

Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview, Goals and Objectives

Definition.

A comprehensive plan is a document that generally helps guide the type, location, and appearance of community growth and change. The plan represents the goals, policies, and intentions of the local government, which adopts it. Comprehensive plans provide policies and recommendations, which give direction to local government officials in making subsequent decisions. It is the authoritative resource leaders are able consult and rely on in determining a cohesive, coherent, approach to such issues as land use, transportation, natural resources, public land uses, economic development, and intergovernmental cooperation.

The State of Wyoming has provided specific enabling legislation to prepare and amend a land use plan, including zoning. The comprehensive plan is the anchor used to formulate the rest of the plan to promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the unincorporated areas of the county. W.S. §18-5-202(b)

This comprehensive plan is intended to diagram, or “blueprint” the expectations the County has for itself; providing guidance for development and change. In this case, the County first adopted a comprehensive land use plan in 1978, so this plan is to be known as “the Revised Plan”. It is a countywide plan directly applicable to all of Washakie County, and indirectly applicable to the municipalities, and other local governmental and quasi-governmental units within the County. Within the plan are maps, graphs and references to authoritative sources that cannot be reproduced herein, but which are a valuable resource and explanatory material crucial to effective implementation of this plan.

What it is not:

Since a comprehensive plan seeks to define community goals based on a combination of scientific data, the desires of the public, and the wishes of private property owners, its function is to make policy recommendations. Although a local government may adopt a plan, that plan is not self-actuating. Steps to implement the plan must be taken. One of those steps may be adoption of a zoning resolution, which is just one tool local government has to assure the “status quo” and maintain those values and policies reflected in the comprehensive plan.

Washakie County belongs to an economic development district (“EDD”), known as the Big Horn Mountain Country Coalition (“the Coalition”). For the County to qualify for project funding from the Economic Development Administration (“EDA”), it must belong to an EDD and the Coalition, in turn, is obliged to adopt a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (“CEDS”) every five (5) years setting forth various anticipated projects that might need funding. Washakie County participated in the CEDS process, but not as part of the adoption of this Revised Plan. The two are not to be confused. This Revised Plan has not been created as local support for the CEDS, but it may overlap and contain elements of the CEDS; as follows:

- ❖ Describes the problems, needs, potential and resources of the County;
- ❖ Presents the County's vision and goals;
- ❖ Sets the strategic direction for an action plan;
- ❖ Establishes the priority programs and projects for implementation; and
- ❖ Outlines the standards for evaluation and update of the process.

A CEDS draws from a regional economic development perspective, while the Revised Plan seeks to establish County public policy to further local health, safety and general welfare. The Revised Plan is written to compliment the CEDS, and in the event of a conflict of priorities or policy, the more recent document is intended to control.

Purposes.

The County's 1978 Land Use Plan ("the 1978 Plan") states it should be updated every three (3) years. There have been no changes, amendments or updates of any kind adopted over the life of the 1978 Plan. However, great changes have taken place; changes the County has not stopped to reflect on or adapt to over the years. The implications for the health, safety and general welfare of County residents is the driving force behind the revisions set forth herein. The 1978 Plan probably does not reflect the public's vision of itself, and no longer serves as a guiding force for charting a course for the County. Therefore, Washakie County is taking this action for the following public purposes:

- ❖ To establish a more consistent and defensible decision making process.
- ❖ To manage economic and demographic change occurring since 1978.
- ❖ To provide a sound basis in public policy to update outdated land use regulations.
- ❖ To make local government more efficient and attuned to taxpayer needs and expectations.
- ❖ To preserve the local character of the community.
- ❖ To build on the work done in the 1978 Land Use Plan

As one can see throughout this document, the Revised Plan does not abandon public policies adopted in the 1978 Plan, but builds on and adapts those policies to meet today's needs and concerns. For instance, the Revised Plan seeks to use information from the 1978 Plan and additional information gained since to describe the custom and culture of the community, and create a guiding force in public land management decision-making. Significant factors associated with the community's custom and culture is outlined with as much particularity as possible. In addition, two public policies identified in the 1978 Plan are focal points of the Revised Plan and are set forth as follows:

- ❖ Protect property values; and
- ❖ Protect productive irrigated farmland from conversion to other uses.

Washakie County Fact Sheet

Acreage (in acres):

Private:	578,857	24.10%	Total area:	2,242.75*
Bureau of Reclamation	3,240	.002%	Total Water area:	2.69*
National Forest	35,230	2.40%	Total Land Area:	2,240.06*
BLM	927,000	66.74%		
State of Wyoming	95,044	6.56%		
City	2,624	.001%		
Other	91,216	6.82%		
Total:	1,447,680	100.0%		

* totals are given in sq. miles

Agriculture Statistics (WASS data published September 2002):

Number of Farms & Ranches	205
Total Acres in Farms & Ranches	450,000
Total acreage assessed as "Ag"	357,100
Total Cropland Acres	58,000*
Average Size of Farm or Ranch	2,195
Value of Land & Buildings (per farm)	\$887,000

* The "Westside" Project described in the County's history below will substantially increase cropland.

Agriculture County Rankings (WASS data published January 1, 2003):

Commodity	Actual Numbers	Rank	Yield (if applicable)
All Cattle (head)	30,000	19 th	
Breeding Sheep & Lambs	13,000	10 th	
All Hay (tons)	50,000	12 th	3.3
Barley (bu)	1,160,000	2 nd	87
Oats (bu)	NP*	13 th	NP*
Corn for Grain (bu)	158,000	4 th	144
Dry Beans (cwt)	25,800	5 th	1,980
Sugarbeets (tons)	149,700	2 nd	19.7
Total Cash Receipts	\$29,120,000	17 th	

* NP (Not Published)

<u>Population Characteristics:</u>	<u>2000 Census Data</u>	<u>1990 Census Data</u>
Rural	3,046	2,646
City of Worland	5,250	5,742
Town of Ten Sleep	304	311
Seniors – 65 and Older (%)	14.9	13.9
School Enrollment	2,112	2,130
People with a Disability	657	641
People in the labor force (16 & over)	3,963	3,963
Percentage of White	92.2%	93.7%
Percentage of Hispanic or Latino*	11.5%	9.5%
Percentage of Black or African	0.1%	.2%
Percentage of American Indian & Alaskan	1.6%	.7%
Percentage of Asian	1.0%	NA
Percentage of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Is.	0.1%	NA
Percentage of some other race	7.2%	4.8%
Percentage of high school graduates	85.6%	78.8%
Percentage of bachelor or higher degrees	18.7%	18.4%
School Enrollment (3 years and older)	2,112	2,130
Median Age	39.4	34.6
Persons per Square Mile Density	3.7**	3.7**
Total: County Population	8,289***	8,388***

* Hispanic and Latino populations are a racial sub-category within the designation “White”. Therefore, the percentage of White people also includes Hispanic and Latino populations.

** By U.S. Census standards a density of 3 to 6 people @ sq. mile is considered “Frontier”. As a State, Wyoming has a population density of 5.2 people @ sq. mile. Below 3 people @ sq. mile, the density is considered “Wilderness”.

***The total population of Washakie County in 1980 was 9,496. It peaked thereafter in 1982 at 10,143. Although the County has experienced sporadic gains in population between 1980 and 2000; generally the County’s population declined by more than 20% in 20 years. The population of the County is predicted to continue this trend, dropping below 8,000 in 2005. The population is projected to be 7,900 by 2010; the lowest it’s been since 1972.

<u>Economic Attributes:</u>	<u>2000 Census Data</u>	<u>1990 Census Data</u>
Median Household Income	\$34,943.00	\$25,172.00
Average Household size	2.47	2.61
Median Male Earned Income	\$31,633.00	
Median Female Earned Income	\$21,028.00	
Average Earnings per job	\$23,131.00	
Average Non-Farm Proprietor Income	\$14,218.00	
Per Capita Income	\$25,428.00	\$17,780.00
Average per capita retail sales		\$6,753.00
Median Home Value	\$83,600.00	\$54,600.00
Total Housing Units	3,654	3,732
City of Worland	2,334	
Town of Ten Sleep	158	
Total Occupied Housing Units	3,278	3,156
Mobile Homes(%)	14.2%	15.4%
Single Family detached (%)	74.6%	72.6%
Owner Occupied (%)	73.1%	71.8%

Anecdotal Socio-Economic Factors Indicating Revisions are Necessary:

In the five (5) years following passage of the 1978 Plan, per capita median income rose steadily. Wages and income levels exceeded both State and national averages, and the 1978 Plan reflected the optimism of its youthful ambitious population. Since then, although real wages and incomes have continued to grow, comparisons with State and national averages reversed. Presently, the County is significantly below both State and national averages for household income, per capita median income, and wage levels. In recent years, the County has been designated as “distressed” by the Economic Development Administration. High unemployment and low-income levels have been exacerbated for extended periods in recent years. Washakie County has been recognized nationally for those attributes by being designated a “distressed” community.

Unemployment percentages dropped as people left, which shifted the supply and demand for wage earners. Now, those employed are generally over-qualified and under-paid. High wage and income levels, which attracted young people to Washakie County in 1978, are now found out-of-State. Washakie County income levels are about 85% of the State average, and the State average is less than the national average. From 1990 to 2000, the County only lost 1.2% of its population, but the 24-35 age demographic dropped by 34%; a significant loss in the vitality of any community. These are the childbearing years so school enrollment levels have also suffered.

The latest estimates show the County losing residents at the rate of 2.3% a year. As a consequence, the County is experiencing a phenomenon known as “aging in place”. With all other age groups remaining the same, less young adults and children raises the average age of the County’s population as a whole. It follows that seniors represent a significant percentage of the population (note the change in median age shown in the Fact Sheet). In fact, those over 65 now represent approximately twenty percent (20%) of the County’s population.

During the boom years of the late 70's and early 80's, a number of rural subdivisions were laid out in response to the County's rapid growth. Growth, as an influx of new residents later stalled, but rural subdivisions continued to be formed, and the lots sold for several more years.

In 2002, the State loosened the requirements for forming a subdivision by creating a category for "minor subdivisions" of five (5) lots or less. This change, coupled with the anticipated availability of potable water, reinvigorated the movement toward creating rural subdivisions. Since the County adopted regulations for the formation of minor subdivisions, eight have been formed. No major subdivisions have been formed in the County in over ten (10) years. The cumulative affects of this trend have yet to be realized, but some consequences of note follow:

First, while both municipalities lost population in the 1990's (approximately 10%), the rural County population increased by approximately seventeen percent (17%). The number of second homes also increased in the rural areas in and against the mountains. Residential construction in unincorporated areas is far out-stripping the incorporated area construction; last year (2002) there was twenty (20) new homes built in the County, and only three (3) in the two municipalities combined. This trend seems to be continuing in 2003.

Second, the 1978 Plan indicated problems bringing the County into compliance with the State's septic installation and operation requirements. These problems persist, but now there are substantially more homes requiring septic systems. Informal estimates indicate there may be as many as eight hundred (800) septic systems operating in the County, but less than three hundred (300) of those are permitted. Demand for septic waste disposal facilities is increasing, but fewer facilities are willing to take septic waste. Right now, there are no septic waste dump facilities in the County. The towns of Thermopolis and Basin, which now receive septic waste from Washakie County, have given notice they may stop this practice at any time.

Third, the housing stock has changed substantially since 1978. There are increasing numbers of modular homes, rather than "stick-built" homes. The County has no condominiums (a condominium project is planned for Worland), and the first town homes were just built in 2002. These changes, plus the loss in population, the accompanying lower income levels, and the lack of confidence in building quality, have taken a toll on home values. While nationally, home values are increasing at an annualized rate of four percent (4%); here home values are static. As the County's population continues to age, demand for single-family homes is likely to fall, while the need for senior housing will increase.

The Planning Philosophy

The Washakie County Planning Commission (“the Commission”) prepared the Washakie County Revised Comprehensive Plan (“the Revised Plan”) using a philosophy that:

- ❖ Encourages input and participation from all citizens of Washakie County throughout the process,
- ❖ Represents a consensus of the widely differing interests and concerns within the County,
- ❖ Develops new approaches and techniques that avoid the problems of traditional land use planning, and
- ❖ Recognizes that uses for private property shall remain inviolate in accordance with the Wyoming Constitution (Article 1, §§ 6, 7, 32, and 33).

Community Custom and Culture:

Definition:

The custom and culture of Washakie County is defined by the activities and values residents, past, present and future, who derive their well-being and subsistence from it. These values and activities are what make Washakie County unique. Washakie County recognizes it’s custom and culture is based on traditional values and activities subject to gradual continuous change by various influences incurred by succeeding generations. Therefore, this comprehensive plan must continue to be a “work in progress” reflecting changes as they occur. Public policy is set accordingly to either promote or dissuade how those changes affect our custom and culture.

Integral to the values and activities that create well-being and provide subsistence is the land. Private property and the rights and privileges residents have come to rely on are central to the custom and culture of Washakie County, as follows:

- ❖ Agriculture (farming, irrigation, livestock grazing, etc.)
- ❖ Recreation and related tourist activities (motorized and non-motorized transport and activities, including but not limited to hunting, fishing, water and land sports, hiking, wildlife viewing, etc.)
- ❖ Industry (mining, power production, oil and gas production and exploration, timbering)
- ❖ Water (agricultural uses, industrial uses, recreational uses, power, domestic uses, and general water resource development and conservation)
- ❖ Intangible Values (historical and cultural sites, open space values and access to open space, aesthetic values, conservation, entrepreneurial values)

Washakie County, through a series of community assessments, surveys, reports and public meetings, has determined what makes it unique – it’s custom and culture. The history of the County is set forth elsewhere; however, it was through the historical events which brought farmers, ranchers, and the energy companies that molded and formed the custom and culture the community enjoys today. For instance, the boom and bust cycles common to the western states, impacted Washakie County; both positively and negatively.

However, the greatest continuing outside influence on the County has been and will continue to be the federal government. Federal government agency jurisdiction over public land and irrigation water sources is fundamental to the County's economic structure. The federal government's program of "payments in lieu of taxes" ("PILT"), farm subsidies, social security benefits, and other such programs cannot be relied on as consistent revenue sources. In spite of the precarious nature of these programs, federal policies resonate at every level and reach even the remote corners of the County. Finally, the presence of so many federal employees and offices represents a major sub-culture, and economic stimulus.

General Planning Goals.

- ❖ The goal of the Revised Plan is to involve citizens in establishing guidelines and criteria for future utilization of the land on an on-going basis. The goal is flexible. It is expected to evolve as the needs and desires of County residents change. By creating processes and policies rather than irrevocable decisions, it is expected the County can better adapt to its future and enhance the ability of residents to sustain their custom and culture.
- ❖ The Commission is not generally concerned about where specific land uses are located in the County, but rather how and when land uses will affect residents. Performance standards and policies will be used to determine how and when future utilization of lands will take place and most benefit the community as a whole.
- ❖ Community perceptions and the physical capabilities of the land (such as geography, geology, soil conditions, and drainage patterns) rather than population projections will guide primary land use planning.
- ❖ The Revised Plan will also provide a tool to reduce public costs and mitigate private conflicts.
- ❖ The Revised Plan is intended to maintain historic land use patterns on public land as a means of stabilizing existing economic uses and keeping the character of the community intact. It is important to retain the rural character of unincorporated areas, and the individuality of the County's two municipalities.

General Development Policies

The following are the general policies of the Revised Plan for development of unincorporated areas:

1. *Overall Growth and Development.* Washakie County will strive to turn around adverse economic trends occurring in recent years. The County intends to maintain and encourage a moderate sustainable growth rate. The County is committed to building on its diversified economic base by working through and in support of the Washakie Development Association ("WDA"), the Washakie Area Chamber of Commerce and the Big Horn Mountain Country Coalition.

2. *Industrial and Commercial Development Policy.* Washakie County will encourage new industrial and commercial development compatible with the existing economy. To assure compatibility and the continued health, safety and general welfare of the public, new industrial and commercial development projects will be subject to public review based on standards and criteria appropriately adopted for that purpose; and shall include, but not be limited to the following:
 - i. Adequate buffer zones to mitigate impacts on adjoining properties from odor, noise, and particulates.
 - ii. Adequate screening of waste, parts, and other personal property, which negatively impact the value of adjoining properties.
 - iii. Adequate mitigation of the cost for public services, including water, sewer, roads, fire and law enforcement protection.
 - iv. Adequate bonding to prevent residual problems should the industrial or commercial use cease to continue.

3. *Transportation.* Washakie County is without access to an interstate highway. However, other modes of transportation are available and currently provide access to other population centers. The County intends to continue in a leadership role in developing intermodal transportation options, including:
 - i. Creation of a system of hiking and biking trails;
 - ii. Secure better access to public land;
 - iii. Recognition of a stock trail system for seasonal movement of livestock;
 - iv. Development of river amenities for recreation and flood control;
 - v. Improved efficient road system serving local commerce;
 - vi. Expansion of the Worland Municipal Airport;
 - vii. Fully funded reliable public passenger bus service; and finally;
 - viii. Revive rail service as a part of the community's economic and social fabric.

Chapter 2: History

Washakie County; A Century of Change

Washakie County was created by the legislature on February 9, 1911, and organized as a County on January 6, 1913. It is the twentieth (20th) county recognized, of the twenty-three (23) counties that make up the State of Wyoming. The County seat is the City of Worland. Washakie County has one other municipality, the Town of Ten Sleep, which is the older of the two.

Washakie; Chief of the Eastern Shoshone Nation.

Chief Washakie, for whom the County is named, was the last chief of the Eastern Shoshone Nation. The Chief spent time with other tribes in his early days, and knew many of the legendary “Mountain Men”, which frequented the region. He was and is remembered as a great friend to the immigrants moving through the Big Horn Basin and those that decided to settle here.

The Shoshone Tribe was being pressed on all sides by various warrior tribes, so Chief Washakie aligned himself with the immigrants from the east. Known first for his personal bravery, his people came to rely on his wisdom. Washakie’s service to his people extended over most of the 19th Century and into the 20th Century – for almost seventy (70) years, until his death at Fort Washakie on the Wind River Reservation in 1901 at the age of one hundred and one (101) years. He was buried with full military honors at the fort, which bears his name.

A statute of Chief Washakie was recently dedicated in the Hall of Congress to commemorate his many years of service to his people, his friendship with the United States and his historical significance in Wyoming history. Smaller versions of the statute reside in the Washakie County Courthouse, at Fort Washakie on the Wind River Reservation, and in the State Capitol of Wyoming in Cheyenne. The County is privileged to be named for such a man.

Prehistory.

The County has one of the earliest known human occupations of North America; the Colby Site; located just east of the City of Worland about two miles on U.S. Highway 16. A mammoth kill site, known as the “Colby Site”, dates back approximately 11,200 years. Although the property owner initially identified the site, it’s importance for excavation was not recognized until Dr. George Frison (a native of the Ten Sleep area and a world renowned archeologist) was contacted to look at material taken from the site.

Dr. Frison, under sponsorship from the University of Wyoming, excavated the Colby Site during the 1970’s. His findings were real breakthroughs, and provided previously unknown information about early hunting and meat storage; re-setting the timelines for populating this area. He was able to confirm man killed one particular mammoth when a spear tip, called a Clovis point, was discovered embedded in a bone. Other sites in the region indicate continuous human use of this portion of the Big Horn Basin from pre-historic times; including the petroglyphs on The Nature Conservancy’s Ten Sleep Preserve.

The Western Migration.

Later, but still prior to the recordation of historic events, the area served various Native American tribes; primarily the Crow and Shoshone Nations. Blackfoot, Northern Cheyenne and Sioux bands occasionally visited the area. The Town of Ten Sleep got its name from the bands of Cheyenne and Sioux making their way from their traditional home in the Black Hills of South Dakota to the Basin – it took ten (10) nights sleep. In the southeastern part of the County, the area known as Big Trails was so-named for it's reputation as a major route for buffalo going into and out of the Basin for eons.

The Big Horn Basin was included in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. It remained an unorganized territory until 1854 when it became part of the Nebraska Territory, and was later split off as part of the Dakota Territory in 1861. Finally, the Wyoming Territory was formed in 1868, and the Basin was a part of Sweetwater and Carbon counties. The boundary followed a longitudinal line, which would now bisect the County.

John Colter is credited with the first recorded entry into the Big Horn Basin in 1806. His route took him along the Big Horn River throughout its length so it is likely he was in Washakie County. Others followed. Although never known for beaver, fur traders and various mountain men utilized the Big Horn Basin until the collapse of the fur trade in the 1840's.

One of the most famous of those mountain men was Jim Bridger; a legendary figure prominent in the settlement of the west. Once the beaver no longer supported him, Jim Bridger turned to escorting wagon trains making their way west. His connection to Washakie County comes from a trail given his name that served immigrants seeking their fortunes in the Montana and Idaho gold fields. The Bridger Trail was established along the Big Horn River in 1864 as a safer alternative to the Bozeman Trail. It followed the route used by the Reynolds' 1859-1860 Yellowstone Expedition. The trail starts when it leaves the Oregon Trail in Casper, proceeds west toward Lysite, then turns north and crosses Bird's Eye Pass before dropping into the Big Horn Basin to follow the Big Horn River north. While following the river, the trail crosses the full extent of Washakie County, south to north, before cutting west to the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River, then along the Yellowstone River in Montana.

During the Civil War, a series of forts, which served the Bozeman Trail, were built along the east side of the Bighorn Mountains, but Cheyenne and Sioux Tribes claimed that land as their own. Known as the "Bloody Bozeman", a great many battles were fought to keep the trail open, but with so many demands on resources from the Civil War, the forts were eventually closed. Military actions associated with this conflict spilled over into the Big Horn Basin as well. At least one battle was fought in Washakie County. Chief Washakie is known to have joined in several battles and skirmishes that took place in proximity to the County. The Eastern Shoshone Tribe under the leadership of Chief Washakie allowed immigrants to pass through without interruption. Charlie Worland established a dug-out trading post on the Bridger Trail in the late nineteenth century.

Settlement of the County.

In 1881, Johnson County began operation; its western line was the Big Horn River. Fremont County was formed in 1884, and its eastern county line was the Big Horn River. When Big Horn County was formed in 1897, the eastern boundary was set just west of the current County line. Washakie County was formed from Big Horn and Johnson counties in its current configuration. Both County municipalities were in existence when it was organized.

Cattle were introduced to the west slope of the Bighorn Mountains in the early 1880's. W.P. Noble brought a large cattle herd to the Ten Sleep area in 1880 and others followed closely behind him. Charlie Worland is thought to have brought in the first sheep in the winter of 1886-87; arguably the worst winter ever recorded in Wyoming history. Charlie lost most of his "band" of sheep, and many cattle operations across Wyoming literally disappeared due to some of the worst blizzards recorded in the State.

Cattle and sheep did not mix in this era, and some of the most famous characters and events from Wyoming history came together as a result. Stories of the Johnson County Wars are a mainstay of western history. Although most of the action occurred east of the Big Horn Mountains, it culminated locally with the 1909 Spring Creek Raid, even though the war raged on elsewhere. Cattlemen declared a so-called "Dead Zone", and sheepmen were warned not to cross into that zone. Some did and they paid the price with their lives. The Spring Creek Raid site is marked about ten (10) miles south of Ten Sleep on State Highway 434.

An attempt at large scale irrigation using the waters of the Big Horn River was first made in 1886. A group led by William Richards (he later became Governor of Wyoming) dug a diversion ditch about four (4) miles south of Worland, which has become known as the "W.A. Richards Canal". No crops were grown as a result of this effort.

Partly as a result of the influence of "Buffalo Bill" Cody, various irrigation projects in the Basin were launched at the turn of the century. Beginning in 1904, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and various other governmental agencies dug several large ditches around Worland. The Big Horn Canal and the Lower Hanover Canal were projects of the Bureau of Reclamation. Other canals soon followed as irrigation districts were formed to pay for them; such as the Upper Hanover Canal, the Highland Hanover Canal, and the Bluff and Upper Bluff Canals. To support these large-scale projects the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad was completed through the Basin in 1906. Other canals followed. These canals continue to be the principal means of irrigating farmland today.

The arrival of the railroad brought about a number of changes to Washakie County, not the least of which was the re-location of its principal town. Worland, which started on the west side of the Big Horn River with Charlie Worland's dug-out trading post along the Bridger Trail started growing, but when the railroad decided to route along the east side of the river, Worland quickly picked up and moved. The Town literally skated across the ice to its new site on the east side of the river.

The railroad also allowed expansion of the oil and gas industry. Several fields were developed in the Big Horn Basin. An “oil rush” started with the discovery of the Grass Creek Field in 1914. Grass Creek, Little Buffalo Basin and Elk Basin were all established as commercially important fields. The Hidden Dome Field, which was discovered in 1917, is the earliest major field discovered in Washakie County.

Post World War II; Recent History.

Since World War II, Washakie County has undergone another transformation. The first event of import was the construction of Boysen Reservoir by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. This reservoir has proved to be the salvation for agriculture in this community during this latest prolonged drought. The reservoir stores water for the various irrigation districts, and then releases that water at the most opportune times. Although the reservoir is meeting the basic needs for agriculture, the recent drought has shown even that may not be enough. Water use will soon be expanding with the WestSide Project so more water needs to be made available.

With financial incentives to convert, farmers are installing irrigation pivots that use less water much more efficiently. Flood irrigation is effective, but uses far more water than crops actually need. The WestSide Project has been “in the works” for a number of years. Finally, in 2001, Congress approved and the President signed S. 610, which mandates BLM lands become privately owned as irrigated farmland. This project will increase productive irrigated farmland in Washakie and Big Horn counties by over 16,000 acres.

Second, railroads have faded since WWII. Rail service, especially passenger service, has declined substantially nationwide. The local economy was originally jump-started by rail service, but after half a century, the community came together and built a new commercial airport – Worland Municipal Airport. Although commercial flights in and out of the airport have declined in recent years, the City of Worland has pressed for and received substantial funding to extend the runways and upgrade the facilities on-site. Access to commercial air service was an important milestone, and will be a significant factor in jump-starting the local economy in the twenty-first century.

Third, and most recent of these events, has been the exploitation of extensive aquifer reserves for potable water. While drilling for oil in 1978, crews were surprised and awed when they struck an artesian water source. Recognition of the significance of this find was not long in coming, and the rest, as they say, “is history”. Funds were secured and a water line was laid between the well and the City of Worland; a distance of approximately twenty-seven (27) miles. The water pressure is so great no pumps have been required to move the water throughout the system – a major cost-savings to users.

Unincorporated areas also have poor drinking water; whether from mineralized contaminants, fertilizer, sewage, or other contaminating sources - many rural residents are unable to utilize their water wells for household purposes. Again, far-sighted community leaders banded together and formed the Washakie Rural Service and Improvement District, which is bringing potable water to outlying areas; thus spurring a surge in rural population growth.

Now, water lines are being laid in populated rural areas of the County using the same wells that serve the City of Worland. Soon, these lines will be extended beyond the County. A Joint Powers Board has been formed to provide potable drinking water as far south as the City of Thermopolis and as far north as the City of Greybull. To assure redundancy of the system and provide alternative water sources, the Joint Powers Board has engaged in a drilling program for additional, independent source, water wells.

Chapter 3: Public Land

Local Controls / Local Benefits

Introduction.

This Chapter is limited to the County's positions regarding public land. When speaking of "public land", the reference is to real property owned or controlled by an agency or bureau of the either the State or federal government. Over seventy percent (70%) of the land, which makes up the County is "public land". These positions are not intended, nor should they be interpreted, as positions toward private property issues, or rights of private property owners dealing with County regulations. The County's custom and culture has been significantly influenced by the relationship of the citizenry to public land, and the economic benefits that derive from public land. For instance, the Payments in Lieu of Taxes program ("PILT") was devised to offset negative repercussions caused by so much land being in public hands, but PILT has never been fully funded so the County does not have the means to adequately cope with public land issues.

This section of the County's Revised Comprehensive Plan is intended to identify and establish local public policy standards for the management of public land. The County finds public land management practices are both relevant and substantive to its custom and culture; its economy; its environment; its quality of life; and its ability to protect and enhance local resources in spite of potentially detrimental outside influences.

While the County still recognizes the importance of public land to the quality of life in the community, the County intends that policies and practices established pursuant to the Revised Plan endeavor to maximize the County's influence on decisions made by State and federal land managers regarding public land for local public benefit. To that end, the Revised Plan identifies the issues, background, and action steps recommended by Washakie County related to land use planning on State and federal lands. The information, goals and policies were all arrived at through extensive public input. The County will endeavor to continue gathering public input as various issues arise, change and evolve with time.

Authority.

The County's decision to incorporate these policy statements into its Revised Plan relies on the National Environmental Policy Act process ("NEPA"), W.S. §18-5-208, and such other authoritative legislation and precedent, which invite local participation in State and federal decision-making processes. These issues involve, but are not limited to the following categories:

- ❖ land management
- ❖ wildlife protection
- ❖ environmental issues
- ❖ roads and highways
- ❖ water and irrigation projects
- ❖ flood control
- ❖ resource development
- ❖ plant and animal damage control
- ❖ airport peripheral land use
- ❖ economic stability

General Public Objectives

- ❖ Washakie County expects and relies on State and federal authorities for appropriate and timely notice of anticipated changes to policies or management.
- ❖ Washakie County expects and relies on State and federal authorities for the expertise and financial resources for it to make an informed decision regarding public land issues.
- ❖ Washakie County expects to assert the maximum amount of influence allowed by law regarding any public land issues, and expects its contributions to management and regulatory decisions be accounted for and recognized as intended.
- ❖ Washakie County expects State and federal authorities to either implement or allow augmentation of water resources, protect access, and educate the public on the contributions multiple use makes to the local economy, and its custom and culture.
- ❖ Washakie County expects State and federal authorities to implement management policies and processes. Upon information and belief, Washakie County has concluded past management practices may have strayed from or otherwise ignored written management policies and processes. Washakie County cannot monitor compliance with various policies and processes, but it is the County's objective to review any deviations coming to its attention.
- ❖ Washakie County expects to participate in State and federal actions impacting public land in a way best calculated to achieve optimum affect; including but not limited to, requests for cooperating agency status. If possible, the County will recommend how State and federal agency action might enhance and benefit local custom and the community's culture; thus providing sustainable continuity of local interests.
- ❖ Washakie County expects State and federal officials need to respect private improvements as contributions to the sustainability of local custom and culture. To this end, the County's objective is to reduce vandalism, educate public land users regarding these improvements, and promote more efficient and effective regulatory schemes that allow owners of these improvements to make repairs and enhance the usability of these improvements.

General Public Policies

- ❖ Washakie County will support traditional land uses as a means to maintain continuity in the local economy, and assure the sustainability of existing agricultural, recreational, and industrial interests. By supporting traditional multiple uses, the County intends local custom and culture will be maintained and given continuity thereby mitigating potential negative social impacts on the community in the process.
- ❖ Washakie County will oppose material changes in land uses, which hamper or otherwise negatively impact traditional land uses. The County intends to avoid undue social distress, dislocation, and hardship brought on the community by such changes.

- ❖ Washakie County will endeavor to forge cooperative agreements and maintain existing cooperative agreements with various agencies, bureaus, and administrations to assure the greatest possible communication and exchange between and among stakeholders to public land. Washakie County intends that cooperative agreements will be relied on and acted on regularly with consistency.
- ❖ Washakie County will enforce mandates on State and federal authorities to consider the social, cultural, and economic needs of the local human environment in any regulatory action impacting local custom and culture. The County will insist regulatory action cite the impacts to the local economy, local custom and culture, the human environment and provide how such action is consistent with new, revised or supplements to the County's land use plans.

Multiple Use

Definition:

The County defines multiple use of public land in terms of management of such land (and the land's intrinsic resources) in a combination of ways to best meet present and future public needs. Under law, real property is unique so each unit of land needs to be identified, its circumstances examined, and decisions on its uses made in light of the potential uses of that particular unit of land. In other words, multiple use is the judicious utilization of public land based on the ever-changing needs, conditions and desires of the public.

Background:

There is a direct tie between multiple use and the custom and culture of Washakie County. Multiple use concepts are integral to the County's custom and culture. Washakie County residents are directly and indirectly dependent upon public land and the land's intrinsic resources for their livelihoods and their quality of life. It follows that the viability and sustainability of the local economy is dependent upon management for multiple use.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County supports multiple use of public land. The County opposes management initiatives, which restrict or limit existing and potential uses. The County will inform public land managers of any negative impacts on the livelihoods and/or quality of life of Washakie County residents.
2. Washakie County will utilize cooperative agreements, NEPA, the Wyoming Wilderness Act, broad-based legal precedent for appropriate, and timely notice of anticipated changes in land use management of public land so it can provide essential information and assert the maximum amount of influence on land use management decisions negatively impacting multiple use issues.

Access

Definition.

Access is a means of approach, entrance, or passage; ingress and egress. Activities linked to local culture and custom, and which need access follow:

- ❖ Agriculture (farming, irrigation, livestock grazing, etc.)
- ❖ Recreation and related tourist activities (motorized and non-motorized transport and activities, including but not limited to hunting, fishing, water and land sports, hiking, wildlife viewing, etc.)
- ❖ Industry (mining, power production, oil and gas production and exploration, timbering)
- ❖ Water (agricultural uses, industrial uses, recreational uses, power, domestic uses, and general water resource development and conservation)
- ❖ Intangible Values (historical and cultural sites, open space values and access to open space, aesthetic values, conservation, entrepreneurial values)

In addition, the County itself relies on access to fulfill its statutory mandate to protect the health, safety and general welfare of people within its jurisdiction; including but not limited to, fire protection, search and rescue, flood control, the human environment, and law enforcement.

Background.

Local culture and custom is closely tied to the access of public land. It is important to the sustainability of the livestock industry in Washakie County that grazing areas, and the stock trails that connect them, be open and accessible. For instance, livestock “trailed” from one grazing area to another must access not only the grazing areas on either end of that process, but also those lands in between. Historical use of stock trails and grazing areas has fluctuated over the years, depending on market prices, weather conditions, etc., but the need for access availability has remained constant, and continues to be relied upon by County residents.

Washakie County, on information and belief, asserts State and federal officials have engaged in a continuing effort to limit, restrict or otherwise curtail access. This effort has been done informally, or through a bureaucratic incremental process that did not give due consideration to local interests. Even when proper notice was given, local officials were not provided enough information to form a good understanding of the implications and consequences, which could result – loss of access.

Washakie County relied on and acted on its rights under RS 2477 in recognizing various roadways (Resolution passed December 15, 1981). Unfortunately, the process for prioritizing and identifying roadways pursuant to RS 2477 was not completed. The County intends doing so with adequate funding and personnel resources. Washakie County has also relied on protections for existing roads and trails contained in the Wyoming Wilderness Act.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County supports retention of existing access to public land, and will oppose management initiatives, which restrict or limit access or might impact the livelihoods and/or quality of life of Washakie County residents.

2. Washakie County relies on its cooperative agreements, RS 2477, the Wyoming Wilderness Act, NEPA and broad-based legal precedent, which all assure continued access of public land, and place the burden on State and federal officials to show why access must be curtailed.
3. Washakie County expects and relies on State and federal agencies to provide appropriate and timely notice of anticipated changes to access or management of public land that impacts access to make an informed decision of any proposed change. Washakie County intends to assert such influence allowed by law to maximize access to public land.
4. Washakie County asserts State and federal officials need to respect access to public land as contributing to the sustainability of local custom and culture. Toward this end, the County supports efforts to identify and perfect stock trails, roads, and rights-of-way protected by law, education of public land users regarding access issues, and promotion of more efficient and effective regulatory schemes that allow continued access through repairs and other actions assuring such access.
5. Washakie County requests State and federal officials work with the County to finalize perfection of the County's rights under RS 2477 and the Wyoming Wilderness Act, including assistance in obtaining the funding for the County to complete this project.

Agriculture

Definition.

Agriculture is the art and science of nurturing crops and breeding livestock for commercial purposes.

Background.

Agriculture represents the oldest source of revenue derived from the land. It is central to local custom and culture. Also, livestock grazing is the most extensive County land use; occurring on public and private land alike. The proximity of public land to livestock operations contributes to and is integral to those operations; crucial to their continued viability.

The working relationship between livestock owners and public land managers has changed over the years as conditions, expectations, and needs have changed. The County recognizes the inherent difficulty of managing public land for private commercial interests – especially agricultural interests. Public land managers have the daunting task of incorporating an evermore-complicated list of factors into their decisions; many of which cause more restrictions, increase costs, reduce revenue, or some combination of all these things.

The Bighorn National Forest Management Plan adopted in 1985 set animal unit per month (“AUM”) levels, and provided objectives to reduce AUM levels over time. Not only have reductions occurred, changes in the marketplace prompted further reductions. For instance, local producers changed grazing permits from sheep to cattle and then faced poor market conditions for cattle too. Upon information and belief, the County has concluded management objectives of the USFS resulted in other agencies following suit. Although Washakie County ranching operations utilize public land located in other counties, the negative implications resulting from these objectives impact the County’s economy and its citizens.

Upon information and belief, the County asserts natural disastrous conditions, such as drought, is cyclical and foreseeable, and must be planned for to assure impacts on local producers are mitigated.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County has determined agriculture makes a substantive contribution to environmental and recreational uses of public land; for that reason, public purposes such as protection of endangered species, wildlife habitat, open space, and augmentation of water resources are all enhanced by continued support for agriculture.
2. Washakie County supports opportunities for enhancement of land stewardship based on objective scientific data. Good land stewardship assures public land continues to be productive for generations to come, as it has sustained the County’s economy for several generations already.
3. Washakie County asserts State and federal land use and management plans are incomplete and materially deficient unless they contain a thorough discussion and evaluation of agriculture. Each plan needs to incorporate standards and objectives that sustain agricultural interests season-by-season, year-by-year and generation-by-generation.

Cultural, Paleontological, and Archeological Resources

Definition.

Archeology is the art and science of studying history from the remains of early human cultures as discovered chiefly by systematic excavations. Paleontology is the science of the forms of life existing in former geologic periods, as represented by their fossils. Cultural resources may be investigated through “sociology”, which is the science or study of the origin, development, organization, and functioning of human society. The cultural resources located on public land may have historical significance; even if they only bring perspective to a given resource. For instance, the Bridger Trail, which bisected the County, has historic implications regarding the westward migration of people during the nineteenth century, and for the tribal cultures of several Indian nations, which were here before, during and after that time.

Background.

Washakie County offers a unique expression of human occupation over the last 11,000 years. Many significant cultural, paleontological and archeological sites have already been identified on public and private land; with the likelihood additional important sites have yet to be identified. Since the vast majority of land is publicly owned, it is reasonable to assume most future discoveries will occur on public land. The Bighorn National Forest Service Office alone has concluded that a significant resource site may exist on every ten (10) acres in their jurisdiction.

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979 provides strict and meaningful penalties for destroying sites on public land, and for taking artifacts. Washakie County recognizes manpower and financial constraints have prevented State and federal officials from identifying and protecting every site within the County. As a result, Washakie County concluded most sites are unmarked and essentially unprotected.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County will support development of public education and stewardship programs which increase awareness about cultural, paleontological, and archeological resources (“Cultural Resources”), enhance responsible visitation, appreciation of history and meaning of various sites, and heighten protection strategies carried out within the context of multiple use.
2. It is the County’s intent to be recognized as a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (as amended). Washakie County has a Historic Preservation Commission, and maintains the status of a certified local government (“CLG”) as evidence of its intent to be a consulting party.
3. Washakie County will cooperate with State and federal authorities in identifying significant Cultural Resources in the County, make such sites known, and evaluate the significance of proposed land use actions and their impact on Cultural Resources. It is the County’s intent to evaluate the economic and cultural impacts associated with Cultural Resource identification and protection, and weigh one against the other in a cost/benefit context based on the County’s unique custom and culture.
4. Washakie County supports visitation opportunities to local Cultural Resources, and site protection of those Cultural Resources. Washakie County relies on State and federal agencies for the fiscal costs and expertise necessary to carry out this policy.

Law Enforcement

Definition.

Law enforcement relates to the means a local government compels observance of legal rules of conduct within that government’s jurisdiction. This incorporates one aspect of the mission of local government to protect the health, safety and general welfare of its citizenry, and is commonly referred to as “police powers”. The search and rescue program for Washakie County is conducted through the Washakie County Sheriff’s Department. In addition, the County has a Homeland Security Coordinator on staff.

Background.

Violators do not readily recognize boundaries between public and private land. Consequently, assurances the Washakie County Sheriff’s Department (“Sheriff”) continues as the chief law enforcement officer on public land is important to assure consistency and to maintain public expectations. The Federal Land and Policy Management Act (FLPMA) provides a means for federal agencies to work with local law enforcement authorities to assure law enforcement protections have no gaps. The pertinent language follows:

“The Secretary may authorize Federal personnel or appropriate local officials to carry out his law enforcement responsibilities with respect to the public land and their resources. Such designated personnel shall receive the training and have the responsibilities and authority provided for in paragraph (1) of this subsection.”

Cooperative agreements have been worked out in the past. The County relies on these cooperative agreements to assure efficient and effective law enforcement.

Wyoming State law does not exempt public land from State law. The Sheriff is the County’s chief law enforcement officer, whose duty it is to enforce the law. In addition, the Sheriff provides search and rescue functions and is critically important in emergency situations throughout the County. Finally, law enforcement communications equipment, vital to law enforcement, is located on public land. Without unimpeded access to public land, the health, safety and general welfare of the public will be put at risk and could jeopardize the department’s ability to protect and serve within its mission.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County supports cooperation between and among County, State and federal authorities for uninterrupted communications, expedited emergency response, and unimpeded law enforcement protection.
2. Washakie County will endeavor to adhere to its rights and responsibilities for each cooperative agreement, and will insist on the adherence by other parties. In the event the County is unable to carry out its obligations, it will take immediate action to assure the public health; safety and general welfare are not compromised.

Minerals and Industry

Definition.

Minerals are naturally occurring homogenous substances formed by organic or inorganic processes. Industry is a specific branch of production or manufacture. The County relies on legal precedent and statutory designations of what are minerals and industry established by the State. The minerals and industry segments of the County’s economy need supporting infrastructure to remain viable; thus creating associated industries, which build, operate, and maintain transmission lines, towers, rails, pipelines, roads, and water systems.

Background.

The 1978 Plan postulated oil production would remain at 2,000,000 barrels annually. It also speculated bentonite production in other parts of the State would wane in the future, thus giving producers in Washakie County a greater market share. Finally, they divined gas production would decline at the rate of 5% a year. Even if these assumptions held true for the first few years after the 1978 Plan was written – things have changed. For instance, there was no coalbed methane (“CBM”) in 1978; gas production has gone up and oil production has dropped significantly. The increased market share for bentonite never happened.

Minerals and industry consistently represent the greatest tax revenue source for the County. At the time the 1978 Plan was adopted, the impacts from this tax revenue were all positive. Since that time the so-called “boom and bust” economy associated with extractive industries has resulted in various negative impacts. As oil and gas prices go - so goes the County budget. It has been difficult, especially in 1997, for the County to carry out its mandated governmental responsibilities and establish long-term budget expectations with an unreliable and often-changeable revenue stream. The standard of living and services enjoyed by Washakie County residents are directly tied to minerals and industry.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County supports continued mineral exploration on public land in an environmentally responsible manner.
2. The County acknowledges coal seams underlying the County at-depth are not presently economical for development, but future exploitation has implications the County needs to address. It is good public policy to assure negative impacts associated with CBM production in other parts of the State do not occur here; that agricultural interests in the surface are appropriately protected; and that responsible mineral interests will be able to proceed without undue interference or delay.
3. Washakie County asserts it is the responsibility of the mineral owner, especially State and federal officials, to evaluate opportunities for commercial use and mitigate adverse impacts on surface uses. Cooperation and good planning will help sustain the County’s agriculture heritage for future generations.
4. Washakie County asserts local, State, and federal land use and management plans are incomplete and materially deficient unless such plans contain a thorough discussion and evaluation of coal bed methane development, and the implications such development has on surface land uses.
5. Washakie County strongly urges mineral interests reach written agreements with surface owners before entering upon the land. The County believes mineral and surface owners both have rights and responsibilities, one to the other, and only through mutual cooperation can each optimize their returns on investment.

Recreation and Tourism

Definition.

Recreation is defined as an action or lack-there-of, which results in relaxation, entertainment, and is enjoyed by those who participate. Tourism is traveling as, for recreation, relaxation and entertainment.

Background.

Washakie County offers a variety of recreation and tourism opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Public surveys have shown the recreation opportunities locally available are important to local residents and visitors alike. Heightened and more proactive efforts to expand recreation and tourism opportunities will only enhance the quality of life and make a significant contribution to sustaining the custom and culture of the community. The forest, campgrounds, rivers, streams and lakes of the Bighorn Mountains contribute significantly to the quality of the experience enjoyed by tourists and recreationists. Privately owned concessionaires rely heavily on public land management for their livelihoods, while tourists rely on public land management to assure a positive experience, and residents generally rely on public land management which will maintain their quality of life.

Most recreation and tourism opportunities occur on public land, but draw on County resources and infrastructure to provide support for that experience. Since public land is not taxed, the County relies on programs like the “Payments in lieu of Taxes” (“PILT”) program to provide those resources and infrastructure, and public services. Unfortunately, PILT has never been fully funded so the burden falls to the local taxpayer to pick up the difference. Any shortfall may be detrimental to the recreational and tourism experience, and the local economy suffers as a result. It also means the quality of life for local residents is diminished since money, which would have otherwise gone to enhancing their lifestyle must be used to maintain services and infrastructure for non-taxpaying tourists and recreationists.

Washakie County is on a major route to Yellowstone National Park, which experiences seasonal surges in tourism. As Yellowstone’s reputation as a winter destination for snowmobilers has grown, so did that of the Bighorn Mountains. Now, with winter recreation in Yellowstone under scrutiny, the Bighorn Mountains may expect a significant surge in winter use. A ski area, and several hunting lodges also serve Washakie County.

The Bighorn National Forest and the Wyoming Department of Transportation designated U.S. Highway 16 East from Ten Sleep as the “Cloud Peak Skyway Scenic Byway”. There are also prime hunting areas, fishing streams, and historic sites attractive to sportsman and tourists alike in Washakie County.

Hunting season used to bring many visitors to the County. However, in recent years, the County has seen fewer hunters, but that is not all that has changed. Decades ago, it was generally men who ventured out in the fall and winter. The numbers were few and they were spread out. Now, many women participate in both fall and winter recreation opportunities. Women today are also apt to be driving between communities over the Bighorn Mountains more than in years past. These changes, and others, have required local businesses to adjust services, lodging, communication, etc. to accommodate feminine needs.

Upon information and belief, Washakie County has concluded past public land management practices heightened the likelihood for wildfires (flooding of barren lands follows). Even though tourist and recreation businesses did not make those policies, wildfires and flooding have negative repercussions for business owners and users alike. Re-occurring droughts have taken their toll in the past, and this latest prolonged episode has resulted in dire consequences to the health of local forests. When visitors to the forest are restricted in their use and access of the forest, they are less likely to stay in the area, and that has been the case here.

People create waste, but there is a distinct lack of sanitary facilities to accommodate sportsman, recreationists and tourists. This unfortunate circumstance is at crisis proportions even though local officials have sought for many years to head-off this problem. The quality of the experience for visitors has been degraded, and may create a health hazard. The ability of these transportation corridors to support and accommodate visitors is critical to gaining and keeping their status as scenic byways; and therefore, failure to provide sanitary facilities impairs and jeopardizes the County's tourism and recreation industry. The lack of sanitary facilities is of considerable concern to local residents who use these corridors regularly for business, recreation, and social driving.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County supports recreation and tourism opportunities carried out in an environmentally responsible manner consistent with sustaining local businesses that rely on tourism and recreation.
2. Washakie County will strive for additional federal designation(s) of scenic byways, will promote cooperative agreements with other communities to develop heritage and cultural corridors, and will take appropriate action in support of efforts to create facilities to bolster scenic highway access in and through the County.
3. Washakie County deems it incumbent upon State and federal offices and agencies to provide sufficient sanitary facilities on major highway corridors, at recreation areas, historic sites, and other attractions throughout the County.
4. Washakie County asserts State and federal land use and management plans are incomplete and materially deficient unless there is a thorough discussion and evaluation of the need for public sanitary facilities. Each plan needs to incorporate standards and objectives, which sustain and support local recreation and tourism economic interests.

Special Land Designations

Definition.

"Land Designations" refer to tracts of land with distinctive and uniquely recognized use characteristics. Commonly used Land Designations in Washakie County include, but are not limited to: national monuments, national forests, wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, wildlife refuges, national recreation areas, roadless areas, areas of critical environmental concern, and wild and scenic rivers.

Background.

The Wyoming Wilderness Act was enacted October 30, 1984. With passage of that legislation, a wilderness area was designated within the Bighorn National Forest. Although this wilderness area is not in the County, its existence and possible expansion have impacts, which reverberate through the local economy. The revisions to the management plan for the Bighorn National Forest under discussion at this writing include alternatives for increased wilderness, new designations for wild and scenic rivers, and expanded roadless areas. The Forest Service is managing “roadless” areas of the Forest as *de facto* wilderness, ignoring actual roads built to provide access, and closing some of those roads even though they have been designated as roads from the RARE II inventory.

BLM designated three (3) wilderness study areas in 1987. The Honeycombs Wilderness Study Area, the Bobcat Draw Wilderness Study Area, and the Cedar Mountain Wilderness Study Area are being managed as wilderness. BLM also has a roadless initiative in effect. Revisions to its management plan (“RMP”), which dates back to 1987, are scheduled to begin soon. There are no indications the wilderness study areas will be managed differently as a result, or that their status will change as a result of the RMP process.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County opposes attempts to bypass the processes for creating wilderness areas by using “roadless areas” as a category for land management in and of themselves. Instead, the County supports the intent of the Wyoming Wilderness Act, which discourages efforts to promote additional roadless areas, and wilderness-like areas.
2. Washakie County opposes continuing to treat “wilderness study areas” as wilderness for extended lengths of time – more than a decade has passed since these areas were selected for study, and there seems no end in sight for a determination on the issue. Instead, the County supports the intent of the Wyoming Wilderness Act, which discourages efforts to promote additional wilderness areas, and wilderness-like areas in any form.
3. The County encourages the BLM to publish the findings and conclusions of its study of the three (3) areas selected for possible designation as wilderness, prior to finalizing its revisions for its management plan. In this way, the BLM will be able to adopt an appropriate management plan for these areas rather than waiting another fifteen (15) years to do so.

Water Resources

Definition.

Water resources are simply supplies of water that can be drawn upon for various purposes.

Background.

At this writing, Washakie County is experiencing an extended drought. Droughts are not unexpected, but recurring in semi-arid regions of the country like the Big Horn Basin of Wyoming. Generally, Washakie County experiences less than minimal rainfall. Rain alone is insufficient to sustain municipal, industrial, agricultural, and recreational uses. Its scarcity makes it all that much more important public policies give due consideration to issues of water quality, quantity and availability if the economic viability and the quality of life here are to be sustained.

Most of the major drainages serving the County start on public land, and the vast majority of the water utilized within the County comes from sources located on public land. Some of these sources are not even in the County, like Boysen Reservoir and the aquifers which supply potable water to the City of Worland. Rainwater and snowmelt create limited amounts of surface water, which have to sustain livestock operations. Decisions made regarding storage and use of surface water on public land directly impact the sustainability of agricultural operations, determine grazing practices, and otherwise prompt agricultural practices on and off public land.

Several interdisciplinary planning, management, and implementation groups/agencies exist to address water resource issues impacting Washakie County. Some of these groups/agencies include but are not limited to:

- Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- Wyoming Game and Fish Department
- Wyoming Water Development Commission
- Washakie County Conservation Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bighorn National Forest Service
- Wyoming State Engineer's Office
- Wyoming's Drought Task Force

Boysen Reservoir is a Bureau of Reclamation project managing waters of the State in accordance with Wyoming water law. The operating agreement entered into at the time the reservoir was built, provides for the allocation and distribution of water for downstream interests. Farm irrigation water stored in Boysen Reservoir is conveyed through Wind River Canyon and then down the Big Horn River to various irrigation works. The irrigation works are under the jurisdiction of various agencies and local districts, which are responsible for conveying the water from the river to the farm fields through ditches and sprinkler irrigation units.

Although most of the farm irrigation projects were built prior to construction of Boysen Reservoir, variations in stream flow during drought periods made irrigation water availability unreliable when needed. Boysen Reservoir was built to assure agricultural interests surface water would be stored in the good years, and available to them for use in the lean years; thereby substantially mitigating the adverse impacts of drought years. A decision made regarding storage and use of water in Boysen Reservoir directly impacts the sustainability of local farm operations, determines what crops get planted, and otherwise guides farm management practices. There are no dry land farming operations in Washakie County.

Although some ranching operations do utilize irrigation systems, most do not generally rely on irrigated water, but instead move from pasture to pasture as grass, forage and drinking water for the animals becomes available. Much of the pasture and the stock trails connecting those pastures are located on public land.

The County's municipalities obtain water from wells located on public land. Pipelines transport the water to residential, commercial, and other governmental users. In the case of the City of Worland, the pipeline is over twenty-seven (27) miles long, traverses a vast stretch of public land (commonly referred to as "the Badlands"), and provides water to a number of users in and out of the City limits. The Town of Ten Sleep maintains an alternative water right on Ten Sleep Creek for municipal uses. It is important to require sustained flows of quality water to secure this right.

Water uses on public land also include recreational uses such as fishing, and fishery habitat. The County is pleased to have a State fish hatchery on Ten Sleep Creek to stock and replenish County fisheries. Supplying adequate stream flows to maintain and sustain these fisheries is important to the tourism industry and local recreationists alike.

Concerns over total maximum daily load ("TMDL") levels in the water have led to changes in how and where livestock are grazed and corralled. Not only have livestock been associated with detrimental impacts on water quality, but also on the wetlands and low areas surrounding water sources. This pattern has been followed in Washakie County as well, and has impacted various livestock operations. Changing land management practices on public land has necessitated changes on private land as well. Previously grazed shorelines and bog areas are now fenced off to livestock permittees, which reduces grass and forage supplies for many allotment areas, causing permittees to utilize private land more often.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County will continue to support and advocate for augmentation of water storage facilities on public land. Local agricultural interests rely on the strict compliance with State water law and water storage agreements, which give priority to agriculture in delivery and use of water.
2. Washakie County supports continued exploration for water sources and aquifers on public land in an environmentally responsible manner.
3. Washakie County will endeavor to incorporate provisions in its land use regulations directed at development of coalbed methane ("CBM").

Weed Management

Definition.

Weed management is defined as the ability to control plants that interfere with management objectives for a given area of land at a given point in time.

Background.

Washakie County, by and through the Washakie County Weed and Pest Control District, has cooperative agreements and memorandums of understanding with various State and federal agencies. Unfortunately, the County has not always been informed on this issue, although it is aware that various programs are being directed at weed management; including but not limited to the National Undesirable Plant Management Act (7 U.S.C. §2814).

The major weed control tactics utilized presently are as follows:

- ❖ Education (plant identification, life cycles, mapping infestations, etc.)
- ❖ Prevention (irrigation management, soil fertility, range management, etc.)
- ❖ Mechanical and physical (burning, mowing, cultivation, cross-fencing, etc.)
- ❖ Cultural (rotating land uses, establishment of desirable and competitive plants, etc.)
- ❖ Biological (grazing, predators, parasites, pathogens, etc.)
- ❖ Chemical (herbicides, weed oils, plant growth regulators, etc.)

Funding for a long-term strategy implementing weed control tactics has been lacking. Various State and federal agencies support weed management by utilizing monies from discretionary or general funding sources. This only secures short-term funding, which means that most strategies are based around project attacks against specific weed infestations that last no more than one season. In recent years, during the drought, these short-term efforts have been all but abandoned as agencies at both the State and federal levels have poured money into drought-related issues such as fighting and protecting against wildfires.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County supports integrated long-term plant management and weed control tactics programs for responsible wildlife habitat preservation, development, and management through the Washakie County Weed and Pest Control District.
2. Washakie County will support cooperative efforts with State, federal and private land managers to enhance cooperative weed management efforts countywide coordinated with and primarily managed by the Washakie County Weed and Pest Control District.
3. Washakie County relies on Washakie County Weed and Pest Control District to make use of cooperative agreements, NEPA, the Wyoming Wilderness Act and broad-based legal precedent to assure recognition of local conditions and circumstances in the decision making process, and to keep the County and the public informed of those efforts.

Wildlife (Animal)

Definition.

Animal wildlife describes animals living in nature that are not domesticated or tamed. As per this Plan, activities depending on wildlife in Washakie County include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Hunting (elk, deer, antelope, bear, mountain lion, coyotes, grouse, rabbits, waterfowl, etc.)
- ❖ Aquatic wildlife (fishing, managing fisheries, etc)
- ❖ Passive recreation (bird watching, wildlife viewing, etc.)
- ❖ Species of concern (Black-Footed Ferrets, Greater Sage Grouse, Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse, transplanted wolf populations, and grizzly bears, etc.)

Background.

The State of Wyoming has principle responsibility for the preservation and enhancement of wildlife populations both on and off public land. The Endangered Species Act at the federal level has had a major impact on wildlife management in this County. Land used for agricultural populations are known to be critical habitat for wildlife, but because wildlife populations do not recognize jurisdictional and/or ownership boundaries, it is important the County cooperate with State and federal authorities to assure that habitat for wildlife populations are protected without interfering with agricultural operations.

Washakie County enjoys a diverse and abundant game and non-game wildlife population. To further an understanding of this resource, the County asked the State to conduct a survey of wildlife populations in the County in 2000. According to this study, there are no populations of wildlife on the endangered species list located in the County, although there is suitable habitat for certain endangered species. This study is the basis for policy decisions made in this Plan.

Although hunting played a large and important role in the County's economy, recent surveys indicate that the number of hunters has dropped significantly. In particular, the number of out-of-state hunters claiming big game licenses has dwindled. At the same time, certain species, such as wolves and grizzly bears, are protected under the Endangered Species Act, but represent a predator threat to livestock and people alike. A balance must be struck, and the County anticipates playing a role in developing wildlife management plans with human and economic concerns fully and effectively protected.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County supports integrated long-term wildlife management. The County believes any planning process needs to account for both consumptive and non-consumptive management strategies and tactics addressed in an environmentally responsible manner from the perspective of impacts on the human environment.

2. Washakie County endorses fencing strategies, especially strategies implemented by the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WyDOT) which enhance the ability of permittees and other agricultural interests to keep their operations financially viable, and reduce or otherwise mitigate risks to the health, safety and general welfare of the public.
3. Washakie County supports pro-active efforts to reduce and control predator populations; and more especially, prevent the spread of predator species such as grizzly bears and wolves from migrating or re-locating to grazing allotments. Washakie County expects predator control strategies to balance with the best science available, economics and the pragmatic logistics of the livestock industry.
4. The State of Wyoming has made the Department of Game and Fish responsible for management of wildlife. This responsibility entails protection of the public and their property from damage by wildlife. If and when such damage does occur, the County fully expects victims to be compensated in full for their losses as expeditiously as possible.

Wildlife (Plant)

Definition.

Plant wildlife describes plants living in nature other than those raised for domestic or commercial use, which include both native and introduced plants to the United States as well as desirable and undesirable plants.

Background.

The diverse topography and climatology of Washakie County has resulted in an abundance of consumptive and non-consumptive vegetative species. To further an understanding of this resource, the County asked the State to conduct a survey of wildlife populations in the County in 2000. According to this study, there are no populations of plant wildlife on the endangered species list located in the County, although there are habitats capable of supporting species on the list. This study serves as a basis for policy decisions made in this Plan.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County is particularly concerned about management practices of wildlife within view corridors of existing scenic byways on public land. Trees in Ten Sleep Canyon are being devastated by disease and pestilence, thus creating excessive risk of fire, reduced habitat, the potential for excessive erosion, and the ultimate loss of aesthetic values that contribute to its “scenic” integrity. Washakie County calls on public land managers to take drastic action to stop tree losses and/or for drastic action to replace plant wildlife along these scenic view corridors.
2. Washakie County supports efforts to thin poorly managed forests and to remove dead and infested trees to mitigate wildfires.

Chapter 4: Countywide Policies by Area of Concern

Sustainable Growth

General.

Washakie County has a much more diversified economy than much of Wyoming. Recent events have highlighted the importance of local manufacturing, and prompted local interests to assume the financial risks of at least one operation – Wyoming Sugar Company. Even though Wyoming Sugar is agriculture-related, most of the major employers doing business in the County are not. Admiral Beverage, Crown Cork & Seal, and Wyoming Gas, among others are recognized corporate citizens of this community and major contributors to the sustainability of the local economy.

Background.

Jobs in agriculture have dwindled over the last half-century. Although sugar is a value-added product from agriculture at the local level, other efforts to create value-added products from local agricultural products have not met with success.

At the time the 1978 Plan was written, many of the high-paying jobs swelling the population were in manufacturing and the oil and gas industry. Mainstays of the local economy have waned in recent years; even agriculture, which used to predominate job growth, now commands only about 9% of the job market. As this plan is being written, the oil and gas commodity market is seeing price resurgence; however, if past experience is a guide, this community will see only negligible employment increases as a result.

For the future, if oil and gas is to contribute jobs to the economy, coalbed methane reserves contained in coal seams at-depth will have to become commercially exploitable. Expectations are low for the foreseeable future that coalbed methane will be a contributing factor to the sustainability of the local economy.

Goals.

- ❖ While each community and region has unique challenges and opportunities, Washakie County intends to build on its assets for a sustainable economy into the 21st Century.
- ❖ The State passed legislation in 2003, which provides additional financial resources, and there are a number of legislative initiatives making their way through Congress seeking to provide necessary financial support for rural communities. Washakie County accepts that these new programs require a local commitment to contribute as a prerequisite to participation in those programs.
- ❖ Because Washakie County believes its most valuable assets are already in place, economic development efforts will give first priority to supporting existing enterprises for expansion and job growth.

- ❖ Industrial development needs to reflect the need to attract firms, which diversify the industrial mix, which are compatible with existing enterprises, and which will provide increased opportunities for upward economic mobility to the labor force.
- ❖ Strengthen industrial development planning functions; including more coordination between and among various stakeholders, planning authorities, and economic development resources
- ❖ The community has identified prime sites for business park development; including development of light industrial facilities, good transportation alternatives, and infrastructure on the fringe area of the City of Worland. There is sufficient land for a business park, and the rudiments of a plan for development of the park. The goal is to solidify financial commitments and work toward making these business park development areas a reality.
- ❖ The County needs appropriate land use regulations for siting industrial, commercial and business development. Zoning is a recognized regulatory means for the protection of existing compatible uses and activities, while giving due consideration to residential development.
- ❖ Land use regulations need to permit flexibility in interior site design and layout to encourage responsiveness to natural features.
- ❖ Public facilities requirements for prime industrial sites, including water, sewer, road and rail access need to be identified. Capital improvements need to be planned and budgeted for on a priority basis to ensure that at all times adequate industrial land is available for opening new sites for development in a staged, sequential manner over a foreseeable period of time.
- ❖ Clearly defined guidelines need to be established. The County needs to provide for the expansion of utility services, including sewer and transportation improvements, which may be made either by the private sector or through a collaborative effort with government. These guidelines need to apply consistently to all developments, define the arrangements for planning, coordination with public agencies, and operating responsibilities.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County wants to encourage sustainable growth, not as a means to gaining population necessarily, but as a means of providing County residents with higher incomes, enhanced working conditions, more opportunities for employment, including employment potential for those just entering the workforce, all bettering the lifestyle and the quality of life in this community.

2. The County will recruit environmentally sound, well-paying sustainable industries. “Sustainable industries” is defined as commercial activities, which do not destroy or undermine the resources they are dependent upon, have some close or inherent link to the community, and support other public goals and policies. In particular, the County will target industries, which support traditional lifestyles and maintain the rural character of the countryside.
3. Economic development strategies need to support agriculture as a viable and significant industry. Efforts will be made to attract agriculture-related industries that not only provide job opportunities for County residents, but also support the diversification of the agriculture industry and the use of raw materials from area farms.
4. In order to recruit new industries, the County needs to identify and promote its competitive market advantages. Washakie County is relying on Washakie Development Association, the Big Horn Mountain Country Coalition and the Wyoming Business Council for the collection and analysis of baseline economic data, community demographics, skills, lifestyles, and trends to establish and market those competitive advantages on behalf of the County.
5. Housing is a key component of any community development plan for sustainable growth. Land selected for rural residential purposes needs to be carefully evaluated so that lands with the least productive resource capabilities are selected in preference to lands that can be managed for agricultural purposes. Lands which are not productive and not otherwise contributing economically will be encouraged for use as rural residential sites.
6. Growth patterns shall be encouraged to concentrate within and in close proximity to existing urbanizing areas. Capital facility programming will be accomplished with the dual objectives of 1) being the least burdensome means of financing; and 2) minimizing property taxes.
7. Sufficient land will be allocated to provide for the development of diversified commercial and industrial bases.
8. The County will support participating property owners within the North Worland Project area to facilitate the development of an attractive and economically viable rail-friendly business park, and provide economic incentives to encourage development in the North Worland Project area; including, but not limited to better access, assistance in organizing the area as an improvement district, and a commitment to coordinating elements of the project to enhance opportunities for success.
9. The County adopts as public policy the findings, conclusions, goals and recommendations from the North Worland Project Report and the Worland Area Trails Project as significant to the County’s plans for economic development.

Cultural & Historical Resources

General.

Historic trails, old churches, petroglyphs, and tepee rings all evidence Washakie County's long and significant history. These historic sites and structures remind us of our rich cultural heritage, provide a reassuring sense of time and place, and assure us all of a continuing source of educational opportunity.

Washakie County's traditional lifestyle has centered on agricultural pursuits for generations, and much of the County's modern history memorializes the great events and places that contribute to those lifestyles. Rural landscapes, traditional resource-based industries, and built environment are links to the past and convey the legacy prior generations left for us. Preservation of what's here provides insight into the fabric of the community, and what it will likely become.

Through private efforts, several houses, buildings and landscapes have been restored and protected. New uses have been found for historic buildings. The Washakie Museum, the Ten Sleep Museum and the Washakie County Historic Preservation Commission have all played a role in the preservation of the County's resources.

Preservation of irreplaceable historic and cultural resources promotes a sense of community. Historic preservation promotes revitalization of our towns, cities and the countryside. The economic values of historic preservation have been proven again and again; it enhances property values and provides the basis for heritage tourism, the cleanest of "clean" industries.

Background.

Presently, the following structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

<u>Place</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date Listed</u>
❖ Ainsworth House	Spring Creek Road, Big Trails	9/11/86
❖ Ten Sleep Hardware	2 nd & Pine, Town of Ten Sleep	9/11/86
❖ Worland House	520 Culbertson, City of Worland	2/27/86
❖ County Line Bridge	Big Horn & Washakie County Line	2/22/85
❖ Worland Ranch	801 W. Big Horn Ave., City of Worland	3/5/92

Goals.

The County encourages recognition of places, districts and sites within the County, which have played a part in creating the cultural, prehistoric, and historical fabric of the community. Among those sites and buildings, which are significant and worthy of recognition, include but are not limited to the following:

<u>General Description</u>	<u>General Location</u>
❖ Neiber Stage Stop	Intersection of Gooseberry / South Flat Roads
❖ Neiber Cemetery	Intersection of Gooseberry / South Flat Roads
❖ Bridger Trail	Generally follows the Bighorn River South to North
❖ Spring Creek Raid Site	On Private Land 12 miles South of Ten Sleep
❖ Washakie County Courthouse	1001 Big Horn Ave., City of Worland
❖ Worland Middle School	1200 Culbertson Avenue, City of Worland
❖ Colby Mammoth Kill Site	On Private Land about 5 miles East of Worland
❖ Durkee School	U.S. Hwy 20 N 6 miles and east on Lane 5
❖ Bates Battlefield	Rural Upper Nowood on Private Land
❖ Nowood Store	Upper Nowood Road 40 miles south of Ten Sleep
❖ Red Bank School	Intersection of Cherry Creek and Nowood Roads
❖ Shearing Plant	Just off the Spring Creek Road on Private Land
❖ W.A. Richards Canal Site	South Flat Road 4 miles South of Worland
❖ W.A. Richards Cabin	Lundgren Ranch SW of Ten Sleep
❖ Devils Kitchen	North of State Hwy 431 West of Worland 30 miles
❖ The Honeycombs	South and West of Ten Sleep on Blue Bank Road
❖ Mahogany Butte	40 miles South of Ten Sleep - Upper Nowood Road
❖ Ten Sleep Fish Hatchery	6 miles East of Ten Sleep on U.S. Hwy 16
❖ Irrigation Canals; Upper Hanover Canal Lower Hanover Canal Big Horn Canal Highland Hanover Canal Bluff Canal Upper Bluff Canal	Big Horn River valley
❖ Sheep Ranching Monument	Intersection of the Hazelton and Dry Farm Roads

- ❖ Wyoming Sugar Facilities 300 South 1st Street, City of Worland
- ❖ Culbertson Avenue Bridge West of the City of Worland on Culbertson Ave.
- ❖ Worland Town Site Original Worland Town Site west of the City

Public Policy

1. The County will support the inventory of historic and cultural sites and buildings within the County. There is no prior inventory of historical and archeological resources so a thorough inventory is essential if the County is to achieve its goal of preserving the County’s historical and archeological heritage. Through a cooperative effort between public and private interests a methodical effort will be made to identify and develop innovative and wide ranging incentives to support a variety of historic preservation activities.
2. The County will assist in the search for funding to review and update the existing inventory of eligible historic and cultural sites, buildings, communities, land, archeology, landscapes, and historic transportation corridors within the County. Preservation and adaptive re-use of historic buildings will be given due consideration in the planning process, and methods to preserve these historic and cultural resources will be investigated.
3. The County will encourage local historic preservation interest groups to assist property owners and communities in understanding the benefits of, and preparing nominations for, the National Register of Historic Places listing. Yearly goals for nominations will be established.
4. The County will make owners of historic properties aware of grant and loan programs for restoring historic buildings and provide information on the proper maintenance and repair of historic buildings. In addition, the County will continue to promote the compatible adaptive reuse of significant historic structures through the use of flexible regulations.
5. The County will set the example for preservation of historic and cultural structures and sites through designation, maintenance, and compatible use of County-owned sites and areas.
6. Develop community awareness of local culture and history through the development of educational programs.
7. Commit to cooperative agency status in federal agency actions affecting historic buildings and culturally significant sites
8. Projects and publications, which link cultural heritage and tourism, have the potential to become important components in the County’s tourism program. The County will actively participate in regional tourism efforts that link and promote Washakie County’s unique attractions and activities. This participation will

encourage efforts that will attract new and repeat visitors to this community's lodging, retail and restaurant facilities.

Natural Resources and Environmental Quality

General.

Because of the importance of natural resources and the environment to County residents, the protection of such resources through good planning is of utmost importance. The natural environment is important in fostering and attracting economic development, assuring continued growth in tourism, maintaining property values, and providing for a high quality life style. Elements of the natural resources and environmental quality considered here are water quantity and quality, air quality, vegetation and wildlife, energy conservation, and aesthetics.

Background.

Unfortunately, Washakie County is characterized by very limited sources of drinking water. Use of surface water represents much more than an historical footnote. For many years, the fortunes of the local economy turned on the how much water was in the Bighorn River. Water rights and appropriation of this most precious of resources meant a boom or a bust for many. In 1948, Boysen Reservoir was built to minimize the year-to-year changes users had to make adjusting to the flow rates in the river.

In 1978, the City of Worland switched from using the surface water of the Bighorn River to deep artesian wells for its drinking water. The Town of Ten Sleep maintains a water right on flows of Ten Sleep Creek as a standby municipal water source. Municipal water wells now serve as the primary source for its drinking water. Rural residents surrounding the City of Worland and outside the extra-jurisdictional authority of the City voted (1997) to create the Washakie Rural Improvement District ("the Improvement District"), which is now building a system of water lines to provide drinking water in outlying areas. The Improvement District has now joined the South Big Horn Joint Powers Board to extend the availability of drinking water through the Big Horn River valley as far south as Thermopolis and as far north as Greybull.

With the advent of the Improvement District, rural residents are able to take advantage of deep artesian well sources out-of-County for their drinking water. Assurance of adequate water supplies and protection of the aquifers supplying this water is crucial to all existing and future County residents. The extension of water lines through the County has had a number of repercussions. First, the financial commitment of federal, State and local taxpayers to this project is very substantial. At the time of this writing, the Improvement District expects costs of its part of the project to exceed \$14,500,000.00. It also anticipates four hundred (400) taps.

Second, the extension of water lines is providing an impetus to develop previously unused, unprofitable, or isolated lands. It also represents land uses in competition to historical agricultural uses, and this change in use is not always without its conflicts. From 1990 – 2000, while both municipalities lost significant numbers of residents, unincorporated areas of the County grew by seventeen percent (17%). Interestingly, the number of people engaged in agriculture fell over that same period even while the rural population was growing.

The County has no building permit program that could track residential construction over that time, but just in the last two years alone, the County has approved eight (8) minor subdivisions consisting of approximately twenty-three (23) lots, most of which were developed as a direct result of the new availability of drinking water. Residential development on historically agricultural lands is generally considered “sprawl”, which is essentially the urbanization of open space on over-sized lots for residential development purposes.

Third, the extension of water lines away from the urban centers potentially creates over-use of public infrastructure and services such as roads, utilities, fire protection, school buses, and law enforcement. Installation of the water lines has caused the status of certain roads to be called into question. The County expects pressure to improve and upgrade its roadways as the needs for these roads change, and the availability of water is driving those changes.

Improper or inadequate wastewater disposal is a primary concern as more people move to the country. It is estimated there are potentially eight hundred (800) households requiring a septic, but the County has fewer than four hundred septic systems permitted. Of course, the rural water lines did not create this issue, but they do exacerbate it.

Older homes built before 1968 did not need a septic permit. These homes were built before many water-using appliances were available. Now, with the availability of potable water, these older homes are upgrading their life style by putting in dishwashers, clothes washers, garbage disposals, second and third bathrooms, etc. These improvements are taxing the old systems, and increasing the likelihood raw sewage will enter State waters.

Local service companies have limited access to sewage dumpsites, giving rise to potential for illegal dumping and even unsanitary conditions. In addition, run-off from roads, parking lots and other disturbed (graded) areas pose threats to the health, safety and general welfare of people in this community. Unfortunately, the residences are not disbursed evenly throughout the County, but are concentrated in areas receiving further pollutants from insecticides, fertilizers, etc. The cumulative effect is being seen in the TMDL and selenium levels of local rivers.

The Powder River Basin east of the Bighorn Mountains has been transformed in recent years by a boom in the production of coalbed methane (“CBM”). The economies of counties in that region have improved as a result, but not without adverse consequences. Development of CBM has burdened counties with costs associated with over-used roads, expanded road systems, and demands for facilities associated with development of CBM (pipelines, etc.).

Two issues of particular significance have caused a great deal of conflict in the Powder River Basin. The County seeks to avoid these conflicts in its future. First, the separation of the ownership of the surface and mineral rights to a given property (commonly referred to as “split estates”) result in land uses with different purposes, perspectives and goals that often compete. Each estate has its own purpose and means of providing a livelihood for the respective owners.

Second, CBM production requires the removal of water from coal seams before the gas can be extracted. This surplus water is not necessarily useable by the surface owner. Quantity, quality, and responsibility for this water in a desert-like environment create significant problems for whole communities. Removal of large quantities of water from underground sources on to the surface have consequences and ramifications still being evaluated, analyzed and debated.

Goals.

- ❖ The County will support efforts to supply potable water to County residents, preserve the quantity and quality of water in cooperation with local, State, regional, and federal authorities, and utilize its police powers to enhance the health and safety of residents through water projects developed by the Rural Improvement District and the Joint Powers Board.
- ❖ The County will seek to enter into cooperative agreements and memorandums of agreement to assure that changes in land use brought about by water projects sustain local custom and culture, while enhancing the economic and aesthetic quality of life of County residents.
- ❖ The County has joined the National Flood Insurance Program (2001), but the County needs a reliable flood plain map and flood mitigation program. A reliable, accurate flood plain evaluation needs to be done in the very near future, and a mitigation program developed from that evaluation if industrial siting and residential development is to make informed decisions.
- ❖ The County will endeavor to draft rules and regulations in support of federal clean water standards, for the protection of water quality and quantity through conservation, and for the best use of this precious resource to assure future generations will not be deprived of water supplies adequate to their needs.

Public Policy

1. Adequacy of water supplies shall be reviewed at the time of request for a subdivision approval, or upon request for approval of multiple family residential, commercial, or industrial developments. For subdivisions, the County will encourage development within fringe areas around incorporated areas of the County. The County will seek to provide incentives for common water and sewage sources. The County will encourage development, which neither curtails or interferes with property engaged in agricultural irrigated productive use contrary to the custom and culture of this community.
2. Protection of the existing quality of ground and surface water resources shall be a priority factor in the consideration for approval of residential, commercial and industrial developments.
3. Development projects impacting drainage on adjacent properties or on public roads or watercourses, and which require action by the Commission, shall include a drainage report which discusses how surface runoff will be accommodated and what impact it may have on adjacent properties.

4. The County will set an example of responsible water resource protection by locating its new buildings, facilities, roads, and other development activities to protect and preserve ground and surface water resources.
5. In its role as an example, the County will encourage the exercise of existing legal and financial practices to establish County parks and recreation sites, and form public/private partnerships (cooperative agreements and memorandums of agreement) for the protection and preservation of live streams, riparian areas, flood mitigation, and other water resources with the County, including water resources which lie within developed areas.
6. In its role as an example, the County will seek appropriate state and federal agency action, which encourages ground and surface water quality, to prevent or mitigate potential harm to the health and safety of County residents.
7. In its role as an example, the County will participate in the planning of programs to identify, monitor, and abate all non-point source pollution-generating activities on lands and waters.
8. The County will vigorously oppose proposals or efforts to modify the watersheds, natural vegetation, or prevailing climate patterns, as a means of transferring and increasing water supplies at the expense of County residents, wildlife, vegetation, and quality of life.
9. The County will vigorously seek to locate, identify, categorize, and determine the potential harm to the health and safety of County residents as to wastewater systems.
10. The experience of other counties in the State of Wyoming indicates the exploitation of coal bed methane extraction. The resulting water generated by operations needs to be considered in any planning process to assure local health, safety and general welfare considerations are protected.

Air Quality

General.

Washakie County's air quality is of particular concern at this writing. The County has a number of oil and gas facilities, feedlots, and other farm operations, which contribute to poor air quality. Open burning of fields is a cultural tradition in the agricultural community. Burning increases already high levels of total suspended particulates (TSP) in the air. TSP problems are known to combine with fugitive dust, construction activity, woodstove and fireplace smoke, controlled burns by federal and State agencies, diesel-fueled vehicles, off-road vehicles and emissions from the sugar plant, etc. to create a potential health hazard.

Smoke from wildfires brought on by the drought has aggravated this perennial problem under recent drought conditions. The County has a significant percentage of seniors and people with disabilities, who are more susceptible to dust and smoke than the general population. People with allergies, are also susceptible to degradations in air quality. As more residents seek to live in unincorporated areas, the conflicts between existing agricultural, industrial and commercial interests and local residents are expected to become more prevalent.

The County addressed this problem by convening a task force. Based upon the recommendations of this group the County adopted standards for burning fields and implemented steps to be taken in drought conditions. The County encourages subdivision developers to include notice to potential buyers of this issue on the subdivision plat.

Under the Federal Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has the responsibility for setting and enforcing air quality standards. Much of the local enforcement is delegated to the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, which does not have a physical presence in Washakie County; their closest office being in Lander, WY.

Goals.

- ❖ Air quality is important to the health, safety and general welfare of the public. Dust and odors from local family farm operations are an accepted part of life in rural Wyoming, but unnecessary and harmful pollutants in the air are not. The goal is to prevent harmful air pollution without hampering normal family farm operations.
- ❖ The County will develop a transportation plan setting priorities for paving heavily used dirt roads, which create excess dust. The County's Road and Bridge Department will identify those roads highly susceptible to the creation of fugitive dust, and then pursue aggressive dust control efforts.
- ❖ Incentives for mitigating sources of air pollution will be given priority over regulatory restrictions. If regulatory restrictions are deemed necessary, then the goal will be to implement those regulations on terms and conditions that will not be invasive of the rights of individual property owners, but only for the public's health, safety and welfare.

Public Policy

1. Protection of existing air quality will be a major consideration in the review of plans for new industrial, commercial, and large scale residential projects. New uses or changes in existing land uses, which would tend to cause a significant deterioration of existing air quality shall be discouraged. Existing activities shall be encouraged to improve management and practices in support of higher air quality standards.
2. The County will seek to work with federal, State and local agencies to educate the public on the value burning plays a part in agriculture operations. The County will work with agricultural interests to develop best practices concepts and applications for burning fields, ditches and canal facilities.

3. The County will seek to encourage State and federal agencies to use prescribed burns as a primary means of weed and pest control. The County will become actively involved in planning for prescribed burns to mitigate potential wildfire threats.

Aesthetics

General.

Washakie County is blessed with a diversity of scenic beauty, which plays an important role in maintaining the viability of its recreation and tourism industry. Improvement of visual quality characteristics can lead to significant economic gains. Two recent surveys have recently been done regarding issues related to aesthetics - both found significant support for improved visual quality of the landscape and protection for existing scenic corridors.

Aesthetics play an important role in maintaining property values. Storage of secondhand materials, junk, old inoperable vehicles, and poor maintenance detract from the value of the affected property, and adjacent and surrounding properties as well. Junkyards and trash located along major highways also have an influence on visitor and tourists' perceptions.

Attention to aesthetics preserves this community's unique rural qualities, allows for better planning of commercial centers and nodes, and protects significant historic and cultural sites and resources in the County. Protection of aesthetic values along highways enhances tourism; encouraging travelers to or from national parks and forests, monuments or other nationally recognized tourism destinations to stop and enjoy the rural landscapes and open spaces.

Significant complaints have been received for years regarding an area along U.S. Highway 20 just north of the Worland city limits, and the area in and around the Devon facility; the area along U.S. Highway 20 near Winchester on the east edge of the County; and U.S. Highway 16 east of Antonex. Poor enforcement of State law regarding junkyards, and roadside signage has also contributed to negative impacts on the aesthetic values that could otherwise enhance the quality of life for this community.

Goals.

- ❖ The County shall make every attempt to protect and improve the aesthetic quality of the environment, and prevent negative impacts on property values, the historic culture and custom of the County, and the community's quality of life.
- ❖ The County will seek to designate the Bridger Trail (State Highway 433), U.S. Highway 16 east of Ten Sleep, U.S. Highway 16 between Worland and Ten Sleep, and State Highway 434 (Upper and Lower Nowood Roads) as scenic byways or higher under the Federal Transportation Act.
- ❖ The County will seek to identify view corridors, and mandate protections for designated scenic byways for all new development occurring within those view corridors. This could be done through overlay zoning of those corridors, which will address issues of signage, and building siting and size within those view corridors.

- ❖ In recognition of the importance of scenic vistas, advertising by means of rooftop signs, billboards and off-premise signs shall be controlled according to the law, and as a means of fostering and enhancing views of the farms, ranches and vistas we have to offer.
- ❖ In recognition of the importance of scenic vistas, junkyards (as that term is used in the Wyoming Junkyard Act) shall be screened and setback as required by State law.
- ❖ The County shall rigorously enforce land use restrictions at all levels to eliminate non-conforming uses that detract from the community's aesthetic values, while preventing further development incompatible with the County's aesthetic values.
- ❖ The County will seek to discourage outdoor storage by promoting screening and landscaping wherever appropriate.
- ❖ Preservation and protection of all natural habitats shall be strongly encouraged. Protecting and preserving the native vegetation shall be a high priority.

Public Policy

1. Washakie County serves as gateway to a great many tourist attractions and recreational opportunities. Development along highways leading to these destinations deserves special attention to assure these are not degraded or compromised. County restrictions supportive of the aesthetics are supportive of the businesses and revenue derived from those aesthetic, pristine, destinations.
2. Visual intrusions include a diverse range of structures and other nonstructural activities. Scarring of the landscape has occurred in some locations from poor grading and excavation practices and from the unnecessary cutting of trees or removal of other native vegetation. Billboards and other outdoor advertising signs may impair otherwise scenic views and the rural landscape. The County intends to establish standards for signage that compliments and enhances the rural aesthetics associated with this community.
3. Continued rural residential development is a potential threat to the character of the community. Aesthetics are adversely impacted when development intrudes. It fragments forest, watersheds, and habitat; creates pollution from automobiles, septic systems, and surface water runoff; and encroaches on the agricultural economy of the community. Therefore, it is extremely important land use regulations reflect the pride the County has in its quality of life, and assures high standards for this rural character are not degraded by development activities.
4. Aesthetics play an important role in maintaining property values. Storage of junk, inoperable vehicles, and weed infested residential properties detract not only from the affected property, but surrounding properties as well. They may even pose health and safety hazards to the public. Such problems located along major highways adversely influence perceptions of this community, devaluing it, and costing the community financially.

Transportation

General:

The historical record illustrates the importance of transportation, even to the native peoples in prehistoric times. The environment was just too inhospitable for year-round habitation until the last century. So much history simply documents the people who passed through the area; even into the nineteenth century with the Bridger Trail. Now, transportation sustains commerce, provides the means to participate in State and national affairs, and forms the basis of our tourism industry. Just as the flow of water sustains life; so too does transportation enhance livability.

The Wyoming Business Council retained consultants to evaluate the economic development potential of the State. The report concluded that those areas not located within easy access of the State's interstate highway system were at a considerable disadvantage in developing commerce. Washakie County is not located near an interstate highway system. Other modes of transportation available to the County must be enhanced to compensate for this shortcoming.

Worland Municipal Airport has commercial flights on a daily basis. Plans are to expand the runways, lighting and over-all capacity of the airport in the near future. Although jurisdiction for the airport is with the City of Worland, the County has cooperated in this effort. In response to a request from the City of Worland, the County has already passed updates to its airport perimeter resolution to allow for the impacts these improvements are expected to require.

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad ("BNSF") was, is and will continue to be an important factor in sustaining commerce and the quality of life of the community. The County has been working closely with the BNSF Railroad to improve rail service, make rail crossings safer, and assure access when railroad right-of-way separates landowners from public roads. The County has passed expressions of support for AMTRAK rail service on this line. It has contacted and is working with BNSF to make public and private rail crossings in the County safer. Finally, the County has worked on an effort to re-develop an existing light industrial area, and develop adjacent land as the "North Worland Project"; a rail-friendly business park better serving existing and future light industrial operations.

With more people choosing a rural lifestyle, unproductive land squeezed between rail, canals, and roads have become tempting residential sites. As a result, conflicting rights and responsibilities have developed over speed and access to local roads and highways with residential drivers wanting slower speeds and better access, while agricultural and commercial interests want fewer access points and higher speeds.

The Wyoming Department of Transportation ("WyDOT") is presently upgrading U.S. Highways 16 and 20, and WyDOT has advanced plans to make portions of these highways four lanes eventually. WyDOT was instrumental in revitalizing the Urban Systems Group, which consists of planning staff and planning commission members from both the City of Worland and the County to chart transportation needs. WyDOT provided funding to develop plans for the North Worland Project and the Worland Area Trails Project. WyDOT has also contributed staff time and expertise on a number of occasions to assist with local issues. Rehabilitation of off-system bridges ("BROS" Program) was stalled for several years, but WyDOT became very pro-active in getting that program back on track and adapting priorities to meet local needs.

Higher standards for proof of title have impeded the County's participation with State and federal authorities on road projects in recent years. Title to the County's roads is often unclear, difficult to verify, and consistently inconsistent. During the early 1980's when growth was a real issue, the County, WyDOT and the BLM did work toward perfecting title to the right-of-ways. However, changing priorities, turnovers in staff and a myriad of other changes pushed this project to the backburner. Now, with policy mandates holding up needed construction and rehabilitation of roadways, the County is again working with State and federal agencies to clear title to its right-of-ways. In July 2003, the County contracted for the services of a professional to review the status of the County's roadways, and make recommendations to perfect title.

Historically, local ranchers utilized designated stock drives to move livestock to seasonal grazing. Times have changed. The market in sheep and lambs waned, and market conditions coupled with a prolonged drought curtailed grazing activity and culled herds. This resulted in less use of traditional stock drives. However, the allotments are still in place and as markets and climatic changes take place, it is likely those stock drives will again be needed. Stock drives traverse State, federal and private ground; because many of these trails pre-date government surveys, there was no real parameters for them to follow. Ranchers from Big Horn and Johnson counties may utilize stock drives in Washakie County, while ranchers here may utilize stock drives in those counties. The State Supreme Court recently decided against the County in Case #2003 WY 164; which involved title to the Ten Sleep Stock Drive. Now, the County must decide how it will deal with this issue, and how public policy will change as a result.

Changes in ownership, inadvertent failure to perfect and secure easements, and fluctuations in use sometimes means new comers simply are not aware of stock drive trails. Stock drives, however, are a lawful property right. Wyoming law recognizes these trails. As a result, trails are being wrongfully fenced off, narrowed, moved and manipulated. The loss of a stock drive to livestock producers has adverse economic consequences, and may have unintended consequences for the public since livestock then must move over public right-of-ways not suited for that.

Goals:

Generally, the County supports the following transportation goals:

Airport: The County will support and provide assistance to the City of Worland for the construction of a longer runway and enhanced lighting to foster commercial airline usage of the airport.

Aviation: The County will support and provide assistance in obtaining more frequent, and more reliable, commercial air service to the State of Wyoming, and Washakie County in particular. The County will support and provide assistance in obtaining more and better general aviation services for both commercial and private aviators.

U.S. Highway 16: This is the principal east-west transportation artery for the County. The County supports upgrades to this highway. It wants to promote safety and efficient local use of this highway as an intermodal roadway capable of meeting community needs for stock drives, bike paths, and vehicle support.

The County will seek a higher Scenic Byway status for various sections, more and improved facilities (including year-round public restroom facilities), adequate parking for winter recreational use, and grade separated bicycle paths. The County also supports enhancement of this highway to promote tourism, recognition of historic, geologic, and cultural landmarks along the route or within easy access to the highway. Appropriate signage is also important.

U.S. Highway 20: This is the principal north-south transportation artery for the County. The County will support safe efficient local use of this highway. It also will seek to have alternate routes evaluated for inclusion as this highway. The County supports designation of sections of this highway as a Scenic Byway, with more and improved facilities (including year-round public restroom facilities), grade separated bicycle trails, and better signage in recognition of the historic, geologic, and cultural sites along this roadway. The County also supports enhancement of this highway to promote tourism, recognition of historical and cultural landmarks. Signage appropriate to the safe use of the highway right-of-way as a stock drive is also important.

Stock Drives: Protection of stock drive trails historically used to move livestock to seasonal pasture opportunities is exceptionally important to the continued viability of local livestock producers. The County will seek to protect historical use of stock drives, and perfect the public's interest in allowing the free movement of livestock for the benefit of commerce.

Railroad: The County will continue to seek more opportunities to move locally grown and produced commodities by rail. The County supports efforts to create rail passenger service from large metropolitan areas on the Front Range and west coast areas through the County by rail. The County expects better rail service to provide opportunities for increased tourism, and a transportation option for local residents not now available to them. The County will encourage a better working relationship with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad ("BNSF"), foster public/private cooperative agreements for better rail service and otherwise work with BNSF for mutual benefit of the railroad and this community.

Railroad Crossings: The County will seek to make safe at-grade rail crossings. The County is especially concerned about delays that prevent emergency vehicles from accessing people and property. The County will endeavor to improve rail crossings, and make rail right-of-ways available for recreational trails, and other community enhancements whenever possible.

North Worland Project: The County will continue to support the North Worland Project. This Project will improve access for truck traffic, provide local businesses with a reliable publicly owned right-of-way, and mitigate the impacts of historically unsafe private rail crossings. The Project also offers opportunities to mitigate flooding, improve recreational opportunities and make formerly unusable land available for development of a rail-friendly business park.

Public Transportation: The County will support efforts to advance public transportation opportunities. At this writing, the County has supported continuation of bus transportation, and the public transportation offered for seniors, rail passenger service, and upgrades for the Worland airport to promote air passenger service. Given the remoteness of the County, continued support for alternatives in public transportation are important to the continued viability of the County's economy.

Transportation Planning: The County will seek to develop a County Road Plan, which identifies traffic loads, speeds, and uses for all County roadways; establishes priorities for the improvement of those roads according to their level of use; and devise a system of roadways intended to route traffic efficiently and effectively. The Road Plan will:

- i. Create a capital improvement program for bridges, paving, drainage, and upgrades to County roads and stock drives.
- ii. Formalize an agreement with the City of Worland and WyDOT to make the Urban Systems Group a functional part of the planning process.
- iii. Establish a working relationship with the Town of Ten Sleep to discuss transportation issues in the Ten Sleep area.
- iv. Incorporate a standard means to transfer right-of-ways between and among other public entities for such things as annexation, de-annexation, re-engineering of a roadway, abandonment, etc.
- v. Adopt rules and procedures for the petition process for establishing Private Roads and Public Roads.
- vi. Prioritize transportation needs with other public entities to assure the public's health, safety and welfare are incorporated into the planning process.
- vii. De-commission the Culbertson Avenue Bridge and complete planning for an alternative river crossing to replace it as soon as possible.
- viii. Accept or reject reports done on transportation planning within sixty (60) days of completion. If accepted, then adopt an action plan to implement the report.
- ix. Recommend and participate in a comprehensive strategic planning process to assure the County and the Big Horn Basin as a whole have the highway transportation options being planned for are what we really need. Is a four-lane highway needed between Thermopolis and Worland, or between Worland and Greybull?
- x. Recommend highway and back road segments for designation as scenic byways at the State and federal levels, and work to provide the facilities to support those designations.

Public Policy

1. Access to the land is essential for sustainability. The health, safety and general welfare of residents and guests alike cannot be adequately protected without adequate access. The County will continually assess the need for roadways throughout the County, and work in partnership with property owners to adapt to the changing needs of the community for access. The County intends to utilize rights derived from RS 2477 and the Alaska National Interest Conservation Act ("ANILCA") in achieving this end.

2. The County will encourage livestock interests to petition for existing stock drives to be perfected so all stakeholders can be heard and proper action taken.
3. A public policy was formerly in place to assure the Ten Sleep Airport would continue to serve the public (1978 Plan at page 35), but the airport ceased operations. An airport no longer serves the Town of Ten Sleep. As a matter of public policy, the County will support efforts by the Town of Ten Sleep to locate and develop an airport to serve that community.
4. U.S. Highway 16 within the Bighorn National Forest is designated as a State of Wyoming and U.S. Forest Service Scenic Highway (Cloud Peak Scenic Byway). This is not the primary status needed to secure appropriate funding to construct and maintain public facilities recommended for this highway given the uses and traffic loads. It is the policy of this County to coordinate efforts to secure “All-American” status for this highway over the greatest length appropriate to this status.
5. It is County policy to have public roads in the County recognized for their scenic, historic and cultural significance. To this end, it is County policy to secure scenic byway and scenic back road status for public roads within the County and to secure funding necessary to construct and maintain public facilities on those roads so designated.
6. The railroad preceded most settlement. Since its completion, considerable development has grown up around the tracks. There are impacts on public health and safety, and in addition, the railroad is a major barrier to accessing one side to the other. Most crossings are at-grade and have no flashing lights or other protections. The County needs to develop a good working relationship with both WyDOT and Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad (“BNSF”) to mitigate impacts on the public caused by the railroad, while at the same time encouraging better and more reliable rail service for commercial and agricultural interests.
7. The County will actively seek to acquire a new off-system river crossing to replace the Culbertson Avenue Bridge. The Culbertson Avenue bridge has deficiencies, which cannot be repaired, but the County intends that the bridge continue to serve the public as part of the proposed trails system.
8. Rural residents and agriculture interests are at risk so long as emergency vehicles cannot access an off-grade rail crossing in the Worland area. The County will seek to collaborate with other public entities to develop at least one off-grade rail crossing, which will provide more efficient traffic flows and allow for better emergency responses.
9. The County hereby adopts the findings and recommendations of the North Worland Project Report, and commits to implementing that project as a matter of public policy.

Recreation & Outdoor Activities

General.

The County enjoys extraordinary opportunities for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreational activities. As shown by the public survey conducted by the University of Wyoming, which was done in conjunction with the Bighorn Forest Management Revision Process, residents of Washakie County prize these opportunities. They want them protected and enhanced as much as possible.

Goals.

The County's goals for recreation and outdoor activities follow:

- ❖ River Recreational Opportunities: The County intends to work cooperatively to develop recreational opportunities on the Big Horn River, Ten Sleep Creek, and Nowater Creeks by creating rafting opportunities, kayak rapids, and water sports areas. The County expects to maximize community benefits derived from each project.
- ❖ Recreational Trails: The County has planned for a system of recreational trails from various segmented projects. These trails will provide for equestrian access as well as walking and bicycle access (see specifics below for each type of trail). To foster use of the system the County anticipates the need for standards and priorities that will protect users from injury and landowners from liability. The County expects to work with stakeholders to alleviate the hurdles to implementation, and to provide needed support for community involvement for mutual benefit.
- ❖ Bike Paths: The County intends that road projects include separated, improved bike paths wherever possible. The County expects to leverage its costs and enhance the public benefits derived from each project by cooperating with local, State, and federal agencies in furtherance of this goal. To foster use of a trails system, the County intends to utilize rail, river, and highway corridors; and in cooperation with local irrigation districts, work to include canal right-of-way easements as public recreation trails.
- ❖ Equestrian Trails: The County intends to enhance the opportunities for equestrian activities and recreation horse riding by creating equestrian trails. The County expects to leverage its costs and enhance the benefits that might be derived from each project by cooperating with local, State, and federal agencies in furtherance of this goal. To foster use of the system, the County intends to utilize rail, river, and highway corridors that connect public facilities and recreational opportunities.
- ❖ Youth Activities: The County has determined that more and better activities for local youth is supportive of local economic development. It is important for the community to offer its youth recreational opportunities as a component of any economic development program since parents look for such things for their children and are attracted to communities with enhanced amenities since this helps in parenting, keeps children out of trouble, and bonds youth to the community.

Public Policy

1. Outdoor recreation is important to the County's custom and culture. The County will support development of recreational opportunities and promotion of recreation.
2. The County will coordinate with municipal, State and federal officials to encourage recreational opportunities.
3. The County will encourage recreation opportunities by coordinating its public works projects with recreational events to minimize potential conflicts.
4. The County has adopted the Worland Area Trails Project Report as a matter of public policy. However, at this time, the County's policy for incorporating irrigation canal right-of-way into this trails system is limited to the urbanized unincorporated areas of the County. The County is convinced by the success other communities across the west have had with trails projects along waterways, and more especially irrigation canals, that a well-planned collaborative effort will be successful here.
5. The County's policy is to support both municipalities in efforts to incorporate waterways with the respective communities into a trails system.

Chapter 5: Countywide Policies by Industry

Agriculture

General.

Agriculture is an integral to this community's ability to remain viable with a diverse, sustainable economy. The acceptance of this tenet is central to a strategy for the protection and preservation of local farmlands. Productive farmland has been developed from desert only after a great deal of work, money and commitment. Just as each acre of ground in production contributes to the profitability of a single farm, so too does each acre contribute to the economic viability of the community as a whole. The steady decline in the number of farms and farmers is a response to social and economic forces beyond local control. The community needs to be aware of the consequences, direct and indirect, should these negative trends continue.

Agricultural land contributes to the scenic beauty and the available wildlife habitat, while providing recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike for hunting, fishing, snowmobiling and other tourist-related activities. It is invaluable as an employer, as a source of affordable food and raw materials, as a provider of open space, as an environmental steward, and as a component to sustainable county development.

Washakie County is determined to preserve and protect its range and farmland resources. A general policy statement to this effect was made part of the 1978 Plan, and this Plan seeks to amplify that policy through various supportive goals and policies. If farm families are to make the heavy investment, and take the risks necessary to keep farm businesses viable, governmental policies must create a climate of confidence for the future of agriculture industry.

Background.

The Fact Sheet attests to the County's present position as a ranking producer of agricultural goods. It is agriculture that brought the railroad, and was the original cause for settlement at the beginning of the twentieth century. Despite past successes, there are no assurances past actions will work to control unplanned growth and other environmental pressures, which may jeopardize or impede the agriculture industry in the twenty first century.

Agriculture is the productive use of land. Recent studies show that agriculture contributes much more in taxes than it demands in services. It also contributes to the preservation of valuable open space, critical wildlife habitat, and protection of natural areas. Investments in agriculture farm machinery and equipment are substantial.

When the parent company of Holly Sugar declared bankruptcy, the local farming community stepped forward to finance the purchase of the plant to assure its continued operation. Farms are rapidly converting from flood irrigation to pivot irrigation to conserve water, enhance productivity, and retain the long-term viability of the land. Development of the Westside Project will add substantially to the productive farm ground. Even though farm employment has dropped in recent years (8.9% in 2000), the "ripple effect" agriculture has on the local economy is tremendous.

In the County's own land use survey, it was found protections for agriculture are very important, and that importance goes far beyond local farm families. The 1978 Land Use Plan contained only two definitive public policies. 1) protect productive farmland; and 2) preserve property values. These public policies are being carried forward through this Plan by espousing goals and policies in support of the start made by the 1978 Plan.

The 2000 Farm Bill contains financial incentives for farmland protection. Already, there are a number of programs in place that could be utilized to protect farmland, lower property taxes, and provide financial benefits to local farm and ranch owners. The County is not utilizing the available incentives, which offer alternatives to splitting up properties, subdivision development, or other possibilities that will take farmland out of production.

Goals.

- ❖ Local planning and economic development agencies need to address the fast-changing economies confronting agriculture and related industries. Studies need to be undertaken to identify obstacles, barriers and opportunities for agricultural development. Strategic plans to overcome problems and take advantage of opportunities need to be identified. Most importantly, the agricultural communities and other stakeholders need to be involved in the process to assure implementation of the plan has their full support.
- ❖ Ways in which the agricultural economic base might be diversified, and strengthened through value-added industrial development, reliable transportation alternatives and marketing efforts are important aspects to securing a sustainable future for the local agriculture industry. Attainment of these goals will assure County residents can expect higher standards of living, and be able to keep pace with the rest of the nation in earning power.
- ❖ The County will seek to incorporate flexible development standards in its land use regulations, which allow for adequate spacing without resulting in the unnecessary diversion of agricultural lands for residential purposes. For instance, linear development along a roadway can cause added expense for utilities and public services. By providing for clustering within subdivision sites, economies can be achieved, emergency access becomes easier, and agricultural lands preserved.
- ❖ The location and density of proposed residential development will be designed to minimize the loss of productive irrigated agricultural lands. The County will adopt processes and procedural incentives to curtail interference with productive irrigated agricultural lands. Pursuit of this goal will assure the sustainability of the agriculture industry, the conservation of natural resources, the control of unnecessary public expenditures for unplanned services, and continuation of the custom and culture of the community.

Public Policy

1. Development will be encouraged to take place on unproductive farm and ranch land by focusing on incentives rather than prohibitions. Development on other agriculture lands shall be designed to cause minimal disruption to existing farm operations.

2. To maintain the economy and tax base of the area, and to maintain the public/private balance of ownership whenever it becomes necessary to withdraw private land for State or federal use, those agencies will return land of equal value to private ownership. Access rights-of-way shall be exempt.
3. The County will engage in a process for the adoption of land use regulations to protect and maintain agricultural production. Classification of commercial farm areas, semi-commercial farm areas, consumer occupied farm areas and other agricultural areas as needed. This policy is designed to encourage appropriate agricultural pursuits, including smaller intensive agricultural uses, which enhance continuity and viability.
4. As water, air, and soil are essential elements of the economy and environment, all new development proposals or changes in land use shall limit erosion and maintain, or make better, this area's high quality air and water.
5. The sprawl and scattering of residential development places a strain on government's fiscal resources. Rural sprawl disrupts agriculture operations, provides less tax revenue than it demands in services and infrastructure, and infringes on open space and wildlife habitat. The County will find ways to discourage rural sprawl and encourage responsible development in or within the extra-jurisdictional reach of the County's municipalities.
6. Washakie County values its pastoral rural landscape and intends that its agriculture-based economy will remain viable. Subsidies, "transfer of development rights (TDR)" programs, zoning, conservation easements are all tools appropriate to an incentive based land use regulations.

Energy & Minerals

General.

Washakie County is very reliant on its energy and mineral resources for tax revenue. Mineral royalties and severance taxes contribute directly and indirectly to providing the County services and infrastructure central to the quality of life residents and visitors alike enjoy here. The area has an abundance of mineral resources including, but not limited to, oil, gas, coalbed methane, and bentonite.

There is ample evidence vast coal seams underlie the County at depth. Although coal was extracted nearby in Hot Springs County, the County's coal resources have never been exploited. However, in recent years, new technologies have allowed the extraction of coalbed methane from coal seams in place. So far, exploitative development has not occurred in Washakie County, but there is a manifest expectation reserves in the Fort Union and Mesa Verde coal seams, estimated at five to seven trillion cubic feet of gas, have significant commercial value.

Background.

At the time the 1978 Plan was written, the County was producing over two million barrels of oil a year. The County now produces less than half that number annually, and reserve depletion means production will continue downward. On the other hand, natural gas production has increased substantially. Two years ago, prices for natural gas spiked, then receded, and have recently been trending upward again.

Bentonite production has remained fairly stable over the last twenty-five (25) years. Reserves of bentonite remain stable, and local production is expected to continue at this level for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, production has not resulted in the creation of any value-added products, like cat litter, being manufactured locally. Bentonite is simply shipped in bulk by rail to out-of-state plants for value enhancements, packaging, and delivery to retail outlets.

Coalmines operated in nearby Hot Springs County for many years. The coal seams trended toward the surface around Kirby and the ghost town of Gebo; those same seams dip down as they move eastward. Now, coal seams are being exploited without having to burrow in the ground. Coalbed methane is being exploited in other parts of Wyoming, and the expectation is that eventually exploration and production will result here also.

Goals:

- ❖ Mineral extraction operations shall conform to best practicable management practices pertaining to site location, site clean up, rehabilitation of sites and unneeded roads, and the disposal of wastes from such operations.
- ❖ Mineral extraction operations will conform to the best practicable management practices concerning water quality and shall be expected to conform to the Big Horn Basin Water Quality (208) Plan.
- ❖ The County will adopt clear and objective standards for the development of mining operations. These standards will be applied to all mining operations, except where supplanted by other clear and objective standards.

Public Policy

1. The County has long been known for its mineral resources, and the known oil and gas fields are depleted, which has resulted in the large multi-national firms selling out to local business interests. The County will encourage local ownership of mineral resources and build working relationships with entrepreneurs willing to invest in and do business in the County.
2. Agriculture surface uses are to be protected from excessive or abusive development of severed mineral rights, which impair or impede surface land uses. The County will encourage restraint of development of severed mineral rights and assist as appropriate in creating standards for agreement between and among surface and mineral interests prior to actual development.

Health Care

General.

With a population aging in place, the County is experiencing an increased need for health services, and a shift in what services need to be made available – services significantly different from a youthful population. As one might expect from the demographic distribution; County residents are disproportionately prone to be disabled. Demand for geriatric care is growing, while the need for pediatric care is diminishing. Local senior centers are taking on added responsibilities for health care as the senior consumer population in need of these services grows.

Washakie County has invested heavily in health care. There have been recent additions onto the hospital, and efforts to upgrade and expand services are on-going; especially in rehabilitation care. The hospital anticipates the need for further expansion within the foreseeable future.

The County is also served through a new County health services facility located just north of the courthouse. This facility is home to the County health nurse and the multiple health programs it provides. Both the hospital and the County Health Nurse provide services Countywide; there being no health services provided in the Town of Ten Sleep for that area.

The Worland area ambulance service recently found a home in the County's health services facility, but remain autonomous. The ambulance service for the Ten Sleep area is housed in the Town Hall facility. Each ambulance service has multiple ambulances and crews to meet emergency situations. The County is fortunate to have so many volunteers willing to go through the training and give of their time to provide needed emergency services for the benefit of all.

In addition, the County has mental health services, a long-term care nursing home, and units for independent living for those who need subsidized housing. However, the County does not have an assisted living center or a group home for those with special needs. Plans have been made to develop both a group home and assisted living center, but neither project is poised for construction anytime soon.

Background.

The original County hospital now serves as the County library and home to the County's agriculture extension service. After World War II, the need for a new hospital caused the County to build a new facility, which was recently expanded and upgraded. The present facility operates under the control of a board of directors appointed by the County, and is managed by a private provider.

Goals.

- ❖ The County will cooperate with the City of Worland to secure a site for the development of future community healthcare services, including but not limited to an assisted living center, a senior center, expansion for the County hospital, and a group home for persons with special needs.

- ❖ The County will consider emergency services in its transportation plan, and secure appropriate access routes for ambulance, law enforcement and fire protection.

- ❖ The County will provide support for efforts to make health care facilities and services available to the Ten Sleep area, including but not limited to a multi-purpose facility that could be used by various health services organizations serving the Ten Sleep area.
- ❖ The County will coordinate with health services organizations to maximize their effectiveness and efficiency in meeting and adapting to the health care needs of the community.

Public Policy

1. Demographic changes indicate a need for adjustments in health care services and facilities. The County will endeavor to provide what support it can to meet those changing needs. In addition to the increasing need for additional and more varied senior health services, the County intends to review health care needs in the community and adjust the resources and financial support accordingly.
2. Washakie County has a significant population of people with disabilities, including people with learning disabilities who might not otherwise be able to adequately care for their personal needs. For instance, a proposal has been made for development of a care facility for brain-injured persons, which has the County's support.
3. The County has completed three (3) studies to evaluate the need and appropriateness for an assisted living center for the community. Washakie County has determined an assisted living center is financially feasible to build and maintain given the appropriate circumstances. The County is committed to pursuing this project as a priority.
4. The County is aware of the efforts of a private citizen to create a local facility for brain-injured persons. The County supports this projects, and welcomes such initiative as a real step forward in providing a needed service to the community and State as a whole.

Telecommunications

General.

Washakie County continues to be very sparsely populated, with limited access to services and goods, which are normally available in populated areas. Distances between services, neighbors, friends, and work are considerable. These and other similar factors make the need for the very best communications services an absolute necessity if this community is to keep pace with the rest of the country. Modern communications systems are a must for us to compete in various markets. All our industries and homes are affected by communications services.

Background.

Communication systems are comprised of telephone, cellular, satellite phone systems, Internet, cable TV, and radio. Presently one cable TV provider, two primary phone companies, two satellite TV providers, and access to numerous radio stations service the County. Several cellular services are available through local distributors and outlets. The County was instrumental in getting weather reporting stations established to serve the Big Horn Basin.

Technologies have evolved rapidly, and in most cases the County has kept reasonably up-to-date. The Ten Sleep community is extremely fortunate to have direct access to the main telecommunications back bone of the country, through a local phone service provider in Basin, WY. Worland too has a local phone service provider offering internet access and digital upgrades.

Cellular service remains spotty and somewhat unreliable due to the topography and lack of sufficient towers to cover the area. Satellite service is available, but too expensive to be a legitimate option for most citizens.

Goals.

- ❖ The County will cooperate with the City of Worland, and the Town of Ten Sleep to coordinate a uniform approach to encourage Telecommunications providers to continue to improve and expand their services. Information will be gathered and provided to service providers to assist them in determining our needs and effective ways to serve those needs.
- ❖ The County will work to encourage governmental agencies to study and fund improvements to our communications networks. Special attention needs to be paid to cell services and satellite communications, and other similar technologies being developed. Our hospital, ambulance service, fire departments, sheriff and police are of special importance and require the most modern services available.
- ❖ The County will coordinate and encourage telecommunications system improvements, which are hardened, and dependable in case of natural disasters or terrorism. Sources of funding will be sought to support this effort, including funds from FEMA, and Home Land Security.
- ❖ The County will seek to continue to educate citizens on telecommunications technologies and their uses. This is to include emergency preparedness and management education.

Public Policy

1. With much of the country doing business electronically using advanced technology resources, it is important to encourage telecommunication enhancements, which will both sustain local businesses, and make them competitive in the global marketplace.
2. The County will encourage cooperation between and among telecommunication service providers to enhance communication between and among communities within the Big Horn Basin, including expansion of local service exchanges, and the elimination of long distance between Worland and Ten Sleep will enhance communication between those communities.
3. The County will strive for elimination of long distance charges between and among the various communities that make up the Big Horn Basin; but especially, long distance charges from any point in the County to any other point in the County.
4. The County will support efforts to improve the reliability and expansion of local cellular capabilities.

Chapter 6: County Policies Regarding Urban Centers

City of Worland

General.

From 1990-2000, the City of Worland (“the City”) lost ten percent (10%) of its population. At the same time, unincorporated areas of the County gained population by seventeen percent (17%). Along with the increase in population in unincorporated areas, there has been a decline in the population of those engaged in agriculture. Presently, only 8.9% of the County’s population is engaged in agriculture even though over a third of the population lives in unincorporated areas.

The Wyoming Division for Economic Analysis expects these trends to continue at least through 2010. With an increasing rural population not engaged in agriculture, more pressure will be placed on the County to provide more and more intense services outside municipalities. The installation of potable water lines to prime developable land is only fueling an exodus from the incorporated municipalities to the countryside.

Already, the County has received counter-petitions from agriculture interests and rural residents regarding speed limits – subdivision residents want lower speed limit / agriculture wants higher speed limits. The County has also received a petition for a new, very expensive, road to a single subdivision. Finally, the County is getting significant pressure to pave, widen, and improve various rural roadways. In addition to the infrastructure costs associated with an increasing rural population, there are fire protection costs, ambulance and law enforcement costs, school bus routes, and other public services.

Cities are incorporated and receive enabling legislation in support of its mission to provide urban services, while counties receive enabling legislation to only fund nominal services. A recent report done by the University of Wyoming found that for every tax dollar of revenue derived from rural residential development, it costs the County more than \$1.13 in services. Therefore, this trend portends serious financial consequences for both the City and the County.

During the boom years of the late 1970’s and early 1980’s, the City and County had several jurisdictional disputes. Two incidents are of particular note. First, the City sought to annex in certain rural subdivisions along the City’s east edge, but residents in those areas opposed annexation and eventually stopped it. Second, the City, certain subdivisions and improvement districts, and County entered into an agreement for water and sewer services. This agreement was entered in the expectation that the City would continue to grow, which it has not. Now, this agreement has expired of its own terms, while references to that agreement remain as part of the legal basis the subdivisions and improvement districts operate on.

The City has extra-jurisdictional authority under State law from several sources. The statutes do not necessarily apply the extra-jurisdictional authority for cities in a consistent manner, which is causing some confusion and conflict. Further, the statutes do not establish workable priorities and incentives for cooperative planning with municipalities for mutual benefit.

Goals.

The County has adopted the following goals for enhancing relations with the City of Worland:

- ❖ Incentives devised to sustain and protect agricultural interests and productive irrigated farmlands are of mutually benefit the City and County. The goal is to plan for urban services and annexation compatible with the County's public policies and within the fiscal capabilities of the City.
- ❖ The County will be fiscally responsible by sharing responsibilities with the City of Worland rather than duplicating or usurping municipal services. The County's goal is to partner with the City in becoming more proactive in providing transportation, flood mitigation, recreation and other services of mutual interest. The County intends to renew its intergovernmental agreement with the City of Worland with these purposes in mind. It is extremely important that agreements be reached on the timing, location, financing, and capacity of service expansion to avoid scattered development patterns.
- ❖ Residents preferring a rural lifestyle need to understand and assume the fiscal burdens on government resulting from their choice. This goal was adopted as a public policy in the 1978 Plan at page 58, and needs to be better implemented.
- ❖ Investments in sewer, highways, drainage, parks, recreational and similar facilities, shall be given the highest priority in the extra-jurisdictional perimeter ("growth boundaries") around the City of Worland. Development of all types will be encouraged within this growth boundary perimeter.
- ❖ Development has its costs, and its responsibilities. The County seeks to assure that rural residents receive the most effective and efficient protections and services fiscally responsible. In addition to fire, police and health protections, the County seeks to assure that standards for development are appropriately enforced through the City. In order to ensure that maximum use is made of public and private investments in facilities, development will be encouraged first in areas where services already exist, and then in conjunction with planned extensions of utility and transportation systems. Other local services and recreation should be provided in a coordinated program of public services in newly developing areas. The County adopted this as a public policy in the 1978 Plan at page 59. The County expects the cooperation of the City in giving more credence to this concept as a goal.
- ❖ While it may be necessary or even desirable for annexation and de-annexation to be a mechanism for implementing policy, piecemeal annexation and de-annexation of areas adjacent to municipal boundaries can result in random development patterns, which bear little relation to the land use plans of either the municipality or the County. Such piecemeal annexation may also make it nearly impossible to anticipate and provide for future service demands in the area. Orderly annexation procedures need to be established in which the municipality and the County jointly agree on the areas to be programmed for service expansion, and annexation of an area. To enhance the opportunities for success of this goal, the County suggests other alternatives to random piecemeal annexation be explored, including negotiated service agreements, tax base sharing or tax differentials, consolidation of services, and other possibilities.

Public Policy

1. The County will incorporate policies conducive to working in cooperation with the City of Worland (“the City”) on issues of mutual interest. To this end, the County shall use its best efforts to enter into a new cooperative agreement(s) with the City of Worland dealing with economic development, annexation, urban services, transportation, and housing issues within the urban services limit as provided in the 1978 Plan at page 58.
2. The County is aware the City is preparing a new zoning plan, which will extend zoning into unincorporated areas co-extensive to its extra-jurisdictional authority under State law. The County intends to mitigate potential for conflict which may arise as a result of the exercise of statutory extra-jurisdictional authority.
3. The Worland Municipal Airport is a necessary component of the County’s transportation network. The airport represents a major public investment that enhances the quality of life for the whole community. The County shall support efforts to protect the airport from conflicting land uses that threaten the long-term viability of the facility.
4. The County will cooperate in developing a master street plan for the City, which coordinates existing and expected roadways in and out of the City. Except for truck traffic, the County will endeavor to focus traffic into the downtown area, keep traffic at safe speeds, and promote intermodal transportation concepts in concert with the City.
5. The County will coordinate its land use regulations with the City to reserve land for industrial use, primarily as “parks” as called for by the 1978 Plan at page 58, for residential subdivisions, and for coordinating controlled growth for expeditious and inexpensive development to take place in keeping with County public policy.
6. Specific projects the County intends to participate with the City in planning and implementing within the foreseeable future are as follows:
 - a. Implement the Worland Area Trails Project Report
 - b. Design and construct appropriate drainage for Sage Creek on Washakie Avenue
 - c. Implement the North Worland Project Report
 - d. Work through the Urban Systems Group to build the 23rd Street Parkway
 - e. Re-map the 100 year flood plain(s) within the Urban Services Area
 - f. Enhance recreational opportunities along the Big Horn River
 - g. Replace the Culbertson Avenue Bridge with a new river crossing
 - h. Secure the old middle school site, and re-develop the site for community projects
 - i. Design and build a rail-friendly business and light industrial park
 - j. Design and build an air service-friendly business and light industrial park
 - k. Participate in the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street Program

Town of Ten Sleep

General.

The Town of Ten Sleep is the oldest urbanized trading center on the west side of the Bighorn Mountains. Now it functions also as a gateway community for the Bighorn National Forest, the Shoshone National Forest, the Bridger-Teton National Forest, and Yellowstone National Park. The Town has worked hard in recent years to upgrade and expand its infrastructure to accommodate residents and visitors alike. Land surrounding the Town is not presently open to development, and the Town has not been able to encourage in-fill development.

Goals.

The County has adopted the following goals for enhancing relations with the Town of Ten Sleep:

- ❖ It is the County's intent to be fiscally responsible through the judicious expenditure of revenue, which will benefit the most residents without compromising the right of those preferring the rural lifestyle from doing so.
- ❖ The County will cooperate with the Town of Ten Sleep to have the flood zone for the Town and surrounding areas adjusted to more appropriately reflect the real flood potential of Ten Sleep Creek, Canyon Creek and the Nowood River.
- ❖ Development has its costs, and its responsibilities. The County seeks to assure rural residents receive the most effective and efficient protections and services fiscally responsible. In addition to fire, police and ambulance services, the County will cooperate with the Town to provide adequate services of mutual concern to both entities.
- ❖ While it may be necessary or even desirable for annexation to be a mechanism for implementing policy, piecemeal annexation of areas adjacent to municipal boundaries can result in random development patterns, which bear little relation to the land use plans of either the municipality or the County. Such piecemeal annexation may also make it nearly impossible to anticipate and provide for future service demands. To enhance the opportunities for success, the County suggests alternatives to annexation be explored, including negotiated service agreements, tax base sharing or tax differentials, consolidation of services, etc.
- ❖ The County is cognizant of the impact public land management has on the economy of Ten Sleep. The County has and will continue to keep the Town apprised of public land issues of mutual concern, and support the Town when public land management conflicts with the welfare of the Town and the extended community around it.
- ❖ The County will use its best efforts to encourage research into the aquifers serving public and private interests, and act to coordinate a well-head protection program balancing the needs of all parties relying on ground water resources.

Public Policy

1. In order to ensure maximum use is made of public and private investments in facilities, the County will encourage fringe development around the Town where services already exist, and then in conjunction with planned extensions of utility and transportation systems compatible with the Town's resources.
2. Orderly annexation procedures and standards providing incentives for residential properties to annex into the Town of Ten Sleep will fiscally benefit the County, and the County agrees to cooperate with the Town in developing a cooperative agreement for urban services expansion, and annexation.
3. Sustainability of the residential and commercial interests relies on adequate and reliable availability of water. The County will strive to encourage conservation of water resources, and remain mindful of protecting ground water resources in its land management policies and planning.

Chapter 7: The Next Step

Implementation

This statement appeared in the 1978 Plan as a requirement:

“Planning is a continuing and evolving process. The Policy Plan is the beginning of this process, which should be added upon....”

The 1978 Plan anticipated a review every three (3) years. This effort does not aspire to such an ambitious expectation. Although well intended, the 1978 experience shows clock-like efficiency in reviewing a comprehensive plan is impractical. The time, effort and money required to complete this process is substantial.

The 1978 Plan also teaches written policies are unlikely to be recognized, or enforced with any consistency. Implementation is not self-actuating; public policies have to be translated into rules and regulations. It is a step-by-step process, which starts with public policy and ends with enforcement. Cumulatively the whole process enhances the quality of life in the community.

The Revised Plan represents the County’s official policy statement on the needs, desires and priorities for community progress. It is hoped that as the needs and desires of County residents change, County government will take the initiative and incorporate appropriate public policy adjustments to assure adaptive actions will result. The expectation for this Revised Plan includes a call for immediate action by all entities and stakeholders to translate policy into law, and then review both the policies and the laws at reasonable intervals, which may be as frequent as annually.

The Revised Plan is also intended to be and remain a “work in progress”. It has been sub-titled “The Centennial Plan” to indicate there are approximately ten (10) years to go before the County celebrates its centennial. Those who participated in this great effort did so with the expectation the general text of the Revised Plan could remain in effect through the County’s centennial. However, even if material changes do occur, regulations drafted in reliance on this public policy statement will endure until the County sees fit to revise its comprehensive yet again.

Following passage of the Land Use Plan in 1978, a priority concern was adoption of subdivision regulations. With the County experiencing substantial growth at the time, there was a real concern about growth. The other priorities (in their order of appearance) for implementation were as follows:

- ❖ A Development Code will be the main implementation tool ...
- ❖ Small wastewater permits will be issued on the County level....
- ❖ Manageable growth around the fringe areas of the municipalities will be implemented through a concurrent resolution ... allowing the towns’ specified powers outside their municipal limits.

These same concerns are with us today; however they are not driven by growth pressures, but by drastic changes to the demographic make-up, and population trends.

In comparing 1978 to 2003; the County is older; less educated, less prosperous, and far more disbursed into unincorporated areas (17% from 1990-2000), while the municipalities are losing people (over 10% of the population of Worland left between 1990-2000). Although the County adopted sweeping changes to its subdivision regulations in October 2002, a public survey done later that year found residents were closely monitoring those regulations in anticipation of additional changes. The same survey found development of the urban fringe areas around municipalities was of significant concern. The survey results have been made an appendix to the Revised Plan.

Waste from septic systems has become a real issue in recent years. Local municipalities no longer accept septic waste, and non-compliant systems contribute to excessive TMDL levels in streams and rivers. One solution is to have urbanized fringe communities around municipalities hook on to public systems, like subdivisions along north Road 11 are planning. Another project anticipated by the Washakie County Conservation District would help offset the costs to bring older septic systems into compliance. Finally, the County is working on locating a septic waste dumpsite that would serve the lower Big Horn Basin – providing a needed service to local property owners, a place to take septic waste, which is both convenient and inexpensive.

With the advice and consent of the Washakie County Board of County Commissioners (“the Board”), the Commission established a priority list for implementation of various land use measures in late 2000. The list, although changed by later circumstances follows:

1. Update Subdivision Resolution (1976)*
2. Establish County Road and Stock Trail Policies and Procedures*
3. Update Land Use Resolution (1982)
4. Update County Zoning Resolution (1982)
5. Update County Comprehensive Plan (1978)*
6. Establish County Policies and Procedures regarding municipal annexation/de-annexation
7. Adopt Outdoor Advertising Regulations
8. Adopt Junkyard/Vehicle Graveyard Regulations

* In October 2001, the Board adopted revisions to the subdivision regulations in response to substantive statutory revisions to the Wyoming Subdivision Act earlier that year. The Commission reviewed the status of County roads and stock trails, but declined to attempt developing policies and procedures, without more and better information. The Board requested this plan receive priority, and budgeted for it in fiscal 2003.

The County’s needs, expectations and resources are not what they were in 1978. The Revised Plan was drafted on a personal computer, transmitted by e-mail, supplemented with digital graphics and maps drawn from “GIS” data, and will likely be printed using laser technology – none of this was available in 1978. Technology not only changed the way the County does its work, but the result. The whole North Worland Project may be planned with computer software called “Community Viz” that allows development scenarios to be played out in cyberspace to test the consequences of various actions.

A youthful population is much different than a aging population so the priorities and concerns perceived in 1978 have taken on a different perspective. However, if this community expects to remain viable and productive, sustaining successive generations, it must find a way to not just provide for seniors, but also implement bold and innovative strategies to bring youth back. This is a daunting task, but one faced by many rural communities. While we share many of the same issues with these other communities, the true test of whether we succeed or fail in finding solutions is entirely our own.

Public Policy

This Plan is intended to be implemented by balancing potentially competing policies that favor aggressive efforts to protect and defend local custom and culture with policies which favor initiatives for a sustainable economy; in other words, amenities and jobs attractive to youthful, family oriented, individuals willing to contribute to the community's well-being. To that end, the County has adopted the following policies:

1. Washakie County will act with other local interests to provide input on public land issues, offering a local perspective and information on management issues regarding public land.
2. Washakie County will continue to support agencies involved in developing methods and information pertaining to disease, weed control, erosion, and drainage, including but not limited to incorporation of those policies adopted as part of the Washakie County Conservation District Land Use Plan. Support for these programs will better utilize the existing agricultural land in the County.
3. Washakie County will coordinate with the Washakie County Conservation District, various irrigation and drainage districts, and the private sector to assure protection of existing productive farmland, and for the development and expansion irrigation facilities for additional productive farmland.
4. Washakie County seeks to remain fiscally responsible to the taxpayers; to retain the rural character; and to protect property values. In doing so, the County will enact land use regulations that will cause productive agricultural farmland to be protected from development, while encouraging development on lands with the least productive resource capabilities and access to utility services and adequate access. Select lands most suitable for rural residential development will receive the most incentives for development, with public land having these criteria receiving the most incentives.

5. Growth patterns will be encouraged to concentrate within and in close proximity to the urbanized areas. The development of new public facilities shall consider cost impacts on property owners and, whenever possible, the least burdensome means of financing shall be selected. Capital facility programming shall be accomplished with the objective of minimizing property taxes.
6. Washakie County intends to protect local public and private interests by assuming primary jurisdiction in the following areas authorized by law:
 - ❖ The partitioning or subdividing of land;
 - ❖ The creation of new roads, access, and utility easements;
 - ❖ The creation of structures within areas subject to flood hazards;
 - ❖ The minimum parcel size; and
 - ❖ The minimum setback of structures from property lines.
7. Zoning is a useful tool assuring local public policies are translated into enforceable regulations. Land use regulations protect and enhance the custom and culture that sustains a community. Washakie County recognizes the need for a good zoning plan to effectuate these public policies; and in particular, the five areas of primary jurisdiction set forth immediately above.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Acronyms

ANILCA	Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act
APA	Administrative Procedure Act (there is both a federal and a State APA)
AUM	Animal Unit Month
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CBM	coalbed methane
CEDS	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DPC	Desired Plant Community
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FDQA	Federal Data Quality Act
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning Systems
ICA	Intergovernmental Cooperative Act
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFIP	National flood Insurance Program
NFMA	National Forest Management Act
NPS	National Park Service
NUPMA	National Undesirable Plant Management Act
PILT	payments in lieu of taxes
RCRA	Resource Conservation Recovery Act
RMP	Resource Management Plan
R.S. 2477	Revised Statute 2477
TMDL	total maximum daily load
TSP	total suspended particulates
USFS	United States Forest Service
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WyDOT	Wyoming Department of Transportation
WDEQ	Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (land and water divisions)
G&F	Wyoming Department of Game and Fish

Appendix B:

FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS PROVIDING FOR CONSULTATION OR INVOLVEMENT OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

- (i) Process and Procedural Statutes
- ❖ Administrative Procedure Act (“APA”), 5 U.S.C. §553, requires notice and comment of proposed regulations.
 - ❖ Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, 3 U.S.C. §301, 42 U.S.C. §4231(a), provides that federal agencies are to coordinate programs and plans with state and local governments. See also, Executive Order 12372 (July 14, 1982)
 - ❖ National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) 42 U.S.C. §4331, 40 C.F.R. §1506.6; NEPA policy is to promote public involvement – 40 C.F.R. §1506.6
 - ❖ Code of Federal Regulations (“CFR”), 40 CFR §1508.5 “A state or local agency of similar qualifications or, when the effects are on a reservation, and Indian Tribe, may by agreement with the lead agency become a cooperating agency.”
 - ❖ Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), Under the FOIA, “...each agency, upon any request for records, which (i) reasonably describe such records, and (ii) is made in accordance with published rules stating the time, place, fees (if any), and procedures to be followed, shall make the records promptly available to any person.” 5 U.S.C. §552(a)(3)(A). (2002)
 - ❖ City of Waltham v. U.S. Postal Services, 11 F.3d 235, 245 (1st Cir. 1993). The obligation of federal agencies to consider local government concerns is a legally enforceable right.
 - ❖ Village of Palatine v. U.S. Postal Services, 742 F. Supp. 1377, 1397 (N.D. Ill. 1990). The consideration of local government plans and policies must occur on the record. Federal agencies have an affirmative duty to develop a list of factors, which support or explain an agency’s decision to act in disharmony with local land use plans.
- (ii) Management of Federal Land
- ❖ Federal Land Policy and Management Act (“FLPMA”), 43 U.S.C. §§1701, *et seq.*
 - (a) “The secretary shall allow an opportunity for public involvement and by regulation shall establish procedures, including public hearings where appropriate, to give federal, state and local governments and the public adequate notice and an opportunity to comment upon and participate in the formulation of plans and programs relating to the management of public land.” 43 U.S.C. §1712(f)
 - (b) Coordination with local government is required in addition to public involvement by regulation for development of land use plans, guidance and revision or amendment of plans. 43 C.F.R. §1610.3-1(a) (2002)

- (c) The BLM is obligated to take all practical measures to resolve conflicts between federal and local government land use plans. Additionally, the BLM must identify areas where the proposed plan is inconsistent with local land use policies, plans or programs and provide reasons why inconsistencies exist and cannot be remedied. 43 C.F.R. §1610.3-1©(2) and (3). (2002)
- (d) “In exercising his authorities under this Act, the Secretary by regulation shall establish procedures, including public hearings where appropriate, to give the federal, state, and local governments and the public adequate notice and an opportunity to comment upon the formulation of standards and criteria for, and to participate in, the preparation and execution of plans and programs for, and the management of public land.” 43 U.S.C. §1739(e)
- (e) “The Secretary, with respect to the public land, shall promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the purposes of this Act and of other laws applicable to the public land, and the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to lands within the National Forest System, shall promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the purposes of this Act.” 43 U.S.C. §1740

❖ National Forest Management Act (“NFMA”), 16 U.S.C. §§1600 *et seq.*

- (a) “In developing the reports required under subsection (b) [Resource Planning Assessments] of this section, the Secretary shall provide the opportunity for public involvement and shall consult with other interested governmental departments and agencies.” 16 U.S.C. §1601(c)
- (b) “The Secretary shall develop, maintain, and, as appropriate, revise land and resource management plans for units of the National Forest System, coordinated with the land and resource management planning processes of State and local governments and other federal agencies.” 16 U.S.C. §1604(a) (2001)
- (c) The Forest Service is obligated to consider and provide for “the stabilization of communities” in its decision-making processes. 36 C.F.R. §221.3(a)(3) (2002)
- (d) To promote sustainability, the responsible official must actively engage the American public, interested organizations, private landowners, state, local and Tribal governments...in the stewardship of the National Forest system lands. 36 C.F.R. §219.12(a) (2001)
- (e) “The responsible official must provide early and frequent opportunities for state and local governments to (a) participate in the planning process, including the identification of issues, and (b) contribute to the streamlined coordination of resource management plans or programs.” 36 C.F.R. §219.14 (2001)
- (f) Amendments to NFMA plans require public notice as well. 16 U.S.C. §1604(f)(4)
- (g) Land use planning regulations are to follow the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) requiring notice and public comment. 16 U.S.C. §1604(g)

- (h) “In carrying out this subchapter, the Secretary of Agriculture shall utilize information and data available from other Federal, State and private organizations and shall avoid duplication and overlap of resource assessment and program planning efforts of other Federal agencies.” 16 U.S.C. §1610
- (i) “In exercising his authorities under this subchapter and other laws applicable to the Forest Service, the Secretary, by regulation, shall establish procedures, including public hearings where appropriate, to give the federal, state and local governments and the public adequate notice and opportunity to comment upon the formulation of standards, criteria, and guidelines applicable to Forest Service programs.” 16 U.S.C. §1612(a)
- (j) Public involvement in all Forest Service decisions, 36 C.F.R. Part 216, implements 16 U.S.C. §1612 of NFMA [note: exempts from public notice and comment manual direction on personnel, contracting and routine business operations. 36 C.F.R. §216.3(a)(3)]
- (k) The Secretary has authority to create advisory boards necessary “to secure full information and advise on the execution of his responsibilities.” 16 U.S.C. §1612(b)
- (l) The Secretary is to implement NFMA through rulemaking with notice and public comment pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) 16 U.S.C. §1613

❖ Other Forest Service Regulations:

- (a) Community stability, 36 C.F.R. §221.3. “Management plans for national forest timber resources shall.....be designed to aid in providing a continuous supply of national forest timber for the use and necessities of the citizens of the United States.”
- (b) Executive Order 12630 (E.O. 12630) March 15, 1988. Governmental Actions and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights.

❖ Protection of Historic and Cultural Resources:

- (a) Cooperation with state and local governmental agencies in protection of historic sites. 16 U.S.C. §464
- (b) Establishes policy of partnership with states, Tribes and counties in protecting historic and cultural resources. 16 U.S.C. §470(a) – (c)(3)
- (c) Historic Advisory Council authorized to adopt regulations to implement local government participation. 16 U.S.C. §470(s)
- (d) Public notice and state agency involvement in rulemaking to protect archeological resources on public land. 16 U.S.C. §470(ii)
- (e) Under APA, “...information concerning the nature and location of any archeological resource for which the excavation or removal requires a permit or other permission ... may not be made available to the public.... Unless the federal land manager concerned determines that such disclosure would (1) further the purpose of this ... Act; and (2) not create a risk of harm to such resources or to this site at which resources are located.” 16 U.S.C. §470hh(a)

(iii) Wildlife Protections

❖ Endangered Species Act. 16 U.S.C. §1533

- (a) With respect to any regulation proposed by the Secretary to implement a determination, designation or revision referred to in subsection (a)(1) or (3) [listing or critical habitat], the Secretary shall...give actual notice of the proposed regulation (including complete text of the regulation) to the state agency in each state in which the species is believed to occur, and to each county or equivalent jurisdiction in which the species is believed to occur, and invite the comment of such agency, and each such jurisdiction, thereon;...” 16 U.S.C. §1533(b)(5)(A)(ii); 50 C.F.R. §424.16(c)(2)
- (b) Public comment of at least sixty (60) days – thirty (30) days in all other rules. 50 C.F.R. §424.16(c)(2)
- (c) Public hearings; if requested. 50 C.F.R. §424.16(c)(3)
- (d) The Secretary shall prior to final approval of a new or revised recovery plan, provide public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment on such plan. The Secretary shall consider all information presented during the public comment period prior to approval of the plan. 16 U.S.C. §1533(f)(4)
- (e) Guidelines for classifying petitions and review of potentially threatened or endangered species shall have public notice and opportunity for comment. 16 U.S.C. §1533(h)
- (f) Secretary is to cooperate with the states “...to the maximum extent practicable.” 16 U.S.C. §1535(a) This includes signing cooperative agreements and working with state fish and wildlife programs.

❖ Miscellaneous Other Federal Wildlife Protection Laws

- (a) Coordination with state and other agencies in wildlife protections. 16 U.S.C. §661
- (b) National Wildlife Refuge System is to coordinate with state agencies and other agencies and to provide for public involvement. 16 U.S.C. §668(dd)
- (c) Coordinate with state and other entities in developing comprehensive plans for wildlife restoration. 16 U.S.C. §670(g) and (h)
- (d) Counties are entitled to twenty five percent of revenues from sales of operations within units of the National Wildlife Refuge System. 16 U.S.C. §715(s)
- (e) National Trail System administration and coordination to occur in consultation with state, tribal and local governments. 16 U.S.C. §1246
- (f) Wild & Scenic Rivers System to be designated and expanded in consultation with state and local governments. 16 U.S.C. §1273
- (g) Coordinate, consult and provide for public involvement with local governments in conservation of soil and water, including private land grazing. 16 U.S.C. §§2003-2005
- (h) State authority to develop conservation program for non-game wildlife and fish and public involvement. 16 U.S.C. §2903

(iv) Federal Pollution Laws

❖ Clean Water Act. 33 U.S.C. §1251, *et seq.*

- (a) “It is the policy of the Congress to recognize, preserve, and protect the primary responsibilities and rights of the states to prevent, reduce and eliminate pollution, to plan the development and use (including restoration, preservation, and enhancement) of land and water resources and to consult with the Administrator in the exercise of his authority under this chapter.” 33 U.S.C. §1251(b)
- (b) “Public participation in the development, revision, and enforcement of any regulation, standards, effluent limitation, plan or program established by the Administrator or any state under this chapter, shall be provided for, encouraged, and assisted by the Administrator and the states. The Administrator, in cooperation with the states, shall develop and public regulations specifying minimum guidelines for public participation in such process.” 33 U.S.C. §1251(e)
- (c) “It is the policy of the Congress that the authority of each state to allocate quantities of water within its jurisdiction shall not be superseded, abrogated, or otherwise impaired by this chapter. It is the further policy of Congress that nothing in this Chapter shall be construed to supersede or abrogate rights to quantities of water, which have been established by any state. Federal agencies shall cooperate with state and local agencies to develop comprehensive solutions to prevent, reduce and eliminate pollution in concert with programs for managing water resources.” 33 U.S.C. §1251(g)
- (d) “The Administrator shall, after careful investigation and in cooperation with other federal agencies, state water pollution control agencies, interstate agencies, and the municipalities and industries involved prepare or develop comprehensive programs for preventing, reducing or eliminating the pollution of the navigable waters and ground waters and improving the sanitary conditions of surface and underground waters.” 33 U.S.C. §1252(a)

❖ Resource Conservation Recovery Act (“RCRA”). 42 U.S.C. §6901, *et seq.*

- (a) State solid waste regulatory programs authorized. 42 U.S.C. §6926
- (b) State underground storage tank programs authorized. 42 U.S.C. §6991(c)

❖ Clean Air Act. 42 U.S.C. §7401, *et seq.*

- (a) Public involvement in preparation of state and regional implementation plans. 42 U.S.C. §7410

❖ Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (“CERCLA”). 42 U.S.C. §9601, *et seq.*

- ❖ Community Right to Know. 42 U.S.C. §1001, *et seq.* Implements broad authority to inform members of the public regarding the existence or presence of regulated substances.
- (v) Federal Public and Rural Services
- ❖ Plant and Animal Damage
 - (a) 7 U.S.C. §§2808, 2814. Requires cooperation with counties on noxious weed control.
 - (b) 43 U.S.C. §1241. State agencies authorized to control noxious weeds on public land.
 - ❖ Federal Electrical and Telephone Services
 - (a) 7 U.S.C. §950(aa). Authorizes economic development aid for local communities.
 - (b) 7 U.S.C. §2281. Authorizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture to form local advisory councils.
 - ❖ Federal Highway Act.
 - (c) 23 U.S.C. §§204, 214. Requires consultation with local government authorities.
- (vi) Presidential Executive Orders
- 58 Fed.Reg. 51, 735. (1993)

“State, local and Tribal governments are specifically encouraged to assist in the identification of regulations that impose significant or unique burdens on those governmental entities and that appear to have outlived their justification or be otherwise inconsistent with the public interest.”
 - 62 Fed.Reg. 48, 445.

“The purpose of this Order is to assist Federal departments and agencies in undertaking such reviews and in proposing, planning, and implementing actions with due regard for the Constitutional protections afforded by the Fifth Amendment and to reduce the risk of undue or inadvertent burdens on the public fiscally resulting from lawful governmental action.”

Appendix C:

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES
OTHER THAN THOSE IN APPENDIX B

Wyoming Statutes; especially, W.S. §18-5-201, *et seq.*

The Washakie County Planning Workshop Results dated March 18, 1995

Ten Sleep Community Assessment - Conducted October 22-24, 2001

Worland Community Assessment – Conducted September 26-28, 2000

Wyoming Agricultural Statistics (2003)

Big Horn Basin Wyoming Resource Conservation and Development Council Long Range Plan (2002-2007); as revised 2002

Washakie County Conservation District Revised Land Use Plan (December 2001)

Big Horn Mountain Country Coalition Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) dated (2002)

Wind/Bighorn River Basin Plan (2003)

Wyoming Business Council Strategic Plan (2002)

“Smart Growth at the Frontier:” by Barbara Wells (2002)

Moffat County (CO) Land Use Plan, Chapter 1: Public Lands; as amended September 2001

The General Plan for Washington County (MD) as of 11/12/2002

Coconino County (AZ) Comprehensive Planning and Visioning Plan (2001)

Sweetwater County (WY) Comprehensive Plan dated 8/6/02

Hot Springs County (WY) Land Use Plan (2002)

Laramie County (WY) Comprehensive Plan (2001)

Park County (WY) Comprehensive Land Use Plan (2000)

North Worland Project Report (2002)

Worland Area Trails Project Report (2003)

Appendix D:

MAPS AND GRAPHS

Maps.

Location Map of the State of Wyoming highlighting Washakie County

County Base Map showing land cover uses

Base Map of the Worland Area

Base Map of the Ten Sleep Area

Aerial of Town of Ten Sleep

Zoning Buffer Aerial of City of Worland

Pocketed Base Map showing surface ownership; private, State, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and other federal lands, platted rural subdivisions and public roads (color coded)

Appendix E:

LAND USE SURVEY RESULTS

Background.

1. In 2001, just over 3,000 questionnaires went out and we received 316 responses.
2. There were 129 responses that were signed and received in a timely manner.
3. Many of the responses failed to answer all of the questions; especially 3(a).

Questions.

1. Regarding the land you own in the County (not including land in any other State or County), what are your primary uses of the land? (Choose all that apply)

78% permanent residence
07% second / vacation home
23% agriculture
17% business
13% investment
04% other

2. How many acres of land do you own in the County? (Choose one)

39% less than one acre / city lot
20% one acre but less than three
06% three acres but less than five
12% five acres but less than thirty-five
22% thirty five or more acres

3. Do you agree the County needs to establish a building construction code?

28% yes
37% no
11% undecided

- a. If so, do you agree new construction be inspected?

49% yes
23% no
10% undecided

4. Should the County hire a code enforcement officer?

22% yes
56% no
20% undecided

5. Should the County encourage development of senior housing?

67% yes
16% no
15% undecided

6. Do you believe Washakie County needs land use regulations addressing the following issues: (Choose all you agree with)

30% Mobile / Modular homes
78% Junk & Salvage yards
31% Minimum subdivision lot sizes
49% Size and location of roadside billboards
62% commercial animal feedlots

7. Do you agree the County needs to actively participate in federal agency decision-making affecting Washakie County?

82% yes
07% no
08% undecided

8. What are the most important County planning issues for you? (Choose only **three**)

13% Draft a new Land Use Resolution
13% Draft a new Zoning Resolution
29% Promote Controlled Development
32% Promote property clean-up efforts
20% Promote the Rural Character of Washakie County
37% Encourage Opportunities for Agriculture
56% Encourage Opportunities for Economic Development
22% Encourage growth to occur around municipalities
05% Mitigate flood prone areas
10% Mitigate damage to wildlife habitat
24% Develop a County Road Plan / Establish public right-of-ways
20% Protect Cultural and Historical sites

9. Do you agree the County needs to discourage “Urban Sprawl”?

43% yes
36% no
19% undecided

10. Do you agree the County's 1978 Comprehensive Plan needs to be revised?

51% yes
06% no
35% undecided

b. If so, what are the most important issues that need to be addressed in that Plan.
(Choose the **three** most important issues that need to be addressed in the Plan)

26% Adopt a stronger statement of public policy protecting agriculture
05% Remove statements of public policy that protect agriculture
22% Plan by region rather than the county as a whole
19% Adopt a public policy statement discouraging "Urban Sprawl"
10% Adopt a public policy statement encouraging fire suppression equipment on
public water lines
31% Adopt a public policy statement supporting access to public lands
21% Adopt a public policy statement supporting grazing on public lands
22% Adopt a public policy statement encouraging development with public water and
sewer facilities
27% Plan based on land use impacts rather than zoning

11. The State passed a new subdivision law in 2001. Are you aware that with certain exceptions, any split of property creating a parcel of less than thirty-five (35) acres is now subject to the Wyoming Subdivision Act?

38% yes
51% no
08% undecided

12. The County recently adopted new subdivision regulations. Do you agree these regulations effectively carry out State law?

09% yes
08% no
72% undecided

13. Do you believe the County Planning Commission should place notice of its meetings in the local media?

93% yes
02% no
03% undecided

14. The Washakie County Planning Commission has set a priority list to be accomplished. Given the following list, please mark the **five** issues that would be at the top of the list you would like to see the Planning Commission accomplish?

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------|---|
| | 27% | Revise Subdivision Resolution (2001) |
| 3 rd | 43% | Establish County Road and Stock Trail Policies and Procedures |
| | 38% | Update Land Use Resolution (1982) |
| 5 th | 39% | Update County Zoning Resolution (1982) |
| 2 nd | 46% | Update County Comprehensive Plan (1978) |
| 4 th | 42% | Establish County Policies and Procedures regarding municipal annexation |
| | 31% | Adopt Outdoor Advertising Regulations |
| 1 st | 73% | Adopt Junkyard/Vehicle Graveyard Regulations |