

# **2011**

## **Uinta County Comprehensive Plan**

The 2011 Uinta County Comprehensive Plan was a planning effort that involved County and community interests throughout the project. Special thanks to Uinta County residents and County and Community officials, departments and organizations who participated in this project.

**UINTA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
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# UINTA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2011

## Introduction

The 2011 Uinta County Comprehensive Plan is a proactive effort by County leaders and citizens to address the County's present and future land use needs. The adopted 2011 Comprehensive Plan updates and replaces any and all preceding Uinta County Comprehensive Plan(s) and clarifies/reconfirms the County's land use and development goals and policies.

Wyoming state statutes provide for the development of county-level comprehensive plans under Title 9-8-301 and Title 18-5-202. As stated, locally-developed, adopted and implemented county plans apply to the unincorporated areas within the county and may address public health, safety, moral and general welfare issues. These statutes also highlight the expectation that County governments will coordinate their land use plans and planning efforts with incorporated communities and other local entities. Through Title 18-5-208, Wyoming planning statutes encourage the coordination of county planning efforts with federal land and resource management agencies. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires the federal government to cooperate and coordinate federal actions with local government. In addition Uinta County has adopted Resolution 94-04 (attached) which sets forth procedural protections which shall be followed to insure full and complete cooperation and coordination between the county and the federal government to protect the custom, culture, heritage, economy and stability of Uinta County and its citizens. The 2011 Uinta County Comprehensive Plan focuses on land use and development issues as prioritized and discussed by County leaders and residents through an extensive public involvement and policy refinement process.

Primary benefits of the 2011 Comprehensive Plan are two-fold. First, the County possesses a document that articulates a consistent and clear direction for future land use and development. It is anticipated that the Plan will be proactively supported by County decision-makers and further implemented through County land use regulations. For the Plan to remain a valuable planning tool, it should be reviewed and amended as necessary to address emerging County issues and interests.

Second, the planning process itself has been a valuable learning experience for Uinta County decision makers, planning staff and citizenry. A diverse group of County interests actively participated in various stages of the project and *draft* material review. Through this process, the 2011 Plan truly reflects Uinta County interests. Public ownership of the Plan and familiarity with the accompanying policies will be invaluable as County leaders adopt the document and begin Plan implementation.

## **The Plan Development Process and Public Involvement**

Uinta County leaders recognize the need for proactive county-level planning and land use regulations. As noted, Wyoming state law allows local plans and development guidelines to address public health, safety, moral and general welfare issues. The law requires public participation through adequate public notice and open public meetings and/or hearings.

By design, the 2011 Uinta County planning project involved County residents and other interested parties throughout the process. Following a detailed review and discussion of County goals and policies, the County Planning Commission began a series of public meetings to solicit citizen input on the proposed revisions. These activities included newspaper advertisements explaining the process and encouraging residents to attend two public meetings to discuss the proposed goals and policies with County planning staff and community leaders. Public Meetings were held in Evanston on Wednesday, June 15, 2011 and in Mountain View on Thursday, June 16, 2011.

Ultimately, the *updated* goals and polices covered a variety of County interests including land use and development, economic development, facilities and services, natural and cultural resources, and public lands. These statements were reviewed by the Planning Commission and recommended for approval to the Board of Uinta County Commissioners.

As outlined in Wyoming state statute, the *draft* Plan was available for public review and comment through an open Planning Commission and County Commission public hearing and adoption process. Formal approval and recommendation was made by the Uinta County Planning and Zoning Commission during their regular meeting held in Mountain View, Wyoming on Wednesday, June 22, 2011. Formal action was then taken by the Board of Uinta County Commissioners during their regular meeting held in Evanston, Wyoming on Tuesday, July 19, 2011 where the Commission voted unanimously to approve the 2011 Uinta County Comprehensive Plan as official County Policy.

## **Using and Amending the Uinta County Comprehensive Plan**

Uinta County officials and citizens should be commended for their proactive commitment to planning and completing the updated Comprehensive Plan. It is intended that the 2011 Plan will serve as a framework for County decision-makers as they consider future land use and development decisions. The Plan is also designed to provide a formal policy foundation for enhancing County and community relations, pursuing economic development activities, coordinating infrastructure planning, encouraging responsible natural resource use, and fostering County and state/federal agency cooperation and coordination.

To successfully implement the updated Plan, County leaders will need to take action beyond Plan adoption. In the 2011 Plan, County goals are followed by supporting policies. These policy statements outline specific Plan implementation activities and strategies.

While the 2011 Plan, upon adoption, reflects the thoughtful direction of Uinta County in 2011, it is anticipated that the Plan will be updated and revised as circumstances change and new challenges arise. The process for amending the Plan, as outlined in Wyoming state statute and County regulations, requires adequately noticed public hearings and formal action by the Uinta County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners.

### **County Goals and Policies: *A Framework for Action***

The following sections include the County's Goals and Policies as recommended by the Uinta County Planning Commission and adopted by the Uinta County Board of Commissioners.

County Goals and Policies have been developed for the following issues:

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- E. Natural Environmental / Cultural Resources ..... Page 17
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**A. PLAN AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION -County Goals and Policies**

- 1. COUNTY GOAL: Encourage land use decisions and growth patterns that are consistent with the County's adopted land use plans and development objectives.**
- 2. COUNTY GOAL: Encourage inter-jurisdictional coordination and cooperation to identify and address growth management and land use issues.**

The County has identified the following policies relating to plan implementation and inter-jurisdictional planning coordination:

**Plan Consistency and Conformity**

- a. County Policy:** As applicable, County land use plans and development studies will be utilized as guides for future land use and development decisions.
- b. County Policy:** All development proposals will be evaluated for conformity and consistency with the County's adopted goals and policies, and if not in accordance with them, will be permitted only if it can be adequately demonstrated that the proposal is an improvement to the stated goals and policies, and is consistent with the purpose and intent thereof.
- c. County Policy:** All decisions rendered by the County with respect to public and private development will be made on the basis of compliance with the County's adopted goals and policies. In areas where the County is silent, proper planning methods, procedures and development standards shall be employed to assure the best possible results within the realm of economic and practical feasibility.
- d. County Policy:** Adopted County land use goals, policies and regulations will be periodically reviewed and updated in order to remain useful decision-making tools.
- e. County Policy:** County land use regulations and application/proposal review processes will be designed and executed in an efficient and timely manner.

**Inter-jurisdictional Coordination and Cooperation**

- a. County Policy:** Uinta County will coordinate its land use planning and decision-making processes with local, state and federal government entities, service/utility providers and private interests to promote the efficient development of rural and urbanizing areas within the County.

## **B. LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT -County Goals and Policies**

1. **COUNTY GOAL: Encourage orderly growth and land use development patterns which:**
  - provide a compatible/complementary arrangement of various land uses,
  - promote the efficient and cost-effective delivery of services,
  - protect sensitive areas and the natural environment, and
  - provide for the proper use and conservation of renewable and non-renewable resources
  
2. **COUNTY GOAL: Maintain County land use plans, policies and regulations designed to protect property values and balance private property rights with the general health, safety and welfare interests of present and future County residents.**
  
3. **COUNTY GOAL: Encourage safe, healthy and attractive residential opportunities for families and individuals of all income levels, lifestyles and stages of life.**

The County has identified the following policies relating to land use and development:

### **General Land Use Policies and Approach**

- a. **County Policy:** Uinta County will welcome and encourage commercial, industrial, residential, agricultural and recreational land uses and development patterns consistent with the goals and policies of adopted County land use plans and studies.
  
- b. **County Policy:** All land use development proposals and applications will be evaluated based on anticipated long-term impacts to the County as a whole, rather than short-term benefits.
  
- c. **County Policy:** Uinta County considers “land” a non-renewable resource that should be managed in the best interest of current and future residents of the County.
  
- d. **County Policy:** Uinta County will promote the development of functional and well-designed communities.
  
- e. **County Policy:** Land uses within Uinta County will be classified and discussed as one of two land use “intensity” types: urbanizing areas and rural lands.

**Urbanizing Areas:** As defined by the County, “urbanizing areas” are those areas experiencing, or likely to experience, increased growth and development interest and pressure. Generally, urbanizing areas are adjacent to the existing communities of Evanston, Bear River, Urie, Mountain View, Lyman and Fort Bridger, and are therefore easily serviceable by the Wyoming State Highway system, major county arterial roads, snow removal services, police and fire protection, central water and sewer services, schools and shopping facilities.

**Rural Lands:** “Rural lands” are defined as the lands outside of developed communities and urbanizing areas. Most County-provided services are unavailable in these areas or limited to a service level similar to that provided to agricultural land uses.

f. **County Policy:** Large-scale industrial, commercial and residential land uses and development will be encouraged to locate in areas where impacts to air and water quality can be minimized. Potential visual and noise pollution will also be considered.

g. **County Policy:** Uinta County believes that lands and sites containing sensitive resources, unique scientific values or significant natural features are important. Characteristics to consider when reviewing development proposals include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) wildlife and waterfowl habitat,
- (2) water bodies and riparian areas,
- (3) mature vegetation (namely established trees),
- (4) vistas, landmarks and observation points, and
- (5) cultural and historical resources.

### **Regulations, Standards and the Approval Process**

a. **County Policy:** The County will maintain subdivision regulations that promote orderly, high quality development.

b. **County Policy:** County land use regulations and application/proposal review processes will be designed and executed in an efficient and timely manner.

c. **County Policy:** Potential conflicts between incompatible land uses may be reduced, eliminated or mitigated through proper land use/development siting, design, access, screening or buffering.

d. **County Policy:** Primary considerations in reviewing, approving, approving with conditions, or denying development proposals include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) the natural characteristics of the site;
- (2) the proposed development's proximity to available facilities and services;
- (3) the anticipated demand for County-provided services;
- (4) the developer's plans for provision and maintenance of required infrastructure and utility services;
- (5) the development's compatibility with current and anticipated land uses;
- (6) the possible adverse effects on nearby land uses and public amenities;
- (7) the development's potential impacts on soils, water, natural resources, and historic and cultural resources; and
- (8) the development's compatibility with community and countywide priorities and objectives as stated in the County's adopted plans and studies.

e. **County Policy:** As necessary, potential nuisances, including but not limited to, smoke, noise, dust, litter, vibration, soil erosion and water degradation may be addressed through County land use/development regulations.

f. **County Policy:** Site-specific natural resource/environmental factors to be considered\* by the County in land use planning decisions and in the review of development proposals include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) natural hazards (slopes, floodplains, etc.),
- (2) topography,
- (3) soil types,
- (4) vegetation,
- (5) wildlife habitat,
- (6) depth to water table,
- (7) surface drainage patterns,
- (8) groundwater recharge/discharge areas (including springs),
- (9) the quantity and quality of surface and underground water resources, and
- (10) community culinary water sources and sewage/solid waste facilities.

\*As deemed appropriate and necessary, the County may solicit UCCD input and recommendations on the above issues.

g. **County Policy:** When irrigated land is to be subdivided, the County shall require that the associated water rights are appropriately (re)allocated through a state-approved distribution plan.

h. **County Policy:** Development and land use proposals may be required to demonstrate the availability of an adequate, safe water supply and a safe, reliable method of sewage disposal. Any discharges should not be detrimental to surface or underground water sources.

### **County/Community Fringe Area Development**

a. **County Policy:** Uinta County will cooperate with incorporated municipalities and the state to coordinate the planning and development of community “fringe areas”.

### **Residential Development**

The following policies will apply to residential land uses within Uinta County:

#### **County-wide**

a. **County Policy:** Residential development at densities of more than one (1) dwelling unit per acre should be located in areas having, or easily provided with, central water and sanitary sewer systems.

b. **County Policy:** Residential development at densities of more than one (1) dwelling unit per acre should be located adjacent to major thoroughfares to avoid the introduction of excessive traffic onto minor streets.

c. **County Policy:** The Planning Commission may determine the appropriate lot size(s) feasible in a subdivision or proposed development area and restrict future lot divisions associated with or connected to the original action to that size.

d. **County Policy:** As necessary, established residential areas will be protected from encroachment by incompatible land uses through adequate buffering, screening and setback requirements/guidelines.

### Urbanizing Areas

a. **County Policy:** Uinta County will encourage residential development within urbanizing areas or adjacent to existing communities where a full range of community services can be efficiently provided or are easily accessible. These amenities include, but are not limited to, cultural and recreational opportunities, commercial retail and services, public and private utilities, emergency services, and public schools.

b. **County Policy:** It is the County's preference that residential development proposed for and/or occurring within urbanizing areas be consistent and compatible with the adjacent community.

### Rural Lands

a. **County Policy:** Residential development within rural areas of the County will be compatible with the County's rural/agricultural character.

b. **County Policy:** Rural areas/residents of the County should not anticipate County-provided services. In most cases, the County will not provide levels or types of services to rural areas above those provided to agricultural land uses.

c. **County Policy:** As necessary, developers of rural areas are responsible for the provision, enhancement and maintenance of services or service levels above those provided in the subject area by the County or other local entity. Developers are also required to mitigate adverse effects of providing such services on adjacent land uses.

d. **County Policy:** When temporary housing in rural areas is necessary to accommodate an approved industrial (typically resource-related) or recreational development, such housing should be designed and developed in a coordinated manner. Adequate water and sewer services/facilities must be demonstrated before such land uses are approved.

## **Commercial Development**

### **County-wide**

- a. **County Policy:** All commercial development will be designed to minimize visual, traffic and noise impacts on adjacent land uses. Factors to be considered as part of the development proposal review and approval process include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) the availability of necessary services (water, sewer, utilities, etc.);
- (2) access to federal, state or County road networks;
- (3) visual screening and buffering for adjacent land uses;
- (4) adequate site-specific ingress and egress;
- (5) adequate on-site (off-street) parking; and
- (6) development siting and facility design.

### **Urbanizing Areas**

- a. **County Policy:** Commercial development will be encouraged to locate within areas specifically identified for commercial-type land uses.
- b. **County Policy:** Where not in conflict with other County goals and policies, commercial development is encouraged to locate at major intersections and along major thoroughfares. These locations include, but are not limited to, junctions of interstate and state highways, junctions of state highways and county arterial roads, and at planned development clusters along state highways. Primary access to commercial development should not be through residential streets or neighborhoods.
- c. **County Policy:** The County will encourage commercial development that is attractively and functionally well-designed and maintained.

### **Rural Lands**

- a. **County Policy:** Commercial development in rural areas will be encouraged at a limited number of identified highway intersections. Commercial development may also be appropriate on a case-by-case basis adjacent to resource- or recreation-related development.

## **Industrial Development**

### **County-wide**

a. **County Policy:** Industrial sites and land uses will be appropriately located in areas that have adequate utilities and infrastructure (or where such utilities will be provided by the developer), convenient access to major transportation corridors and minimal environmental concerns.

b. **County Policy:** All industrial development and land use proposals will include full disclosure of the potential environmental, social, public facility and economic impacts. In addition, development proposals must include specific mitigation strategies addressing these issues.

c. **County Policy:** Industrial uses may be allowed in the County provided they are consistent and compatible with County goals, policies, guidelines and regulations.

d. **County Policy:** Factors to be considered by the County when reviewing industrial development and land use proposals include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) the availability of necessary services (water, sewer, utilities, etc.);
- (2) potential impacts to air and water quality;
- (3) the provision of adequate and safe solid waste, waste water and sewage disposal;
- (4) proper access, traffic impacts and patterns, and parking;
- (5) adequate buffering and/or screening;
- (6) visual impact to communities;
- (7) appropriate setbacks from adjacent land uses; and
- (8) adequate noise management.

e. **County Policy:** Industrial land uses determined to be in potential conflict with County goals, policies and interests will not be allowed to continue without mitigation. Elements to consider include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) disruption of wildlife and damage to critical habitat,
- (2) impacts to recreation and scenic resources,
- (3) pollution of water resources or air sheds,
- (4) health/safety hazards or nuisances, and
- (5) visual impact to communities.

f. **County Policy:** Appropriately located industrial land uses are entitled to protection from encroachment by incompatible land uses, just as other land uses should be protected against industrial encroachment.

## Urbanizing Areas

- a. **County Policy:** Industrial development will be encouraged to locate within areas specifically identified for industrial-type land uses.

## Rural Lands

- a. **County Policy:** Industrial land uses will be considered in rural areas of the County as necessary due to the availability/location of natural resources or proximity to transportation facilities (interstate highways, rail service or air transport). It may also be desirable to locate industrial uses within rural areas when the proposed use is, by nature, unsafe or undesirable in developed or urbanizing areas.

## C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT -County Goals and Policies

1. **COUNTY GOAL: Promote balanced commercial activity that is economically viable and responsive to the needs of County residents and surrounding market areas.**
2. **COUNTY GOAL: Establish a diversified economic base that will provide permanent employment opportunities for County residents and an improved tax base without contributing to significant degradation of the natural environment.**
3. **COUNTY GOAL: Develop the County's existing economic assets including agricultural lands, industrial parks, commercial centers, scenic and recreation areas, renewable and non-renewable resources, and wildlife, keeping each as an important and viable element of the County's economy.**
4. **COUNTY GOAL: Coordinate County economic development efforts and activities with other local, state and private interests.**

In addition to the commercial and industrial land use policies articulated in the Land Use section and resource development policies reflected in the Natural Resources section, Uinta County has identified the following policies relating to economic development:

### Economic Development and Diversification

- a. **County Policy:** Uinta County will actively promote economic development activities in the County through its economic development office and associated business partners.
- b. **County Policy:** Uinta County will encourage new businesses in the area and the expansion of existing businesses through business-supporting land use and infrastructure planning.

c. **County Policy:** The County's land use plans, regulations and development decision-making processes will support orderly, well-serviced, adequately infrastructured commercial and industrial development.

d. **County Policy:** The County will conduct and maintain an inventory of areas with utilities and services conducive to commercial and industrial development. Land uses proposed for adjacent properties should be compatible with existing and anticipated industrial and commercial uses.

e. **County Policy:** Uinta County will work with local communities in support of their economic development goals and objectives. This cooperative approach is critical particularly as it relates to the County-community interface and highway/interstate corridors.

### **Business Retention and Expansion**

a. **County Policy:** County land use regulations will support existing business expansion activities and residentially-compatible home occupations.

b. **County Policy:** County land use regulations will encourage compatible "value-added" activities adjacent to existing businesses. Potential markets includes traditional-agriculture, natural resource-based, and recreation-oriented industrial and commercial businesses and operations.

### **Business Recruitment**

a. **County Policy:** Uinta County will pursue economic development opportunities that complement other County goals and objectives.

b. **County Policy:** Potential businesses will be considered based on their consistency with the County's adopted land use plans and regulations.

c. **County Policy:** The County will maintain land use plans and regulations that are conducive to business recruitment and relocation efforts.

### **Recreation/Tourism**

a. **County Policy:** Uinta County will encourage recreation-oriented economic development activities that are consistent with the County's character and lifestyle.

b. **County Policy:** County land use plans and regulations will support expanding recreation opportunities and the protection and enhancement of traditional recreation areas/sites.

## **Agricultural Land and Related Uses**

- a. County Policy:** The County's development review process will include considering the effects of proposed uses on agricultural land and related uses.
- b. County Policy:** Agricultural lands and associated land uses will be appropriately buffered from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
- c. County Policy:** Uinta County encourages compatible, ag-supporting land uses of agricultural land.
- d. County Policy:** Uinta County supports incentive programs and other efforts which encourage/promote the continued use of productive agricultural lands for agricultural purposes.
- e. County Policy:** Uinta County will explore the feasibility of "right-to-ranch/farm" policies and regulations to pre-empt nearby residents (or other potential agriculturally incompatible land uses) from bringing nuisance suits or complaints against established agricultural operations.
- f. County Policy:** As feasible, the County will explore agricultural land protection and preservation strategies.

## **D. INFRASTRUCTURE AND COUNTY SERVICES -County Goals and Policies**

- 1. COUNTY GOAL:** Meet the service needs of Uinta County residents and businesses in a manner that prevents excessive public expenditures and needless duplication of services or facilities.
- 2. COUNTY GOAL:** Utilize the County's financial, land and human resources in an effective and efficient manner when providing or expanding public facilities and services.
- 3. COUNTY GOAL:** Ensure that public utility facilities and services, including power, communication and natural gas are planned, designed and located in a coordinated manner that will increase efficiency, complement other County objectives and preserve the natural environment.

The County has identified the following policies relating to infrastructure and community services:

### **County-provided Services to Rural Areas**

- a. County Policy:** Rural areas/residents of the County should not anticipate County-provided services. In most cases, the County will not provide levels or types of services to rural areas above those provided to agricultural land uses

### **Developer-provided Services**

- a. **County Policy:** As necessary, developers are responsible for the provision, enhancement and maintenance of services or service levels above those provided in the subject area by the County or other local entity. Developers are also required to mitigate adverse effects of providing such services on adjacent land uses, including utility corridors and recognized rights-of-way.

### **Utility Planning and Coordination**

- a. **County Policy:** The location and design of utility transmission lines and corridors shall, as much as possible, avoid prime agricultural land, urban development areas, sensitive environmental areas, and scenic and historic areas. Whenever feasible, major utilities (oil and gas pipelines, high tension power lines, fiber optics, etc.) will be encouraged to “share” utility corridors.
- b. **County Policy:** The County will require that services and service levels associated with proposed developments located adjacent to existing communities, or in areas likely to be annexed at a future date, be compatible with the services provided by the community.
- c. **County Policy:** As appropriate, Uinta County will cooperate/coordinate with other government entities and interests to provide services of mutual benefit or those too costly for a single government to pursue.
- d. **County Policy:** As deemed necessary and relevant, all interested political subdivisions, public utilities and private interests will be given an opportunity to review and comment on proposed subdivisions.

### **Development Standards**

- a. **County Policy:** Primary considerations in reviewing, approving, approving with conditions, or denying proposed development and land use plans and applications include, but are not limited to, the following:
- (1) the natural characteristics of the site;
  - (2) the proposed development's proximity to available facilities and services;
  - (3) the anticipated demand for County-provided services;
  - (4) the developer's plans for provision and maintenance of required infrastructure and utility services;
  - (5) the development's compatibility with current and anticipated land uses;
  - (6) the possible adverse effects on nearby land uses and public amenities;
  - (7) the development's potential impacts on soils, water, natural resources, and historic and cultural resources; and
  - (8) the development's compatibility with community and countywide priorities and objectives as stated in the County's adopted plans and studies.

- b. County Policy:** Development and land use proposals may be required to demonstrate the availability of an adequate, safe water supply and a safe, reliable method of sewage disposal. Any discharges should not be detrimental to surface or underground water sources.
- c. County Policy:** Where site conditions are conducive, public utilities shall be placed underground.
- d. County Policy:** As part of the approval process, a disclosure statement, indicating compliance with all applicable subdivision requirements and referencing all associated covenants, shall be signed by all parties concerned, including but not limited to the buyer(s), seller(s) and developer(s). This statement will be referenced on the subdivision plat and shall accompany the recording of each lot.

### **Recreation**

- a. County Policy:** The County will utilize land use planning processes to identify the potential location of desired recreational facilities. Facilities will be located and designed in a manner that provides for the active and passive recreation needs of citizens.
- b. County Policy:** When possible, development proposals will be sensitive to County outdoor recreation and open space preservation objectives. County-identified public recreation areas and lands with unique natural features may be preserved through easements or other common open space preservation strategies.

### **Water (Culinary and Irrigation)**

- a. County Policy:** Development and land use proposals may be required to demonstrate the availability of an adequate, safe water supply and a safe, reliable method of sewage disposal. Any discharges should not be detrimental to surface or underground water sources.
- b. County Policy:** Regulations and standards for on-site sewage disposal systems shall be enforced for all development dependent on such systems.
- c. County Policy:** Development proposals shall identify potential impacts to existing irrigation systems.
- d. County Policy:** When irrigated land is to be subdivided, the County shall require that the associated water rights are appropriately (re)allocated through a state-approved distribution plan.

## **Sewer and Solid Waste Disposal**

- a. **County Policy:** Development proposals may be required to demonstrate the availability of adequate and safe solid waste and sewage disposal systems. This process may include UCCD review of applicable sewer and solid waste disposal elements.
- b. **County Policy:** The County will continue to conduct initial approval and periodic inspection of sewage and solid waste disposal systems.
- c. **County Policy:** Regulations and standards for on-site sewage disposal systems shall be enforced for all development dependent on such systems.
- d. **County Policy:** Lands that are not suited for on-site absorption systems shall not be developed unless other acceptable provisions are approved by the County.
- e. **County Policy:** Sewage treatment plants and other public facilities shall be located and designed in a manner that will avoid visual and air quality impacts.
- f. **County Policy:** Solid waste disposal sites shall be appropriately located in areas with minimal environmental concerns (high water table, ground water, high wind, etc.). Facilities will be designed in a manner that prevents adverse impacts to air quality (including odor) and aesthetics.

## **Roads and Transportation Planning**

- a. **County Policy:** The County will develop and maintain a master transportation plan to identify and accommodate the current and future transportation needs of the County.
- b. **County Policy:** All development proposals will be reviewed to determine conformity and consistency with the County's adopted transportation plan and related land dedication and roadway construction regulations and standards.
- c. **County Policy:** All new roads and streets shall be consistent with the approved County transportation plan with regard to classification, right-of-way, design and construction.
- d. **County Policy:** Development proposals for year-round housing must demonstrate adequate primary access road construction and maintenance.
- e. **County Policy:** The County will develop/maintain/enforce standards for dedicated County roads. This may include categories for road maintenance and service (e.g., low maintenance, winter maintenance and full maintenance.)
- f. **County Policy:** County approval will be required prior to the construction of private road access points onto County roads. Conditions of approval include, but are not limited to, appropriate design, compatible grades, adequate drainage, identified number and location of access points, and adequate sight distances.

**g. County Policy:** All development proposals and site plans must demonstrate conformance with the following County transportation design guidelines:

- (1) Direct access from private property to designated County collector and arterial roadways will not be permitted unless no other reasonable alternative exists.
- (2) Access to and from concentrated commercial/industrial land uses and residential subdivisions shall be designed to minimize interference with collector and arterial road traffic flow.
- (3) New development shall provide adequate off-street parking for their projected needs.
- (4) Shared use of appropriately designed and designated parking facilities among adjacent property owners will be permitted.
- (5) Where commercial development is allowed along improved County roads, access to such development shall only occur via frontage/backage roads designed and improved at the expense of the developer.

**h. County Policy:** Roads warranting dedication by the County as a County road must be built to County specifications prior to dedication and then will be formally identified and dedicated as such.

**i. County Policy:** As deemed necessary and relevant, all interested political subdivisions, public utilities and private interests will be given an opportunity to review and comment on proposed subdivisions.

**j. County Policy:** Any development, subdivision, or zoning action adjacent to, or potentially impacting a state highway may be reviewed by WYDOT. Mitigation measures may be imposed on the developer.

**E. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT/CULTURAL RESOURCES -County Goals and Policies**

- 1. COUNTY GOAL: Encourage maintaining and protecting the County's high quality of air, water and wildlife resources. Encourage the adequate and appropriate protection of the natural environment.**
- 2. COUNTY GOAL: Support efforts that ensure development in or near designated scenic, historic, recreation or environmentally sensitive areas does not adversely impact the quality of that environment.**
- 3. COUNTY GOAL: Minimize the loss of life and property caused by natural hazards.**
- 4. COUNTY GOAL: Conserve water and encourage its beneficial use. Ensure that the impacts of future development on water resources are considered in the planning process.**

5. **COUNTY GOAL: Support efforts and activities that utilize/develop the County's water supplies and energy resources in an efficient manner and in accordance with Wyoming State law.**
6. **COUNTY GOAL: Power, communication, natural gas and other utility facilities and corridors will be coordinated and cooperatively planned, designed and sited in a manner that will help protect the natural environment.**
7. **COUNTY GOAL: Provide support for UCCD as lead agency on natural and environmental resource issues as appropriate.**

The County has identified the following policies relating to the natural environment and resources:

**Land Use/Development Criteria and Guidelines**

- a. **County Policy:** All proposed development will be evaluated to determine its possible effects on water quality, air quality, scenic features, historic/cultural resources, recreation resources and wildlife habitat.
- b. **County Policy:** Site-specific natural resource/environmental factors to be considered\* by the County in land use planning decisions and in the review of development proposals include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - (1) natural hazards (slopes, floodplains, etc.),
  - (2) topography,
  - (3) soil types,
  - (4) vegetation,
  - (5) wildlife habitat,
  - (6) depth to water table,
  - (7) surface drainage patterns,
  - (8) groundwater recharge/discharge areas (including springs),
  - (9) the quantity and quality of surface and underground water resources, and
  - (10) community culinary water sources and sewage/solid waste facilities.

\*As deemed appropriate and necessary, the County may solicit UCCD input and recommendations on the above issues.

- c. **County Policy:** All new development shall meet Wyoming DEQ air and water quality standards.
- d. **County Policy:** Uinta County will consider natural resource information on renewable and non-renewable resources during land use planning and decision-making processes.
- e. **County Policy:** Large-scale industrial, commercial and residential land uses and development will be encouraged to locate in areas where impacts to air and water quality can be minimized. Potential visual and noise pollution will also be considered.

## **Open Space**

**a. County Policy:** Uinta County believes that lands and sites containing sensitive resources, unique scientific values or significant natural features are important. Characteristics to consider when reviewing development proposals include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) wildlife and waterfowl habitat,
- (2) water bodies and riparian areas,
- (3) mature vegetation (namely established trees),
- (4) vistas, landmarks and observation points, and
- (5) cultural and historical resources.

## **Hazardous Areas**

**a. County Policy:** Development in known hazardous areas will be discouraged or appropriately mitigated. Types of areas to be avoided include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) subsidence areas,
- (2) flood plains,
- (3) areas with severe or unstable slopes, and
- (4) seismic areas.

## **Vegetation, Soil and Water**

**a. County Policy:** Natural vegetation will be protected as much as possible and shall not be removed unless necessary. If slope failure or excessive erosion is a possibility, vegetation removal will not be allowed except for street and utility construction. In all situations, appropriate and adequate mitigation steps will be taken.

**b. County Policy:** Re-vegetation/restoration will be encouraged where excessive removal of vegetation has occurred. Associated mitigation measures will be designed to prevent slope failure, excessive erosion, excessive dust, spread of noxious weeds and visual disruption.

**c. County Policy:** Development requiring significant site modification (grading, cut or fill) resulting in a potential disruption of natural drainage patterns, or excessive levels of uncontrolled run off or erosion, will not be permitted unless a County reviewed and accepted mitigation plan is also developed.

**d. County Policy:** Lands that are not suited for on-site absorption systems shall not be developed unless other acceptable provisions are approved by the County.

**e. County Policy:** Regulations and standards for on-site sewage disposal systems shall be enforced for all development dependent on such systems.

### **Wildlife Resources**

- a. **County Policy:** Uinta County considers wildlife a renewable resource with economic, recreational, scenic and environmental value.
- b. **County Policy:** The County will evaluate impacts to wildlife and critical wildlife habitat as part of their development review/approval processes.

### **Historical/Cultural Resources**

- a. **County Policy:** All development proposals will be evaluated for their potential impacts on historic and recreation areas within the County. In situations of potential/known impact, County reviewed and accepted mitigation plans will be required.
- b. **County Policy:** Development proposals will be reviewed to ensure that they are consistent and compatible with other County efforts and objectives designed to preserve historic and cultural resources.

### **F. PUBLIC LANDS AND RESOURCES -County Goals and Policies**

1. **COUNTY GOAL: Assist through coordination public land and resource management agencies in determining the best uses of public lands and resources.**
2. **COUNTY GOAL: Encourage the use of public lands and resources to accommodate new growth and foster economic development opportunities.**
3. **COUNTY GOAL: Through coordination with public land and resource management agencies actively participate in public land and resource planning and decision-making processes to adequately protect and promote County interests.**

The County has identified the following policies relating to public lands and resources:

#### **County/Public Land and Resource Agency Coordination**

- a. **County Policy:** Uinta County will coordinate by actively pursuing and maintaining cooperative working agreements and relationships with federal, state and county resource management agencies including, but not limited to, the following: The United States Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Department of Agriculture, United States Forest Service, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Wyoming State Forestry Department, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, United States Bureau of Reclamation, etc., etc.
- b. **County Policy:** Uinta County will coordinate by actively participating in all relevant public land and resource planning processes to adequately protect and promote County interests.

## **Multiple Use**

- a. **County Policy:** Uinta County supports continued management of all public (Federal, State and County) lands and resources through multiple-use sustained-yield concepts and practices.

## **Public Lands Resource Use and Development**

a. **County Policy:** Uinta County supports the continued use and development of public lands and resources.

b. **County Policy:** Uinta County promotes the continued use of public lands and resources for traditional ranching and livestock grazing practices and activities as a critical component of the county's economic base and a major part of our history, custom and culture.

c. **County Policy:** Uinta County will coordinate by actively participating in range management planning processes and activities to promote the continued viability of the agricultural industries by insuring that federal agencies optimize Animal Unit Months (AUM's) of forage provided on federal lands in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, the Public Rangeland Improvement Act of 1978, and the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960.

d. **County Policy:** The County supports continued natural resource exploration and development on public lands as a critical component of the County's economic base.

e. **County Policy:** Uinta County promotes responsible mining and mineral exploration and development as an important, historic multiple use of public lands and resources.

f. **County Policy:** The County will strive to maintain sustainable timber harvests as an important, historic multiple use of federal lands and as an effective forest management tool to promote healthy forests and prevent bark beetle, mistletoe, and other harmful infestations.

g. **County Policy:** Uinta County opposes the introduction of any animal species, including but not limited to wild and/or feral horses which compete with livestock and indigenous wildlife for habitat, forage and water.

h. **County Policy:** Uinta County will coordinate by supporting the renewal of grazing leases and permits on all public lands..

i. **County Policy:** Uinta County supports land use planning that provides livestock and wildlife forage expressed in Animal Unit Months (AUM) be no less than the maximum number of Animal Unit Months (AUM) sustainable by range conditions in allotments and districts and based on actual and scientific analysis.

**j. County Policy:** Uinta County opposes the relinquishment or retirement of grazing permits or Animal Unit Months (AUM's) in favor of conservation, wildlife or other uses or efforts.

**k. County Policy:** Uinta County supports returning any suspended non-use AUM's to active use as soon as range conditions improve and forage is available.

**l. County Policy:** Uinta County opposes the special designation of public lands as "Wilderness", "Wilderness Study Area", "Wild Lands", "Area of Critical Environmental Concern", "Wild and Scenic River", etc., etc. which would restrict multiple use planning concepts and/or practices.

**m. County Policy:** Uinta County agrees that all waters of the State of Wyoming belong to the State of Wyoming and are held in trust for the citizens of the State; said waters are subject to State appropriations for beneficial use and are essential to the future prosperity of the State. The State of Wyoming holds the right to develop and use its entitlement to interstate rivers and any water desired by the Federal Government must be obtained through the State of Wyoming Water Appropriation System.

**n. County Policy:** Uinta County opposes the use of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to restrict or curtail the use or development of public lands and resources.

**o. County Policy:** Uinta County will coordinate with State and Federal Agencies prior to the listing or designation of any species or habitat as endangered or critical.

### **Public Lands Access**

**a. County Policy:** Uinta County will promote historic rights to travel over federal and state managed lands in the pursuit of mining, logging, livestock raising, recreation, renewable resource development, oil and gas exploration and production, other historic uses, and opposes the closing of any existing road or access.

**b. County Policy:** The County does not support the taking or condemning of private property in an effort to gain public access.

### **Wildlife Resources**

**a. County Policy:** Wildlife resources are an important County asset. The County will actively participate in wildlife management planning and decision-making processes.

**b. County Policy:** Uinta County will encourage the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and federal wildlife management agencies to maintain balanced wildlife populations for consumptive and non-consumptive uses.

**c. County Policy:** The County supports implementation of predatory animal management practices.

### **Public Land Recreation**

- a. **County Policy:** Recreation and tourism are traditional public land and resource uses.
- b. **County Policy:** County participation in recreation planning and decision-making processes is critical to promoting/preserving traditional public land recreational uses.

### **Special Designations**

- a. **County Policy:** Historic/traditional public land and resource uses must be recognized and addressed in planning and decision-making processes regarding wilderness and other set aside designations within or adjacent to the County's borders. Critical issues and County interests include, but are not limited to, the following: continuing mineral resource exploration and development, preserving adequate public access, maintaining traditional recreation opportunities, protecting grazing rights, and continuing timber and range management activities.

### **Public Land Disposal**

- a. **County Policy:** The County will work with federal land managers to identify public lands which may be designated for specific recreational, historical or water development purposes or which may be utilized by communities for future development and infrastructure needs.

**Plan Adoption**

The Uinta County Planning and Zoning Commission hereby recommends to the Board of Uinta County Commissioners that the foregoing 2011 Uinta County Comprehensive Plan be approved and thereby declared as official Uinta County Policy in compliance with the provisions of the Wyoming State Land Administrative Procedures Act (W.S.A. 16-3-101) and the Wyoming State Land Use Planning Act (W.S.A. 9-8-301 thru 9-8-302) This recommendation having been made by unanimous vote in the affirmative this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of June, 2011



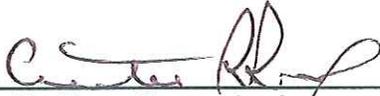
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dennis Covolo, Chairman



\_\_\_\_\_  
Brent Barker, Vice Chairman



\_\_\_\_\_  
Les Hartle, Commissioner



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Curtis Rex, Commissioner



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Gerry Thompson, Commissioner

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Kent Williams, Secretary

**Plan Adoption**

The foregoing 2011 Uinta County Comprehensive Plan is hereby adopted by the Board of Uinta County Commissioners this -- day of July, 2011, as official Uinta County Policy. Adoption of this plan is hereby declared to be in compliance with the provisions of the Wyoming State Land Administrative Procedures Act (W.S.A. 16-3-101) and the Wyoming State Land Use Planning Act (W.S.A. 9-8-301 thru 9-8-302)



\_\_\_\_\_  
**W. Robert Stoddard, Chairman**



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**Leonard C. Hysell, Commissioner**



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**Craig B. Welling, Commissioner**

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_  
**Lana Wilcox, Uinta County Clerk**

UINTA COUNTY

RESOLUTION NO. 94- 04

RESOLUTION AND BINDING ACTION SUPPORTING COUNTY CUSTOM, CULTURE AND HERITAGE IN DECISION MAKING REGARDING FEDERAL LANDS IN, AND ADJACENT TO, UINTA COUNTY, STATE OF WYOMING

WHEREAS, the government of the United States of America exercises control over a significant portion of the land and resources within, and adjacent to, the geographic boundaries of Uinta County, State of Wyoming; and

WHEREAS, decisions governing federal land in, and adjacent to, Uinta County, State of Wyoming, have a direct and broadly based impact on the interrelated heritage of cultural, environmental, and economic well-being and stability of residents; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has expressly intended to act in cooperation with county governments while using all practicable means to create and maintain conditions on federal lands allowing for productive harmony between man and nature while fulfilling the social, economic, environmental, and cultural requirements of present and future generations of American; and

WHEREAS, efforts of the Congress seeking to coordinate federal plans with county government, maintaining a balance between population and resources, and encouraging a high standard of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities can be enhanced by increased cooperation between Uinta County and those federal officials involved with the administration by the federal government of the needs of citizens of said county who will be directly and indirectly impacted by agency decisions regarding the use of federal lands; and

WHEREAS, there now exists a significant, urgent need for the promotion of the involvement of Uinta County, State of Wyoming, in the management of federal lands and the development of criteria that are meaningful in that federal decision-making process;

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED AND DETERMINED that the following procedural protections shall be followed to ensure that there is full and complete information and cooperation provided to the Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, or Environmental Protection Agency (hereinafter known as "federal entities") in their decision-making processes regarding management of lands located within, and adjacent to, Uinta County, State of Wyoming, and federal consideration of the impact of their decision making and actions has on the preservation of

the interrelated heritage of culture, environmental, and economic well-being and stability of this county:

1. These procedural provisions are intended to apply to all decisions undertaken by any agency, department, or other federal entity that do or will have a direct or indirect impact on federal and private lands within, and adjacent to, the geographic confines of Uinta County, State of Wyoming.
2. Within thirty (30) days of adoption of this resolution, and at the beginning of each calendar year after this resolution becomes effective, the Chairman of the Board of the Uinta County Commission, as executive officer of the county, or his designee, shall give written notice to federal entities as follows:

- a. That the county government of Uinta County, State of Wyoming, desires to have full and complete notice and opportunity for involvement in the decision making processes of the federal entity that either:

- (1) are taken or are being proposed to be taken regarding federal lands located within, or adjacent to, Uinta County, State of Wyoming;
- (2) involves the listing, de-listing, or re-classification of a threatened or endangered species or critical habitat within, or adjacent to, Uinta County, State of Wyoming; or
- (3) involves any major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within, or adjacent to, Uinta County, State of Wyoming.

- b. That any decision of federal entities to not afford the government of Uinta County either:

- (1) complete notice;
- (2) opportunity for involvement beyond that afforded each citizen; or
- (3) limit the role of county government to a local public hearing

is presumed as a matter of law to reduce the role that Uinta County has in the planning process and to be prejudicial to the government of Uinta County, State of Wyoming, and its residents.

- c. That all zoning regulations lawfully in force and lawfully operating business enterprises of any kind are expressions of interrelated environmental, cultural, and economic policies that Uinta County deems to be critical to the maintenance of the well-being and stability of the residents of this county and their government.
3. That within present budgetary constraints, affirmative action shall be taken to notify federal entities of any other evidence of our interrelated historic, cultural, and environmental heritage as well as the anticipated impact on the same of any use of federal or private lands located in, or adjacent to, Uinta County, State of Wyoming.
4. If proposed implementation of a critical habitat designation or federal policies or practices over federal lands located within, or adjacent to the geographical boundaries of the county or elsewhere, will likely result in either:
  - a. the alteration of present county and local zoning regulations without being previously voluntarily initiated by this county, or
  - b. make it infeasible for existing operating businesses to continue their present operations,

the proposed federal action is presumed to both create a negative impact on the interrelated environmental, cultural, and economic well-being and stability of Uinta County, State of Wyoming, and its residents and not be the preferred alternative to resolve the environmental and other concerns of the federal entities.

5. Nothing herein is intended to conflict with any existing federal or state statute or applicable regulation that governs lands within, or adjacent to Uinta County, State of Wyoming. Any section, paragraph, sentence, phrase, or word that is found to do so as a matter of law may be severed from this ordinance without limiting the enforceability of the non-conflicting portion.

SO RESOLVED, ADOPTED, AND EFFECTIVE this 15<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1994.

William B. Marshall  
Chairman  
Board of County Commissioners

Attest:

Lynne D. Fox  
Lynne Fox Jane Hansen, Deputy  
Uinta County Clerk

## UINTA COUNTY, WYOMING

### “THE CODE OF THE WEST”

#### **What you can expect when buying, building, or developing in Uinta County, Wyoming.**

The “Code of the West” was first chronicled by the western novelist, Zane Grey. Men and women who settled the western frontier were bound by an unwritten code of conduct. In keeping with that spirit, we offer this information to help people who have chosen to build and/or live in the unincorporated areas of Uinta County, Wyoming.

#### **Welcome to Uinta County:**

Life in the country can be rich and rewarding, treasured by both Uinta County residents who have been here for generations, and those who have recently moved here. It’s important that new property owners and homeowners understand that life in the rural parts of the county is different from life in town. The county government cannot provide the same level of service that city and town governments provide. The information included in this Uinta County version of “The Code of the West” is intended to help you make an educated and informed decision as you consider purchasing or

developing land in the unincorporated areas of Uinta County.

### **What kind of access to property is available outside of town?**

The fact that you can drive to your property does not necessarily guarantee that you, your guests or an emergency vehicle (Sheriff, Ambulance, Fire, etc.) can get there easily, or even during all seasons.

Please consider:

- **Response times for emergency services cannot be guaranteed.**
- **There can be problems with legal aspects of access**, especially if you have access across someone else's property. Make sure you have legal easements if you need them (deeded and recorded, not just verbal). You may want to get legal advice if you have questions regarding your own access to a County Road or State Highway.
- **Uinta County maintains hundreds of miles of roads, but many private properties are served by roads which are not County maintained.** Some roads that have been used for many years by the public are not maintained by the County. Make sure you know what kind of road maintenance is available and who pays for it.

- **Many large construction vehicles cannot navigate small, narrow and primitive roads.** If you plan to build, check out construction access. Private driveways should be wide and sturdy enough to support either emergency and/or construction vehicles.
- **If your driveway or private road will connect to a County Road you will need an Access Permit.** Call the Uinta County Planning office to find out more. If your access will be directly onto a Wyoming State Highway you will need to check with the Wyoming Department of Transportation about obtaining a Highway Access Permit.
- **In general, school buses travel only on County Roads or State Highways** and not on subdivision or private roads. In some outlying areas school bus transportation may not be provided at all. Check with the administration office of the district your children will attend to find out about busing.
- **In extreme weather, some roads may become impassable.** You may need a four-wheel drive vehicle, snow tires and/or chains, and perhaps even another mode of transportation to travel during those circumstances.

- **Gravel roads generate dust.** If this bothers you, you may not want to be in an area accessed only by gravel roads and for which no paving is planned. If you have questions about whether roads are scheduled for improvement, check with the subdivision property owners association, or with the Uinta County Planning office.
- **Unpaved roads are not always smooth and are often slippery when wet.** You may experience an increase in vehicle maintenance costs when you regularly travel on rural county roads.
- **Newspaper, parcel and overnight package delivery, and U.S. Mail delivery may not always be available to rural areas.** Check with the agencies that provide these services before assuming you can get delivery.
- **It may be more expensive and time consuming to build a rural residence** due to delivery fees and the time required for inspectors, contractors, etc. to reach your site.

### **What about Sewer, Water, Electricity, Telephone, Television, and Natural Gas?**

The utilities that you may be used to having when you live in a town or city may not be

available in rural areas. Please think about these situations:

- **The availability of telephone communication can be delayed,** particularly in the more remote areas of the County. In some areas, the only telephone service available may be a party line. It may be difficult or even impossible to obtain a separate line for fax or computer modem uses, and in some areas, cellular phones may not have service. Check with the local telephone service providers to find out what services will be available to you.
- **If central or municipal sewage treatment is available to your property, find out who provides the service,** and what costs are associated with it.
- **If no central sewage treatment is available,** you will be using or constructing an individual Small Wastewater Treatment Facility (septic system). If there is an existing system you may consider having the septic tank pumped and inspected by a reliable service. Call the Uinta County Planning office about obtaining a permit for construction of any new system or alteration of any existing system.

- **If a central or municipal water supply is available to your property**, find out who supplies it and what costs are associated with it.
- **Be sure you know what water rights are available with your property.** Is there a water well permit? Is there a decree to a spring on or off the property? If water is provided by a spring or well located off your property, do you have an easement allowing you to access and repair it? If you have deeded water rights (for agricultural or domestic use), listed as “acre feet”, or certain “second feet”, find out what that really means for you. You may not be able to drill a well or have real access to a water supply without getting approval from the Wyoming State Engineer’s office. You will need to know what kind of time and expense that may entail. You may want to contact an attorney or an engineer, as well as your realtor to help get this information.
- **Not all wells are permitted to allow watering of landscaping or livestock.** Make sure that you have the proper permits or are protected in the event you cannot obtain the proper permits from the Wyoming State Engineer’s office before you move ahead with your plans.

- **Having a water well permit does not guarantee that there will be water where you dig or drill for it.** Some areas of rural Uinta County have water wells that are several hundred feet deep. Consider those potential drilling and installation costs in your development planning.
- **You may or may not own the water that runs through your property in a stream or irrigation ditch.** Unless you have actually purchased water rights or have had those rights assigned to you, the water cannot be legally taken out of the stream or ditch. You may want to check with your attorney to make sure you have adequate, legal water rights with your property.
- **The Wyoming State Engineer's office, not Uinta County issues water well permits.** You can contact their office in Cheyenne directly or you can pick up an application in the Uinta County Planning office.
- **Electric and natural gas service may not be available in the more remote areas of Uinta County.** Check with each of these service providers to make sure you have the services you want before you commit to a construction or development project.

- **Some of your utility service lines may have to cross properties owned by other people** in order for service to be extended to your property. Make sure the proper legal easements are in place to allow lines to be installed to your property.
- **Electric power may not be available** in single and three phase service configurations. If you have special power requirements, check with the service provider to ensure the service available to you.
- **The cost of electrical service usually** includes both a fee to hook into the system (which may require extensive line installation if none exists), and a monthly charge for energy consumed. Check with the service provider about costs in your area.
- **Power outages can occur in outlying areas** more often than in more developed areas. Not only can these disrupt your computer modem's internet connection, you won't be able to get water from your well, or maybe even heat your home.
- **Trash collection in rural areas is generally limited to two choices:** A commercial pickup service which

charges a regular fee, or hauling your trash to a Uinta County Landfill. If you have questions about landfill hours and fees, call the Uinta County Solid Waste office located in the County Complex.

- **Most rural areas of the County are not wired for cable television.**

Reception through a regular antenna may be very poor at best. A satellite receiver may be required if you wish to have television.

### **What Can I Do On My Property?**

Many issues can affect your property in addition to those concerning utilities and access. It's important to research them before purchasing or developing land.

- **Not all parcels are “legal”.** A parcel must have been created under compliance with the Resolution For Subdivision of Land For Uinta County, Wyoming March 1979, or existed before then, or created by an approved exemption to the subdivision laws before a Land Use Certificate, Small Wastewater permit or Access permit is issued. In some cases, parcels may have been created by some other legal means allowed by Wyoming State law. If you have a parcel which isn't in one of these

categories, or if you don't know how to determine its status, check with the Uinta County Planning office.

- **Zoning Designation** does not necessarily dictate the assessed valuation of your property. Check with the Uinta County Assessor's Office with questions.
- **Other property owners may have easements which require you to allow construction of roads, power lines, water lines, sewer lines and other utilities, as well as maintenance of irrigation ditches across your land**, which may restrict your own development and building options. There may be easements that haven't been recorded, but are "historic". Title abstract and title insurance companies, or an attorney or other professional may be able to help you.
- **Many property owners do not own the mineral rights under the surface of their land.** By federal law, owners of mineral rights have the right to extract the minerals, even if that activity changes "surface characteristics". It's important that you know what minerals may be located under your land and who owns the rights to them. Check your deed, and if you don't understand it, you may want to contact your attorney or other professional to help you.

- **You may be provided with a plat for your property by your realtor,** or other seller. You may wish to obtain the services of a licensed Wyoming surveyor to ensure the accuracy of your survey.
- **Fences that separate properties may or may not be on legal boundary lines.** A survey of the land is the only way to confirm the location of your property lines.
- **Whether you want to construct a single family home,** a guest house, to subdivide, or open a store, your plans may require a **zoning Map Amendment,** as well as **driveway Access Permit,** a **Small Wastewater permit,** a **Land Use Certificate** or other permit requirements. Check with the Uinta County Planning office to find out what you'll need and when you'll need it.
- **Many subdivisions and planned developments have covenants and design guidelines that limit the use of the property.** Find out if there are covenants (either ask your realtor or check with the Uinta County Clerk's office), make sure that you can live with the rules of that subdivision.
- **Homeowners and property owners associations often are responsible for the maintenance of roads, utilities and other**

**common elements in subdivisions.** Check the subdivision's covenants to learn if an association has that responsibility. Check with your realtor or some of your future neighbors to learn if an association is functioning. A dysfunctional or non-operating association can cause problems for you, and may even involve you in expensive litigation.

- **Dues are almost always a requirement for those subdivisions that have a homeowners association.** The by-laws of the association should outline how the organization operates and how dues are set, collected and spent.
- **The property that is an open meadow today may not be forever.** Check the, recorded plat of your subdivision to see what uses are platted within it. In addition, check with the Uinta County Planning office to determine if those uses have changed since the plat was recorded. You can also talk with the planning office about the process that properties undergo for zoning map amendments, and how you will be notified if changes are proposed next to you.
- **You are responsible for keeping your dog on your property.** Wyoming State law allows dogs that are harassing livestock, wildlife, or posing a danger to other people to be destroyed immediately.

## **You Shouldn't Mess With Mother Nature**

Rural residents usually can expect to experience more challenges with the “elements” when they become unfriendly than residents who have access to municipal services.

- **Trees are a wonderful environmental amenity**, but can also endanger your home in a forest fire. The Wasatch-Cache National Forest Service office can offer a list of recommendations to help you protect your home from fire as well as protecting the trees from igniting if your house catches on fire. If you start a forest fire, you could be found legally responsible for paying the costs of putting it out. Helping to prevent a catastrophe before it happens benefits you as well as your neighbors and the forest.
- **Steep slopes can slide in unusually wet weather.** Large rocks can also roll down steep slopes and present a great danger to people and property.
- **You may be required to have a geotechnical study conducted before you can obtain a small wastewater permit, a land use certificate or access permit.** Geologic hazards such as mudslides, rock-fall, avalanche and unstable slopes can be common in Uinta County. Collapsing and

expansive soils can buckle concrete foundations and twist steel I-beams.

- **Be cautious about placing improvements on North-facing slopes.** North facing slopes or canyons rarely have direct sunlight in the winter. Snow may accumulate there and not melt throughout the winter.
- **Building designs which avoid “valleys” over outside entrances,** and have roof slope direction which prevent “dumps” of snow and ice accumulations on sidewalks and garage entrances will help prevent dangerous conditions and headaches during long winters.
- **A property owner who builds his home in a ravine** finds that the water that drained through the ravine now drains through his house. The topography of the land can tell you where the water will go when rain and spring runoff from snowmelt occur.

## Wildlife

Nature can provide you with some wonderful neighbors. However, some may be of concern to you and require extra care when you build and live in a rural or remote area.

- **Some subdivisions may prohibit the keeping of dogs,** which may harass wildlife,

or require that they be kept confined on the property. Some may limit the number of cats you may keep, and require that they be confined to prevent decimation of native bird populations.

- **Coyotes, skunks, squirrels, raccoons, deer, elk, moose, etc.,** can be annoying at times. Other times they may be destructive and dangerous. You will need to learn how to deal with them.
- **Threatened and endangered species of wildlife may be present in certain areas.** Check with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department about concerns related to the area of your property.
- **Hunting has been a way of life in Uinta County for generations.** Neighbors may allow legal hunting activities on their property. Informing yourself of areas where such activities are allowed may be important to you. Again, check with the Wyoming Game and Fish Dept. if you have questions.
- **Harsh winters can bring unexpected herds of elk and deer onto private lands.** They may damage fences, pastures and other personal property. Checking with the Wyoming Game and Fish Dept. about how to address these potential problems before they occur will help both you and the wildlife.

## **Agriculture, Our Heritage and Key to our Future**

The families who settled Uinta County brought water to the sagebrush valleys and were part of an ingenious system of water diversion, which has allowed agriculture to become an important part of our environment. These ranchers were truly the first environmentalists, and it is their irrigated meadows that create and maintain the beautiful green open spaces of our valleys. Minimizing the undesirable impacts of growth on ranching operations will help keep Uinta County a beautiful place to be.

- **Wyoming has an “Open Range” law.** This means if you do not want cattle, sheep or other livestock on your property, it is your responsibility to fence them out, and not the ranchers.
- **Agriculture is a major economic contributor to Uinta County.** If you choose to live among and next to ranching operations, you may be affected by them. You have an opportunity to help keep ranching operations viable by learning how to be a good neighbor to this important part of our county.
- **Ranchers often work around the clock, especially during calving season in the spring and hay harvesting time in middle**

**to late summer.** Occasionally, adjoining agricultural operations may disturb your otherwise quiet surroundings. Those times will pass.

- **If you are traveling on a dirt or gravel road adjacent to ranch lands,** drive slowly and with care. Excess dust can affect both the health of the cattle and the quality of hay in the fields. Occasionally cattle may get out on the road, avoiding hitting an animal is healthy for both you and the animal.
- **Ranchers occasionally burn their ditches to keep them clean of debris, weeds and other obstructions.** This burning may bother you momentarily, but it is not a regular occurrence.
- **Chemicals may be used to control weeds and remove vegetation that impedes the flow of irrigation ditches, or may be harmful to livestock.** Ranchers, just as all others, must operate within the constraints of public health and safety laws which affect the use of those chemicals.
- **Livestock may cause odors and noise, which may be objectionable to some.** If you find them annoying, you may want to consider that before you purchase or develop property.
- **Livestock are occasionally moved on public roads.** When you encounter a

livestock drive, please pull over to the side and allow the drive to pass. Or, if a rider directs you to move forward, do so slowly. The delay will only cost you a few minutes. Enjoy the scene, this is the real west and is a critical part of your neighbor's ability to earn a living.

- **Uinta County uses a noxious weed control program in compliance with Wyoming State law.** If your property has noxious weeds on it you may be required to control them. The Uinta County Weed and Pest office can help with concerns.

#### **Some final thoughts:**

- Though Uinta County receives property taxes from its property owners, the amount of taxes collected generally do not cover the cost of services provided to rural residents. In general, other revenue sources subsidize the lifestyles of those who live in rural areas making up this shortfall.
- Many issues arise when you consider taxes. Typically you will have concerns about whether your property will be taxed as residential, agricultural, commercial, etc., and what methods are used to arrive at the assessed amounts. The Uinta County Assessor's office can help answer those questions.

- Please take the time and effort to study the history of Uinta County. This will help give you an understanding and appreciation for the pioneers who first settled this land. It is our hope that through this understanding, you will approach your construction and development in a thoughtful and sensitive manner, which will help to protect our unique community, our natural resources and our historic way of life.
- The information in this Uinta County version of “The Code of the West” is not all inclusive. There will likely be issues that occur to you, or that you encounter that are not included here. If you have questions, the agencies listed below will do their very best to help you find the help you need.
- This information is provided by the Uinta County Planning office with the help of similar resources produced by other counties throughout the Mountain West. We offer this information and these suggestions with the sincere hope that they will help you as you decide to build, develop and live in Uinta County.

