\$19,867	\$3,086	\$677,801
2020	\$225,146	\$101,759	\$153,955	\$17,128	\$2,724	\$500,711
2021	\$212,039	\$160,036	\$147,074	\$15,765	\$2,219	\$537,133
2022	\$391,550	\$309,646	\$172,026	\$20,434	\$2,427	\$896,083
Projected						
2023	\$388,800	\$324,300	\$162,600	\$21,700	\$2,300	\$899,700
2024	\$351,600	\$274,500	\$145,700	\$20,700	\$2,300	\$767,800
2025	\$337,100	\$199,800	\$125,700	\$19,900	\$2,300	\$684,800
2026	\$310,600	\$183,200	\$119,300	\$20,400	\$2,600	\$636,100

Source: CREG, January 2023 Report, Table 6