

A close-up photograph of a brown bear's head and shoulders. The bear is looking upwards and slightly to the left. Its fur is thick and brown, with some lighter patches on its face. It is surrounded by green foliage, including pine needles and small white flowers. The background is a dense forest.

YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK: 2017-2018

A Guide to the Sublette County Budget

Report from the Sublette Board of County Commissioners, Pinedale, Wyoming

FAST FACTS

- Sublette County is only five percent of Wyoming's landmass, but it contributes nearly 18 percent of the total mineral taxable valuation in the state.
- Sublette County remains Wyoming's top natural gas producing county, and is third in crude oil production.
- Sublette County's population dropped nearly five percent from 2010 to 2016, with an estimated 9,769 residents in July 2016.
- With nearly 5,000 square miles, Sublette County has two people per square mile.
- Four of every five acres in Sublette County is owned by government (local, state, or federal).
- Nearly 40 percent of federal land in Sublette County is designated as wilderness or wilderness study area.



Most private land in Sublette County is classified as agricultural operations.

Front cover: After decades of federal protection, grizzly bears in western Wyoming were returned to state management in 2017.

TOP 10 TAXPAYERS IN SUBLETTE COUNTY

Company	Assessed Value	%
Ultra Resources, Inc.	\$683,054,934	35.04
Jonah Energy, LLC	320,700,477	16.45
QEP Energy Co.	251,851,857	12.92
Exxon Mobil Corp.	121,814,593	6.25
Linn Operating, Inc.	78,888,326	4.05
Vanguard Operating, LLC	71,005,921	3.64
Wexpro Co.	66,893,569	3.43
ExxonMobil Oil Corp.	37,838,154	1.94
Jonah Gas Gathering Co.	24,283,887	1.25
EOG Resources, Inc.	19,057,582	0.98
TOTAL	\$1,675,389,299	85.95
TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE	\$1,949,357,456	

- Sublette County consists of 3.1 million acres, of which 19 percent (600,626) is private land.
- Ninety-two percent of private land in Sublette County is in agricultural operations.
- Fourteen percent of private land in Sublette County is under protective conservation easements.
- Of the 23 counties in Wyoming, Campbell, Sweetwater and Sublette counties ranked first, second and third in the highest overall taxable valuations in the state in 2016, as well as the highest percentages of all taxes contributed by each county in Wyoming. Sublette County represented nearly 11 percent of the state's taxable valuation, and 10 percent of all taxes.
- Sublette County's assessed valuation reached its historic peak of \$6.4 billion in 2009. That number declined 70 percent by 2017, at which point the county's assessed value was \$1.9 billion.
- Sublette County government employs about 160 people.



Commissioners Mack Rawhouser, Tom Noble, Dave Burnett, Vice Chairman Joel Bousman and Chairman Andy Nelson deliberate during a budget workshop.

Commission Sets Operating Budget at \$41.7 million

The Sublette County Commission's efforts to reduce county government spending has resulted in a drop from the \$59 million operating budget of three years ago to \$41.7 million in the new fiscal year.

Commissioners began this budget cycle asking for departments to decrease their funding requests or at least hold the line on spending to last year's levels.

Commission Chairman Andy Nelson said, "We're hoping we're at the bottom of the pendulum swing. I think we've got another year or two before we see the light, so we've got to hold pretty tight where we're at right now."

With three new commissioners on the five-man commission, the budget process made for a grueling two months as the commission considered funding requests amid what Commissioner Mack Rawhouser called "a steep learning curve."

ROAD & BRIDGE

The county's largest departmental budget is that of the Road & Bridge, generating prolonged discussion among commissioners. Commissioner Joel Bousman noted that traditionally, county roads have been the top priority for county government, and that the

2018 Budget Compared to Last Year

- Operating budget is \$500,000 more.
- Cash & revenue is up by \$2.4 million.
- Equipment reserve is \$800,000 more.
- Depreciation reserve is \$2.5 million less.
- General fund budget is \$700,000 less.

county needs to meet the public obligation for good roads. Nelson agreed, noting, "If there is one thing in this county that every constituent uses, it's roads."

After a winter of record snow levels leading to prolonged spring flooding throughout the county, R&B was swamped with snow removal and damage repairs throughout the county's nearly 500 miles of roads. On top of that, R&B found itself without a crew for its gravel crusher, with very little crushed material stockpiled.

Commissioner Tom Noble keyed on R&B operations, pushing for insights to personnel and equipment needs to meet maintenance demands. At the time of the budget discussions, R&B was authorized for 19 laborers, but had only 16 positions filled – a steep decline

COMMISSION SETS OPERATING BUDGET *continued from page 1*

from FY2013's 24 positions. Even with decreased staff, the county had increased the department's workload by having R&B perform maintenance work on a variety of county vehicles (including law enforcement and fire department vehicles), as well as equipment work at the fairgrounds and 4-H buildings.

"They need additional resources," Bousman said.

The commission agreed to return the department to 24 laborer positions, and urged the department to get the crusher back into operation as soon as possible. Commissioner David Burnett noted that although the commission's budget approval includes \$2.4 million for heavy equipment, and \$5 million for projects, the commission retains oversight for any future spending from these line items.

Budget by the Numbers: \$41.7 Million for Operations

The second largest budget in Sublette County's history rings in at \$223 million, and is based on a taxation rate of 12 mills. It is important to note that the budget includes:

Cash-carryover of \$8.8 million (numerous departmental budgets were underspent last year, despite imposed budget cuts);

Reserve accounts of \$168.4 million; and an

Operating budget of \$41.7 million.

The Fiscal Year 2018 budget covers county income and expenditures from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.

General Fund:.....	\$41.7 million
Reserve Accounts:	\$168.3 million
EnCana Tax Refund:	\$525,831
Fair, Airport, Library, Museum:.....	\$12.4 million
Total Requirement:	\$223 million

OTHER CHANGES

As the commission budget considerations proceeded, it became apparent that not only would R&B require additional staff, personnel changes were needed in a few other departments. As Nelson lamented the end to the county's hiring freeze, Burnett pointed out that in several cases, the county was not increasing the number of staff, but adding benefits to existing positions to adequately compensate staff that had previously been classified as temporary.

In the final tally, the county's operating budget is about \$500,000 more than last year. The increase originates in six major areas:

- An increase from three to five commissioners;
- Needed maintenance projects in the Courthouse & Maintenance budget;
- Security doors replacement in the detention center;
- Increased staff, equipment, and projects for Road & Bridge;
- Engineering fees for the landfill; and
- Changes in management for the ice arena

TAPPING RESERVES

Ten years ago, Sublette County was the center of a major natural gas boom, with an increasing workforce and population, and a corresponding demand for services. County government increased to meet those demands, from basic services such as fire protection, law enforcement, and road maintenance, to overall staffing levels in offices issuing building permits, vehicle titles and registrations, etc.

But by 2009, the commission knew the county was set for an economic downturn and began belt-tightening and streamlining county government, implementing a hiring freeze, and prohibiting funding for new human service agencies or programs. After holding the line on spending for a few years, and eventually cutting spending across the board, prudent management by the commission allowed the county to continue to add money to the reserve accounts even as revenues declined.

In FY2015, the commission established a Budget Reserve within its Depreciation Reserve accounts.

The purpose of the budget reserve is to leave designated Depreciation Reserves intact while having funding available for budget shortfalls. That effort paid off, as this year the commission dipped into those reserve accounts for the first time, withdrawing \$2.5 million

to balance the budget, while retaining \$168.4 million in reserves.

Commission Chairman Andy Nelson noted, “If money stopped coming in today, county government can continue to function for about five years.”

Assistance to Towns

During the natural gas boom years, the county invested heavily in traditional infrastructure projects such as major road improvements and the courthouse complex building project, as well as other major facilities improvements at the county fairgrounds, airports, golf course, ambulance barns, and libraries, in addition to construction of new medical clinics and senior citizen facilities in both Pinedale and Marbleton, and the ag center near Marbleton.

Recognizing that the incorporated towns in the county were also heavily impacted by growth, the county took the unprecedented step of

establishing joint powers boards with each of the county’s three incorporated towns in order to allocate some of the county’s general mill levy funding to assist towns in their own infrastructure needs. Each of the three towns received \$11 million from this program, in addition to millions of dollars in matching funds for other infrastructure projects. Although the program was discontinued in FY2013, the county continues to assist the towns by providing both law enforcement and fire protection services without charge. All other counties in Wyoming have metro police departments, with the exception of Sublette County.



Sandhill cranes migrate to the county for nesting in spring, and depart in fall.

Reserve Accounts

Although state officials have a permanent mineral trust fund that allows the interest generated from the account to be spent while preserving its principal, local governments have no similar ability to establish a trust fund. Not only are counties lacking the ability to establish permanent accounts, legal precedent has determined that a sitting commission cannot bind a future commission.

With this reality, the Sublette County Commission worked for more than a decade to establish and build reserve accounts for future needs. The reserve accounts are for specific purposes, covering both operations and capital construction needs.

The current county budget includes \$168,394,375 in reserve accounts, split between cash (\$10 million); equipment (\$11.6 million); and depreciation (\$146.7 million). Reserve money is held in interest-earning accounts. In order to be spent, the budget must be amended to transfer the required funding from a reserve account to a spending account.

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

Equipment reserve: \$11.6 million. Each year, money is set aside to pay for future equipment purchases.

Depreciation reserve: \$146.7 million. Since the county does not have the statutory authority to establish a trust fund or rainy day account for future county needs, money is earmarked and set aside in specific reserve accounts for use in the future.

The Depreciation Reserve budget includes the following accounts:

Building projects, equipment and maintenance	\$32.4 million
Budget Reserve.....	\$14.6 million
Ag & Fair (operations and capital)	\$13.1 million
Recreation (operations and capital)	\$11.7 million
Library (operations and capital).....	\$12.2 million
Senior centers/facilities (operations and capital).....	\$9.7 million
Road & bridge projects	\$7 million
Courthouse & maintenance.....	\$7 million
State/County road fund.....	\$6.7 million
Landfill (remediation, closure, reserve)	\$5.5 million
Museums	\$5.5 million
Airports.....	\$5 million
Human services.....	\$4.5 million
Communications & IT	\$3 million
Fire Halls	\$3 million
Tax Refunds	\$2 million
Resource monitoring	\$2 million
Emergency Revolving Loan	\$1 million
Rural Health Care District.....	\$364,219
Elections.....	\$200,000



Sublette County provides habitat for numerous big game populations, including elk.

Property Taxation

Property taxes are one of the primary sources of income for local governments, counties, school districts, and other special districts like the Rural Health Care District. The federal government does not receive any revenue from your property tax.

The county assessor establishes taxable values for most properties within the county, subject to final approval and certification by the State of Wyoming. Mineral production is also valued by state officials for ad valorem and severance tax purposes.

The Sublette County Commission has set the general fund mill levy at the full 12 mills allowed by law. A mill is \$1 of revenue for every \$1,000 of assessed valuation. With minerals accounting for 93 percent of the county's valuation, the commission's decision to tax at the full 12-mill rate allows the county to capture this revenue stream while these natural resources are being extracted. Minerals are taxed at a rate of 100 percent of fair market value, but are taxed only once – as they are extracted.

Wyoming statutes require all property to be valued at fair market value, except for agricultural land, which is valued by its productive capability. The county assessor determines the fair market value for homes and property, and takes 9.5 percent of that value to determine the taxable or assessed value of residential homes and real property (11.5 percent for industrial property). The taxable value is then multiplied by the appropriate mill levy, whereby each mill is equal to one-thousandth of the taxable value.

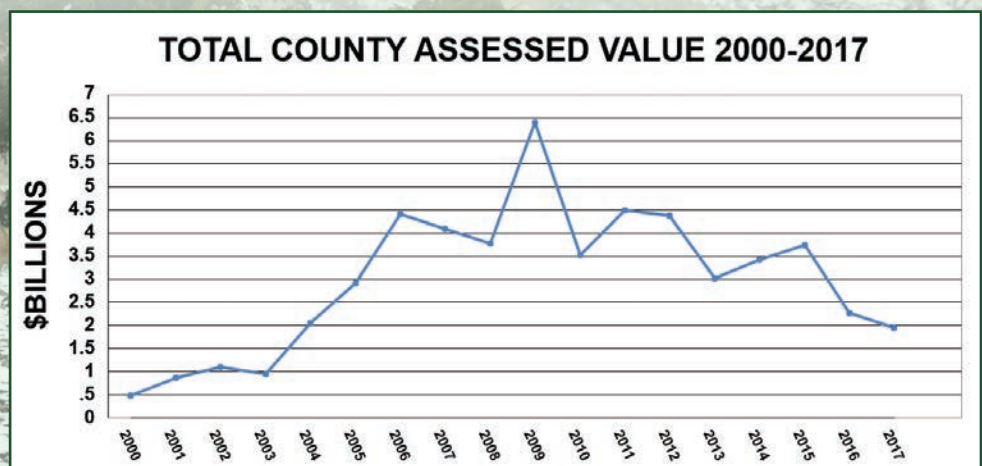
TAX YEAR 2017 VALUATION BY PROPERTY TYPE

Property Class	Assessed Value	Percent
Mineral & Industry	\$1,796,545,814	92.16
Residential	105,398,848	5.41
Commercial	24,915,506	1.28
Agricultural	12,094,288	0.62
Utilities	10,403,000	0.53
Total	\$1,949,357,456	100

For example, a home with a fair market value of \$200,000 would have a taxable value of \$19,000 (based on the 9.5 percent residential assessment rate). An assessment of 64 mills on this home (the average mill levy in Sublette County) would result in a tax of \$1,216.

Although the county taxes 12 mills for county government, your property tax notice includes tax rates ranging from 59 to 67 mills, depending upon where your property is located in the county. A variety of special tax districts impose additional taxation upon property owners in those districts. These special tax districts range from cemetery districts to road improvement districts in areas where property owners vote to approve these taxes on themselves.

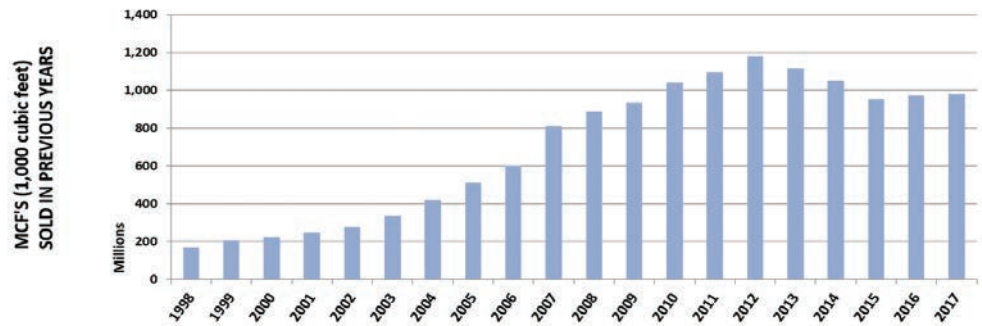
The majority of the taxes you pay provides for the state's educational system. The tax is collected here at the local level, but the revenue is remitted to the state for redistribution.



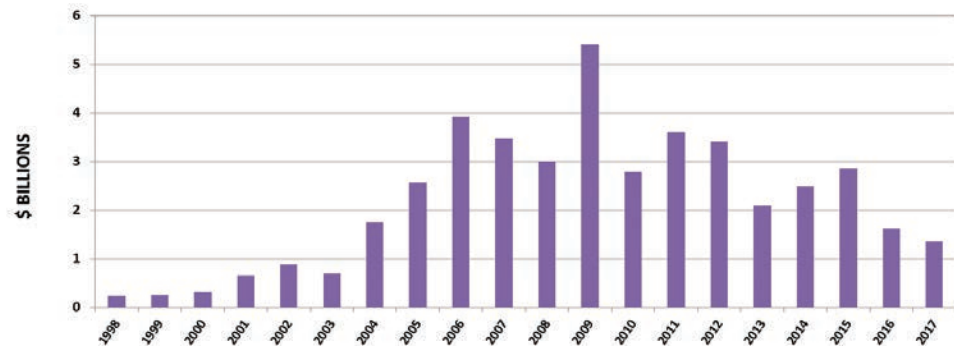
Natural Gas and Oil: Production and Valuation

These charts show oil and gas productivity and assessed valuation in Sublette County for each year since 1998. SUBLETTE COUNTY ASSESSOR

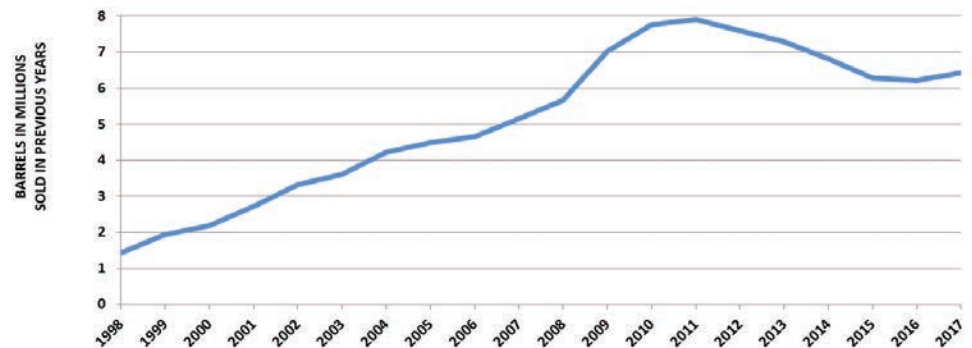
TOTAL NATURAL GAS UNITS SOLD IN SUBLETTE COUNTY



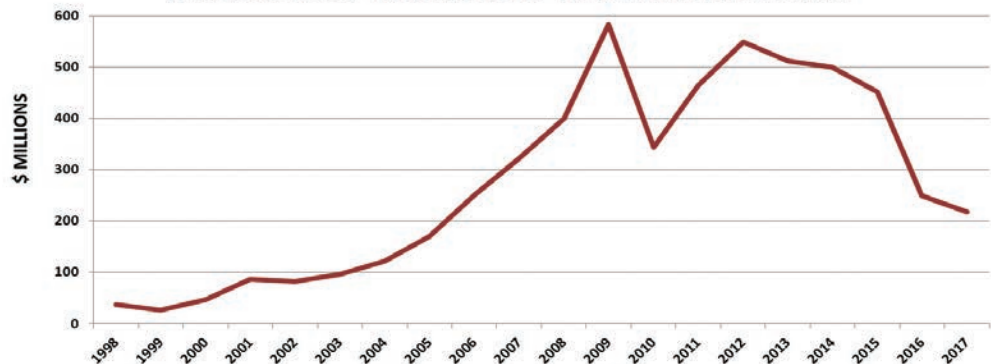
TOTAL ASSESSED VALUATION OF NATURAL GAS IN SUBLETTE COUNTY



TOTAL OIL UNITS SOLD IN SUBLETTE COUNTY



TOTAL ASSESSED VALUATION OF OIL IN SUBLETTE COUNTY



Understanding Revenues

The revenue generated by the taxing of 12 mills provides the majority of funding for county government services, but the budget also includes \$14.6 million in revenue from a variety of other sources (federal, state, and local).

Federal Revenue

The county will receive \$542,000 in Federal Payment In Lieu of Taxes. PILT payments were established by Congress in the mid-1970s to reimburse western counties for a portion of the costs associated with having federal land in the county, but with no method for the counties to tax for the services the counties provide.

State Revenues

Several sources of revenue are funneled to the counties from the state, including severance taxes, sales and use taxes, fuel taxes, and others.

♦ Severance

Mineral severance tax distributions are made to local governments, the state's water development fund, Wyoming Department of Transportation, and the University of Wyoming. The Sublette County budget includes \$149,000 in severance tax revenues.

♦ Sales & Use

Sublette County's sales tax rate is four percent, the lowest allowable under statute. Sublette County estimates it will receive \$5 million in sales and use taxes this year.

♦ Gas & Diesel Fuels

Sublette County anticipates receiving \$1.1 million from the diesel fuel tax, and \$650,000 from the gas tax.

♦ County Road Fund

The County Road Fund (once known as the Farm To Market program) was originally designed to help counties with road construction needs. Funds allocated under the CRF program may be used for both road construction and maintenance. The CRF is funded by the state through gasoline and severance taxes, using a formula for distribution. Sublette County estimates it will receive \$568,000 in county road funds this year.

♦ Cigarette

Sublette County estimates it will receive \$5,000 in cigarette tax revenue in this budget year.

♦ Lottery

Sublette County will receive \$26,000 from the state lottery program.

Local Revenues

The Sublette County budget includes a variety of local revenue sources – from fees paid to county departments, to interest on invested funds.

Motor vehicle licensing will generate \$650,000; and revenues earned for recycling, combined with fees paid at the transfer station and landfill, will result in \$102,000 in revenue. Plat reviews will generate \$2,000, while charges associated with the jail phone and commissary will generate \$10,000 for the county.

Liquor license fees will generate about \$7,300; \$10,000 from traffic school; and the county will receive \$11,000 for providing law-enforcement services at nearby U.S. Forest Service installations.

The new budget includes \$850,000 in interest revenue from investment of county funds.

Revenue from local fees include those paid to the following departments:

County Clerk.....	\$175,000
District Court.....	\$25,000
Planning & Zoning.....	\$8,000
Sanitarian.....	\$4,000
Sheriff.....	\$25,000
Ice Arena	\$14,000
Fairgrounds.....	\$25,000
Misc. Fees	\$65,000

Grants

The county attorney's office will receive about \$36,000 from Victim Witness Services, while the county will also receive \$30,000 for emergency management efforts and \$138,000 in support for the county attorney's office from the State of Wyoming.

Federal and state grant funding of more than \$650,000 is expected to pass through the county coffers for specific programs and projects, including those

UNDERSTANDING REVENUES *continued from page 7*

that address bioterrorism, homeland security, air quality, and health issues.

Other Revenues

The budget includes \$70,000 the county treasurer retains for collection of sales and use taxes; \$40,000 in revenue for fees for services from the public health office; and \$10,000 in sales tax penalties. A handful of other miscellaneous smaller revenue streams are expected to generate an additional \$80,000.

The Sublette County Rural Health Care District will pay the county \$100,000 for lease of the medical clinics (which the county then uses to maintain the facilities), and the Sublette Center will pay \$60,000 on a loan received from the county. The LaBarge landfill will pay the county \$40,000 for accepting refuse from that community.

The budget also includes a \$402,000 carryover in consensus funding for Big Piney's infrastructure projects from the State of Wyoming.

Elected Officials and Their Departments

Commission: \$306,100

The Board of County Commissioners is the general administrative body for county government. Commissioners have myriad responsibilities that include making decisions to keep the county a better place to live and work.

Individual commissioners have no power to act independently. All formal and official actions taken by the Board of County Commissioners must be by majority or unanimous vote in a public meeting. Commissioners also appoint department heads of offices for which they have responsibility. They appoint members to a variety of volunteer boards and commissions. Additionally, individual commissioners serve on other boards that serve the interests of county citizens.

The county commission budget rings in at \$306,100 this year, a steep jump from last year's spending of \$193,000. The increase is a reflection of the first full year of the commission's structure changing from three to five commissioners, with annual salaries of \$32,500 each, plus additional pay for extra meetings held throughout the year. Commission salaries and pay for meetings total \$174,500, with another \$11,000 budgeted for meals and mileage.

Fees for special attorneys are allocated \$75,000, the same amount that was budgeted last year, although only about \$20,000 of that amount was spent. The commission uses specialized attorneys for oil and gas taxation disputes, public lands litigation, etc.

Consultant expenses are allocated \$25,000. This amount covers costs associated with production of the State of the County report, as well as consultations with natural resource professionals who provide data or special expertise on various issues at the commission's direction.

The budget includes \$10,000 for possible expenses associated with Commissioner Joel Bousman's role as president of the National Association of Counties

How Much Are County Officials Paid?

The county commission sets salaries for elected officials every four years, using the guidance of state statutes that establish salary caps for certain elected positions. Sublette County salaries for clerk, treasurer, assessor, clerk of district court, and sheriff are set at \$92,908. The county attorney's annual salary is \$100,000 per year. The county coroner's salary is set at \$30,272. Salaries for other county employees are set by salary schedules approved by the county commission. While eligible employees may move up the pay schedule, the commission has not approved raises or cost-of-living increases for three years.

Western Interstate Region, which represents county interests on public policy issues affecting the West.

The commission budget also includes \$10,100 for a new vehicle reserve, and \$500 for office supplies.

Clerk **\$342,362**

County Clerk Mary Lankford oversees a staff of three deputy clerks and a departmental budget of \$342,362. Most of the anticipated expenditures for this department cover staff salaries totaling \$325,000, including the hiring of a fourth deputy. Remaining budget items cover general office operations.

The duties of the county clerk are diverse and are established by state statute. The county clerk serves as the clerk for the board of county commissioners, preparing agendas, and preparing and recording minutes, resolutions and agreements for the commission.

As the chief budget officer for the county, the clerk prepares the budget for adoption by the commissions, and then administers the adopted budget. This process requires working closely with each department as well as with the commission itself.

The clerk's office issues marriage licenses and titles and liens for motor vehicles, administers liquor license applications and records, and maintains official records of land transactions, subdivisions, mineral leases, and mining claims.

The clerk's office is the accounting office for the county, processing payment requests from vendors to the county, as well as handling the financial administration of grants paid to the county.

The clerk's office also serves as county government's personnel office, maintaining general personnel records, providing new employee orientation and policy manuals, and processing and paying county payroll and benefit allocations.

Assessor **\$484,774**

The majority of Assessor Jeness Saxton's nearly \$485,000 budget covers \$391,000 in personnel costs associated with the assessor and her five deputies, and the \$75,000 cost of a contract for industrial appraisal and audit services. The budget includes \$6,000 for a new vehicle reserve, while the balance of the budget covers the costs of office operations.

The assessor's office locates, identifies, and values

all taxable property in the county in accordance with state laws and guidelines. In Sublette County, that covers more than 10,000 individual parcels.

Treasurer **\$279,706**

Treasurer Roxanna Jensen's \$280,000 budget holds the line on spending to last year's level, with the bulk of that amount (\$257,000) covering personnel costs for Jensen and her three full-time deputies as well as one part-time position. The remainder of budgeted expenditures covers general office operations.

The treasurer's office is responsible for vehicle registrations, sales and property tax collections, and maintaining the books for Sublette County's government.

Attorney **\$741,370**

County Attorney Clayton Kainer's \$741K budget shows a decrease from last year's budget, but is allocated at a higher level than this department's actual expenditures last year. The main differences include \$60,000 budgeted for prosecution and defense, of which only \$20,000 was spent last year, but these costs are difficult to predict from year to year; \$36,000 is allocated for the crime victims program, of which just \$2,300 was spent last year.

The majority of this department's budget covers personnel costs for the county attorney, deputy attorneys, and secretaries, totaling \$531,000. The Title 25 program is allocated \$60,000, which provides for emergency and involuntary hospitalizations of persons suffering from mental illness. The remainder of the budget covers general costs associated with operating the county law offices.

In a separate general fund line item, the county pays \$12,000 for office rental for the public defender.

District Court **\$359,191**

District Court Clerk Janet Montgomery's \$359K budget is similar to last year's, with the majority of that amount (\$223,000) allocated to personnel costs associated with the clerk of court, her two full-time deputies, and one part-time project employee in charge of digitizing court records. The budget also includes \$90,000 for the public defender program, \$8,000 for court-appointed attorneys, and \$8,000 for jurors and witness fees, while the balance covers

ELECTED OFFICIALS AND THEIR DEPARTMENTS *continued from page 9*



Clerk of District Court staff (L to R): Susan Gulbrandson, Melanie Holmes, Jean Hayward and District Court Clerk Janet Montgomery.

general operations of the district court clerk's office.

The district court clerk is responsible for maintaining and preserving the records for all cases filed with the Ninth Judicial District Court, including the processing of cases and court-ordered payments as well as the administration of appeals and jury trials. The district court hears felony criminal cases, large civil cases, juvenile, and probate matters – the most serious legal cases and controversies in the state.

Coroner **\$58,072**

The bulk of Coroner Curt Covill's \$58K budget covers the coroner's salary as well as standby time for deputy coroners. Other major items include \$7,750 for a new vehicle reserve, \$8,000 for autopsies, \$4,000 for supplies, \$2,000 for county burials, and lesser amounts for training and vehicle expenses.

The coroner is charged with pronouncing death and determining the time of death, identifying and removing the deceased, determining the need for autopsy, notifying the next-of-kin, and completing death certificates, as well as investigating deaths in a variety of circumstances.

Sheriff's Office **\$8 million**

Sheriff K.C. Lehr supervises five budgets with a combined total of just over \$8 million.

Law Enforcement.....	\$4,050,280
Detention.....	\$2,305,785
Communications.....	\$871,823
Search & Rescue.....	\$651,350
Emergency Mgmt.....	\$152,755
Total	\$8,031,993

The \$4 million Law Enforcement budget includes \$2.8 million in personnel costs for 33 law enforcement officers and four clerical staff. New vehicle purchases are budgeted \$350,000 while another \$150,000 is put into the new vehicle reserve. Tires, gas, oil and maintenance costs are estimated at \$210,000.

Criminal investigations are allocated \$62,000, patrol equipment \$65,000, investigation equipment \$49,000, and ammunition \$60,000. Training, medical expenses and uniforms for officers are estimated at a combined \$66,000. Animal control is budgeted \$36,700.

Radio maintenance, utilities and telephone total \$111,000.

Detention's budget of \$2.3 million includes \$1.74 million in personnel costs for the 27 staff working in the county jail and providing courtroom security. Major costs include \$280,000 for prisoners' board, \$100,000 for prisoners' medical expenses, and \$50,000 for specialized maintenance on the 13-year-old jail. Also included in the budget is \$45,000 for computer systems and equipment, \$23,000 for training for detention staff, and \$10,000 for uniforms.

The \$871,823 Communications budget covers the costs associated with the county dispatch center, with just under \$595,000 of that as personnel costs for the nine employees working in the dispatch center. Other major line items include \$193,000 for maintenance agreement contracts for the communications technology, \$31,500 for the E-911 calling service, \$20,000 in a 911 equipment reserve, and \$12,000 for staff training.

Search & Rescue's \$651,350 budget includes a \$392,095 helicopter contract that accounts for more than half of this program's budget. Search & Rescue also provides training and equipment for use by Tip Top Search & Rescue volunteers. The county pays \$68,055 for the administrator's salary. Training is allocated \$65,000, while search operations are budgeted \$28,000. Equipment purchases totaling \$17,000 are budgeted for swiftwater, ATV and high angle use.

Reserves for new equipment and vehicles are budgeted \$33,000. The remaining budget items cover office operations and maintenance of vehicles.

Major expenditures in the \$152,755 Emergency Management budget include \$68,055 for the coordinator's salary, \$45,000 for new vehicle and small equipment reserves, and \$12,500 for telephone services, including land lines, cellular, and satellite services. Gas, oil, and vehicle maintenance costs are estimated at \$9,000, while utilities are allocated \$6,000. All remaining budget items reach a combined total of \$12,200.

Other County Departments

Road & Bridge \$12.9 million

The \$12.9 million road and bridge department budget is a large increase over last year's R&B spending of \$6.9 million. R&B Superintendent Butch Penton reports directly to the Sublette County Commission, which provides oversight to this largest of the county departments.

The heaviest line items in this budget are \$5 million allocated to road projects, heavy equipment purchases budgeted at \$2.4 million, and personnel costs of \$2.16 million. Although the commission allocated these large amounts for equipment and projects, the commission retains authority for specific purchases or project funding. The commission also approved \$500,000 for the heavy equipment reserve account.

Soil stabilizer (mag water) is allocated \$600,000, a portion of which is reimbursed by a federal air quality grant. Gas, oil, parts, repairs, and tires are budgeted a combined \$1.4 million. Material costs (culverts, cattle

guards, etc.) are estimated at \$410,000, crusher costs are budgeted \$100,000, and gravel purchase is estimated at \$100,000. Utilities, telephone and radio maintenance are budgeted \$122,000.

Waste Management \$1.41 million

Sublette County's Waste Management department consists of three major program areas: landfill, transfer station, and recycling, with a combined budget of \$1.41 million.

The general waste management budget totaling over \$1 million covers costs associated with operating the balefill facility and sanitary landfill near Marbleton. This budget is up substantially from last year because of increases in three major line items: \$70,000 for heavy equipment purchases, \$75,000 for heavy equipment reserves, and \$150,000 for engineering fees.

Baler operations are budgeted \$75,000, while water monitoring is estimated at \$40,000, and environmental

OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS *continued from page 11*

bags for the refuse bales are allocated \$30,000. Gas, oil, repairs, and tire costs are estimated at \$95,000.

Personnel costs ring in at \$422,000 for five full-time positions, while utilities and telephone are estimated at \$61,000.

The county trash transfer station near Pinedale has a \$326,343 budget. Two major line items constitute the transfer station budget: a \$220,000 contract for transportation of refuse to the landfill, and \$83,093 in personnel costs.

The \$62,347 recycling budget remains unchanged from last year, with personnel costs the largest line item at \$37,597. Transportation, gas, oil, supplies and utilities are other lesser line items in this budget.

Courthouse & Maintenance \$2.76 million

Maintenance Superintendent Andre Irey's \$2.76 million budget provides for maintenance and janitorial services for most of county-owned buildings, as well as snowplowing and landscaping. Irey reports directly to the commission. Personnel costs for Irey and his 20 staff members total \$1.3 million, and insurance on the buildings is allocated \$475,000. Maintenance and

improvements to county buildings other than the courthouse (such as the library, visitor center, sidewalks, etc.) are allocated \$400,000. Building supplies such as lights, light bulbs and paint are budgeted \$150,000, while janitorial supplies, equipment and tools are allocated \$75,000. Utilities are estimated at \$150,000, while vehicle maintenance, gas and oil are budgeted \$50,000.

Maintenance on the medical clinics is allocated \$100,000, and costs associated with the 4-H barn outside of Pinedale are estimated at about \$45,000.

Planning & Zoning \$10,150

With the sudden and tragic death of long-time county planner Bart Myers in June 2017, the county commission did not approve full funding for this department until a new planner has been hired. Instead, the commission allocated just over \$10,000 to cover necessary office functions until a full budget can be developed.

Public Health \$334,967

The public health office includes two and a half state-funded nursing positions, while the county provides the office, equipment, clerical and one half of a nursing position. The \$334,967 budget is a decrease from last year, and includes \$152,000 in personnel costs, with other major budget items including \$50,000 for vaccines, \$15,000 for health fairs, and \$12,000 for janitorial services. The budget also includes numerous expenditures for local preparedness programs that are funded through grants, including \$80,000 for bioterrorism, and \$2,000 for Ebola.

Treatment Court \$208,607

The \$208K treatment court budget has decreased slightly from last year, and includes \$50,857 in salary for coordinator Kathy Anderson, who works under the supervision of Judge Curt Haws. This court-supervised treatment program serves as an alternative to incarceration or probation for repeat substance-abuse-related offenses. The treatment court budget includes \$85,000 for mental health counseling, \$55,000 for drug testing, and \$5,000 for a magistrate judge. The remaining budget items cover general operations of the program, including team training, and incentives and graduations for participants.

Government Operational Costs: \$7 million

The general fund budget includes a variety of large spending accounts that are the necessary cost of government:

FICA Insurance & Retirement	\$6.2 million
Workmens Compensation	\$350,000
Telephone	\$200,000
Printing & Publication	\$120,000
Financial Administration.....	\$100,000
County Officers Expense.....	\$55,000
Unemployment Compensation	\$50,000
CPA Audit.....	\$36,000
Postage	\$30,000
Grand Total:	\$7,091,000



Sublette County youth participate in the market steer program of the Sublette County Fair.

Health Officer & Sanitarian \$47,702

The \$47K combined budget for the county health officer and sanitarian is unchanged from last year. County Sanitarian Alan Huston conducts food safety and septic system inspections and is paid \$28,000.

Dr. J. Thomas Johnston is the county health officer and receives \$15,600 in compensation (of which \$9,600 is funded through a grant from the state). Although appointed by the county commission, the county health officer works under the direction of the Wyoming Department of Health to investigate communicable diseases, prevent the spread of disease, and promote the health of the citizenry.

Information Technology \$249,050

The \$249K IT budget includes \$87,550 for the administrator's salary in this one-man department. Contract services totaling \$98,000 provide backup support to the information technology systems for the courthouse complex and sheriff's office computer systems.

Major budget items include \$30,000 for equipment and supplies, and \$20,000 for training, with the balance allocated to general office operations.

GIS \$51,100

The \$51,100 Geographic Information System budget includes \$45,600 to cover the costs of the county contract with Rich Greenwood to maintain the GIS/map server system available on the county website (www.sublettewyo.com), and \$5,000 for consultations or projects, as well as \$500 for office supplies. This budget is unchanged from last year.

Surveyor \$12,000

The \$12,000 county survey budget covers costs associated with Skylar Wilson's contract work for the county, which is directed by the county commission. The primary duty of the county surveyor involves county roads (alignment, rights-of-way, surveying, mapping, legal documents, etc.), boundary surveys of parcels the

OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS *continued from page 13*

county intends to acquire, legal property research, land and road investigations, reports, and consultation with other departments on road and property matters. This budget is unchanged from last year.

Elections **\$23,600**

The \$23,600 elections budget is down half from the previous year, a reflection that it is not a year for major elections. The budget includes \$17,700 for maintenance of election equipment. The balance consists of small amounts for supplies and notices for minor elections.

Designated Mill Funding **\$12.4 million**

Six program areas receive a portion of the county's 12-mill levy established by the county commission because of their special status as determined by state statute, although their level of funding remains at the discretion of the county commission. These boards include: fair, fire, library, museum, airport, and recreation.

The total budget amounts for each of these budgets includes some cash carry-over from the previous budget year, as well as the mill levy allocation from the current year. In most cases, boards appointed by the county commissioners supervise these budgets but the commission approves their final budgets.

Fair	\$932,910
Airport	\$814,115
Library	\$1,605,185
Museum	\$352,469
Recreation	\$1,394,021
Fire	\$7,312,092
Grand Total:	\$12,410,792

Fair **\$932,910**

The Sublette County Fair mill levy allocation provides funding for the county fair and the overall fairgrounds operations in separate budgets.



A bald eagle soars over Sublette County.

The fair board budget totals \$408,500, including the following:

2017 Fair	\$155,000
2018 Fair	\$167,000
Administrative	\$61,000
Reserve	\$25,000

The fairgrounds budget is \$517,184, and includes \$213,684 in personnel costs for Manager Jay Brower and his staff. Brower reports directly to the county commission. Other major line items in the fairgrounds budget include \$160,000 in utility and telephone costs; \$25,000 for repairs; \$27,500 in equipment; \$10,000 in a new vehicle reserve; and \$25,000 for building maintenance. The budget also includes \$15,000 for projects and landscaping, \$12,500 for training and travel, and \$12,000 for gas and oil.

The Fair budget includes a refund to EnCana totaling \$7,226.

A separate allocation of \$63,215 remains in the budget for expansion of the county fairgrounds. This is a carryover item from previous budgets and the commission currently has no plans for further expansion of the fairgrounds.

Airport **\$814,115**

Both airports near Marbleton and Pinedale benefit from county mill levy funding. The Big Piney-Marbleton airport will receive \$96,000 for general operations, while the Town of Pinedale's airport will receive \$150,000 for major improvement projects, in addition to \$566,109 allocated to reserves for future projects. The county's contribution to Pinedale is limited to match funding for improvement projects, and not for general operations. This budget also includes \$2,006 in EnCana refunds.

Library **\$1.6 million**

The Sublette County Library system will receive \$1.6 million for operations in the Big Piney and Pinedale facilities, in addition to providing circulation materials and support to the seasonal library in Bondurant, operated by volunteers. This allocation includes a \$17,713 refund to EnCana.

EnCana Refund

EnCana's change in tax valuation from 2010 to 2014 resulted in the county having to refund \$14 million to the company. Each tax district or entity in the county that receives mill levy funding is responsible for a portion of the refund. The Sublette County Commission set up a five-year repayment plan. This year's general fund budget includes \$525,831 in EnCana's repayment, and each of the other six county entities that receive a portion of the tax mill levy is responsible for repayment of its portion as well.

Museum **\$352,469**

The museum mill levy funding covers the following budget components:

Green River Valley Museum	\$109,428
Museum of the Mountain Man	\$194,500
Cash Reserve	\$35,386
SC Museum Board	\$7,768
EnCana refund	\$5,387

These allocations provide support to both museums in the county, as well as other historic preservation and interpretation efforts. In a separate general fund allocation, the county will provide \$19,000 to the Sublette County Historic Preservation Board for community history projects, including homestead surveys and national register site documentations.

Recreation **\$1,394,021**

The recreation mill levy funds the Sublette County Recreation Board, the Ice Arena in Pinedale, and the required EnCana refund.

The majority of Rec Board's \$1 million budget consists of carryover funding of more than \$800,000. The rec board budget has declined every year over the last three or four years, and this year's funding level is similar to the year prior, with funding for recreational projects totaling just over \$335,000. Approved projects

allocation of \$150,000 for general maintenance and repairs on senior citizen facilities in the county.

Children

Children's Learning Center	\$219,308
Children's Discovery Center	\$75,000
Pinedale Preschool.....	\$18,860
Scholarships.....	\$104,000
Van Vleck House	\$45,000
4-H Afterschool	\$36,674
Big Brothers Big Sisters.....	\$29,000
Ready For Workforce	\$750

The **Children's Learning Center** is the only early childhood program serving the entire county, and providing early special education through the Wyoming Department of Education and early intervention for children from birth to the age of two by the Wyoming Department of Health. Last year the program served 103 children, including 81 with special needs. The county has committed to providing just over \$219,000 to this program in the new year.

Children's Discovery Center in Pinedale is an early education facility operating five days per week and serving children ages two to 10 years old. CDC's preschool program provided care for 45 families last year. CDC will receive \$75,000 from the county general fund.

Pinedale Preschool will receive \$18,860 from the county for its preschool program.

Older children will receive a boost from the county as well, with \$104,000 set aside for **scholarships** for Sublette County students to attend an institution of higher learning. Up to 26 students will receive the \$4,000 scholarships.

The **Van Vleck House**, operated by Teton Youth & Family Services, will receive \$45,000 to provide prevention, early intervention, and treatment to Sublette County youth aged 10 to 18 in its group home, crisis shelter, and secure facilities. Last year, five Sublette County children stayed at the crisis shelter, four were in the group home, and one was housed in the secure facility. Located in Jackson, this program serves youth from Sublette, Teton and Lincoln counties.

The **4-H Afterschool** program's \$36,674 consists

of carryover funding that the county administers, while the local Board of Cooperative Educational Services handles the program.

Big Brothers, Big Sisters will receive a total of \$29,000, with a portion of that funding coming from a state grant, and the remainder from county general funds to provide youth mentoring services.

The **Ready For Workforce** allocation of \$750 is the county's support for this Sublette Board of Cooperative Educational Services program to provide work experience to students.

Other Human Services

Veteran's Services	\$125,000
SAFV	\$46,358
Pregnancy Resource Center.....	\$17,860
Home Based Family Services.....	\$8,463
Community Food Closet	\$3,000

The **Tri-County Veteran's Services** program is a joint effort with Lincoln and Sweetwater counties to help connect veterans with state and federal benefits – ranging from home loans and educational benefits to health care and disability compensation. Sublette County provides \$125,000 to this program.

The **Sublette County Sexual Assault/Family Violence Task Force** will receive a total of \$46,358 in both a direct allocation and as pass-through state funding. The program provides assistance, safety intervention, and prevention education through its 24-hour crisis hotline, emergency shelter and financial assistance, among its other services. The county also provides the buildings for SAFV offices and shelters.

The **Pregnancy Resource Center** will receive \$17,860 in pass-through funding from a state grant. The program provides support to women and families who experience an unplanned pregnancy, or who are parenting young children.

The **Home Based Family Services** program will receive about \$8,500 in pass-through state funding to provide personal care and homemaking services for home-bound citizens.

The **Community Food Closet** in Big Piney will receive \$3,000 in county funding to provide supplemental food assistance to those in need.

Addressing Natural Resource Issues: \$840,418

Sublette County's abundant natural resources and vast public lands require special attention from county government, which addresses issues through a variety of programs.

Conservation District	\$625,327
Extension Service	\$138,091
Predator Management	\$32,000
Coalition of Governments	\$30,000
WPLI	\$15,000

The Sublette County Conservation District will receive \$625,327 for its continued operations, which is the same amount of support the district received last year. The district monitors changes in water quality, works to improve watershed conditions through water development projects, is an active participant in federal and state land use planning, and offers a variety of programs to benefit natural resources in the county, from sponsoring seedling tree sales to rangeland monitoring. Members of the district's board of supervisors are elected from rural and urban areas of the county.

The county provides \$138,091 in funding to the University of Wyoming's County Extension Service programs for 4-H youth development, economics, and information and research related to agriculture and natural resources.

The Sublette County Predator Management District is budgeted to receive \$32,000 (the same amount the district received last year) for predator control. Most control efforts involve coyotes, in addition to control of ravens and depredating wolves. This board consists of three elected sheep representatives, three elected cattle representatives, and one member appointed by the county commission.





Big Piney Milkvetch is endemic to the Green River Basin in Sublette County.

The Sublette County Commission serves as a member of the Coalition of Governments in south-western Wyoming, and provides \$30,000 in fund-ing. This coalition of county governments works together to deal with federal land management is-sues and resource planning projects.

The budget includes \$15,000 for the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative, a program of the Wyoming County Commissioners Association. This collab-orative effort aims to bring forth one multi-county legislative lands package addressing the designation and management of Wyoming’s wilderness study areas. The Sublette County Commission has ap-pointed an eight-member advisory committee to develop WSA recommendations for the commis-sion’s consideration.

MISCELLANEOUS PROGRAM SUPPORT

Visitor Center.....	\$38,422
Translator Grant	\$30,000
Animal Control	\$950

The commission agreed to fund the Sublette County Chamber of Commerce with \$38,422 for operations of the Visitor Center in Pinedale. Coun-ty funding for the center’s operations continues to decline each year as the commission struggles with not only providing the building but paying a sub-stantial percentage of its operating cost. The com-mission noted that the Town of Pinedale receives the most benefit from the center with its location in Pinedale, and yet provides little support.

The \$30,000 translator grant is carryover from previous budgets and is used for rural television op-erations in the county.

Happy Endings Animal Rescue is provided \$950 toward the spay-and neuter program for stray pets.

Contact the Sublette County Commission

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

The county's fiscal year is July 1 to June 30 of each year. Each summer the commissioners set the budget for the coming fiscal year. Funding requests are submitted in May, and the commission holds a series of work

sessions through June for the budget discussion and consideration, followed by a budget hearing and formal adoption the third week in July. County commissioners work with all other county elected officials to assure that all offices of county government are properly funded to perform statutory duties.

Sublette County Commission
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Sublette County remains one of the state's top natural gas producing areas.





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A cow moose is accompanied
by two calves in lush forage of a
Sublette County river bottom.