

# State of the County 2012 - 2013



A report from the Sublette Board of County Commissioners  
Pinedale, Wyoming



# FAST FACTS

- Proportion of Wyoming's taxable valuation contributed by Sublette County for the year 2011: 18.43 percent. Only Campbell County's proportion was higher, at 22 percent.

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE ANNUAL REPORT

- Sublette County contributed 17 percent of all taxes paid to the State of Wyoming in 2011. WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE ANNUAL REPORT

## • Snapshot of activity:

### Boom & decline

As measured by total rig weeks in a single county over the course of a calendar year, Garfield County, Colorado and Sublette County, Wyoming hit all-time highs as the busiest drilling areas in the West (in 2008 and 2006, respectively).

- **Fastest build-ups:** Headwaters Economics noted: "We often pay attention when a boom is underway, but are less cognizant of the period of build up and bust. Focusing on the boom makes sense because local impacts may be most visible. But the speed and scope of change that occurs during the build up to a boom make these periods equally dramatic — often leading to the most difficult periods for local economies and governments that are challenged to react to rapid swings in revenue, population, and business activity."

- **Steepest declines:** The economic recession resulted in steep and rapid declines in drilling activity. Sublette County ranked high on the list of counties experiencing rapid busts. HEADWATERS ECONOMICS. COUNTY LEVEL DRILLING ACTIVITY 2001-2012. FEBRUARY 2012.

10 Busiest Counties—Most Rig Activity in a Single Year in the Past Decade

	County, State	Basin	Rig Weeks in a Single Year	Year
1	Garfield County, CO	Uinta-Piceance	3181	2008
2	Sublette County, WY	Green River	2257	2006
3	Eddy County, NM	Permian	2041	2006
4	McKenzie County, ND	Williston	1882	2011
5	Mountrail County, ND	Williston	1633	2010
6	Weld County, CO	Denver	1602	2011
7	Lea County, NM	Permian	1564	2005
8	Uintah County, UT	Uinta-Piceance	1458	2008
9	Williams County, ND	Williston	1352	2011
10	Dunn County, ND	Williston	1169	2011

10 Fastest Build-ups in Oil and Gas Drilling Activity in the Past Decade

	County	Basin	Total Increase in Rig Week Activity	Period
1	Eddy County, NM	Permian	1154	2002 - 2003
2	Mountrail County, ND	Williston	858	2007 - 2008
3	Lea County, NM	Permian	834	2002 - 2003
4	Williams County, ND	Williston	815	2009 - 2010
5	Garfield County, CO	Uinta-Piceance	808	2002 - 2003
6	McKenzie County, ND	Williston	763	2009 - 2010
7	Sublette County, WY	Green River	725	2002 - 2003
8	Weld County, CO	Denver	622	2010 - 2011
9	Uintah County, UT	Uinta-Piceance	495	2003 - 2004
10	Dunn County, ND	Williston	413	2009 - 2010

10 Steepest Falls in Oil and Gas Drilling Activity in the Past Decade

	County	Basin	Total Change in Rig Week Activity	Period
1	Garfield County, CO	Uinta-Piceance	-2100	2008 - 2009
2	Uintah County, UT	Uinta-Piceance	-1007	2008 - 2009
3	Sublette County, WY	Green River	-915	2008 - 2009
4	Eddy County, NM	Permian	-663	2008 - 2009
5	Lea County, NM	Permian	-588	2008 - 2009
6	Mesa County, CO	Uinta-Piceance	-449	2008 - 2009
7	Weld County, CO	Denver	-390	2008 - 2009
8	Sweetwater County, WY	Green River	-368	2008 - 2009
9	Richland County, ND	Williston	-355	2008 - 2009
10	Rio Blanco County, CO	Uinta-Piceance	-234	2008 - 2009

Front cover: A rangeland windmill along the Wind River Front.

Background this page: Indian paintbrush and lupine are familiar companions on springtime slopes.

# Budget totals more than \$200 million

*Commission holds line on spending, tucks money away*

The Sublette County Commission approved a historic \$202 million budget for the 2012-2013 year – the largest budget in county history. More than \$130 million of that amount is allocated to reserve accounts, and \$52.5 million is new tax money generated from a 12-mill levy. The commission was able to place an additional \$23.5 million into reserve accounts in the new budget over last year's amounts, but notes that some of this money may need to be allocated to spending accounts to address a critical county issue – the needs of its senior citizens. The commission had pledged its commitment to providing support for seniors through major projects in both Marbleton and Pinedale. Read more about this on page 3.

It costs about \$3.4 million per month to operate county government, according to Sublette County Clerk Mary Lankford.

Many of the departmental budgets declined from last year to the new year, and the county continues a downward trend in staff positions. As staff positions become vacant (such as through retirements) the positions have been left vacant or eliminated due to the decreased workload resulting from the current economic downturn. In some cases, the commission has changed the structure of positions to reflect the amount of work involved. The commission has also continued its general hiring freeze, not creating new staff positions.

Commissioner John Linn pointed out that another major change this year is the elimination of the contract to accept Teton County garbage at the Marbleton landfill.

"I'm really happy that we're going to be dealing with our own garbage from now on, and we can determine our own destiny at the landfill," Linn said.

"I've been talking about senior housing since I became a commissioner, and we're also going to see something happen with that. The Sublette Center rebuild is looking like it's getting closer and closer," Linn said.

"I'm happy to say I think we've got money now to handle these projects, mostly because we've put the money away and planned very prudently," Linn added.

These were two priority items for Linn when he campaigned to come on the commission eight years ago, and he is now seeing the fruition of his efforts.

Commissioner Andy Nelson was particular at pointing out overall senior services need support from the community and will be the subject of commission attention.

"It is not just senior housing, but assisted living and nursing care, in addition to independent senior housing," he said.

In a somewhat unprecedented outlook, all three commissioners are united in their support to address senior services as the top priority issue in the county, and to taking a countywide approach to the subject, as Nelson pointed out.

"It's neat to see the whole county come together on one particular topic – to see everyone headed in the same direction with support is just wonderful," he said.

In terms of the overall budget, Nelson also noted

*Continued on the next page*



County Commissioners John Linn, Andy Nelson, and Joel Bousman hold commissioner meetings twice a month in the county courthouse.



**COUNTY BUDGET** *continued from page 1*

that capital improvements are not as prominent as they have been in the past.

Nelson said, "I believe that the county is getting to the point where we have our infrastructure in good shape, and we can turn our emphasis toward maintaining what we have and not continue to build."

Nelson expressed his appreciation for past commissions that worked to make improvements to infrastructure while also tucking money away for the future.

"I think that previous commissions have done a good job in getting the county to this point, and now that we're at this point, we can turn our attention to other things," Nelson said. "I'd rather help somebody feed their family than build another building."

Commission Chairman Joel Bousman said that while town and county government officials have stepped up to lead the way by addressing senior services, the citizenry needs to do the same.

"It needs to be one countywide project," Bousman said, emphasizing that the decision to approve this level of tax-funded senior services needs to be supported by the people.

"It's kind of a change in the traditional philosophy

of local government in this county, to be putting that much money into that type of a service. It is imperative that people support it – through an election of some kind, whatever is decided."

Outside of the senior services issue, Bousman said with this new budget, "The county was able to very adequately fund budget requests while adding significantly to the budget reserves."

Bousman once again noted his frustration that the county has no mechanism in place to protect the reserve accounts from being spent.

"One thing I would like to see happen in the future is for counties to be given statutory authority for a trust fund for county money," Bousman said. He noted that although this commission, and past commissions, have worked diligently to build the county reserve funds to the level they are today, a future commission could spend those at any rate it chose since there is no legal way the current commission can bind future commissions to keep the money in reserves. Although the Sublette County Commission has raised the topic repeatedly at the state legislature, few other counties face an excess revenue issue, so nothing has been done to address it.

## Budget by the numbers

The entire county government budget for Fiscal Year 2013 rings in at \$202 million, of which \$52.5 million is tax money assessed this year, with the balance being carryover from existing accounts.

The Sublette County Commission voted to assess the tax rate in the county at 12 mills to generate the

\$52.5 million mentioned above. That money funds all county departments, boards, and social/human service programs – everything from road projects, and museums, to law enforcement and recreational programs. The budget also includes nearly \$130 million in reserves.

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Total</b>
General Fund.....	\$191,431,594
Fair Fund .....	\$2,450,579
Airport Fund.....	\$1,136,335
Library Fund .....	\$1,736,392
Museum Fund.....	\$524,923
Recreation Fund.....	\$2,111,348
Fire Fund .....	\$3,103,575
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$202,494,746</b>

Total appropriations:.....	\$61,938,088
Other general accounts: .....	\$12,747,290
Cash reserve: .....	\$10,000,000
Equipment reserve:.....	\$7,368,260
Depreciation reserve:.....	\$112,125,246
General fund requirement: .....	\$191,431,594
<b>TOTAL REQUIREMENT:.....</b>	<b>\$202,516,890</b>

## Top priority item: Support for senior citizens

"We have a huge project we're wrestling with," Commission Chairman Joel Bousman explained as the Sublette County Commission began its budget talks this year. That issue is senior services/housing, and it quickly grew into the top priority item for the commission.

"Any extra money we have, I'm inclined to allocate it toward addressing that issue," Bousman warned.

"We've got all our eggs in this senior housing basket," said Commissioner John Linn.

That sentiment is reflected in the final budget figures, with \$29 million allocated into a reserve account for building projects. This is the line item from which the commission can move funds into spending accounts as plans are finalized for improvements in services and housing for seniors in the coming year, and the commission decides how much, if any, should be paid from county coffers. The \$29 million budget item is for all future county building projects, not just those involving senior citizens. It is the commission's intention to retain money in this reserve account to continue to provide for the county's future building needs as they arise.

Commissioner Andy Nelson noted that the county's interest is not just in senior housing, but overall senior services, and it is critical that citizens in the county join

together with local elected officials in providing overall support and momentum to address the needs of seniors. The commission has expressed its intent having citizens have their say on a special excise tax to provide designated funding for senior projects.

The town councils of Big Piney and Marbleton have both identified senior housing as a top priority item for funding support, and each town has set aside \$1 million toward that effort. The Sublette County Commission and the governing councils of the county's three incorporated towns serve as a "consensus group" for a capital projects grant program administered by the Wyoming State Loan and Investment Board. The consensus group agreed that the \$1 million in grant funding would be allocated toward senior services issues in the county. The commission rose to the challenge by agreeing to put up an initial amount of \$2.9 million for a senior housing project in Marbleton.

Preliminary plans call for the construction of independent housing units for seniors in the Marbleton area, independent living units in Pinedale, and construction of a new Sublette Center in Pinedale, with both assisted-living and skilled-nursing accommodations at the Pinedale facility. The commission stands ready to lead the process as plans for these facilities are finalized.



A sandhill crane on her nest in the Bondurant area of Sublette County.

## Funding for the Future: Nearly \$130 million in reserves

The budget includes \$129,493,506 in reserve accounts, split between cash (\$10 million); equipment (\$7.4 million); and depreciation (\$112 million). Reserve money is held in interest-earning accounts. In order to be spent, the budget must be amended to transfer the required funding from a reserve account to a spending account.

**Cash reserve:** \$10 million. This money provides for cash flow for county government operations.

**Equipment reserve:** \$7.4 million. Each year, money is set aside to pay for future equipment purchases.

**Depreciation reserve:** \$112 million. Since the county does not have the statutory authority to establish a trust fund or rainy day account for future county government operations, money is earmarked and set aside in specific reserve accounts for use in the future.



A western bluebird perches on a corral pole, with the Wind River Mountains in the background.

### The Depreciation Reserve budget includes the following accounts:

Landfill (remediation, closure, reserve).....	\$4.5 million
Teton County Landfill Contract (conclusion of contingency and capital).....	\$178,217
State/County road fund .....	\$4.5 million
Building projects, equipment and maintenance .....	\$29 million*
Senior centers/facilities (operation and capital).....	\$7.7 million
Road & bridge projects.....	\$6 million
Recreation (operations and capital).....	\$9.7 million**
Ag & Fair (operations and capital).....	\$12.7 million***
Human services.....	\$4.5 million
Courthouse and maintenance.....	\$6 million
Airports .....	\$5 million
Museums (operations and capital).....	\$8.5 million
Library (operations and capital).....	\$10.2 million****
Resource monitoring .....	\$2 million
Communications and IT .....	\$ 1 million
Elections .....	\$200,000

\* This is the fund from which the commission can provide an allocation to support senior housing, should a decision be made on that in the new fiscal year.

\*\* Included is \$1 million for a clubhouse for the county-owned golf course.

\*\*\* Including \$1 million for a new building for the property donated from QEP in early 2012 to support the county 4-H program.

\*\*\*\* Includes \$6 million as a seed account for the eventual renovation or construction of a new library in Big Piney.



## Designated mill funding

Six program areas receive a portion of the county's 12-mill levy established by the county commission because of their special status as determined by state statute. These boards include: fair, fire, library, museum, airport, and recreation. The total budget amounts for each of these budgets includes some cash carry-over from the previous budget year, as well as the mill levy allocation from the current year. Boards appointed by the county commissioners supervise these budgets and the commission must approve their final budgets.

### FAIR

The fair fund totals \$2.4 million, including \$1.8 million in new funding (.40 of a mill). A portion of this amount goes toward hosting the county fair, while the remainder provides for operation the ag center, and all maintenance and improvements of the fairgrounds and all its facilities.

The fair budget totals about \$845,000, but this includes enough funding to host two fairs in order to provide for adequate cash flow during the budget year (since the fair is held at the start of the budget year). The fair board oversees this spending, providing for all events at the annual county fair, personnel and administration, and a reserve account.

The fairgrounds budget totals \$1.7 million, which includes \$196,864 in staff salaries. Major spending categories include \$500,000 for equipment in buildings, \$200,000 for construction, \$160,000 for building maintenance, \$170,000 for utilities and phone, \$120,000 for equipment, and \$100,000 for projects. Entertainment is budgeted at \$80,000, and landscaping is allocated \$75,000.

Gas and oil is budgeted at \$25,000, and training and travel is allocated \$15,000. Supplies, repairs and trash removal are allocated a combined \$73,000, and the budget also includes \$10,000 for a new vehicle reserve.

The commission also made a separate allocation of \$586,645 to pay for the recently completed paving and drainage projects at the fairgrounds.

### FIRE

The fire budget totals \$3.1 million, which includes new funding of \$951,135 (.21 of a mill). This budget includes funding for all six fire stations and volunteer

fire departments in the county (Big Piney/Marbleton, Bondurant, Boulder, Daniel, Kendall Valley, and Pinedale), as well as an allocation for the countywide fire board. This budget also provides for the newly constructed fire-training tower. The commission added an additional \$246,500 for construction of a new training facility at the tower.

The budget also includes \$107,240 for a fire suppression account. This funds firefighting efforts on private lands, and is used to pay for additional fire trucks from neighboring stations to stand by in support of the county's firefighting resources.

### LIBRARY

The \$1.7 million library budget includes \$1.3 million in new funding (.30 of a mill). The biggest change in the library system budget is the placement of full-time library staff members on the county step salary schedule so they are paid on par with other county employees. The library system budget also includes the addition of e-books to the services offered to library patrons in both the Big Piney and Pinedale libraries. The budget also provides support to the Bondurant library through collection materials and technology.

### MUSEUM

The county museum budget totals about \$525,000, with \$435,000 coming from .09 of a mill in the new year. The Sublette County Museum Board supervises this budget, and money is allocated to the Sublette County Historical Society (which operates the Museum of the Mountain Man in Pinedale) and the Green River Valley Museum. The county also provides about \$20,000 for the county's historic preservation board. The board's major projects this year include surveying historic homesteads, improvements at New Fork Historical Park, the Lander Trail book, and sponsorship of "History Day" events.

### AIRPORT

The airport budget totals \$1.1 million, including \$255,000 in new funding (.05 of a mill). This provides \$105,000 to operate the Big Piney-Marbleton airport, and \$150,000 for the Ralph Wenz Field near Pinedale.

*Continued on the next page*

## Fairgrounds Improvements

A quick look at the Sublette County Fairgrounds near Marbleton reveals that major improvements have been made to the grounds in the last few years, and those improvements are slated to continue.

From the major events held at the events center (everything from bull sales, tractor pulls, rodeos, and concerts, to reining and cutting events) to new bucking chutes at the Buss Fear Arena, and new pavement and parking areas, with landscaping throughout the grounds, and a marquee sign at the entrance, the fairgrounds has become an important asset in the county.

The events center continues to experience increased usage, and Fairgrounds Manager Jay Brower said he'd like to see a community event in that facility at least once a month.

**Fairgrounds Manager Jay Brower and assistant Brianne Brower process paperwork in the manager's office at the events center.**



"We can use this as a tool in the county to promote tourism," Brower said. By hosting major events at the fairgrounds, visitors are drawn to the county and will spend money at local business establishments while they are here, he added.

Those wanting to reserve fairgrounds facilities for events can visit the Sublette County website, [www.sublettewyo.com](http://www.sublettewyo.com), and under the department's header, select fairgrounds to see the schedule. Contact the manager by email at [jayb@sublettewyo.com](mailto:jayb@sublettewyo.com), or call (307) 749-3546.

## DESIGNATED MILL FUNDING *continued from page 5*

The commission also separately allocated \$267,000 for the runway project at the Marbleton airport.

### RECREATION

The recreation budget totals \$2.1 million, including \$1.1 million of new funding (.25 of a mill) to fund programs approved by the county recreation board as well as the ice arena in Pinedale. This funds a wide variety of recreational pursuits, including lighting at the ball fields, wrestling equipment, softball umpires, Pinedale Fine Arts Council programming, gun club improvements, equipment for the Big Piney recreation program,

Nordic trail grooming, marathon support, pathway maintenance and improvements, ski and snowboard group activities, hockey rink operations, and support for skate club and nature camps. The Sublette County Recreation Board supervises this budget.

The \$387,835 ice arena budget includes \$153,735 in salaries, \$75,000 for building maintenance, and \$57,000 for equipment and tools. The budget also includes \$55,000 for utilities, \$15,000 for equipment maintenance, \$11,000 for rink supplies, \$8,000 for training, and lesser amounts for miscellaneous items related to operating the arena.



# Property Taxation

All property tax is based on the assessed value of the property. Assessed value actually means taxable value, which is a percent of the fair market value.

Gross product of minerals and mine products is taxed at 100 percent of its fair market value; industrial property is taxed at 11.5 percent; and all other property (real and personal) is taxed at 9.5 percent.

The county assessor establishes taxable values for most properties within the county. Minerals are valued by the state for ad valorem and severance tax purposes. The values are allocated back to the counties for ad valorem purposes.

Property taxes are one of the primary sources of funds for local governments, counties, school districts, cities, towns and special agencies such as service and improvement districts, rural health care districts, and cemetery districts. The federal government does not receive any revenue from your property tax. Tax rates are set by the various political entities with the legal power to levy taxes.

Sublette County property owners have among the lowest average mill levies in the entire state, with its total of about 64 mills. The total mills levied in Sublette County includes not only the 12 mills established by the county commission, but includes school funding, and special districts such as cemetery districts, rural health care, weed and pest, and service and improvement districts. These special districts generated more than \$10 million in additional taxes from levies last year, in addition to the school and county general fund budgets.

The majority of the taxes you pay provides for school funding – 44 mills of your tax burden pays for the state's educational system. The tax is collected here at the local level, but the revenue is remitted to the state for redistribution.

Only two county commissions in the entire state did not levy the entire 12 mills available to them last year. Teton County levied about 8.6 mills, and Campbell County levied 11 mills.

## UNAVAILABLE TO OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT

More than 42 percent of land in Sublette County is unavailable for oil and gas development.

Area	Acres
Designated Wilderness Areas	474,313
USFS special status areas	363,768
BLM special status areas	45,338
BLM ROD additional withdrawals	453,700
BLM WSRs	10,675
Total acreage unavailable	1,337,119
Sublette County Total	3,168,009

ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH GROUP, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
DOCUMENTS

## VALUATION BY PROPERTY TYPE

Property Class	Assessed Value	Percent
Mineral & Industry	\$4,236,101,158	96.78
Residential	95,209,977	2.18
Commercial	30,469,657	.70
Agricultural	7,972,516	0.18
Utilities	7,394,198	0.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,377,147,506</b>	<b>100</b>

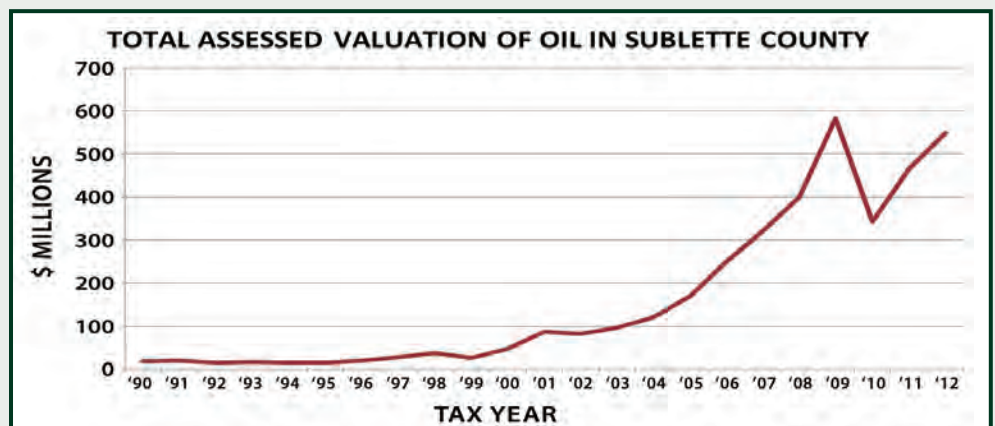
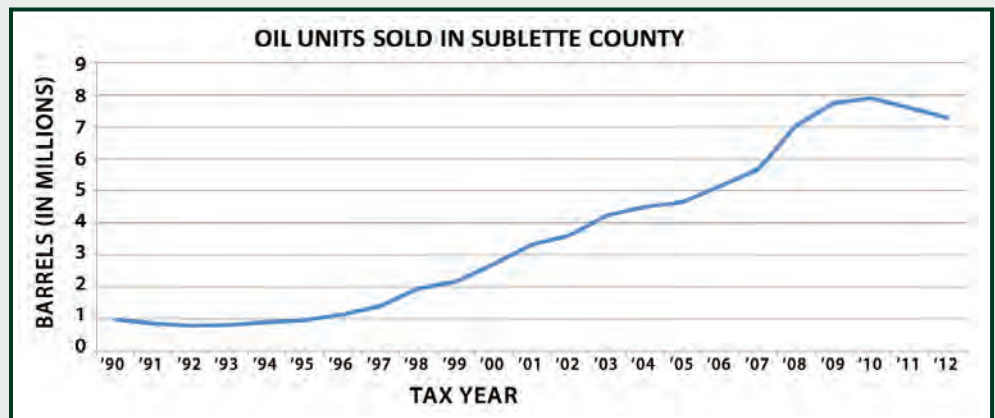
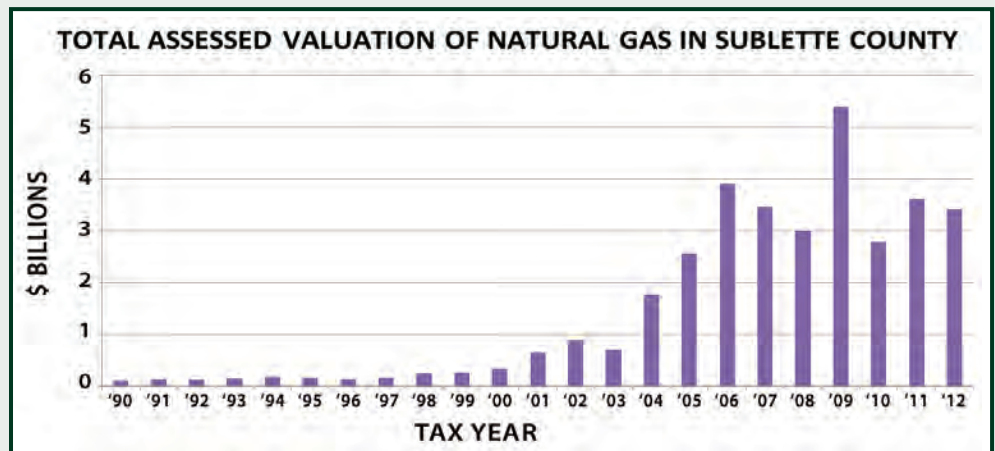
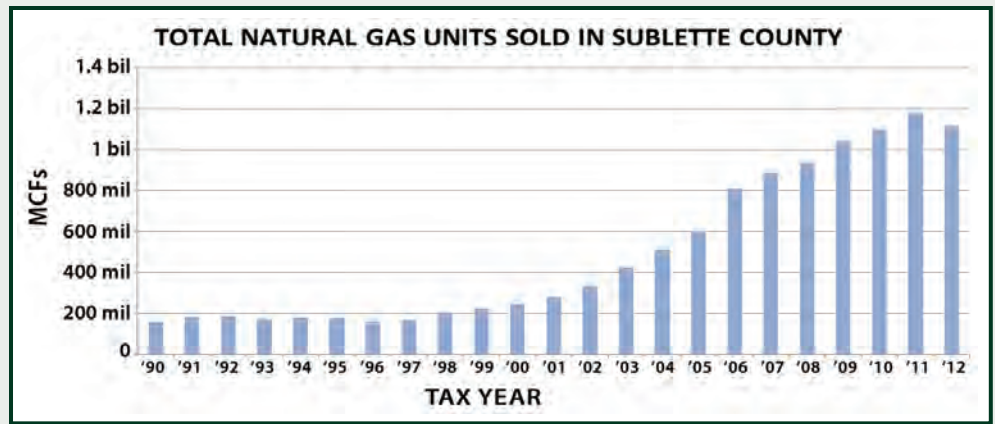
## TOP 10 TAXPAYERS IN SUBLETTE COUNTY

Company	Total Assessed Value	Percent
EnCana Oil & Gas USA, Inc.	\$1,091,224,176	24.93
Ultra Resources, Inc.	914,268,111	20.89
SWEPI LP (Shell)	502,335,438	11.48
QEP Energy Co. (Questar)	478,639,597	10.93
BP America Production Co.	340,451,515	7.78
Lance Oil & Gas Co., Inc.	199,675,802	4.56
Exxon Mobil Corp.	127,505,773	2.91
Jonah Gas Gathering Co.	81,096,472	1.85
EOG Resources, Inc.	70,481,888	1.61
Wexpro Co.	67,224,888	1.54
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$3,872,903,660</b>	<b>88.48</b>

## Natural gas and oil production and valuation

These charts show oil and gas productivity and assessed valuation in Sublette County for each year since 1990.

SUBLETTE COUNTY ASSESSOR.





## Elected officials & their departments

Seven county departments are operated by elected officials that work full time in those positions: clerk; treasurer; assessor; attorney; district court clerk; and coroner. Each elected official supervises their department and staff, with the board of county commissioners serving as the final authority over budget expenditures. Funding for each of these departments comes from the county general fund. The county commission also has its own budget, but has no specific department or staff.

### Commission

The commissioners hold a budget of \$328,350, with nearly \$100,000 of that amount allocated to salaries (each of the three commissioners receives an annual salary of \$33,250). The other two large spending categories of \$100,000 each include special attorneys and consultants. The commission retains lawyers and consultants to help the county participate in land use planning, natural resource litigation, assess impacts of federal actions, and to report back to the public. The commission retains the Davis and Cannon law firm, and provides funding to support litigation regarding natural resource issues, working with the Wyoming

Stock Growers Association to do so.

The commission has set aside \$18,000 for travel, meals and mileage. Sublette County is honored that Commission Chairman Joel Bousman also serves as president of the Wyoming County Commissioners Association, and part of the travel budget covers expenses associated with that important role. Each of the county's three commissioners serve on various boards and commissions, and participate in governmental partnerships at the local, state and national level. Commissioners also travel to attend meetings, to testify and lobby the Wyoming Legislature, and to various locations where they work to have an impact on regional and national policies that affect Sublette County.

The commission has set aside \$10,100 into a new vehicle reserve account for eventual replacement of the vehicle used by the commission on official business, plus \$500 in office expenses.

### Clerk

The clerk's budget totals \$404,901, which includes \$377,601 in salaries for Clerk Mary Lankford and her

*Continued on the next page*

## Salaries

The county commission sets salaries for elected officials, using the guidance of state statutes that establish salary caps for certain elected positions.

Salaries for the county clerk, treasurer, assessor, clerk of district court, and sheriff are set at \$78,750 for the remainder of the 2012 year, and \$82,687.50 for the 2013 budget year (a 5-percent increase). The county attorney's annual salary will also increase from \$89,250 per year to \$93,712.50 per year. The county coroner's salary is set at \$29,390.

Salaries for other county employees are determined by a set salary schedule. Certain department heads that are not elected have salaries set at the identical rate of \$74,667. This includes the superintendents of the following

departments: Maintenance; Road & Bridge; and Waste Management.

Instead of instituting a cost-of-living increase to those on the county pay schedule, the commission did something a little different this year, according to County Clerk Mary Lankford.

"In this budget, we added \$1,000 to each step of pay schedule," she said. In addition, the commission is providing a bonus of \$200 per year for each year of service, up to 10 years, so it caps at \$2,000.

"The biggest increase anyone can get during the year is \$3,000," Lankford said, between the increase in the pay schedule and the bonus. Lankford also noted the county is phasing out the bonus program.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS** *continued from page 9***Clerk Mary Lankford**

five deputies who staff this service-oriented office. The remainder of the budget allocation covers costs associated with operating the office, including office supplies, equipment, repairs and telephone.

The clerk's office has a wide variety of duties and responsibilities, including serving as the clerk to the board of county commissioners, chief budget officer, county accounting and personnel office, chief elections officer, maintaining motor vehicle records, and maintaining and recording land transactions, subdivisions, mineral leases, mining claims, marriage licenses, and liquor licenses.

The Clerk also oversees a separate budget for elections. This year, the elections budget totals \$43,800, and pays for all components of holding elections (primary, general and special) in the county, from ballots and supplies, to publication of notices, equipment purchase and maintenance, election judges and assistants, meals and mileage, and rent for polling places.

**Treasurer**

Treasurer Roxanna Jensen's budget totals \$338,041, with the majority of this budget (\$314,941) allocated to cover personnel expenses for Jensen and her four staff members. The remaining \$23,100 budget covers office operational expenses, including telephone, postage, and office supplies and equipment.

**Treasurer Roxanna Jensen**

The treasurer's office is responsible for vehicle registrations, sales and property tax collections, and maintains the books for our county government.

**Assessor**

Assessor Jeness Saxton's budget totals \$473,814, with the majority of that amount (\$375,064) funding the salaries of the six people who staff that office. The budget also includes \$68,000 for appraisal and audit services, \$7,500 for education and travel, \$6,000 for a new vehicle reserve, \$3,750 for vehicle expenses, and \$500 for rural addressing. The remainder of budget (\$13,000) covers costs associated with operating the office.

**Assessor Jeness Saxton**

The assessor's office is charged with the duty to locate, identify and value all taxable property in the county and to do so in accordance with state statutes and guidelines.

**Attorney**

County & Prosecuting Attorney Neal Stelting's budget rings in at \$786,828, down from last year, and includes \$630,336 in costs associated with the seven-person staff of this department. The budget includes \$65,000 for prosecutions, \$16,000 for educational training, \$12,000 for online legal database access, \$7,350 for a reserve account for a new vehicle, \$7,306 for books and publications, and \$5,000 for vehicle mileage and maintenance. The remainder of the line items in this budget (totaling about \$40,000), cover office operational and equipment expenses.

The county attorney's office provides legal representation for Sublette County government, including both civil matters and criminal prosecutions.

**Clerk of District Court**

District Court Clerk Janet Montgomery's budget totals \$365,144, with \$206,644 of this amount allocated toward personnel costs associated with the total of three staffers in the office. The budget also includes \$105,000 for the public defender program; \$8,000 for guardian ad litem, which provides for legal



representation of children or those judged incompetent; \$8,000 for court-appointed attorneys; \$10,000 for juror and witness fees; \$5,000 each for transcripts and the law library; \$13,500 for telephone, office supplies, and equipment; \$1,500 for travel expenses; \$1,000 each for jurors board and district court commissioners; and \$500 for appointed medical examiners.



**Clerk of Court Janet Montgomery**

The district court clerk is responsible for main-

taining and preserving the records of all legal cases filed in the Ninth Judicial District Court. Montgomery was appointed to this position with the retirement of Marilyn Jensen in September 2012.

### Coroner

The coroner's budget totals \$119,900, which includes \$29,390 for Coroner Donald Schooley's salary, and \$2,500 for standby time for deputy coroners. This budget includes \$43,000 for purchase of a new vehicle, \$7,750 for a new vehicle reserve, and \$3,000 for vehicle expenses. The budget includes \$20,000 for autopsies, \$4,000 for county burial of indigents, \$2,000 for educational training, and \$150 for juror and witness fees. The budget also includes \$8,200 for supplies and telephone expenses.

## Sheriff's Office

Sublette County Sheriff Dave Lankford oversees a broad range of responsibilities, and the budgets he supervises total over \$9 million as follows:

Law enforcement.....	\$4,894,444
Detention .....	\$2,365,682
Communication .....	\$936,316
Search & Rescue.....	\$756,410
Emergency Management.....	\$157,236
<b>Total: .....</b>	<b>\$9,110,088</b>

The Sublette County Sheriff's Office comprises a total staff of 67, including all sworn officers, courtroom security, detention center personnel, emergency dispatchers, and clerical staff.

According to last year's state statistics, for counties with a population of 5,000-10,000, the average number of sworn sheriff's department officers is 3.9 per 1,000 persons. Sublette County has 3.8 officers per 1,000 people.

Sublette County is unique in that the sheriff's office serves not just the county, but also serves as metro law enforcement for the county's three incorporated towns. All other counties in the state have metro police

departments. The statewide average number of sworn law enforcement officers (including both metro and sheriff's officers) per 1,000 people is 2.3, compared to Sublette County's 3.8 officers.

The value of law-enforcement services provided to the towns free of charge is substantial. Using last year's budget figures, the county provided \$2.8 million in law-enforcement services to the towns (\$1.6 million to Pinedale; \$859,000 to Marbleton; and \$433,000 to Big Piney).

The Sublette County Sheriff's office provides service to a county covering nearly 4,900 square miles, and provides that service around the clock. Sublette County's estimated population of about 10,000 residents is joined by a huge influx of summer visitors, many of whom enter the mountains for recreational pursuits.



**Sheriff Dave Lankford**

*Continued on the next page*

## SHERIFF'S OFFICE *continued from page 11*

### **Law enforcement**

This \$4.89 million budget includes \$3 million in salaries. The budget includes a variety of expenses for vehicles: \$538,000 in new vehicle purchases; \$150,000 in a new vehicle reserve; and \$365,000 for tires, gas, oil and maintenance. Other major budget items include \$209,320 in grant expenditures, \$36,700 for animal control, \$11,000 for the drug dog program, and \$4,000 for courtroom security. Criminal investigation and investigative equipment total \$105,750, patrol equipment is allocated \$142,807, and training is allocated \$76,000. The budget includes about \$14,000 to provide patrol of U.S. Forest Service-administered properties. Publications and periodicals, and school resource supplies, are each allocated \$7,500.

Office equipment, supplies and other operational expenses total about \$45,000, while utilities and telephone total \$86,500. Radio maintenance is allocated \$35,100, while DARE will be funded with \$7,000 and public services will receive \$8,000. Medical expenses and uniforms are budgeted at \$43,000.

### **Detention**

The \$2.3 million detention budget includes \$1.5 million in salaries. Prisoners' expenses include \$300,000 in prisoner board, \$95,000 in prisoner medical expenses, and \$7,500 in prisoner transport. Training and uniforms are budgeted at \$41,600, while medical expenses for officers are allocated \$12,500. Jail maintenance and supplies are budgeted at \$107,000. The Title 25 program, which provides for emergency and involuntary hospitalizations of persons suffering from mental illness, is allocated \$50,000.

New vehicle purchases, allocation to a new vehicle reserve, and vehicle maintenance receive a total of \$91,000. Equipment is budgeted at about \$58,000, and a variety of lesser amounts associated with operations of the jail are allocated a total of about \$20,000.

### **Communications**

The \$936,316 communications budget includes \$586,816 in salaries, and \$19,000 for training and

uniforms. Communications center maintenance is allocated \$169,000, radio maintenance is budgeted \$75,000, and the E-911 system is budgeted at \$51,000. The remaining line items in this budget total \$14,000.

### **Search & Rescue**

The search and rescue budget totals \$756,410, including \$64,335 for the administrator's salary. The seasonal contract for helicopter services is the single largest budget item, at \$343,625. The county was able to recover about \$78,000 of that cost last year through agreements with other counties for use of the helicopter, and another \$86,000 through state reimbursements.

The budget includes \$100,000 for building repair and maintenance, \$75,000 for training, and \$28,000 for search operations. The budget includes \$16,000 for a new vehicle reserve, and \$15,000 for an ATV/snowmobile reserve. Gas, oil and maintenance on vehicles are budgeted at about \$23,000. Radios and phone are budgeted at \$12,250. Utilities and office operations expenses are budgeted at \$21,000.

The budget includes a variety of equipment purchases for high angle, swift water and other technical rescues, totaling about \$30,000.

### **Emergency Management**

The emergency management budget totals \$157,236, of which about \$64,000 is for the coordinator's salary.

Gas, oil and vehicle maintenance are allocated \$19,000, and \$20,000 is allocated for a new vehicle reserve. Miscellaneous equipment purchases, including satellite phones, emergency and hazardous material equipment, are allocated a combined total of \$34,000. Office equipment, radio maintenance, and utilities are allocated \$12,500. Training is allocated \$6,000, and the Local Emergency Planning Committee program is allocated \$2,000.

The county will also pay \$30,000 from the S&R budget to rent space for secure storage of emergency management equipment.





## Other county departments

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

As the county commission finalized the new budget, it also ended its long-standing relationship that allowed garbage from Teton County to be placed in the Marbleton Sanitary Landfill. Teton County has hauled garbage to the Marbleton facility for years, and held joint title to the facility along with Sublette County. Teton County officials now believe a more economical alternative for Teton County refuse should involve hauling it to eastern Idaho. As part of an agreed-to parting of the ways, Teton County signed over the deed to Sublette County, and Sublette County refunded \$848,680.68 in prepaid fees to Teton County. In the past, 60 percent of the garbage entering the landfill came from Teton County (including 22,806 tons last year), so the estimated lifespan of the facility will be extended.

The waste management budget totals \$1.2 million, and that amount includes more than half-million dollars in salaries. Other major budget categories include \$225,702 in heavy equipment, \$100,000 in environmental bags for bales, and \$135,000 for gas, oil, tires and repairs.

Engineering is budgeted at \$60,000, and water monitoring is budgeted at \$30,000. Operation of the balefill and baler is allocated \$60,000, utilities are provided \$35,000, and equipment hire is estimated at \$24,000. The remaining line items in this budget are lesser amounts for materials, supplies, and operations for this department.

### TRANSFER STATION

Part of the waste management program involves the transfer station near Pinedale, which has a budget of \$552,950. It should be noted that about half of this budget (\$225,000) include the contract for hauling refuse to the Marbleton landfill. Other major spending categories include about \$99,000 for salaries, \$118,000 for an Integrated Solid Waste Management program (expenditures related to a grant program), \$18,000 for disposal of e-waste and household hazardous wastes, \$25,000 for heavy equipment, and \$20,000 for equipment hire. Water monitoring is allocated \$10,000, as are repairs, while engineering is estimated at \$8,000, and all other remaining spending categories are for lesser amounts, totalling about \$20,000.

### RECYCLING

The recycling budget comes in just under \$100,000, which includes \$59,033 for wages, \$15,000 for transportation of materials, and \$10,000 for equipment. Office expenses total just under \$10,000; gas, oil, and repairs total \$3,000; shipping and sorting materials total \$1,800; and training is allocated \$700.

### ROAD & BRIDGE

The Sublette County Road and Bridge Department has a budget of \$28.5 million, with about \$2.2 million of that amount paying the salaries of the 25 full-time and nine part-time employees of this department that works to maintain the estimated 500 miles of county

*Continued on the next page*

### Construction projects

#### **Boulder Community Center      \$810,000**

Renovations - \$790,000 is provided from State grant funding

#### **Daniel Schoolhouse      \$20,000**

Completion of renovations

#### **White Pine Tower      \$400,000**

Construction of a new communications tower building and equipment

#### **Kismet Tower      \$290,000**

Construction of a new communications tower for Hoback Ranches area and equipment

#### **Shooting Range      \$400,000**

Improvements at the Daniel law-enforcement shooting range

#### **Golf Course      \$10,000**

To support the process of developing a master plan

#### **Rural Television**

The county has received about \$44,000 in federal grant funding for support of rural translator systems in the county, and this amount has been placed in a spending account for upgrades as needed.

## OTHER DEPARTMENTS *continued from page 13*

roads in its inventory. The majority of this budget – \$20 million – is set aside for major road projects. This is the same amount that the commission has allocated in each budget the last few years, providing a source of spending money for any ready-to-go projects, should they arise. If no new major road projects are undertaken, the money is rolled over into the next year's budget.

The purchase of heavy equipment is allocated \$1.5 million, while \$500,000 is allocated back to the new vehicle reserve. The new equipment list includes two pickups, two large trucks, a tanker, a forklift, and two rollers.

Soil stabilizer is budgeted at \$800,000, materials at \$500,000, gravel at \$200,000, paving at \$500,000, and the crusher is allocated \$200,000. Repairs to buildings in Daniel and Bondurant are budgeted at \$300,000, and equipment hire is allocated \$150,000.

Utilities, telephone and office operational expenses total about \$120,000, while safety is allocated \$25,000. Gas, oil, miscellaneous supplies, parts, repairs and tires have a combined budget total of \$1.5 million.

### HEALTH OFFICER & SANITARIAN

Keith Raney is the county's full-time sanitarian, while Dr. J. Thomas Johnston is the appointed official public health officer. The combined budget for these two programs totals \$92,765, and that amount includes \$68,390 for the sanitarian salary, and \$18,000 for the health officer's salary. The remaining \$6,400 covers office and travel expenses.

Raney's job as sanitarian involves the supervision of water well and septic system design, siting and installation; food safety inspections; swimming pool inspections; and responds to other environmental and public health emergencies.

Johnston's duties as health officer are under the direction and supervision of the Wyoming Department of Health, and involve investigation of communicable diseases, preventing the spread of disease, and promoting the health of the county's citizenry.

### HEALTH

The county health budget totals \$324,402 and covers the county's expenses associated with the public health office, which is done in a partnership with the

Wyoming Department of Health. The budget includes about \$178,000 in personnel costs. Other major items include \$48,000 for vaccine purchases, \$42,000 for bio-terrorism prevention, and \$17,500 for the health fair. The budget includes \$12,000 for janitorial services, and about \$21,000 for office equipment, supplies and other expenses associated with operating the health office. The budget includes \$2,500 for educational training, \$1,000 for county employee services, and \$2,000 in advertising.

### TREATMENT COURT

The Treatment Court budget rings in at \$269,376, including \$50,778 for the coordinator salary. Major budget items include \$115,000 for mental health/treatment, \$75,000 for drug testing, \$8,000 for indigent services/recovery, and \$12,000 for team training and travel. The remaining budget categories include office operational expenses, and costs for providing incentives and graduation for those involved in treatment court.

### P&Z

The Planning and Zoning (P&Z) department budget of \$148,438 includes about \$128,000 for salaries for the two staff positions in this office (planner and zoning administrator). The remaining \$20,000 covers a variety of lesser items associated with operating the office and providing for plat reviews. This departmental budget has declined in the last few years, as budget reductions were made with a slowdown in activity, and one staff position was eliminated.

### GIS

The county's geographic information systems office has a \$72,700 budget, with \$45,600 of that amount consisting of the county's contract for services with Rich Greenwood of Greenwood Mapping Inc. of Jackson to maintain the county's GIS system. This budget also includes \$20,000 for consultations/projects (including historical mapping and additional data layering). The remainder of the budget provides for operations of the office (about \$7,000).

### SURVEYOR

The budget includes \$20,000 for the county surveyor. This budget provides per diem reimbursement

for services rendered on behalf of the county. Skylar Wilson currently serves as the county surveyor, with his primary duties involving county roads (alignment, rights-of-way, surveying, mapping, legal documents, etc.), and boundary surveys of parcels the County intends to acquire.

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Technology is a new department headed by Michael Christie, who works to assist county departments with their IT needs. The IT budget totals \$127,500, which includes the administrator's salary of \$87,000. Equipment and supplies are budgeted at \$30,000 (including servers, router, networking), and the remainder of the budget items are associated with maintaining the IT office operations and services.

### COURTHOUSE & MAINTENANCE

The Courthouse and Maintenance Department budget totals just under \$3 million, and this includes \$1.2 million in salaries to fund the 18 staff members who clean and maintain 10 county buildings and five fire halls, in addition to the landscaping at more than a dozen county facilities. Major budget categories include government facilities (various maintenance, repairs and security provisions) at \$600,000; insurance

on county buildings at \$525,000; building maintenance and supplies at \$250,000; utilities at \$150,000; vehicle maintenance, gas and oil at \$65,000; janitorial supplies at \$40,000; and training at \$15,000.

### CLASS II ROADS

The Class II Roads program has been allocated a budget of \$451,567 with the majority of that budget directed toward grants to road projects (\$406,952), with consultants budgeted about \$42,000. This budget pays for design and bid preparation for completion of the Little Mountain Road project in the Warren Bridge area, and Rim Road at Hoback Ranches.

### COUNTY OPERATIONS

Costs associated with county government operations are substantial. The budget includes \$5 million for FICA insurance and retirement, \$100,000 for financial administration, and \$34,000 for the county's annual financial audit. Worker's compensation and unemployment compensation are covered by an allocation totaling \$370,000. County officers' expenses are allocated \$75,000, while printing and publications are budgeted at \$105,000. Postage is estimated at \$45,000, and telephone expenses are budgeted at \$20,000. The county also budgeted \$12,000 for office rental for the public defender's office.

## Town allocations

This is the first budget in recent years that does not include direct allocations for the county's three incorporated towns. When the most recent industrial boom hit Sublette County, the towns struggled to provide needed infrastructure to match the sudden growth, so the Sublette County Commission took an unprecedented step in establishing joint powers boards with each of the three towns as a means to allocate some of the county general mill levy funding to assist the towns.

The commission recognized that towns were impacted by the natural gas boom, and because of increased tax revenue from the development, the

county was able to provide substantial amounts of funding to the towns to improve infrastructure during that time of increased demand.

The three towns have benefited from the \$11 million each received from the county under this program. The county has also provided millions of dollars in matching funds for other infrastructure projects to help the towns.

As anticipated, with the downturn in the economy, and the expected decline in the industrial revenue stream, the commission has discontinued this special funding program, as reflected in this year's budget.



## Support for children

The Sublette County Commission allocates considerable resources in support of youth-services oriented programs and organizations, including some that are very specialized.

The Children's Discovery Center is a non-profit licensed child care facility offering preschool programming for about three dozen children, as well as after-school enrichment and summer day camps. In addition to standard curriculum practices, the CDC provides socially educational programs and works to encourage literacy, healthy lifestyles, and stewardship of natural resources through focused programming. The CDC receives about \$107,000 in funding from the county, which helps to provide a variety of operational functions, as well as meeting the expenses associated with providing three balanced meals per day.

The Children's Learning Center is the only early childhood program serving both Big Piney and Pinedale. This educational non-profit agency will receive \$285,000 to support its inclusive preschool programs that bring students from regular education together with students from special education. Last year, this program involved 144 students, including 121 with special needs. Research demonstrates that for every dollar invested in early childhood programs, the amount saved later on varies from \$9 to \$13. More than half the students receiving special services from the Children's Learning Center no longer require services when they enter school. This organization offers free screening clinics, and provides early intervention and special education services at no charge to families, but does charge tuition for preschool, with a limited scholarship program.

The Sublette County Childcare Coalition will receive \$71,000 from the county to provide support to childcare providers. The coalition works to assure providers can offer care for children under the age of two years, encouraging new childcare start-ups to provide needed slots for children ages 0-5. It also offers student internships for after-school and summer-school programs in the county, as well as enrichment programs such as nature camps. The SCCC extends funding to childcare providers to attend training programs, and assists them in meeting state licensing guidelines. The SCCC also runs a limited tuition scholarship program.

The Pinedale Preschool will receive \$45,000 to support holistic early childhood educational programming for children aged two and a half to five years. This preschool serves 44 families, and provides a limited amount of needs-based tuition assistance. The Pinedale Preschool prides itself on its highly qualified teaching staff focused on exposing students entering kindergarten in the fall to reading, math and science. The results are impressive, with many students reading independently, writing in sentences, and counting to 100 and beyond.

The county administers \$93,800 in support of the 4-H Afterschool Program, in partnership with the University of Wyoming and its 4-H office. This program – developed in response to a growing need for afterschool programming for working families in the county – provides educational enrichment in supportive environments for students in K-5th grades.

The Sublette County Commission allocated \$100,000 for scholarships for 10 selected high school seniors to attend an institution of higher learning, and



A group of beef calves rest on their summer range.

continued support for 15 college students from the county.

The Van Vleck House (a division of Teton Youth and Family Services located in Jackson) will receive \$45,000 from the Sublette County budget to provide prevention, early intervention, and treatment services to Sublette County youth (ages 10 to 18) in a group home and crisis shelter. This program served four long-term residents from Sublette County last year for a total of 314 days. One is still in residence, one graduated from the program and enrolled in Job Corps, one returned home, and one was placed in a residential treatment facility in Utah.

In addition, the facility handled crisis placements

from Sublette County, for a total of 89 days, with the primary reasons for placement being a history of physical or sexual abuse, with the abuser no longer in the home. Three of these Sublette County children returned home successfully, and two were placed at a higher level of care after being evaluated and assessed.

The county will provide \$32,000 for mentoring services provided to Sublette County youth through Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sublette County. The goal of the program is to provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever.

## Human services

Sometimes a small investment provides a big result. The county's allocation of \$8,000 to The Community Food Closet in Big Piney is such an example. This program provides supplemental food assistance to an average of 40 families per month, including 74 adults and 50 children. Families bring bags or boxes to the facility (located in the old Pioneers senior building in Marbleton) to carry home free food distributed through this community program.

The Pregnancy Resource Center will receive \$17,750 in the county budget as pass-through grant money from the state. This program serves women and their families who are experiencing an unplanned pregnancy, or difficulties during a planned pregnancy, or who are parenting young children.

The Veteran's Services program is allocated \$100,000 to provide services to veterans in the county. Sublette County partners with neighboring Lincoln and Sweetwater counties in providing veteran services programs.

The Sexual Assault and Family Violence Task Force will receive \$34,460 in county funding. SAFV provides a 24-hour crisis line, emergency shelter, emergency legal advocacy, peer counseling, victim advocacy, assistance with victim compensation, life skills training, emergency financial assistance, resources/reading materials, and prevention/awareness activities. Last year, SAFV served 76 individuals who had been affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking. Forty-seven percent of the clients served indicated they

were from Pinedale, and eight percent were men.

The newly created M.E.S.A. Therapeutic Horsemanship program will receive an allocation of \$50,000. This non-profit program provides equine-related therapy activities to individuals with disabilities in the county, promoting self-esteem, self-confidence, physical independence, and social interaction. The program serves participants with a range of physical, mental and behavioral challenges.

## Economics

The Sublette Economic Resource Council will receive \$50,000 to promote economic development in Sublette County. This group plans to develop company-specific recruitment plans, launch a new website, continue a business needs assessment survey, attend governmental meetings to provide economic development input, identify grants for town infrastructure projects, and provide technical assistance for business owners.

The Sublette County Visitor Center will receive \$53,552 to cover operational costs of the center, which hosted nearly 30,000 visitors last year and sent out 16 relocation packets and 70 visitor center packets.

## Continuing senior support

The county budget supports senior citizens services through several regular budget allocations.

The Southwest Sublette County Pioneers senior center in Marbleton will receive \$178,000 in general operational support. The center has become a vital community hub, where seniors and other citizens of the county come for community functions, senior services, and excellent meals. The Pioneers center serves family-style meals three days a week, with a wait staff, and suggests a donation of \$4 per meal for seniors dining there. The center serves an important social connection to seniors, some of whom have no other social contact outside of meal attendance at the center.

Rendezvous Pointe in Pinedale will receive \$200,000 in operational support. The county's contribution helps fund the noon meal program five days a week, home-delivered meals for the homebound, annual blood draw and flu clinics, and other senior services such as the lending closet, blood pressure monitoring, and help with tax returns, property tax relief, and transportation to dental and medical appointments.

The Sublette Center will receive \$670,000 in operational support from the county general fund budget. The commission also approved an allocation of about \$225,000 to fund architectural services for design of a new facility.

The commission allocated an additional \$275,000 for repairs and maintenance of the Marbleton senior center, and Rendezvous Pointe.



A porcupine traversing through Sublette County sagebrush.

## Natural Resources

### *Extension*

The Extension Service program budget totals \$195,632, which includes just over \$100,000 in salaries for staff, including the clerk, 4-H program associate, and part-time assistants. The budget includes \$39,000 for office rent; office supplies, utilities, and postage combined total about \$14,000. The program expenses for 4-H are budgeted \$25,200, while travel expenses for the ag educator and 4-H participants tally \$8,500. The budget includes a new vehicle reserve of \$2,000, and vehicle expenses of \$1,500. Equipment repairs and the remaining lesser line items total \$5,000.

The Extension Service provides reliable, research-based information in agriculture and natural resources, consumer and family economics, community and economic development, and 4-H youth development.

### *Conservation District*

The Sublette County Conservation District will receive about \$750,000 from the county coffers to provide general operational support for the district's natural resource programming. The district is a subdivision of state government, with an elected board of five supervisors, a staff of eight full-time employees, and two seasonal employees. The district's major programming areas include seedling trees, surface water quality monitoring, rangeland monitoring, and the natural resources, wildlife and habitat program. In addition, the district performs specific monitoring of ground and surface water associated with industrial development in the Pinedale Anticline natural gas field.

### *Predators*

The county budget allocated \$80,000 for the county predatory animal management district board. This board consists



of cattle and sheep producers elected by livestock producers to represent their interests, as well as one member of the public appointed by the county commission. The board contracts with USDA Wildlife Services to provide coyote and raven control in the county. Although the county allocates \$80,000 to cover these costs, the predator board has never sought that amount in reimbursement, with expenses most years totaling less than \$15,000. But the higher allocation allows the predator board to be able to respond to emergency needs for animal damage control, such as in the event that wolves lose federal protections and cause problems for local livestock producers.

### ***Coalition of governments***

The Sublette County Commission allocated \$30,000 to fund the Coalition of Governments, which facilitates county governments from throughout southwestern Wyoming working together to deal with federal land management issues and resource planning projects undertaken by state and federal agencies.

### ***Air Toxics & Ozone***

The budget includes \$250,000 for any items that arise in regard to air toxics and ozone in the county. The county has provided funding for air quality research and monitoring stations in the past.

## **RANGE MONITORING**

The Sublette County Commission's interest in assisting federal grazing permittees in rangeland monitoring efforts prompted the Conservation District to undertake a range program that is funded through the county budget allocation. In addition to gathering and generating rangeland monitoring information supporting grazing permit renewals, the Conservation District also provides a great deal of information about the health and trend of the county's rangelands in general. The District's monitoring has been targeted for use in the permit renewal process; efforts are now focused on high-profile allotments on the Bridger-Teton National Forest, as well as initiating work on the upcoming NPL natural gas field project area.

Most importantly, the Conservation District's monitoring information has helped defend the Bureau of Land Management's Resource Management Plan for the Pinedale area, demonstrating how field data-gathering can impact broader public policy and management.

## **Revenues**

The revenue generated by the taxing of 12 mills provides the majority of funding for county services, but the county budget includes nearly \$18 million in revenue from a variety of other sources (federal, state, and local).

### **Secure Rural Schools**

The U.S. Forest Service Secure Rural Schools fund was formerly known as the Forest Reserve Payment. These funds are sent to the state by the federal government and distributed by the State Treasurer. The use of the bulk of the funds is determined by both federal and state law. The budget includes an estimate of \$107,240 in this revenue.

### **State revenues**

Several sources of revenue are funneled to the counties from the state, including severance taxes, sales and use taxes, all fuels revenue, and the county's assessed valuation for personal property tax.

### **Sales and use taxes**

Sublette County's sales tax rate is four percent, the lowest allowable under statute. Thirty percent of the state's 4-percent sales/use tax goes to cities, towns and counties. The taxes are first returned to the county of origin, and are then distributed to the county and its cities and towns, based on the percentage of the population each bears to the total county population. An

*Continued on the next page*

**REVENUES** *continued from page 19*

additional one percent goes exclusively to counties, and is distributed by first allocating \$50,000 to each county, with the remainder distributed by population. The remaining 69 percent of the sales tax collected in the state is retained by the state. Sublette County estimates it will receive \$10 million in sales and use taxes this year, down from last year's \$11.6 million.

**Severance taxes**

Mineral severance tax distributions to local governments, the state's water development, Wyoming Department of Transportation, and the University of Wyoming are capped at \$155 million. Allocations over that amount must be directly appropriated by the legislature. Of the \$155 million, counties receive 0.78 percent and 3.1 percent, respectively, for their general fund using different distribution formulas.

The 0.78 percent distribution, known as "under the cap," is based 50 percent on the percentage of population each county bears to the total state population and 50 percent on the inverse of its assessed valuation.

The 3.1 percent "over the cap" mineral severance revenues are distributed 85 percent by population and 15 percent allocated equally among the counties.

The Sublette County budget includes about \$100,000 in under the cap revenues, and \$264,000 in over the cap revenues.

**Diesel fuel**

The diesel fuel tax is 14 cents per gallon, with one penny of that going to the state's leaking underground storage tank program, and the remaining 13 cents divided among state, counties, cities and towns. Counties receive 20 percent of the 13 cents, with distribution based on a formula that combines areas of the county, percentage of the rural population of the county, and assessed valuation. Sublette County's budget receives \$774,000 of this revenue.

**Gas tax**

The state gas tax rate is also 14 cents per gallon, with a similar distribution program as the diesel fuel tax, except the counties receive 13.5 percent of the 13 cents. Sublette County anticipates it will receive \$400,000 of this revenue.

**County Road Fund**

The County Road Fund was originally designed to help counties with their road construction needs and was once known as the farm-to-market program. Funds allocated under the CRF program may be used for both road construction and maintenance. It is funded by the state through gasoline and severance taxes, using a formula for distribution. Sublette County estimates it will receive \$282,000 in county road funds this year.

**Cigarette**

Sublette County estimates it will receive \$8,000 in cigarette tax revenue in the new year.

**Local revenues**

The Sublette County budget includes a wide variety of local revenue sources – everything from local fees to grant funding. The new budget includes \$600,000 in interest revenue from investment of county funds. Local fees include those paid to the following departments:

County clerk .....	\$120,000
District court .....	\$40,000
P&Z .....	\$13,500
Sanitarian .....	\$3,750
Assessor .....	\$200
Sheriff.....	\$40,000
Fairgrounds.....	\$15,000
Ice arena.....	\$20,000
Misc. ....	\$75,0000

When the budget was adopted, the county had included an estimated revenue of \$315,000 from tipping fees and the Teton County contract, but this amount will be less since the contract has been terminated.

Motor vehicle fees are expected to generate \$600,000. The county attorney's office will receive about \$136,000 from Victim Witness Services, while the county will also receive \$50,000 for emergency management efforts from the State of Wyoming.

Federal grant funding of \$502,000 is expected to pass through the county coffers for air quality concerns, as well as \$47,500 in state funding for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

Revenues include more than \$1 million in other grant support for specific programs and projects, including those that address bioterrorism, homeland security, health issues, and juvenile detention.

Liquor license fees will generate about \$7,700,

\$15,000 will come from traffic school, and the county will receive \$13,548 for providing law-enforcement services at nearby U.S. Forest Service installations.

A handful of other miscellaneous smaller revenue streams is expected to generate an additional \$75,000.



Pronghorn antelope stand atop a clay hill in the Blue Rim area along State Highway 351.

## Contacting the Sublette County Commission

P.O. Box 250, Pinedale WY 82941 • Website: [www.sublettewyo.com](http://www.sublettewyo.com) • Email: [info@sublettewyo.com](mailto:info@sublettewyo.com)

Sublette County Commission meetings are generally held the first and third Tuesdays of the month, but there is some variation from month to month. Meetings begin at 9 a.m. in the commission meeting room of the courthouse in Pinedale. Commission meetings are open to the public. To schedule an appointment to appear on the commission's agenda, please contact Sublette County Clerk Mary Lankford at (307) 367-4372.



**Chairman Joel Bousman**  
[eastforklive@wildblue.net](mailto:eastforklive@wildblue.net)  
 (307) 749-6154



**Vice Chairman Andy Nelson**  
[andynelson.cc@gmail.com](mailto:andynelson.cc@gmail.com)  
 (307) 749-7886



**Commissioner John Linn**  
[johnplinn@yahoo.com](mailto:johnplinn@yahoo.com)  
 (307) 260-8184



Sublette County Commission  
P.O. Box 250  
Pinedale, WY 82941

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE PD  
PERMIT #81  
JACKSON, WY  
83002

# State of the County 2012-2013

ECRWSS  
Postal Patron

Background photo: Spring in Sublette County sees pronghorn antelope on the move, while sage grouse strut on their breeding ground, called a "lek."