

WYOMING RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



RURAL RESOURCE TEAM REPORT FOR LABARGE'S COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT LINCOLN COUNTY, WYOMING APRIL 17, 18, 2002

WRDC MISSION

*"TO CREATE PARTNERSHIPS THAT RESULT IN EFFECTIVE,
EFFICIENT AND TIMELY EFFORTS TO ENHANCE THE
VIABILITY OF RURAL WYOMING."*

THE WYOMING RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Wyoming Rural Development Council is a collaborative public/private partnership that brings together six partner groups: local/regional government, state government, federal government, tribal government, non-profit organizations and private sector individuals and organizations.

WRDC is governed by a Steering Committee representing the six partner groups. The Steering Committee as well as the Council membership has established the following goals for the WRDC:

- Assist rural communities in visioning and strategic planning
- Serve as a resource for assisting communities in finding and obtaining grants for rural projects
- Serve and be recognized as a neutral forum for identification and resolution of multi-jurisdictional issues
- Promote through education, the understanding of the needs, values and contribution of rural communities.

The Council seeks to assist rural Wyoming communities with their needs and development efforts by matching the technical and financial resources of federal, state, and local governments and the private sector with local development efforts.

If you would like more information about the Wyoming Rural Development Council and how you may benefit as a member, contact:

Mary Randolph, Executive Director
Wyoming Rural Development Council
2219 Carey Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-6430
307-777-6593 (fax)
mrando@state.wy.us
www.wyomingrural.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LaBarge Resource Team

April 17-18, 2002

	Page
Executive Summary.....	4
Process for the Development of the Team Study and Report.....	5
Resource Team Members.....	6
Steve Elledge	
Susan Mizner	
Buck McVeigh	
Wayne Jipsen	
Kirk Heaton	
Gordon Warren	
Community Agenda.....	7
Recommendations Submitted.....	8
Major Themes.....	50
What Was Said at The Interviews.....	52
Appendix.....	66

20 Clues to Rural Community Survival

Any recommendations contained herein are not mandatory. The Wyoming Rural Development Council has not endorsed any recommendations and opinions contained herein. Neither the Wyoming Rural Development Council, nor any of its employees, contract labor, officers, committee chairs and/or members makes any warranty, express or implied, including warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, or assumes any legal liability for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of this report or any information, recommendations or opinions contained herein.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many of the critical elements exist for a successful future in LaBarge. Become a growing; vibrant community takes only a few people willing to roll up their sleeves and go to work.

Remember, the answers to most of the challenges LaBarge faces are not found in Washington, Cheyenne, or even at the doors of the Lincoln County Commissioners. Surely, there are grant programs available from some of these entities that can assist communities like LaBarge. However, the best solutions to the challenges of any community are the solutions that involve local people— neighbors, family, and friends—working towards the betterment of everyone. Because at the end of the day, grants don't make projects happen, people make projects happen.

There are a number of short term, accomplishable and recommendations that the review team has provided. At the very least, these reports will provide some specific actions and programs that can help LaBarge get to where it wants to be. At the very best, however, these reports will serve as a springboard for community involvement and further commitment from local people to create a better future for LaBarge. Look through the short-term suggestions, pick out one that you know what you can do, and get started!

Each of you individually must decide what it is that you want to do. There are enough tasks for everyone. Each small step, every accomplishment, no matter how limited, is movement in the right direction toward achieving LaBarge's goals. It can be done! There is no problem facing LaBarge that cannot be solved by the people living in the community. It is your choice, your decision—you can do it.

On behalf of the LaBarge Resource Team, I want to thank the community and our sponsors for the warm hospitality shown to us during our stay. The meals and accommodations were outstanding. We heard over and over in the listening sessions that LaBarge was filled with warm, caring individuals and we certainly can attest to that! Thank you very much.

We hope you will find great value in this report and remember any team member is available for you to call to clarify information or provide more information and assistance.

Sincerely,

Steve Elledge, Resource Team Leader

PROCESS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT

The Wyoming Rural Development Council (WRDC) has provided a Resource Team to assist the town of LaBarge, Wyoming in evaluating the community's assets and liabilities and in developing suggestions for improving the environment, social and economic future of LaBarge.

The town of LaBarge requested a community assessment from the Wyoming Rural Development Council. Gaylynn Brady served as the community contact and took the lead in agenda development, logistics and publicity in town for the assessment. Resource team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, business and community leaders, and to develop a plan of recommended action for the town. The team members were carefully selected based on their fields of expertise that LaBarge officials indicated would be needed to respond to the problem areas identified.

The Resource Team toured the town and interviewed approximately 77 people over a two-day period from April 17-18, 2002. The team interviewed representatives from the following segments of the LaBarge community: Business, Industry, Senior Citizens, Educators, EMTs, Police, Fireman, Government, Youth, Agriculture, and the General Public. These groups were asked to respond to three questions designed to begin communication and discussion and to serve as a basis for developing the action plan. The three questions were:

- What do you think are the major problems and challenges in LaBarge?
- What do you think are the major strengths and assets in LaBarge?
- What projects would you like to see completed in two, five ten and twenty years in LaBarge?

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met to compare notes and share comments following the three days of intense study. The team then agreed that each team member would carefully analyze what was said, synthesize what they heard with their knowledge of programs and resources, prepare their notes and suggestions, and forward these items to be combined into WRDC's final report to LaBarge.

The oral report was presented to the people of LaBarge on April 18th, 2002. Many of the citizens of LaBarge who participated in the interviews were in attendance.

Following the oral report, a formal written report is prepared and presented to the town of LaBarge.

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT TEAM MEMBERS

LaBarge, Wyoming Resource Assessment April 17-18, 2002

Steve Elledge, Team Leader

Wyoming Business Council
300 So. Wolcott, #300
Casper, WY 82601
307-577-6012
E-mail: selledge@wysbc.com

Susan Mizner

USDA Rural Development
625 Washington St., Room B
P.O. Box 190, Afton, WY 83110-0190 307-
886-9001
E-mail: susan.mizner@wy.usda.gov

Buck McVeigh

State of Wyoming
Division of Economic Analysis
327 E. Emerson Bldg.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-7504
E-mail: bmcvei@state.wy.us

Wayne Jipsen

USDA RC&D
521 West Cedar St.
Rawlins, WY 82301
307-324-2424
E-mail: wayne.jipsen@wy.usda.gov

Kirk Heaton

RC&D
1471 Dewar Drive
Rock Springs, WY 82901
307-382-3982
E-mail: kirk.heaton@wy.usda.gov

Gordon Warren

Shoshone National Forest
808 Meadow Lane
Cody, WY 82414
307-527-6241
gkwarren@fs.fed.us

WYOMING RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
LABARGE, WYOMING RESOURCE TEAM AGENDA
April 17-18, 2002

Wednesday, April 17, 2002

9:10 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.	Business	Town Hall
10:20 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Industry	Town Hall
11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch Break	Senior Center
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Senior Citizens	Senior Center
2:10 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Educators	LaBarge Elementary
3:10 p.m. – 4:20 p.m.	EMT's, Police, Fireman, Government	Community Center
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Youth Pizza Party	Community Center

Thursday, April 18, 2002

8:00 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.	Agriculture	Town Hall
9:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Review Letters	Town Hall
10:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.	General Session	Town Hall
11:20 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch break	LaBarge Elementary
7:00 p.m.	Town Meeting	Town Hall

RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED
BY RESOURCE TEAM MEMBERS

The Resource Team would like to thank the town of LaBarge for the immeasurable amounts of honesty, hospitality, and friendliness that you gave during the Resource Team effort. We have every confidence that the kind of effort and enthusiasm you produced for the Resource Team will be responsible for your future successes.

The Resource Team has given many suggestions, some which have been repeated by more than one of the team members. We have listed the individual recommendations, along with contact information for the respective team members. You are encouraged to communicate directly with any team member.

Any recommendations contained herein are not mandatory. The Wyoming Rural Development Council has not endorsed any recommendations and opinions contained herein. Neither the Wyoming Rural Development Council, nor any of its employees, contract labor, officers, committee chairs and/or members makes any warranty, express or implied, including warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, or assumes any legal liability for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of this report or any information, recommendations or opinions contained herein.

STEVE ELLEDGE
Director of Field Operations

Wyoming Business Council
300 So. Wolcott, Suite 300
Casper, WY 82601
307.577.6012
FAX 307.577.6032
selledge@wysbc.com

INTRODUCTION

Leading the team for the Labarge community assessment has been a great experience. We were treated warmly, fed extremely well, made many new acquaintances, and gathered much pertinent information to assist us in the preparation of our reports and recommendations. While Labarge presents some unique situations, I believe it also provides some excellent opportunity and appears to have the citizen interest necessary to get some things in process. Following are my observations and suggestions on how to implement them:

LEADERSHIP:

Challenge: The issue that appears necessary to address for a sustained effort in any recommendation found on these pages is Leadership. Committed individuals with the desire to make things happen and the determination to do so are necessary in every facet of community development. Very little happens, aside from “natural disasters”, anywhere without the committed leadership of one or a few.

Solution: I believe a strong emphasis on Leadership Development is essential, particularly during the teen years, and progressing well in to senior adulthood. You are never too young, or too old, to take up a cause, developing and sharing your expertise and your experience. Leadership is a responsibility and a privilege, and should be nurtured and respected as same. Leadership courses and support are available in a variety of places. The following are resources that would welcome inquiry:

Leadership Wyoming
Bill Schilling
145 So. Durbin
Casper, WY 82601
307-577-8000

Youth Empowerment Council
Barb Rea
Wyoming Medical Center Foundation
307-577-2134

Rhonda Shipp
Park County Extension Office
Box 3099
Cody, WY 82414-5905
rshipp@parkco.wtp.net www.wtp.net/parkco/uwces/pcli.htm

Additionally, many Wyoming communities and Chambers of Commerce are actively involved in Leadership training and would be happy to assist with resources and recommendations.

HEALTH CARE

Challenges: The need and desire for available, affordable healthcare is a major issue in many of Wyoming's smaller communities. With the closing of the clinic in LaBarge, the community has become almost totally dependent upon surrounding community's resources. I use the word "almost" because it is my understanding that the volunteer trauma care in the community is first-rate and dedicated, and some limited services are available on given days through the Senior Center.

Solutions/Resources: I do not pretend to be an expert in the area of healthcare, but I do believe that remedies are available for most situations. My recommendation would be to do a healthcare assessment, or feasibility study for the community. Try to determine, with the assistance of experts, what types of services the community can support; what is available, and how best to begin the process of getting the services in place. There are services available in the State of Wyoming to assist the community with these types of studies & surveys:

Sharla Allen
Wyoming Health Resources Network
1920 Evans
Cheyenne, WY 82001
1-800-456-9386 FAX 307-635-2599 sallen@whrn.org

Additionally, there are other communities in the state who are currently addressing these issues and have identified several resources, including telemedicine opportunities. A good contact for guidance and referral would be:

Jan Kruse
Niobrara County Health Coalition
307-334-3410

YOUTH:

Challenges: LaBarge area youth face several challenges through the course of their adolescence, including entertainment opportunity, school bussing issues to adjoining communities, and the challenge of how to stay in the area, or what to return to if they so desire.

Aside from the energy and agriculture base in the community there is very little industry to support young families. I will address this particular diversification issue under the Economic Development heading.

Solution/Resources: I am an advocate of involving youth in the business world as soon as possible. Many are not interested in the athletic and physical activities available through the school systems. I think we lose many potential entrepreneurs by not making opportunities as readily available to them as a football or basketball. I recommend mentoring or apprentice programs in existing business and government whenever possible. Youth should not be involved solely in the “do this” portion of business and need to be involved in the “why” and “result” phases as well.

Programs to investigate:

Junior Achievement
JA of Rocky Mountain, Inc.
1445 Market, Suite 200
Denver, CO 80202
303-534-5252 www.rockymountain.ja.org

CANDO Youth Entrepreneurship Camps
Chris McDaniel
CANDO Tech Center
Wyoming State Fairgrounds
Douglas, WY
307-358-2000 www.CANDOYOUTH.com

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Challenges: LaBarge has a few businesses that appear to do very well. Concentration is in energy and agriculture related industry. Diversification outside of those areas was not apparent, aside from limited retail and service that are primarily dependent on those industries. Home-based businesses were not identifiable and other types of industry virtually non-existent.

Diversification is a major challenge in much of Wyoming and seems to be a common buzzword among our communities. Limited workforce, with backgrounds and training in very focused industries, magnifies the challenge.

Solutions/Resources: I would suggest that the community begin with a sort of visioning process, whereby you identify what kind of businesses you would welcome and be willing to pursue for your area. With the limited resources most communities have to work with the “shotgun” approach is very costly and very ineffective. Limited resources need to be focused on a precise target to be most effective. Assistance with beginning this process can be obtained through:

Ray Sarcletti
Southwest Regional Director
Wyoming Business Council
1400 Dewar Drive, Suite 208A
Rock Springs, WY 82901
307-382-3163 rsarcl@state.wy.us

Mickey Beaver
Navigating Change
1020 Bristol
Casper, WY 82609
307-235-5572 mickbeaver@attbi.com

Expansion of existing business is a major focus in Wyoming and is the primary job creator in the country. While much of LaBarge business is focused on energy and agriculture, there is potential to expand those successful endeavors into diverse areas, capitalizing on like processes and common technologies. Ag diversification and “Value-added” projects are prime opportunities, as are “Value-added” energy projects. The raw material base in the area provides some great opportunities to work with wool and lamb byproducts and energy related products.

Once again, Ray Sarcletti of the Wyoming Business Council should be considered a prime resource for assistance in those areas, along with:

Bill Bunce
Director of Agribusiness
Wyoming Business Council
307-237-4692 bbunce@state.wy.us

Bill Ellis
Director
Small Business Development Center
Rock Springs, WY
307-352-6894 bellis@uwyo.edu

These are some excellent places to start the process of looking at new business opportunities.

Another often overlooked opportunity to small communities is the prospect of forming a small group of interested participants to seek and purchase small businesses that can be

relocated to their communities. This provides the business the luxury of local ownership and provides the ownership the luxury of a business with existing markets. A giant step from the hurdles faced by most startup businesses.

There are a variety of ways to seek out these opportunities, the Internet being one of the most available. Suggested sites include:

www.bizbuysell.com and www.businessesforsale.com

Challenge: Some sort of a focus organization is important when considering any kind of a coordinated, sustained effort. If there is interest in the community I believe it would be very beneficial to form an interest group with a focus on business development and support. Perhaps a part-time Chamber of Commerce could serve many masters and provide a point of contact within the community.

Solutions/Resources: I would suggest that an interest group be formed. An organization that could cover duties often handled by Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development groups, Community Merchant organizations, and other community organizations may be of great value to LaBarge.

Research information and Chamber funding scenarios can be sought from individual community chambers or from:

WCCE (Wyoming Chamber of Commerce Executives)
Candy Wright
1220 Hightower Road
Wheatland, WY 82201
307-322-3977

Conclusion: LaBarge is a great community with great people and some real potential. I look forward to the follow-up meeting and the opportunity to see some seeds planted. It takes a lot of work to keep a community where it is today, and a lot more to start moving it forward.

Kirk Heaton

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Western Wyoming RC&D Area 14 West 15th Street
1471 Dewar Dr., #106
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901
307-382-3982
FAX 307-362-3651
Kirk.Heaton@wy.usda.gov

INTRODUCTION

I thank the people of the Town of LaBarge for your warm hospitality during our stay. The town leaders and especially the Team Leader Gaylynn Brady went to a lot of effort to make our visit a good one. The people of your community are it's greatest strength and the key to it's future. LaBarge sits in a very beautiful location with the Green River on the East and Wyoming Mountains on the West. It is truly a "Western Gem".

This report is organized around the major themes identified by the resource team that are based on the comments received in the listening sessions.

1. CLEAN UP / BEAUTIFICATION

Challenges / Opportunities: People in the listening sessions listed many concerns and the following seemed most prevalent to our team under this heading: Junk, Vacant lots, Trees, Grass, Tanks, Gas wells, Cemetery, Curbs, Gutters, Sidewalks.

Solution/Contact:

Try celebrating Earthday to get started on cleanup. Go to the Earth day network how to website:

<http://www.earthday.com/howto/firststeps.stm>

See: Getting Started

Volunteers

Raising Money

Event Ideas

1. Cleaning and Beautifying a community takes time and is a large function of the collective desire of the people and how the leaders put the process in motion. Form a task force of citizens willing to work on this issue. Assign them to develop a community vision of what you are trying to achieve. It is important of have a vision of what you want your community to look like when you have accomplished the clean up and beautification. Ask the task force to take photos of areas that need work. Create a photo history of what you accomplish. Keep track of hours spent and resources spent accomplishing your goals. Ask for help. There can be no harm in asking for help from county agencies, state agencies, schools, colleges and universities, federal agencies. Ask what programs or resources they have that could help you reach your goals.

2. Trees and grass help beautify a community. Landscape architects with the Natural Resources Conservation Service have computer programs that can help build a vision of what vegetation and other improvements can do to improve the looks of areas of the community such as the entries to town and Main Street.
3. Existing tanks, wells and industrial facilities can be painted and or hidden with site barriers made from vegetation and fences. Fences have recently been used in Rock Springs on Dewar drive and Elk street. You have seen the fences on the highway through Marbleton. Establishing an industrial site located in an area away from downtown and residential areas that are less visible from the highways would be an alternative. The industrial parks established by Kemmerer and Pinedale are a good examples.
4. To establish more grass and trees at the cemetery and park will require a watering system and proper maintenance. The USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service Cokeville Field Office can be helpful in designing a watering system for the cemetery.
5. Curbs, gutters and sidewalks help reduce dust and mud. Collective cooperation and decisions are required in a community that installs these items. It is a decision all on a given street must support and they need to tie into a total plan for the community.

Help on these issues is available from the County Planning department, WAM, Wyoming Business Council, Western Wyoming RC&D Council, and USDA Rural Development Agency. Involve the youth and senior citizens in any task force to give it vitality.

Click on this web site for some ideas on how other communities in the west are addressing these types of problems:

<http://www.sonoran.org/>

Kemmerer, Wyoming has possibly the best websites for a small town in Western Wyoming.

See Kemmerer City 1994 plan Rebuilding the Oasis for economic development ideas.

Contact: Mayor Jim Carroll

220 Wyoming Highway 233

Kemmerer, Wyoming 83101-9700

Phone: 307/828-2350 email: citykemm@hamsfork.net

Kemmerer's website is: <http://www.kemmerer.org/>

Kemmerer Golf Course Superintendent: Brad Pehrson 307/828-2362

Kemmerer Recreation Center Director: Eric Howes 307/828-2365

Good sources of information:

Web site development:

<http://www.how-to-make-a-website.com/>

<http://www.make-a-website.com/>

<http://www.build-website.com/>

Good search engines:

<http://www.profusion.com/>
<http://www.google.com/>
<http://www.askjeeves.com/>
<http://www.yahoo.com/>
<http://www.altavista.com/>
<http://www.looksmart.com/>

Good site to learn about search engines:

<http://www.searchenginewatch.com/>

2. YOUTH

Challenges / Opportunities: Citizens indicated that other related concerns were Activities, Drugs and Alcohol, Facilities, Library (expansion, finance, county support), Parks.

Solution/Contacts:

Investing in your youth is investing in your future. Meeting needs of youth requires constant communication with them and is at best a moving target. Involve youth in a task force formed to meet their needs. They can employ methods to reach out to the youth whose needs are not being met. You could start a horseback riding and outfitters club or perhaps a hiking and fishing club. How about a snowmobiling and boating club for kids of all economic groups. How about starting a technical school to train youth to work in the oil field. Schools can submit a project WILD grant proposal to the Wyoming Game and fish department for a \$500 grant to monitor wildlife in your area.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department has a youth program called O.R.E.O.

Outdoor Recreation Education Opportunities. Its mission is to give youth the opportunity to discover wildlife and learn related skills. Subject areas include aquatic activities, backpacking and hiking, first aid and survival, Hunter skills, and more. Contact: O.R.E.

O. Coordinator Patty Stevens

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

5400 Bishop Boulevard

Cheyenne, Wyoming 82006

Phone 307-777-4552

<http://gf.state.wy.us/html/education/oreo1.htm>

3. RECREATION

Challenges / Opportunities:

Citizens listed other concerns as Recreation facilities, Bike/Walking path, Swimming Pool.

Solution/Contacts:

Using your location next to the River is the key to a super Bike/Walking path. The island is a resource that needs to be used. Highway funds can be used for making walking paths along highways. You can get help from the Highway department in Rock Springs and another good source of information is The Nonprofit Friends of Pathways, PO. Box 2062, Jackson Hole, Wyoming 83001, phone 307-733-4534, Director David Vandenberg email:

fop@wyoming.com

4. GOVERNMENT / ORDINANCES

Challenges / Opportunities:

Other concerns listed were Enforcement, Equal/Uniform enforcement, Planning and zoning, Participation, Law enforcement and response, County support.

Solutions/Contacts: You need to appoint a task force that can work on this if it is important enough to you as city leaders.

5. HOUSING

Challenges / Opportunities

Available, Affordable, Livable, Appearance

Solution/Contact: These types of improvements can be achieved by setting a goal and developing a plan then getting help to reach the goal. It is often tempting to assume that such developments are needed because someone suggests them however a wise precaution is to do a need and feasibility study before taking on a costly project. At times it is best to hire a consultant and sometime projects can be accomplished through less costly means. A good start is to assign the needs assessment process to a citizen's task force, which can request help to make these determinations and make recommendations to the mayor and council.

The USDA Rural Development Agency is a great source for funding. The local contact person is:

Linda Ziegler
USDA Rural Development
Afton, Wyoming
307-886-9001
email: linda.ziegler@wy.usda.gov

6. EDUCATION

Challenges / Opportunities:

Retention, Finance, Expansion

Solutions/Contacts:

7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Challenges / Opportunities:

Diversity, Necessity, Grocery store, Restaurant, Bank, Full time / Year round jobs, Secondary employment, Tourism, Agricultural support, Water Development, Rest area, Business loss and retail leakage.

Solutions/Contacts:

1-Establish a website for your community and invite people on your future website to start a business or relocate their business to your Town. Initiate a business recruitment process.

2- Implement a citizen action task force and assign them to inventory the location, condition and compile photographs of the empty or old unsightly buildings in your community. Community leaders need to employ resources to help the owners find a suitable use for the buildings or devise plan to improve there looks or remove them. Once the inventory is completed assign the task force to assist the town to find solutions.

3- It seems every community needs a grocery store of some sort. Perhaps a community

cooperatively owned store might be a solution where all the people own shares and no one then feels like someone is making an unfair profit. A need and feasibility study should be done prior to starting a community coop store.

4- Contact successful restaurant owners outside the area for their ideas on the feasibility of locating in LaBarge. It seems that a great opportunity awaits someone with the right skills.

5- A feasibility study is needed to determine the need and if so needed the best location for an industrial park.

LUAG, South Lincoln County Economic Development Committee, are well suited to the task of economic development. Other sources of help are the Wyoming Business Council, Wyoming Rural Development Council.

Another source of help is that the Western Wyoming Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Council. They sponsoring the grant writing workshop GET THAT GRANT: GRANTWRITING FROM CONCEPTION TO COMPLETION in Jackson, Wyoming on November 18-21, 2002. It costs \$645 and is some of the best training available in the country to teach people how to get grants. For more information contact:

Kirk Heaton
Western Wyoming RC&D Area
1471 Dewar Drive, #106
Rock Springs, WY 82901
307/382-3982

6- The town could have a contest with a prize for the best web site selected by a committee of specialists appointed by the Mayor and Council. The teachers at the Big Piney High School could assign some of their sharpest computer students join the contest to design a web page for the town.

7- The large and attractive grove of trees that exists on the island is an asset that many people would like to enjoy. This could be used to attract tourists to your community. Some attractive signs saying something like LaBarge gateway to the Wyoming Mountains would help advertise your town. The town needs signs that are striking and easily viewable to impress travelers

8. HEALTH CARE

Challenges / Opportunities

Clinic

Solutions/Contacts:

9. COMMUNITY

Challenges / Opportunities

Volunteerism, Attitude, Community center, Leadership were all listed as important by people in your community.

Solutions/Contacts: The issues of leadership and better volunteerism tie into achieving cooperation.

Determining a Social Profile and the social capital of your community can help achieve long-range goals of improved leadership. Western Wyoming RC&D Council can get help you assess your social capital.

You can contact Kirk Heaton at the address above or:

Frank Clearfield, Director
NRCS Social Sciences Institute
336-334-7058
email: clearf@ncat.edu

Resources for Community Collaboration
email: <http://www.rccproject.org>

The USDA Extension Service has contacts with the colleges and universities that can help communities to resolve these issues.

Solution/Contact: Take immediate decisive action. Form a citizen task force with the charge to assist the mayor and town council to develop a vision, an immediate action plan and long term Master Plan. Appoint key leaders and invite the public to participate. Request assistance from universities, county, state and federal agencies. People in organizations, agencies and private contracting firms from outside the community can be used to stimulate the needed actions and volunteerism within the community. **1.**

AMENITIES

Challenges: The values and beauty of the community needs to be sold to it's residents. You are blessed with many positive features including friendly and talented people, a great school with a nice gymnasium and ball court, proximity to service and shopping hubs in Rock Springs, Evanston, Salt Lake City, and Ogden, low crime rates, parks, community events, senior center, great people with solid values, clean air, clean water, a clear sky, near by river, near by mountains, oil, gas wells and gas plants for employment in the vicinity, open spaces, great recreation opportunities such as fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, camping, a library, farms and ranches surrounding the town, affordable housing. All of these nice features, and others we have no doubt missed, make LaBarge a very desirable community to live in! The challenge is to keep the community viable, maintain the services now enjoyed and add any that are needed The Western Wyoming RC&D Council, The USDA Extension Service from the University of Wyoming and Utah State University are great sources of help in such matters. There is a network of facilitators available to assist with achieving community goals. Contact Mary Randolph at Wyoming Rural Development Council.

Another source of ideas is to click on the library at:
<http://www.sonoran.org/>

The following company specializes in community
organizational consulting:
Community Systems
P. O. Box 516
Bozeman, MT 59771-0516
406/587-8970

.Help can come from the Wyoming Tourism Board, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Western Wyoming RC&D Council, Wyoming State Forestry Division, Wyoming Business Council, US Department of Commerce, and the USDA

Rural Development. The Mountain Spirit Heritage Area is now forming and wants to include your community in their organization and brochures.

Kirk Heaton
RC&D Area Coordinator
!471 Dewar Drive, #106
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901
307-382-3982
kirk.heaton@wy.usda.gov

Demont Grandy
District Conservationist
USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
P.O. Box 216
Cokeville, WY 83110-0216
307/787-3211
FAX 307/279-3256
demont.grandy@wy.usda.gov

Dana Stone
District Forester
Wyoming State Forestry Division
P.O. Box 1497
Lyman, WY 82937
307/787-6148
FAX 307/787-6996

dstone@state.wy.us

USEFUL WEB SITES FOR GRANT INFORMATION

State grant information through the State Library:

www.wsl.state.wy.us/sis/grants/index.html

Federal Catalog of Domestic Assistance:

www.cfda.gov

Information about private foundation assistance:

www.fdncenter.org

Contact Kirk Heaton for assistance with certain searches of the Foundation Center database.

Solution/Contact:

Enhance enough economic growth to maintain needed resources and amenities. Use the natural resources and existing features to attract businesses that will provide jobs for youth to stay in the area. Advertise the community to potential clean industries and businesses that are attracted to small, clean, safe communities with abundant resources.

An excellent source of information is the Wyoming Business Council web site:

<http://www.wyomingbusiness.org/>

Another great source is Wyoming Community Network site:

<http://wcn.uwyo.edu/default.htm>

Other very helpful sources are the Western RC&D and National RC&D sites.

<http://www.westernrcd.org/>

<http://www.rcdnet.org/>

Wayne T. Jipsen

Historic Trails Resource Conservation and Development Coordinator
USDA-NRCS, 521 West Cedar St., PO Box 953, Rawlins, WY 82301

Phone: (307) 324-2424

Fax: (307) 324-8806

E-Mail: wayne.jipsen@wy.usda.gov

INTRODUCTION

I would like to begin by thanking the citizens of La Barge for their generous hospitality and the friendly way in which we were treated throughout the assessment process. While the listening sessions identified many challenges faced by the town, they also highlighted many recent successes and an abundance of community spirit. By channeling this community spirit and building on the recent successes I see many opportunities for the future of La Barge.

This report is organized around the major themes identified by the resource team.

CLEAN-UP / BEAUTIFICATION

Challenge: The desire for a cleaner town was expressed many times and in many ways during the listening sessions. Areas of specific concern included: vacant lots; lack of trees and grass; the cemetery; “junk” in yards and along the streets; and, the industrial areas on both ends of town. On the surface, clean-up campaigns appear to be a relatively simple endeavor with potential for quick fixes to the problem. However, the twin issues of personal property rights and “one person’s trash is another person’s treasure” frequently team up and either slow the progress of clean-up efforts or prevent them from even being initiated.

Solution / Contact: This challenge is generally best addressed through a phasing process. It is frequently best to begin with the public areas that everyone can agree need cleaned up. As the town begins to look nicer following community clean-up days and a more concerted effort to keep the public areas clean, then some of the residents will begin to clean up their properties also. As the contagion spreads, peer pressure begins to build and influence more individuals. The final phase of the process, if necessary, is to develop, implement, and enforce town ordinances relating to the issue. Although this phase has the potential to be very contentious within a community and is not recommended as a first step, only the community in question can determine the final direction and extent of a beautification program.

One way to begin the process, and involve the youth of the community, would be to apply for a Wyoming Youth and Community (WYAC) grant, through the Rural Rehabilitation Program, managed by the Wyoming Business Council. The WYAC grant program provides student organizations with a grant up to \$1,500 to improve the facilities, grounds or buildings on public property in Wyoming communities. For further information, contact:

Cindy Garretson-Weibel
Wyoming Business Council
Rural Rehabilitation Program
2219 Carey Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone: (307) 777-6589
Fax: (307) 777-6593
E-Mail: cgarre@state.wy.us

RECREATION

Challenge: La Barge is blessed with an abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities, and if the results of the listening sessions are any indication, many community members enjoy and regularly partake of these opportunities. Examples that were frequently mentioned include: fishing, hunting, snow machining, hiking, bicycling, and camping. However, most of these activities are pursued on federal and state lands and the community perceives a threat of increasing restrictions and regulation from these entities.

Solution / Contact: The Bureau of Land Management's National Training Center and the National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils, Inc. have joined forces to create "The Partnership Series," a suite of classes and workshops addressing such topics as transformational leadership, ecosystem stewardship, inclusion, and capacity building. The partnership has developed a place-based workshop entitled "Community-Based Partnerships and Ecosystems: Ensuring a Healthy Environment." This workshop is designed to pull community members together with land managers in an effort to improve relationships with each other and thereby begin to control and create a more positive future for their communities and the environments they occupy. Working through the local BLM office, the community could request the workshop be held locally. Inclusion of local Forest Service land managers as workshop participants would be beneficial. For more information contact:

Priscilla Mecham
Field Manager, BLM
432 E. Mill Street
PO Box 768
Pinedale, WY 82941-0768
Phone: 307-367-5300

Additional information on The Partnership Series and the recommended workshop can be found at: www.ntc.blm.gov/partner.

COMMUNITY

Challenge: The listening sessions identified a great many specific projects, which the community is interested in pursuing. They also identified a perceived lack of human and financial resources to accomplish many of the potential projects.

Solution / Contact: There are many sources of funding available for most of the proposed projects. The real challenge is to connect the funders with the community. One way to address this challenge is to develop a cadre of well-trained grant writers. The expenses associated with developing grant writing expertise is frequently recouped many times over through the successful funding of community projects by the grant writers. The Western Wyoming Resource Conservation and Development Council host a grant-writing workshop each year. For further information, contact:

Kurt Heaton
Western Wyoming RC&D
1471 Dewar Drive, Suite 106
Rock Springs, WY 82901-5851
Phone: 307-382-3982
E-Mail: kirk.heaton@wy.usda.gov

Wyoming Rural Development Council
Community Assessment Team
LABARGE, WYOMING

Submitted by:

Byron J. (Buck) McVeigh
Administrator
Department of Administration & Information
Economic Analysis Division
1807 Capitol Avenue, Suite 206
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Email: bmcvei@state.wy.us
Website: <http://eadiv.state.wy.us>

Introduction

I want to genuinely thank the government officials of the Town of LaBarge for inviting us, and each and every citizen that participated in the two-day assessment of your community. Your thoughts and ideas reflect a genuine desire to make your community better than ever. The people of LaBarge are a prideful, hardworking class that value its citizens to no end - both old and young, the wide-open spaces, and the business community. My special thanks to the folks who took such good care of us during our stay.

It was truly a pleasure for me to be a part of the assessment team for the LaBarge community. I enjoyed meeting and working with each of the individuals, and I'm looking forward to reading the individual thoughts and suggestions from my colleagues in the final report.

Youth

Challenge: Clearly, the youth of LaBarge are saddled with a multitude of challenges. One of the major trouble spots for youth, ironically, is the school system, and the way it is set up. LaBarge youth can attend school in town from Kindergarten through grade 5. After that, they must endure a daily bus ride to Big Piney, which amounts to roughly 46 miles round trip. The kids who live out of town must endure a much longer bus ride every day. Besides the obvious fatigue and disruption of family life that this causes, it limits, and in most cases prevents, LaBarge youth from participating in any extra-curricular school activities in Big Piney. Suffice it to say that "getting involved" in their school, which has been proven to be invaluable for youth development and performance, is difficult, if not impossible, at best.

Another challenge facing youth in LaBarge is one that is commonly seen and heard across the state, although, particularly in the rural communities. The youth have nothing to do! The community of LaBarge has a town park and skate park, which are located on

the outskirts of the town. Parents are not only concerned about the distance factor, but also about the exposure to the elements, as there is no shelter from the wind and cold. Trees and grass are treasured commodities, yet scarce in LaBarge. There is no youth center or recreation center, and job opportunities for the high school aged youth are very limited. Further, the library is too small, and its business hours are very limited.

What all of the aforementioned difficulties and problems lead to is exactly what we heard during the town meetings: LaBarge has a problem providing positive opportunities for its youth to become involved in both school and the community. As a consequence, the youth are getting into mischief. The Town of LaBarge needs to provide activities, and opportunities for its youth. It needs to keep them busy and involved. The youth, and community as a whole, would benefit greatly from a recreation facility.

Solution: There are several direct steps that the community can undertake to help remedy the problems currently facing the youth in LaBarge. Additionally, there are indirect steps that will help.

It is critical that the kids become involved, both in school and in the community. The following example of youth taking charge, and seeing a project through to the end, was originally submitted by Linda Fabian, Executive Director of the Wheatland Area Development Corporation. She provided it in her assessment write-up for the town of Afton.

It started several years ago, when group of students in Wheatland, Wyoming got tired of having nothing to do, and took it upon themselves to do something about. While LaBarge already has a skate park (although small), this same energy and zeal could be applied toward any project really, certainly a youth recreation center.

They started by selecting a project to fulfill a community need - in this case it was a skate park in their town park. The starting point was selecting an adult sponsor for the project. For this project, they chose a schoolteacher. The teacher worked with the students, helping them develop a budget, a marketing plan, construction plan, and fundraising plans. The entire project took approximately one year from start to finish. For fundraising, the youth placed donation jars throughout the town, received donations from local businesses, held dances and skate-a-thons, and were possibly recipient of a grant. They negotiated with the town council for property, insurance and facility maintenance. From there they worked with the American Ramp Company, the skate park supply vendor, in designing and constructing the skate park. This group of ambitious youth raised approximately \$25,000, and to this day, has an enormous sense of accomplishment and pride in this project. The skate park is utilized not only by locals, but tourists alike, and is also used for local and regional competitions.

For more details, please contact:

Katie Carmen

**School to Career Counselor
Wheatland High School
(307) 332-2075**

**Holly Winders
Student Advocate
(307) 322-4499**

American Ramp Company

214 E. 4th Warehouse #1C

Joplin, MO 64801

Toll Free: (877) 726-7778

Email: sales@americanrampcompany.com

Website: www.americanrampcompany.com

Another source for ideas and assistance in building a youth facility, and a very credible one at that, is the Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA). On November 3, 1997, a group of adults banded together, and with the assistance of BGCA, started a neighborhood-based youth facility in Cheyenne, Wyoming. It is managed by a volunteer board of directors, and has a paid staff. Their current membership has risen to over 1,000 kids from Cheyenne.

The Cheyenne BGCA received start-up financial assistance from national headquarters, located in Atlanta. Today, the Cheyenne BGCA depends on the support of the community to carry out its mission. It currently receives 85% of its funding from individuals, businesses, and foundations committed to improving the quality of life for Cheyenne kids.

There are four key characteristics that define the essence of a Boys & Girls Club. All are critical in exerting positive impact on the life of a child.

1. Dedicated Youth Facility – The Boys & Girls Club is a place, an actual neighborhood-based building, designed solely for youth programs and activities.
2. Open Daily – The Club is open every day, after school and on weekends, when kids have free time and need positive, productive outlets.
3. Professional Staff – Every Club has full-time, trained youth development professionals, providing positive role models and mentors. Volunteers provide key supplemental support.
4. Available/Affordable to All Youth – Clubs reach out to kids who cannot afford, or may lack access to, other community programs. Dues are a low \$10 per year.

More than 25 national programs are available in the areas of education, the environment, health, the arts, careers, alcohol/drug and pregnancy prevention, gang prevention, leadership development and athletics.

Here is a listing of the different programs Boys and Girls Clubs of America offer:

Character & Leadership
Education & Career
Health & Life Skills
The Arts
Sports, Fitness & Recreation
Specialized Programs

When it comes to youth, LaBarge is no different than any other community in the state, or the nation, for that matter. In every community, boys and girls are left to find their own recreation and companionship in the streets. Young people need to have a place to go, and most importantly, know that someone cares about them. The Town of Cody (Park County) has a BGCA.

For more details, please contact:

John Oliphant
Regional Service Director
Boys & Girls Clubs of America
2107 N. Collins Blvd.
Richardson, TX 75080
(972) 690-1393
Email: joliphant@bgca.org
Website: www.bgca.org

Mike Stanfield
President, Board of Directors
Boys & Girls Club of Cheyenne
1700 Snyder Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82001
(307) 778-6674

Boys and Girls Clubs of America - continued

Cindy Sullivan
Executive Director
Boys & Girls Club of Cheyenne
1700 Snyder Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82001
(307) 778-6674

Larry Kent
Executive Director
Boys & Girls Club of Park County
308 16th St
Cody, WY 82414-3214
(307) 527-9260

Health Care

Challenge: The challenge facing LaBarge is to establish and sustain a health care system that provides easy access to routine services, reasonable access to specialty services, and prompt and reliable access to emergency services. This typically includes a county hospital, an adequate number of primary care providers, transportation where needed for routine care and readily available for emergency care, and public health services. While

LaBarge has emergency services and a county hospital in Kemmerer (some 40 miles away), it is deficit in the other components.

The need to have health services available locally is primary to both the individuals in the community and the local economy, in general. It is especially critical for the vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and the poor, who are the least able to travel to obtain services that are not available locally. As for the local economy, local availability and control of services ensures that the community retains expenditures made on health care. These expenditures, in Wyoming, amounted to \$2,931 on a per capita basis in 1998 (“Wyoming in Perspective”, 2002, Morgan Quitno Corp.). In terms of economic impact for local health care spending, it is estimated that every health care dollar recycles through the local economy one-and-a-half times. For example, every rural physician generates more than five jobs and over \$233,000 in income to the local economy (“The Economic Impact of NHSC Physicians on Rural Communities,” Federal Office of Public Health Policy, USDHHS. 1997). Finally, LaBarge, without a local health care system, may find it difficult to bring in new residents or to attract and retain new businesses and the jobs they represent.

Solution: There are several organizations that the community can contact to help remedy the current health care problems in LaBarge.

The Wyoming Health Resources Network, Inc. exists to help improve and enhance rural health services and promote healthier individuals and communities in Wyoming. They provide assistance on: healthcare provider recruiting and community education on recruitment and retention techniques; provide technical assistance and leadership in building healthy communities; provide publications to help communities perform assessments and identify grants and other resources; serve as an open forum for an unbiased exchange of ideas; and serve as a clearinghouse for grants targeting improved health, health care awareness, and the health care delivery system.

For more details, please contact:

Wyoming Health Resources Network, Inc.

1920 Evans Avenue

Cheyenne WY 82001

(307) 635-2930

Fax: (307) 635-2599

Sharla Allen, Executive Director

Email: sallen@whrn.org

Website: www.whrn.org

The Wyoming Department of Health, the Office of Rural Health (WORH) was established in 1993, and began receiving federal funding that year. ORH’s mission is to improve the delivery of health care services in rural and frontier areas through education, service, research, and policy analysis, and to foster cooperation and coordination between state agencies and statewide health care associations across Wyoming. Today, the

WORH continues to focus on recruitment and retention, rural health clinic development, community health planning and healthy communities activities, the Wyoming Rural Hospital Flexibility Program, vertical and horizontal networking, mental health care and dental shortages, and increased telemedicine utilization. The Office continues to work closely with the Wyoming Primary Care Association, the Wyoming Health Resources Network, and other health care associations to assure that the citizens of rural and frontier communities, across Wyoming, have access to primary health care services.

For more details, please contact:

**Wyoming State Office of Rural Health
Office of Rural Health
Wyoming Department of Health
1st Floor Hathaway Building, Rm 117
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Douglas Thiede
(307) 777-6918
Fax: (307) 777-7439
Email: DTHIED@state.wy.us**

For information regarding Federal Grant Opportunities relevant to rural health:

**HRSA Grants Application Center
Attention: Grants Management Officer
901 Russell Avenue, Suite 450
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
1-877-HRSA-123; Fax: 1-877-477-2234
E-Mail: HRSAGAC@hrsa.gov
Website: [http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/richs/grants.htm#Community Development](http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/richs/grants.htm#Community%20Development)**

Education

Challenge: A major concern among the residents/parents in LaBarge is with the future of the LaBarge Elementary School. The school currently serves Kindergarten through Grade 5 youth. Next year, however, it will only serve children through Grade 4. The underlying problem, perceived by many parents/residents, is with school funding, given the current delineation of the school district that LaBarge Elementary resides. Due to its location within Lincoln County (the extreme northeast corner, and only several miles from the Sublette County border) the LaBarge Elementary School falls within the Sublette County School District #9. This district accounts for just a small segment of Lincoln County.

Clearly, the school is integral to the survival of LaBarge. Without it, many families would leave, and along with them, the potential for future economic development. Currently, there are few to zero opportunities for secondary employment. Basically, the school is the only thing keeping families in LaBarge.

School district resources are determined by a block grant model on a per pupil basis. This model is designed to rationally determine the per pupil amount necessary to provide a proper education based upon a set of circumstances. Districts (local administrators and school boards) are granted the freedom of allocating these revenues in a manner best suited to their particular circumstances and student population, so long as a proper educational program is provided.

The subject of school finance has been, and continues to be, difficult and very touchy. In an era where enrollments are declining and expenditures are rising, education funding has become even more challenging and political.

Solution: Make your voices heard! Encourage your community leaders to consider running for school board positions. Remember, it is here that district funding is allocated within the district, and decisions on school operations are determined. Also, of equal importance, you must voice your concerns with your legislative representatives:

Senator Delaine Roberts
P.O. Box 5173
Etna, WY 83118
(307) 883-2135

Representative Louie Tomassi
P. O. Box 549
Big Piney, WY 83113
(307) 877-4439
Fax: (307) 877-9703
Email:

ltomassi@house.wyoming.com

The following websites will help you to understand the Wyoming School Finance System and the amount of resources provided to each school district. However, as mentioned earlier, the block grant provides local administrators and school boards with the authority to use the block grant as they deem appropriate. For answers on revenue allocation within your district, you will need to contact your school district.

[Wyoming School Finance System Information Websites - continued](#)

Sublette County School District Number Nine (SCSD #9) -- Big Piney, Wyoming
Weldon Shelley, Superintendent
P.O. Box 769, Big Piney WY 83113
(307) 276-3322
Fax: (307) 276-3731
Website: <http://www.k12.wy.us/technology/grant3/sucsd9.html>

School District Statistical Profile

Website: <http://www.k12.wy.us/warehouse/profile>

Statistical Report Series

Website: <http://www.k12.wy.us/statistics/statseries.html>

The Wyoming State Legislature

Website: <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/>

Wyoming Taxpayers Association

2410 Pioneer Avenue

Cheyenne, WY 82001

(307) 635-8761

Fax: (307) 637-7556

E-mail: wytax@wytax.org

Website: <http://www.wytax.org/>

Housing

Challenge: The Town of LaBarge cannot attract new businesses and families due to the lack of quality affordable housing.

Solution: The Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA) plays an important role in providing affordable housing, and in helping families take a first step on the road to fulfilling their American dream. In addition, every home built, rehabilitated or financed with WCDA funds means more Wyoming jobs and greater economic stability.

Here's a sample of some funds and programs available through the WCDA:

Home Investment Partnership Program - units of local government, housing authorities, private developers and nonprofit organizations may apply for Home Investment Partnership Program funds. Projects must be targeted to low - and very low - income persons. Funds may be used for rental housing production, homeowner rehabilitation and homeownership programs anywhere in Wyoming.

Community Development Block Grant - This program is the beginning of a statewide revolving

Loan fund that will help meet the state's housing needs in the future. Eligible applicants for these funds are counties and incorporated cities and towns in Wyoming.

Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits - This program provides federal tax credits for developers and contractors as an incentive to develop affordable rental housing projects.

For more details, please contact:

Wyoming Community Development Authority
155 North Beech Casper, Wyoming 82602
(307) 265-0603
Fax: (307) 266-5414
Website: <http://www.wyomingcda.com/index.html>

Demographic, Economic, and Statistical Information

Challenge: Planning and development efforts, federal and state grant applications, and many other assistance programs require vast amounts of research and information.

Solution: Both the Economic Analysis Division and Wyoming State Library are invaluable sources for information. Both of these entities can save you great amounts of time and effort. Use them!

Wyoming Department of Administration & Information
Economic Analysis Division
1807 Capitol Avenue, Suite 206
(307) 777-7504
Fax: (307) 632-1819
Email: ead@state.wy.us
Website: <http://eadiv.state.wy.us/eahome.htm>

Wyoming State Library
Lesley Boughton, State Librarian
2301 Capitol Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0060
(307) 777-7283
(307) 777-6289, Fax
Website: <http://will.state.wy.us/>

State grant information is available through the State Library
Website: www-wsl.state.wy.us/sis/grants/index.html

Final Remarks

In closing, let me say that I think you have all of the necessary talent and resources in the Town of LaBarge to address most of the concerns that we heard on April 17th and 18th. There are three obvious strengths in your community that will serve as the drivers towards solving the challenges you've identified: strong faith, pride, and love for thy neighbor. As a member of your community assessment team, I am sincere in helping you solve the issues you raised.

Susan Mizner
USDA Rural Development
PO Box 190
Afton WY 83110
307-886-9001, Ext. 4
FAX: 307-886-3744
Email: susan.mizner@wy.usda.gov

INTRODUCTION

I want to thank LaBarge for their generosity during our stay for the Community Assessment. Although I have visited LaBarge many times, I have not stayed long enough to get to know the community. This was a wonderful opportunity to learn the history of the area, to learn what the area has to offer, and to learn the goals of the town.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Challenge: Throughout the listening sessions, affordable housing, to rent and to buy, was consistently mentioned.

Solution/Contact: A needs survey can be conducted. It is important to know what is needed, how many units are needed, and whether there is a need for family versus single housing units. For information contact:

Cheryl Gillum
WCDA
PO Box 634
Casper WY 82602
307-265-0603

USDA Rural Development offers several loan programs to for-profit and non-profit groups as well as individuals to construct low-income rental housing in addition to single-family dwellings through direct loans, guarantee loans through local lenders, and participation loans with local lenders and Rural Development. For information contact:

Linda Ziegler
USDA Rural Development
PO Box 190
Afton WY 83110
307-886-9001, Ext. 4
FAX: 307-886-3744
Email: linda.ziegler@wy.usda.gov

Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA) offers low interest loans to first time homebuyers. Housing and Urban Development has housing programs, and the Veterans Administration has guaranteed housing programs for veterans. For information contact:

Most Real Estate Agents and local lenders are familiar with the WCDA, HUD, and VA loans.

Instead of individuals constructing rental units, the Town can form a Housing Authority to help them seek assistance for constructing apartments as well as assisted living centers. For information contact:

The Town of Sundance has a Housing Authority as does the Town of Jackson.

Two major items that affect the cost of housing are the cost of the building site and the size and type of construction. There are programs that non-profit entities can access to reduce the costs of the building site:

If a developer is unavailable, the community could initiate development by purchasing and installing the needed infrastructure. Funding is available on a non-profit basis from Rural Development under the Section 523 program. This program loans funds at a very low interest rate for the development of building lots. These lots are then sold to prospective low-income homeowners in conjunction with the building of a home.

Rural Development has a program called "Self-Help Housing" to reduce the cost of construction. This program allows several applicants to work together to construct several homes under supervision of a construction supervisor sponsored by a Housing Authority or other non-profit organization. For information contact:

Linda Ziegler
USDA Rural Development
PO Box 190
Afton WY 83110
307-886-9001, Ext. 4
FAX: 307-886-3744
Email: linda.ziegler@wy.usda.gov

Other sources of funding for site development are SHOP funds, Housing Assistance Council funding, CHDO funds, and Tax Credit programs. For information contact:

Sue Hoesel
Housing Partners, Inc.
Riverton WY
307-857-1988

WCDA's HOME Investment Partnership Program has funds to finance single family homes for low-income purchasers. This program involves an interested builder who constructs homes using HOME funds and then sells them to authorized buyers. Rural Development can participate with WCDA in financing these homes. For information contact:

Cheryl Gillum
WCDA
PO Box 634
Casper WY 82601
307-265-0603

PLANNING

Challenge: Many rural communities face economic and community development issues due to geographic isolation, low population density, historic dependence on agriculture, population loss, out-migration, and economic distress.

Solution/Contact: Planning is an important tool for dealing with changes in the community, especially growth, but even with decline. It gives businesses, existing residents, and new residents a set of expectations about their investments. Planning can constrain property rights but also protect property rights. It is important to include the community in the planning.

USDA advocated a pilot concept for rural revitalization and community development called Rural Economic Area Partnership Zones (REAP). The REAP Initiative was established to address critical issues related to constraints in economic activity and growth, low density settlement patterns, stagnant or declining employment, and isolation that has led to disconnection from markets, suppliers, and centers of information and finance.

Through local efforts in strategic planning and community action, millions of dollars in State, Federal, private, and non-profit assistance can be brought to a REAP Zone. This is done by ---

Improving economic viability, diversity, and competitiveness of the local economy and enhancing its participation in state, national and global markets;

Assisting local communities to develop cooperative strategies that will maintain and expand essential community functions, basic infrastructure, education, health care, housing, and telecommunications;

Assisting families with crises resulting from displaced employees and joblessness; and,

Providing financial and technical assistance to implement a citizen-built strategic plan.

For information contact:

EZ/EC---Building Communities Together web site---<http://www.ezec.gov>

William C. Davis
USDA Rural Development
Box 1737
Bismark ND 58502
701-530-2402
FAX: 701-530-2111
Email: william.davis@nd.usda.gov

Jerry Tamlin
USDA Rural Development
PO Box 820
Casper WY 82602
307-261-6319
FAX: 307-261-6327
Email: jerry.tamlin@wy.usda.gov

Linda Ziegler
USDA Rural Development
PO Box 190
Afton WY 83110
307-886-9001, Ext. 4
FAX: 307-886-3744
Email: linda.ziegler@wy.usda.gov

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Challenge: The need for public facilities such as enlarging the library, a teen center, a community center, and health clinic was mentioned during the sessions..

Solution/Contact: Community facilities are essential to the quality of life in rural communities. These include:

Health Care---clinics, ambulatory care centers, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and nursing homes;

Telecommunications---medical or educational telecommunication links;

Public Safety---communication centers, police or fire stations, fire trucks, rescue vehicles, and jails; and,

Public Services---child care centers, adult day care centers, shelters for abused women and children, shelter workshops, airports, libraries, city halls, and schools.

The Rural Housing Service of USDA Rural Development works with local lenders including banks, savings and loan institutions, mortgage companies, and Farm Credit System banks, to offer loan guarantees to help build essential community facilities. This program can also provide direct loans and grants to assist in developing essential services. Funds may be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities. Funds are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, special purpose districts, nonprofit corporations, and tribal governments. For information contact:

Linda Ziegler
USDA Rural Development
PO Box 190
Afton WY 83110
307-886-9001, Ext. 4
FAX: 307-886-3744
Email: linda.ziegler@wy.usda.gov

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Challenge: Recruitment of new businesses, secondary employment, and reducing out-migration were mentioned at the listening sessions.

Solution/Contact: The way to economic opportunity and community development starts with broad participation by all segments of the community. This may include, among others, the political and Governmental leadership, community groups, health and social service groups, environmental groups, religious organizations, the private and nonprofit sectors, centers of learning, and other community institutions.

An available resource may be for local farmers and ranchers to consider forming one or more cooperatives. A cooperative is a user-owned business that processes and markets products, purchases production supplies or consumer goods, and provides other services needed by rural residents. By working together for their mutual benefit in cooperatives, rural residents are able to reduce costs, obtain services that might otherwise be unavailable, such as the grocery store, and achieve greater returns for their products. For information contact:

Jerry Tamlin
USDA Rural Development
PO Box 820

Casper WY 82602
307-261-6319
FAX: 307-261-6327
Email: jerry.tamlin@wy.usda.gov

USDA Rural Development Rural Business-Cooperative Service offers Business and Industry Guarantee Loans by eligible local lenders to businesses to create and to maintain employment and to improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. The Intermediary Relending Program consists of loans to intermediaries to provide loans to ultimate recipients for business facilities and community development projects in a rural area. For information contact:

Linda Ziegler
USDA Rural Development
PO Box 190
Afton WY 83110
307-886-9001, Ext. 4
FAX: 307-886-3744
Email: linda.ziegler@wy.usda.gov

Businesses that conduct their business from basically anywhere where Internet access is available are becoming more common in rural America. High tech jobs are currently moving into smaller communities. SENTO, a Utah company that has employed several hundred workers, opened a business center in Evanston. They deal in computer technologies and are a clean business to bring into a community. For information contact:

www.sento.com

Boise Cascade Office Products opened an order center in Casper. For information contact:

www.bcpb.com

More information can be obtained from the following:

Heather Wagoner
Hathaway Bldg, 2nd Floor
2300 Capital Avenue
Cheyenne WY 82002
307-777-5329

Carl D. Perkins, Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998. This program is available to develop academic, vocational and technical skills in vocational students.

Jan Wilson
Department of Employment
PO Box 2760
Casper WY 82602
307-235-3294

Workforce Development Training Fund. This fund is to enhance employment opportunities and to help meet training needs of existing and new industries.

Karen Milmont
Department of Education
Hathaway Bldg, 2nd Floor
2300 Capital Avenue
Cheyenne WY 82002
307-777-3545

Adult Education and Literacy. Their purpose is to provide education for adults who have not graduated from high school or received a GED.

LaBarge Community Assessment Report

Gordon Warren

Public Affairs Officer
Shoshone National Forest
808 Meadow Lane
Cody, WY 82414
(307) 527-6241
gkwarren@fs.fed.us

First of all, thank you for the great hospitality and allowing us to spend some time in your community. The best part of doing community assessments is meeting a lot of new and interesting people. I am impressed with how much LaBarge has already done. Many communities of your size can't boast of such things as a modern water treatment facility, paved streets and a nice town hall.

I hope these comments will be of use in your future efforts.

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Challenge: A Community Action Plan is a critical part of your planning and development process, and you are required to have a plan in place to apply for some grants. Even when not required, a plan gives you a foot up when applying for some grants.

Solution/contact: LaBarge might qualify for a Rural Community Assistance (RCA) grant from the U.S. Forest Service. RCA grants provide for a variety of projects aimed at helping a community develop its natural assets, diversify its economic opportunities, etc. This includes developing a Community Action Plan.

RCA grants are provided on a 20-80 cost sharing basis. This means the community must provide at least 20 percent of the cost of the project and the Forest Service will provide up to 80 percent. The good news is that the community's share can be an in-kind contribution. For example, the community could provide volunteer labor, materials, etc. on a project as an in-kind match.

Forests usually receive funding for RCA grants around March, so you should contact them before then to apply for a grant for that year. For further information contact:

Jason Anderson
Public Affairs Officer
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001
Phone: (307) 739-5500

Paul Ries
Cooperative/Urban Forestry Specialist
USFS Intermountain Region
Federal Building
324 25th Street
Ogden, UT 84401
Phone: (801)625-5253

RECREATION & TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

BLM land for recreation area

Challenge: Several people mentioned the desire to create a recreation area – walking paths, nature trail, etc. - on the islands, parts of which are BLM land.

Solution/contact: Municipalities can obtain BLM lands for recreation and public purposes.

You must file a request with BLM under the Recreation & Public Purchases Act.

There are three options:

- Lease the land under a long-term lease. A special rate is available for communities.
- Purchase the land and patent it. A special rate is available for communities.
- Lease the land with option to purchase later.

You will need to provide BLM with a map and a development plan for the area. There may be other requirements.

For more information and to file a request, contact:

Mark Hatchel – Realty Specialist
BLM Kemmerer Field Office
Box 632
Kemmerer, WY 83101
Phone (307) 828-4507

NOTE: Since the islands are in the floodplain, you also will need to contact the Corps of Engineers, the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and your County Planner to determine what type(s) of 404 permits might be required. Floodplain insurance is handled through your county planner. If you are going to disturb more than one acre of ground, you will need a Storm Water Permit from the DEQ.

For the Corps of Engineers, contact:

Peter Chandler
Corps of Engineers
Wyoming Regulatory Office
2232 Dell Range Blvd., Suite 220
Cheyenne, WY 82009
Phone (307)772-2300
Fax (307)772-2920

For the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality contact:

Barb Sahl
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality
122 West 25th Street
Herschler Bldg. 4 West
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone (307)777-7570

Recreation/tourism development

Challenge: A need was expressed to attract more tourism and develop a viable tourism program through advertising recreational opportunities in the area, etc.

Solution/contact: LaBarge might qualify for Rural Community Assistance (RCA) grants from the U.S. Forest Service. RCA grants provide for a variety of projects aimed at helping a community improve its economic base by showcasing its natural assets and recreation opportunities, developing a plan, designing and printing brochures, designing and fabricating interpretive signs, other projects to attract & develop tourism, develop nature trails, etc.

Jason Anderson
Public Affairs Officer
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001
Phone: (307) 739-5500

Paul Ries
Cooperative/Urban Forestry Specialist
USFS Intermountain Region
Federal Building
324 25th Street
Ogden, UT 84401
Phone: (801) 625-5253

FOCUS ON THE DIVERSITY OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Challenge: Attract tourists and recreationists to the area.

Solution/contact: LaBarge has a unique variety of attractions and things to do. It appears to be a hub or base from which visitors can pursue a plethora of activities. On the east side of town across the river are sandstones, shales and formations similar to what are found in Southern Utah. This is a great area for hiking, biking, photography, etc. To the west, going up into the forest, you have scenic drives, tumbling streams and the whole forest ecosystem. It is unusual to find such diverse areas in such close proximity. In addition you have the Green River and high desert country. Visitors have their choice of fishing, hiking, backpacking, camping, snowmobiling, nature walks, bird watching and other activities.

You also are uncrowded. This is a real plus for some people.

Advertise what you have by creating a brochure(s) and working with the Wyoming Travel & Tourism Bureau. For further information contact:

Chuck Coon, Manager of Tourism Media
Division of Tourism
214 West 15th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone (307)777-2831

Create a community history/interpretive park

Challenge: Attract visitors and make community more attractive.

Solution: While touring LaBarge I noticed a lot of scrap metal and old, worn out equipment. However, some of it appeared to be oil field equipment from earlier times. People are interested in history, geology and antiques. Consider creating an interpretive area or park with interpretive signage telling about the history of LaBarge and the area, its geology, the history of the discovery and development of oil and gas etc. Have interpretive signs beside some of the pieces of old equipment. How did they do it in the old days?

Communities find it profitable and interesting to feature what is unique to their community. Tell the visitor what gives your community a special character.

Include on your interpretive signs and brochures some facts and figures about what LaBarge has contributed. How many millions of barrels of oil or billions of cubic feet of

natural gas have come from the area? Personalize these figures (i.e. enough gallons of oil to fuel every car in the United States to run 100,000 miles, etc.). People like these kinds of figures that give a different perspective and put statistics into something they can relate to.

New technologies for interpretive signs have resulted in tougher, more fade-resistant signs that aren't as expensive as some of the earlier signs. They also are relatively maintenance free. For example, laminate signs are tough and very resistant to fading from sunlight (ultraviolet rays) and are much cheaper than ceramic signs. Digital fiberglass signs also are tough and fade resistant, and the prices have been coming down.

CLEANUP & BEAUTIFICATION

Cleaning up lots and Main Street

Challenge: Many people expressed a desire and need to clean up and beautify LaBarge. This came up in every listening session. In addition to enhancing the quality of life in the community, I believe this is one of the critical first steps in attracting more tourists and other visitors.

Visitors tend to stop at communities that are clean and attractive and have a unique appeal or character.

Solution: This is a big challenge and may seem overwhelming. Here are some suggestions:

- Think positive. It can be done. Other communities have done it.
- Recognize from the start that this is a large project that will take a lot of time and cooperation. Don't be discouraged if things don't look a lot better right away.
- Don't bite off more than you can chew. Start with small, manageable chunks, i.e., start with one lot or one small section of Main Street.
- Remember that success builds success. **THIS IS IMPORTANT.** Clean up one lot or area, no matter how small, so that everyone has something to feel good about, can have a sense of accomplishment and see that it can be done. This also can be a showcase for those in the community who may not support the effort or don't think it can be done.
- Sell the scrap iron in vacant lots, etc. to help fund cleanup efforts.
- Be creative. Have a contest and give prizes for the most improved lot or yard.
- Make it fun and inclusive. Designate specific community cleanup and beautification days. Have volunteers with trucks to help older people or those who don't own a truck. Have a potluck dinner at the Town Hall afterward.

Planting trees & shrubs

Challenge: Some people expressed a need and desire to plant trees and shrubs as part of the beautification effort.

Solution: One source of affordable trees and shrubs is through the Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS). Each Conservation District has its own program. If LaBarge doesn't have a program, you can tie in with another community's program such as Pinedale. For further information contact:

Daryle Bennett
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Box 36
Pinedale, WY 82941
Phone (307)367-2257

Solution: Another source of affordable trees and shrubs is the National Arbor Day Foundation. For a \$10 membership donation you can get 10 flowering trees selected for your area. You also receive a *Tree Book* with planting and care information. The 6- to 12-inch trees are guaranteed to grow or they'll be replaced free of charge. Trees are shipped when conditions are right for planting in your area – February through May in the spring or October through mid December in the fall.

To join and sign up for trees contact:

The National Arbor Day Foundation
100 Arbor Ave.
Nebraska City, NE 68410

Or join online at: arborday.org

Solution: You can transplant trees and shrubs from the National Forest in the spring. You need to check with you local forest for prices and other information Contact:

Jason Anderson
Public Affairs Officer
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001
Phone: (307) 739-5500

Beautifying the oil tanks:

Challenge: The large oil tanks at the south end of LaBarge are rusted and unsightly.

Solution: Paint the oil tanks with attractive paintings depicting the geology and/or wildlife of the area or other scenes. Perhaps one could say “Welcome to LaBarge” and have a slogan.

Ask the oil company if it would be willing to donate some paint. The University of Wyoming and Wyoming’s community colleges have arts programs and some excellent teacher and student artists. Approach one or some of them to see if they would take this on as a class project. Or perhaps you have an artist right in the community.

COMMUNITY PRIDE & SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Challenge: There seems to be a dichotomy in LaBarge concerning community pride. A number of people mentioned how the entire community rallies around to help an individual or family in need. At the same time, a number of people also said it’s hard to get some in the community involved as volunteers or to get behind projects such as cleanup and beautification.

Solution: Here are some suggestions to consider:

- Share this report with everyone in the community. Have a town meeting to discuss why the assessment was done. Encourage questions and discussion and correct any misconceptions or misinformation.
- Make it clear to everyone how proud you are to live in a community where everyone looks out for those who need help, but also help them to understand that improving your community also is a way to help all the individuals and families who live there. People need to make this connection.
- Pastors and leaders of your local churches can play an important role in developing community pride, fostering cooperation, building relationships and good communication, etc.
- Sometimes people view projects such as cleanup and beautification as “telling them what to do” or as being an invasion of their freedom or privacy. But, again, what is good for the community is good for everyone who lives there. You can view a community as a “family” and community projects as “family projects” without taking away any one person’s individuality or freedom.
- Find ways to help people who are simply unable to help themselves or don’t have the tools or means (such as a truck) to do it themselves.
- Involve everyone. Ask everyone for ideas and solutions. Value everyone’s ideas.

COMMUNICATION

Challenge: It has been my experience that communication, or lack of good communication, is part of nearly every problem. This is not unique to LaBarge. It is common to every community and every project. This was mentioned directly by some people. It surfaced indirectly when others talked about community pride and sense of community.

Solution: There is no single solution. However, simply recognizing and acknowledging that communication can be a problem is the first and necessary step to solving it. Good communication is critical and is everyone's responsibility. It is a never-ending problem that requires constant work and attention. Poor communication creates confusion and divisiveness. Good communication helps build cohesiveness and understanding.

Some of the items listed under COMMUNITY PRIDE also apply to good communication. Here are some other suggestions:

- Is word of mouth sufficient to keep everyone informed? If not, consider a community newsletter or bulletin board for announcements, community projects & happenings, etc.
- Newsletters can be relatively expensive and time consuming because of folding, mailing, etc., but they have the advantage of knowing that everyone gets them. Bulletin board or kiosk notices are easier and cheaper, but residents have to be trained/encouraged/committed to take time to stop and read the notices.
- If you have a local radio station that talks about local community events on a daily talk show or news broadcast, ask the station to broadcast your news on meetings and other community news. Have someone from your community get on the talk show occasionally to talk about community events, projects, etc.
- Likewise, if a local newspaper has a community news section, get your community news included.
- Avoid the "them vs. us" syndrome, (i.e. the town council "them" doesn't care about "us"). This is divisive. Instead, be proactive. Help the town council understand your concerns, help develop solutions, etc.
- Discuss the concern about good communication at a town meeting and in one of your first newsletters or bulletin board notices. Enlist other people to be part of the solution. (See next item on volunteers.)
- Use volunteers. Don't just rely on the mayor, town clerk, etc. to communicate or publish the newsletter or bulletin board. They can't do it all. Enlist the help of other people in the community. This not only spreads the workload, it also helps to avoid the notion that the community is only hearing what the town council or others want it to hear. The wider community involvement you have, the more credibility, support and cohesiveness you will have.
- Make sure that your newsletter, bulletin board notices, etc. are timely, accurate and clear.
- Hold some community events: potluck supers, a community cleanup day followed by potluck supper, fund raisers, etc. to help build cohesiveness and get people acquainted. Enlist the help of people different people to plan, arrange and advertise events. There are always people who enjoy this and are good at it. Form a welcoming committee to welcome newcomers. Form an activity committee to plan and promote activities. Use local talent such as a mechanic to teach a class on basic car care for the non-mechanics or a tree expert to teach how to properly plant and care for trees. Your community has many talented people. Help them to share their talents with others and build that sense of community.

- Involve as many people as possible. If someone presents a problem, a gripe or a criticism, ask how they would solve it and enlist their help. Coming up with solutions tends to give people a different perspective and appreciation for what a community is all about.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM WHAT WAS SAID

After listening to citizens of LaBarge, the Resource Team reviewed what was said and condensed the comments down to a few basic statements or major themes that will be addressed in team member reports. These are in no particular order or priority.

MAJOR THEMES FOR LABARGE, WYOMING

Clean Up / Beautification

- Junk, vacant lots
- Trees, grass
- Tanks, gas wells, industrial sites
- Cemetery
- Curbs, gutters, sidewalks

Youth

- Activities
- Drug and alcohol
- Facility
- Library (expansion, finance, county support)
- Parks

Recreation

- Facilities
- Bike path
- Walking path
- Recreation center – pool

Government and Ordinances

- Enforcement
- Equal / uniform enforcement
- Planning and zoning
- Participation
- Law enforcement and response
- County support

Housing

- Available
- Affordable
- Livable
- Appearance

Education

- School retention
- School finance
- School expansion

Economic Development

- Diversity
- Necessity
- Grocery store
- Restaurant
- Bank
- Full time / year round jobs
- Secondary employment
- Tourism
- Agricultural support, water
- Rest area
- Business loss and retail leakage

Health Care

- Clinic

Community

- Volunteerism
- Attitude
- Community center

Leadership

WHAT WAS SAID AT THE INTERVIEWS

The Resource Team spent two days interviewing the local residents to hear what they had to say. Those being interviewed were directed to answer three questions:

- ✓ What are the major problems/challenges in the community?
- ✓ What are the major strengths/assets of the community?
- ✓ What projects would you like to see implemented in your community in the next two, five, ten, or twenty years?

We have listed below, without comment, what we heard from those who volunteered to be interviewed.

1. What are the major problems and challenges in your community?

- Good ideas, don't know how to make them successful
- Have problems but generally take care of them
- Town is dead when it comes to growing trees or lawns – hard to organize active groups
- Growing the community – hard to draw people and facilities
- DITTO
- Affordable housing – purchase / rental
- Unstable economy
- Federal lands - impacts of things on animals are considered – what about people
- Attract people
- Try to keep people in town for businesses
- DITTO ALL
- DITTO ALL
- Drug and alcohol problem in general
- DITTO ALL
- It's the way we've always done it. Need to look farther on. In rut of doing it same way over and over.
- Lack of things for kids to do
- Gossip, stab people in back, hurt each other
- Short on housing
- Doesn't give first impression of "somebody cares"
- Post office – postmaster quit, local person took over, didn't give her permanent – moved someone else in. He quit.
- Lack of Newspaper coverage
- Location – counties don't care about LaBarge
- Hard to get people involved in town government and leadership positions. All volunteer – not paid for this work

- Clean up town DITTO
- Business not dependant upon oil industry – lack of diversity
- Lack of grocery store, restaurants, gift shop
- Need face lift
- County Commissioners; need to have them use our money here / cemetery – trees, road, etc
- Face lift – ditto
- Need year round industry
- Keeping school intact
- Not enough teachers, class size rising
- Color of trucks
- Industry oil and gas related
- Town government needs to have a plan and strength to stick to it
- Lack of housing for industry
- Lack of things for youth to do
- Park needs better maintenance
- Need a restaurant
- Rethink length of term of mayor – may be too short
- Library too small
- Library needs more computers
- Water price is too low to cover costs
- Beautification and town clean-up
- Bus for kids to Salt Lake City activities – county money should include kids from LaBarge
- Need more industry
- Industry that will employ women
- Current industries male oriented – nothing for women to do
- Lacking strength in police department
- Everybody going own separate ways
- Town ordinances not enforced – variances too easy get
- Lack of café and grocery store
- DITTO – biggest problem lack of café
- Lack of entertainment for teens
- DITTO
- Park too far away, lack of shade
- DITTO
- DITTO
- Lack of youth center for teenagers
- Need more people to help out
- Lack of affordable housing
- DITTO
- After school activities
- Lack of maintenance town green areas
- Lack of grocery store

- Lack of activities for adolescents
- DITTO grocery and housing
- Too often ordinances and laws not evenly applied
- Lack of support for businesses from people and government
- Library needs to be enlarged
- Lack of activities for young people in town
- Library open at least one day every other weekend
- Young families moving out
- DITTO
- Need valuing of scholarly achievement
- Clean up – cars, refrigerators, etc
- Poor phone service, lack of choice
- Lack of 24 hour local police protection
- Lack of job opportunities
- Lack of technology speed
- Poor cable system
- Lack of recreation center
- Lack of trees
- Lack of curb, gutter and sidewalk
- Grandfather clause for horses kept in city limits
- Dangerous implements and things around town
- Lack of families – housing
- Local government needs to be aware of what is happening to all in community
- Too far away from conveniences
- Funding for agency
- Need more jobs and opportunities
- Lack of volunteers for fire department
- Planning and zoning ordinances not being enforced
- Communication between government and community , better public meetings, hire a facilitator
- Hard to attract able people to run for town government
- Hard to find people who want to stay here and be of public service
- Lack of transportation - in and out
- Lack of interaction with other communities
- Town needs cleaned up
- Need home health care for home bound persons
- No low income housing
- Combined classes (at school)
- Lack of recreation center
- Lack of golf course
- Need some type of recreation center for all ages
- Boom and bust cycle
- Lack of economic development
- No café

- No store
- Nothing for the kids to do
- Public media reports
- Gossip
- Lack of information on services available
- Activities for public use gathering
- Not enough housing – especially rentals
- No restaurant
- Planning and zoning need to be more lenient – at present they are keeping the town from growing
- Need wind break for city park
- Cut sage brush on all vacant lots
- Large pile of logs west of Dry Creek Station
- There are no activities so we (youth) are more likely to get in trouble or party
- Lack of homeowner interest in taking pride in property
- Community looks run down
- Dropping property values
- Lack of families with kids wanting to live and stay in LaBarge
- Keeping business local with already established businesses
- Police officers never leave Texaco
- Zoning ordinances are not enforced
- Lack of housing for short term residents
- Lack of homes for purchase
- Local realtor does not advise prospective renters or buyers of available housing if it isn't listed with that agency
- Lack of continuity with enforcement of laws and regulations by town officials, council members, housing and zoning boards
- Lack of upkeep in public areas within town
- Town has a run-down, unkempt appearance
- Nothing to do, too many bars, why do the old people get all the entertainment
- There is nothing to do
- Lack of grocery stores or anything
- There is nothing to do
- When we (youth) are out of school the kids tend to drink and smoke because there isn't anything better for them to do
- Our attitudes
- Drinking by youth
- Lack of things to do
- No place for youth to go for something to do to occupy their time
- No entertainment, too much influence on bars
- There is nothing to do so most kids go and drink
- No activities for kids
- Everything – our town is not even a town
- Town needs cleaned up

- People need to keep the business local
- “Cops - Too damn many”
- “Cops – we need them to allow us more rights”
- Water storage for agriculture / irrigation
- Environmental concerns with cattle in creeks and streams
- Sierra Club
- Keeping the ranches economically and physically healthy so next generations can stay on ranch
- Need to promote agriculture
- Wolves
- Changing weather patterns – less rain and snow than in the old days
- Lack of optimism and ambition
- Lack of family activities in local area
- People are bored
- Too easy to get into mischief (adults and kids)
- Park too far away
- People fight too much – don’t know how to let things go – feuding
- Hard to get a business started (hairdresser, little stores, etc)
- Banks don’t want to loan money because hard to show profit expectations
- Hard to keep pastors unless they have other jobs
- Some people only know how to socialize at bars and/or with alcohol
- Social services, DUI training, unemployment offices, etc all out of town
- Occasionally try to close school
- Lack of full time year round jobs
- Lack of things to keep people occupied
- Town is ugly
- Lack of things for young kids to do
- Game and Fish are out of control – deer eating yard
- Drought keeping livestock in meadows – off public lands
- Lack of water
- Hard time keeping restaurant in town full time
- Hard to find land to purchase – too much public land
- County not giving us fair due
- DITTO
- School situation with two counties not working well financially
- DITTO
- Mosquito spraying hard to get from county
- County short changes us
- DITTO with library and recreation board
- Library too small
- Lack of employment
- Done away with (or trying to) timber and oil industries
- DITTO school problems – ignored by Big Piney
- DITTO

- Teachers can not discipline kids
- Sometimes lack of extracurricular activity bus from school
- Roads too narrow for traveling to other towns
- Pot holes and shoddy repair
- Lack of rest area
- Lack of full time work year around
- Lack of restaurant
- Haven't been able to keep a Chamber of Commerce running
- Housing
- Lack of skilled personnel
- Ugly
- Lack of medical clinic
- Police department: they sit in Texaco drinking coffee, eating donuts - Bad example for young people

2. What are the major strengths and assets of your community?

- Close knit area, neighborly, look out for each other
- Fire dept, ambulance service
- People
- Recreation options – range, Green River,
- DITTO
- Hardworking people – this is the heritage of the area
- Small town
- People
- DITTO ALL
- Elementary school
- Library
- Senior Center
- Don't fear for personal safety (generally)
- Ditto
- Don't have to lock houses
- Everyone has to work for a living –
- Within borders of Wyoming
- Wyoming Range, river, lake,
- People with hidden motivation
- This is first step to get going
- School
- Isolated
- Several churches
- People and businesses

- Hunting, fishing, wildlife
- Nice and quite
- Small town atmosphere
- Lake
- School
- Wide open spaces
- Oil field
- Wildlife, fishing,
- Good people
- Location
- Strength of people: ambitious, willing to do things
- DITTO
- Small community
- Senior Center
- Way community pulls together for those in need whether they know them or not
- Quietness
- Summer reading program and winter programs for library
- School
- Beautiful area with beautiful caring people who care about the school
- Recreational opportunities are fantastic
- Law abiding, excellent students, excellent people
- Lots of public land – not all private land
- River
- Local PTO – parent teacher organization
- Hunting and fishing
- Parental support for school
- DITTO and community support for school
- Safe community
- Great place to raise a family
- Christian Community, churches pull together
- Summer swim program – kids bussed free to Big Piney
- Parental support for school
- Do have some good solid businesses
- SBA has worked well with the town
- Fire department able to work with people so close, has good equipment, committed people (volunteers)
- Emergency services
- Police department
- Always someone to help you if you have problems
- Whole town pulls together for others in need
- People
- Get people to know that what they have is worthwhile MOVE TO # 3
- Government – town council and mayor
- Friendly folks

- Good kids
- Ambulance and EMT's
- LaBarge Elementary School
- Oilfield and construction
- Ranching
- The people – their willingness to work on a common goal
- Summer and winter recreation (snow machining; boating at lake; river floats)
- The way people pull together when someone is in need
- DITTO
- Fishing, hunting, nice summers
- Exxon, Williams, Chevron, EOG – major sources of employment
- It is small, so cleaner
- Good school
- Community involvement relating to school and facilities
- LaBarge Elementary School provides a community gathering and events area
- DITTO
- DITTO; used by many organizations; really a uniting center/force for the community
- Caring atmosphere of the entire community
- “There are none”
- DITTO
- Stores and pizza places
- School
- Library
- People always there for someone else in need
- “None that I can think of”
- School keeps you out of trouble
- Sense of belonging
- “None”
- EMS
- Oil company
- Fire department
- The bars
- Bars
- Town works together for those in need
- Ranches – beautiful meadows
- Ideal place to live
- Clean air to breathe
- Oil fields have kept town going
- Agriculture
- DITTO
- Agricultural people
- Small town
- Good place to raise kids
- Lack of violence

- People pull together to help others
- Elementary school
- People
- Wind
- Fishing
- Good place to live
- People come together to help each other
- DITTO
- Great place to raise kids
- Everybody knows everybody else's kids and watch out for them
- Oil field
- Winter activities, snow machines
- School, great teachers, parent involvement
- Greatest community in world
- People are wonderful
- Hunting
- Mayor has been an asset
- Good work year round
- Scenic river and mountain views
- Hunting and fishing
- Community helps one another
- PTO helps kids
- Schools
- Library

3. What projects would you like to see accomplished in your community in the next two, five, ten, or twenty years?

- Town where someone cares, clean, organized, strategically planned for long term growth
- Swimming pool – indoor, heated
- Increased source of water supply
- Enlightened mindset on part of citizenry – everyone willing to consider more options on things, open-up
- Rest area for drive through users / public use
- Annex island to the community
- Old buildings gone or cleaned up and changed into historical buildings DITTO
- Things to attract visitors for events here
- Fontonelle Reservoir – better management and keep it full
- Better access to river and areas to relax / picnic
- Facelift of main street and plan to move this out into the neighborhoods

- Alternative industry
- Fontonelle Lake – better managed
- County road money
- Cemetery improvements – trees, road
- Opportunities for children
- Grocery store / Wal-Mart
- Restaurant
- More for youth to do. Place for them to roller blade for young kids
- Bike Path or side walk along highway
- Teen youth activities / teen board to organize activities at community center
- Develop island / jogging track , golf course, archery and trap ranges,
- Fontenel Reservoir: Boat ramp next to dam better designed
- Designated boat ramp area and designated swimming area – separate areas
- Island development – recreational
- Supermarket, restaurants,
- Roads into recreation areas should be upgraded
- Get a hold of Rand McNalley and get La Barge put on some of the maps they are making
- Bring 5th – 8th grades back to LaBarge
- Like to grass and trees at town park and cemetery
- Small town atmosphere but 1500 –2000 people, bank, grocery, restaurant, town that is self sustaining
- Curbs and gutters
- Recreation Center / weights, racquetball, etc
- Develop Island – hidden treasure (same guy repeated from fist session)
- Fishing area for kid
- More respect for people who want, and are willing, to do something
- Stronger town government
- Paid town business manager
- Miller Creek area – someone to build a lodge and cabins to attract visitors / outdoor recreation, snowmobiles, etc.
- Need more housing
- DITTO
- Restaurant and grocery store
- Everybody to be more truthful to others
- Restaurant open
- DITTO and grocery store
- Medical / health clinic open again
- DITTO
- Restaurant and small store
- Community center or something for teenagers and young people to do
- Health clinic open
- DITTO on teenagers and health clinic
- Let people have what they want (horses, etc)

- Health clinic
- Bus to Wendover
- Wind break for city park, more grass and trees
- Park across street from school
- Recreation center
- Housing development
- Curb and gutters
- Recreation center, bowling alley, swimming pool, arcade, movie theater
- Trees that will survive
- Beautification of main street
- Promote education at all levels here
- Build new library, larger, computers, open weekends, evenings, opportunities for further education for everyone
- Beautification
- Bike path
- Industry other than gas and oil fields
- Economic development – full time positions for family members
- Bank
- Non polluting industry
- Park across from school
- DITTO
- Something for middle and high school kids to do especially 13-15 years old
- Restaurant year round
- Create positive mental attitude – behaviors, communications, feelings
- More recreation activity
- More even trend of financing
- Finish street program
- Drill well
- Finish playground equipment
- Economic development
- Recreation is important
- Incorporate islands
- Institute and stick to a strategic plan
- Better relationships with outside agencies
- Walking path along Green River – walking, roller blading, biking
- More trees
- Better water situation
- Well to water park
- Additional needed equipment for fire department – vehicles, etc – continuous process with changing regulations
- Clean up refineries and oil field equipment
- Industrial site outside of town to put all that equipment, etc into one place
- Get rid of the rust or make it pretty
- Recreation center, exercise equipment, pool, for all ages, pool tables, TV room

- DITTO
- Industrial beautification program
- Paint big tanks
- Clean up old oil refinery and junk yard on La Barge Creek Road
- Gas wells in town should be moved into city ownership and maybe help cover citizens bills
- Shade trees along the street (Hwy 189)
- Doctor
- Catholic Church
- Recreation Center
- Town street to West Valley subdivision
- Organized summer recreational opportunities
- After school and weekend activities for kids
- Small branch bank – drive through
- Community Recreation center
- More businesses
- More housing available
- Names Hill Campground improved to be a nice rest area
- A branch bank
- Plant trees around the park as a wind break
- Get rid of sagebrush on vacant lots; plant grass and trees; install an irrigation system
- Move the pile of logs west of Dry Creek station
- Build a recreation center
- Landscaping more of a priority, more greenery, trees along Hwy 189
- Family style restaurant
- Enforcement of city ordinances that involve upkeep of personal property
- A park between the school and the Town Hall. Playground equipment, exercise stations, grassy area with trees and a covered picnic area
- Recreation facility
- Indigenous trees planted along Main Street and north and south entrances to town
- Plant trees in the town park
- The town needs to be cleaned and maintained (zoning ordinances)
- An affordable housing development
- Community beautification that is carried out all year and not just during the summer
- Restaurant
- New town officials
- “Anything that would make the town more interesting”
- Build a recreation center
- Grocery store, Pizza Hut, fast food place
- Bowling alley
- Recreation Center
- DITTO
- Mall
- DITTO

- Little stores
- DITTO
- Recreation Center
- Strengthen community service
- YMCA
- White trash gone
- More entertainment
- Arcade, theater, more sports
- Recreation center
- Theater
- Make the town attractive and pleasant to see
- Activities for youth and kids
- Build and indoor snow-cross / moto-cross arena
- Weight room
- Bigger and better pizza place
- Park closer to town
- New attractions
- Build reservoirs for agricultural water
- Promote agriculture
- “Like to see it rain in La Barge at least one more time during my lifetime”
- See Ranches in existence today stay that way, not subdivided
- Create an alternative place to meet besides the bars
- Build a community building large enough for dancing
- Physical fitness center
- Build a park closer to town center
- Recreation / athletic / exercise facility
- Cleaner appearance for town
- Grocery store
- Install wind generators
- Need a bigger library
- Enlarge the skate park
- Build a youth center, recreation, family center
- Beautification project
- Plant trees and grass
- DITTO
- Attract more businesses
- Branch bank in town
- Rest area on highway in town
- Like to see it brought back the way it was before Game and Fish took over
- Recognize private property rights
- Need more land opened up for business and housing
- Like to see state help to bring light industry into La Barge
- Need to ease up on planning and zoning
- See something done to improve the lake – it is no longer what it was

- DITTO, too many rules there now
- Improve the roads – outside town
- Clean up the town
- Lot to offer on tourism
- River
- Need RV dumping facility
- Entertainment center: movie house, arcade
- Roller skating rink
- Need to bring in outfitters for winter sports and hunting
- Recreation center for teenagers and pre-teens
- Get a medical clinic in town
- Trees and grass in town
- Recreation center for young and old

APPENDIX:

**20 CLUES TO RURAL
COMMUNITY SURVIVAL**

1. Evidence of Community Pride:

Successful communities are often showplaces of care, attention, history and heritage.

2. Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:

People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.

3. Willingness to Invest in the Future:

In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.

4. Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:

Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.

5. Cooperative Community Spirit:

The stress is on working together toward a common goal, and the focus is on positive results.

6. Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:

Successful communities have learned how to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.

7. Awareness of Competitive Positioning:

Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.

8. Knowledge of the Physical Environment:

Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.

9. Active Economic Development Program:

There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.

10. Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders:

People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.

11. Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:

Women are elected officials, plant managers, and entrepreneurial developers.

12. Strong Belief in and Support for Education: Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.

13. Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health

Care: Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.

14. Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation:

The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.

15. Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life:

Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.

16. Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:

Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.

17. Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:

Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.

18. Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:

Leaders access information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.

19. Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:

People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.

20. Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself:

Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.

*Reprinted from Heartland Center Leadership Development, Spring 2002 *Visions Newsletter*.