

Community Satisfaction and Quality of Life Survey of Long-Term Residents of Sublette County

Prepared for the Sublette Community Partnership November 2008



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2 Executive Summary

During August and September 2008, 43 long-term residents from across Sublette County were interviewed to assess their overall community satisfaction and quality of life. The primary purpose of this survey was to assess if and how residents' community satisfaction and quality of life have been affected by the most recent oil & gas boom within the county.

2.1 Major Findings:

1. Overall Community satisfaction slightly less than 8-10 years ago
 - a. Respondents satisfaction directly related to the importance given to *Oil and Gas* and *Diversity of Residents* within the county.
2. However, most residents continue to feel *very* at home in the county.
 - a. *People/Friends/Family* along with the *Physical Setting* is considered the most positive aspect of the county by respondents.
3. Newcomers seen as good people, but considered to have changed the community for the worse through their sheer numbers and disparate culture.
 - a. Newcomers and their perceived lack of friendliness are considered the greatest change to occur in the county of the past 8-10 years.
4. Negative aspects of the county are deemed almost exclusively to be brought by industry/growth.
5. Change perceived to be the greatest at beginning of boom.
6. Major attributes or positive aspects almost exclusively perceived to be non-industry/growth related.
7. Growth management is seen as the most salient issue for the county in the next 5 years.
8. Perceived financial betterment is correlated with age.
9. Future growth of a similar magnitude of the past 5 years is by and large considered to be negative by respondents.
10. Half of all respondents perceived environmental impacts as negatively impacted quality of life.
11. Overall, social relations viewed to decrease.

3 Introduction¹

Sundry socio-economic impacts due to oil & gas development have been conscientiously and meticulously quantified by numerous agencies within

¹ Information from the introduction was primarily gleaned from Kasarda and Janowitz (1974), Putnum (2007), Wilkinson (1992), and Fischer (1982)

Sublette County, not least of which has been the Sublette Community Partnership. These data have proved invaluable to local managing and governing agencies in both short-term mitigation and long-term planning strategies. While these data are critical in quantifying infrastructural and facility/service needs, they are unable to measure the social-psychological disruption residents experience during periods of rapid expansion and growth within their community.

As a community expands to include an influx of outsiders with disparate cultures and normative behaviors, it can lead to what Emile Durkheim termed *Anomie*, or a feeling of normlessness. In anomie residents experience a loss of control or direction as the community sanctioned methods for social control become ineffective with the incursion of newcomers. Where previously informal modes of social control (gossip, ridicule, facial expressions) could regulate residents' behavior, increasingly formalized means such as the sheriff's department become relied on to monitor and enforce local norms and values. Some residents may isolate themselves socially, or "hunker down" as they begin to encounter newcomers with dissimilar value systems and beliefs, engendering an *in-group out-group* (us-them) mentality; this often results in further isolation and tension between residents.

Rapid economic expansion can create unique problems—i.e. drugs, crime, traffic, infrastructural/planning, as well as growth management issues—previously unknown to the community. Given the nascence of these problems, community/county procedures to cope with such issues do not usually exist; what's more, the initial processes of developing protocols to mitigate these problems can often lead to acrimonious and divisive embroilments within the community/county. Finally, while many prosper from the economic boom, others—such as those on fixed incomes—can sometimes flounder and be swept under by a mounting wave of inflation and property taxes.

The preceding paragraphs portray some of the negative social consequences of communities adapting to a boom; however, by highlighting the positive and negative aspects of rapid growth within a community, prudent steps can be taken to integrate residents and foster a sense of community which is inclusive of both newcomers and long-term residents.

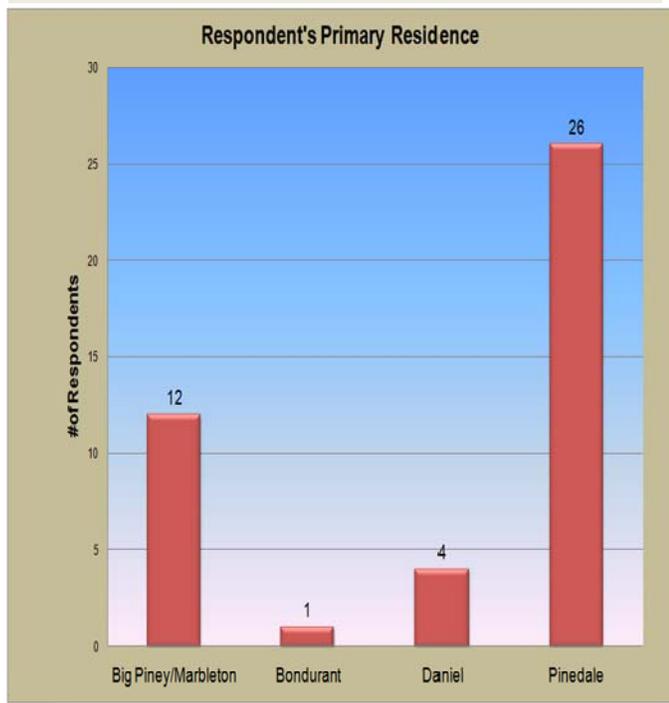
The purpose of this survey was just that, to uncover both positive and negative consequences of growth in an effort to provide data to mitigate social-psychological impacts. While long-time residents were the focus of this particular survey, newcomers will be sampled at a later date to assess their feelings. The Community Satisfaction and Quality Study will be a longitudinal cohort study with different members of the community being sampled over time to assess how

their attitudes change over time. The first phase of that study is presented here. With adroit and proactive community planning these problems can be addressed and mitigated. This document endeavors to provide community planners with a resource with which to make informed decisions to meet the challenges of the county and lessen the transition period for all residents.

4 Methodology

In total, 43 interviews were conducted across the county during the latter half of August and the beginning of September. Interviews were solicited over the telephone and conducted at a convenient location of the respondents choosing. Interviews typically lasted between 30 minutes and 1 hour, with some taking as long as 2 hours. While respondents were given the option of completing the interview in-person or over the telephone, the survey instrument was presented in a unimode format. Accordingly, the interview guide (list of questions) was presented in a standardized form regardless of the mode of delivery i.e. in person or over the telephone. The survey instrument was a semi-structured interview guideline developed by both of the principle investigators. Questions were gleaned from the sociology of community literature, and more specifically boom town literature. In addition, original questions were created by the investigators to supplement and account for unique local circumstances. The questionnaire was a mix of closed-ended and open-ended questions which allowed respondents to expound or explicate their answers and revealed to the investigators previously unrecognized issues. Respondents were purposively selected using a sampling frame provided by a key informant. The sampling frame included long-term residents who had lived in Sublette County for at least 10 years. Within this sampling frame the greatest demographic variability was sought; therefore, great care was taken to assure that a representative sample was drawn across age, gender, occupation, and residence within the county. A final semantic point deserves note. While residents were never prompted to assume that the terms Sublette County and Community were interchangeable, most residents did (except for a few notable exceptions which will be highlighted in the text). Therefore, Sublette County and Community are used interchangeably throughout this document.

Figure 2.1-1



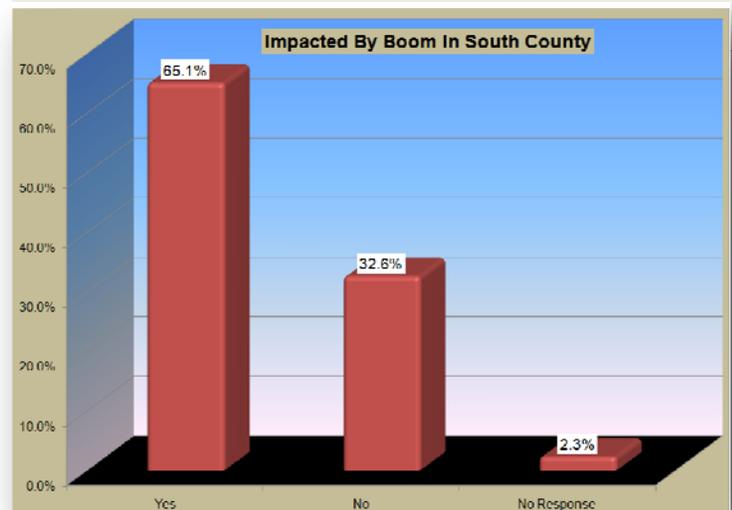
time spent in the county is 32 years with the minimum being as little as 14 years. 60.5% of respondents considered Pinedale their primary residence while 27.95% regarded Big Piney/Marbleton as their primary residence².

6 SENSE OF COMMUNITY

6.1 Question 2: Were You Impacted By the Gas Boom in the South County in the 1980s?

65.1% of respondents believed that they had been impacted by the boom in the 1980s which occurred in the south county. Of those impacted, most provided positive or neutral responses in explicating their experience. Several respondents noted that they benefited financially from the boom, either directly through their employment within the oil & gas industry or indirectly through increased business due to the population influx. However, residents often remarked that the impacts from the current boom are much worse than those that occurred in the 1980s. This finding must be

Figure 6.1-1



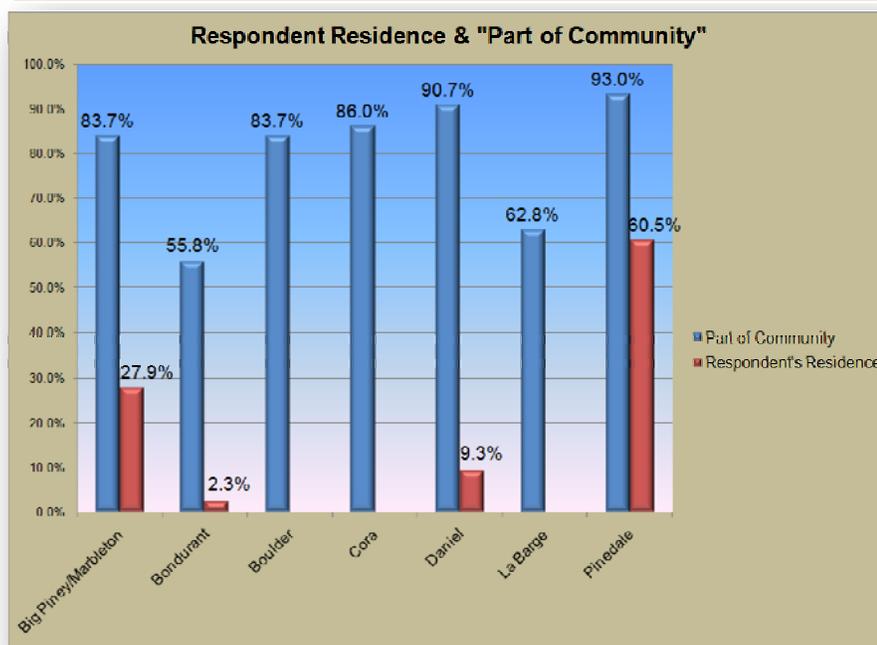
² No distinction was made between Big Piney and Marbleton

tempered by the fact that for many respondents (particularly in the north county) this is their first direct experience with rapid development and growth. *Please see Appendix for a complete list of comments.*

6.2 Question 3: Of the following areas, please indicate whether you consider them part of your community

Respondents were asked to indicate for each of the six incorporated towns within the county and La Barge whether they considered them part of their community. As demonstrated within Figure 6.2-1 most of the towns within the county were considered part of the respondents "community." While Pinedale had the highest proportion of respondents regard it as part of their community, a greater

Figure 6.2-1

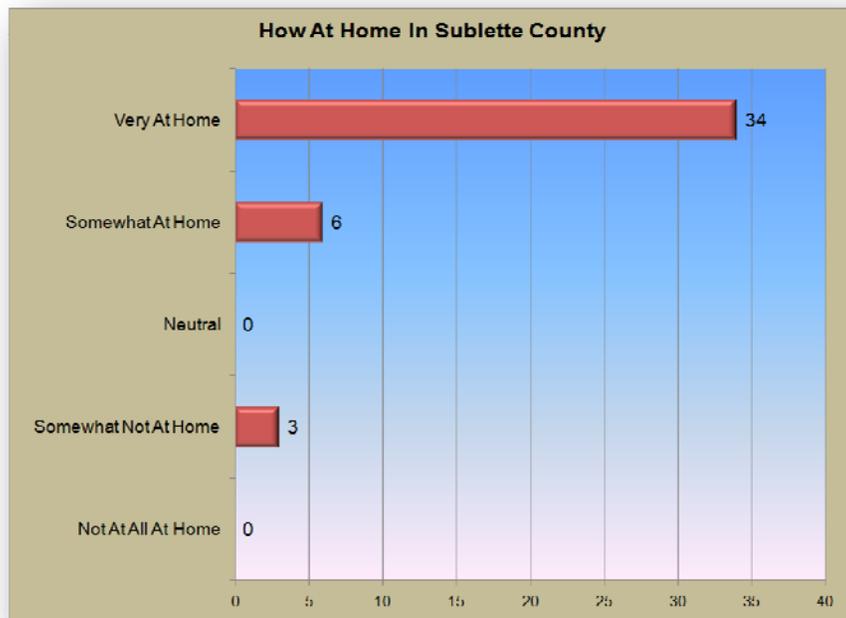


proportion of survey respondents hailed from Pinedale which may explain its exceptionally high inclusion rate. Also noteworthy, more respondents included La Barge in their community than Bondurant, less than 56% of residents felt it was in their community, indicating weaker ties to the extreme northern segment of the county.

6.3 Question 4: How at home do you feel in Sublette County?

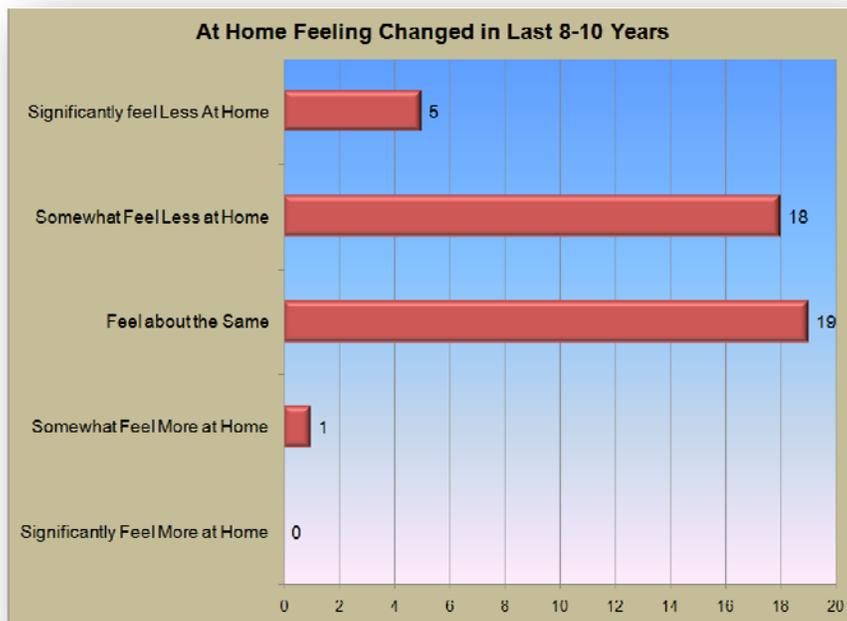
Overwhelmingly, respondents continued to feel at home within the county, with 79% of respondents indicating they felt *Very at Home*. However, compared to 8-10 years ago, over half of respondents (53.4%) indicated that they felt either significantly or somewhat less at home. An additional 44% of respondents felt about the same as they did 8-10 years ago. Thus, while respondents have experienced change within Sublette County which they are uncomfortable or

Figure 6.3-1



Uninterested. When asked whether this interest level had changed over the last 8-10 years most respondents (20) felt that they maintained the same level of interest over the past decade or felt that it had slightly increased with a mean response of 2.81³. However, the responses for this question were more evenly distributed about the mean, and thus there were those (10) who saw their interest level decline. The reasons typically given for this waning interest was “getting old” or “too much to keep track of.”

Figure 6.3-2



³ The responses were charted along a 5 point scale with 3 being “I have about the same level of interest” and 5 being “I have become much less interested.”

dissatisfied with; their attachment to the county and their respective communities remains strong.

6.4 Question 5: How interested are you to know what goes on in Sublette County?

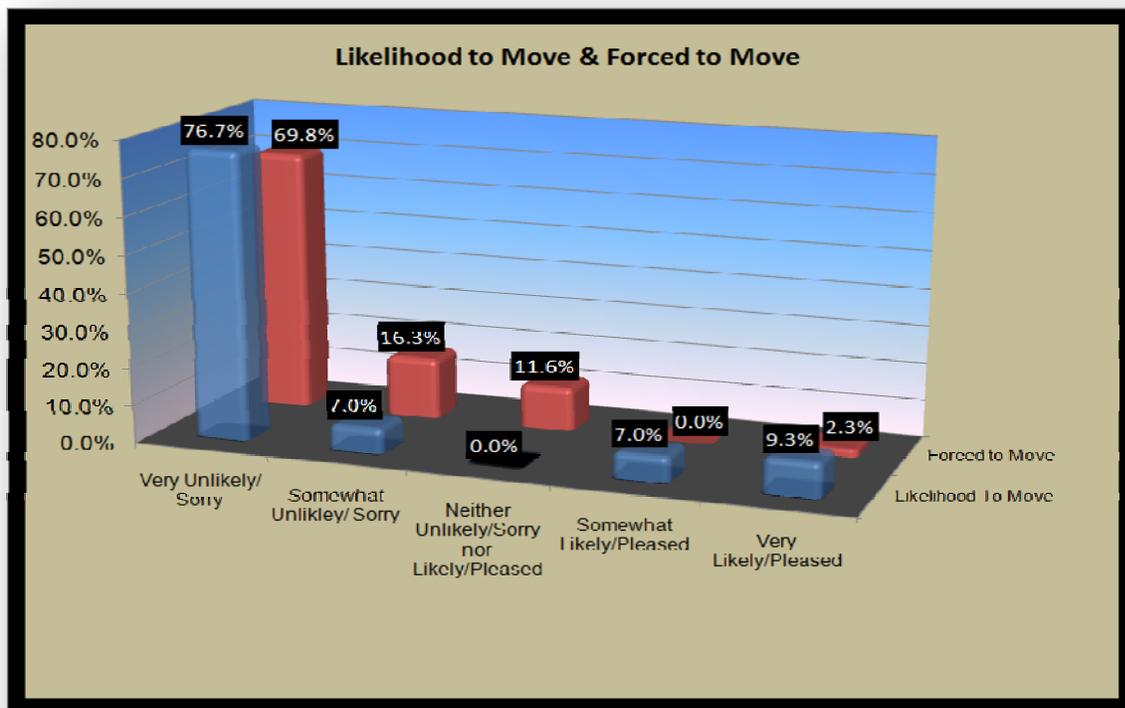
Of the 43 respondents, only 5 indicated they were only *Somewhat Interested* to know what goes on in the county, while 38 were *Very Interested* and none were

6.5 Questions 6 and 7: How likely are you to move away from Sublette County in the next 5 years? Supposing that you were forced to leave Sublette County, how sorry or pleased would you be?

In an effort to assess community attachment, respondents were asked *How likely [they] Were to Move Within the Next 5 Years* as well as *How Sorry [they] Would Be if They*

Were Forced to Move. Given that some residents who are unlikely to move (for instance they may have an excellent job) may not be sorry if they were forced to move from the county if they found a comparable job somewhere in another locality, conversely, another individual might remain in the county even with undesirable employment opportunities to remain near friends or family. In this way, questions 6 and 7 measure an individual's attachment to the county. The majority of respondents surveyed had no intentions of leaving Sublette County and would be very sorry if forced to leave. Only a handful of residents suggested

Figure 6.5-1



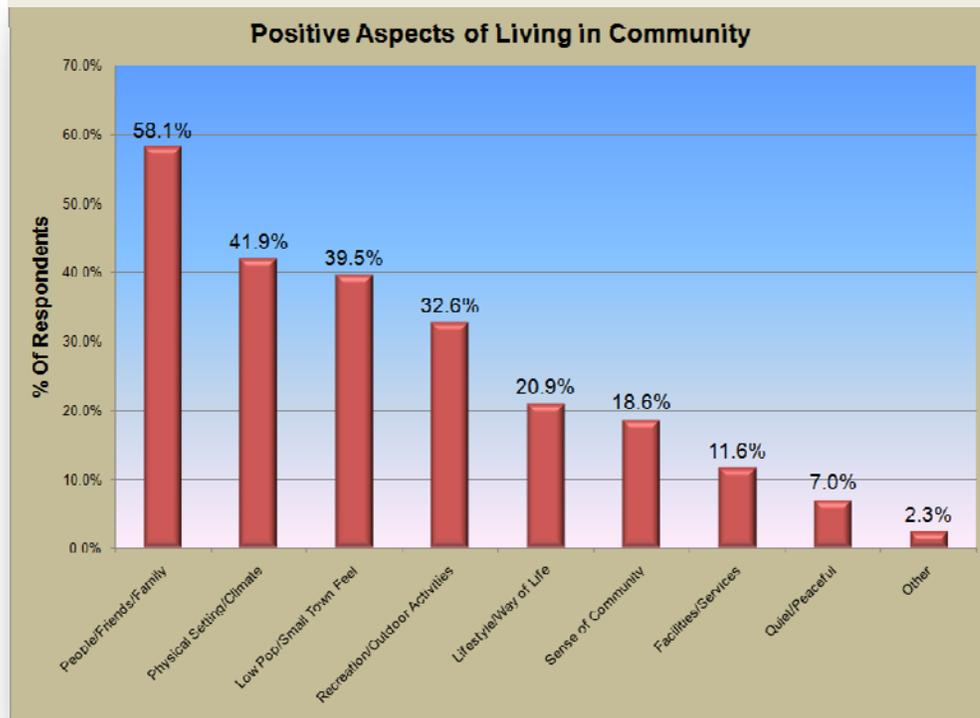
a high probability of moving in the next five years, of those only one

would be pleased to leave the county. Several respondents who did not want to relocate cited their age and the lack of accessible services within the county (healthcare, senior housing, etc.) as factors that might compel them to move against their wishes. The most common responses offered by respondents as to why they would be unlikely to move were simplistic community attachment sentiments such as: it's home or it's my community.

6.6 Question 8: What are the best and worst aspects of living in Sublette County today?

Respondents were asked to list the best and worst aspects of living in the county today. The open ended responses were then coded into 9 primary categories for positive responses and 8 for negative responses (see figures 6.6-1 and 6.6-2).

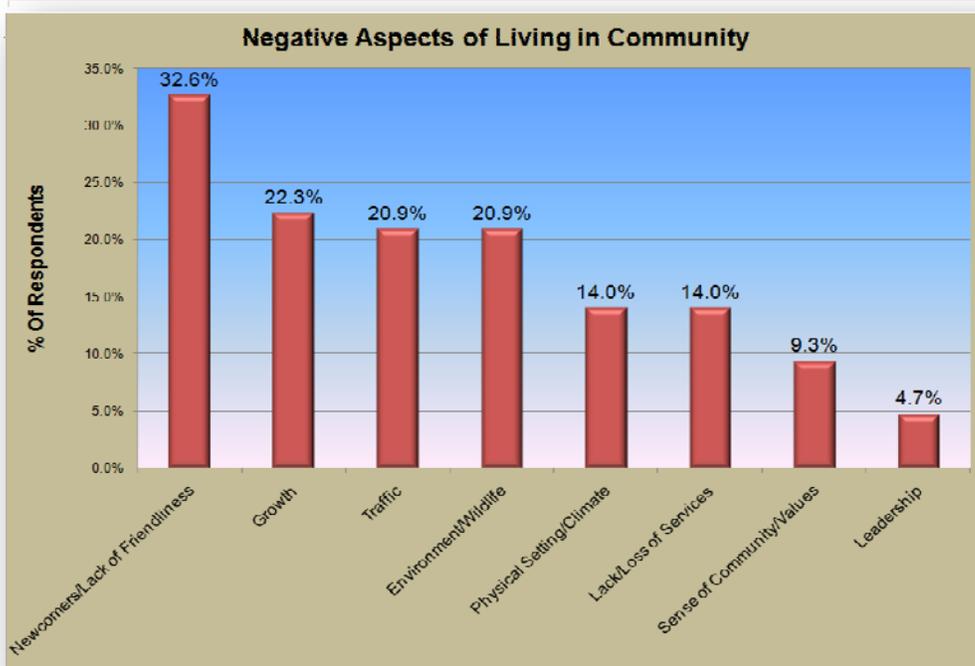
Figure 6.6-1



Over half of respondents believed that the people and their friends/relatives are the most positive aspect of living in the county today. The *Physical Setting/Climate* along with a *Small Town Feel* were also important aspects of the community.

Conversely, the majority of negative community aspects that respondents expressed can be attributable to the natural gas boom and related growth. Respondents felt that *Newcomers* and the concomitant lack of friendliness within the community was the worst aspect of living in Sublette County today⁴. *Growth* (building and infrastructure), *Traffic*, and *Environmental* issues were also considered to negatively affect the county. 76.7% of respondents provided 2-3

Figure 6.6-2

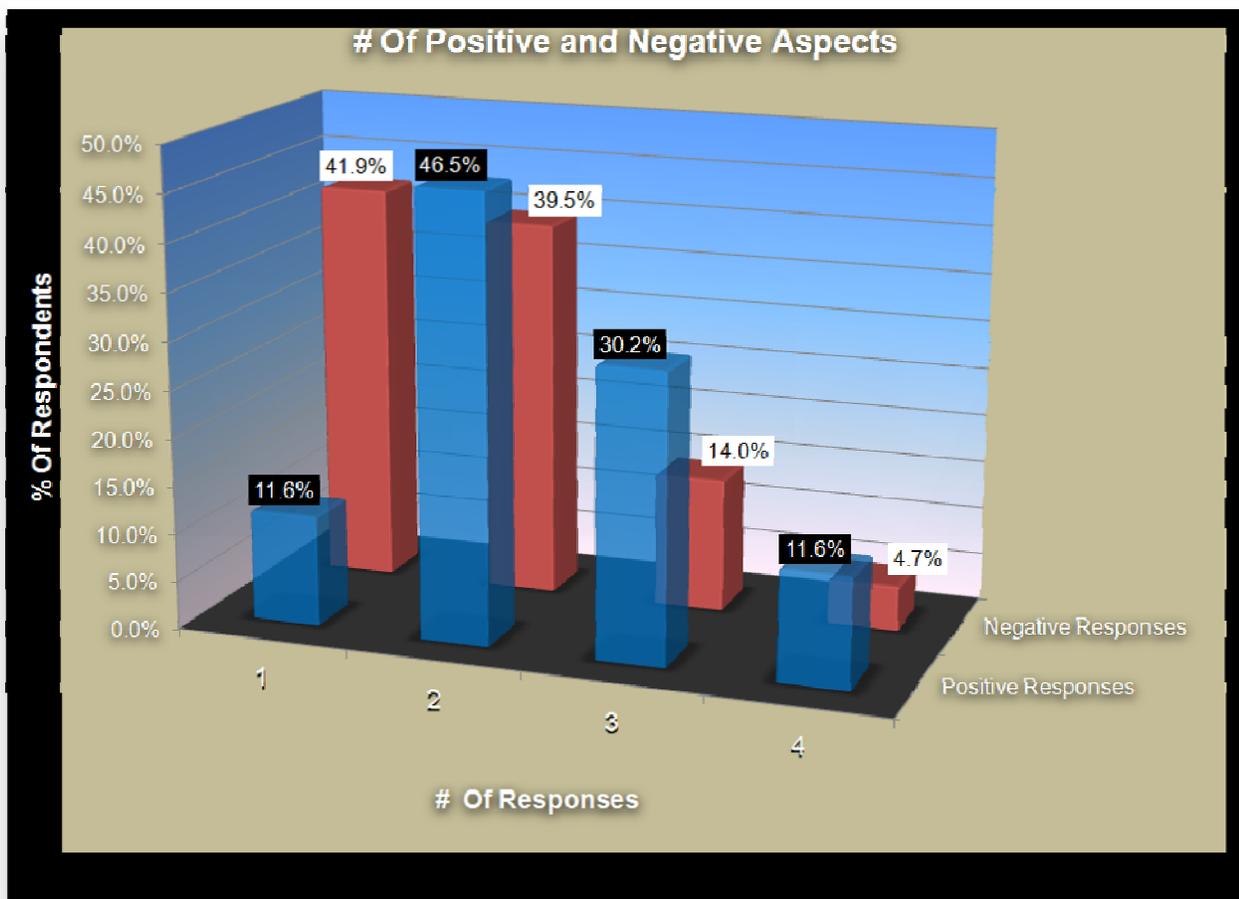


positive responses while 81.4% respondents gave only 1-2 negative responses. Respondents, on average, gave .61 fewer negative responses than positive. Moreover, Individuals who

⁴ However, a majority of respondents believed that newcomers were of a strong character see section 55

gave the greatest number of negative responses tended to give the greatest number of positive responses. This finding indicates that people who provided numerous positive and negative responses were not overly satisfied or dissatisfied with the community, rather they were talkative individuals who were willing to provide a greater number of responses. Both *Age* and *Level of Education* were found to be inversely related to number of positives a respondent tendered.

Figure 6.6-3



6.7 Question 8B: Were these positive or negatives aspects the same 8-10 years ago?

When asked if the above positive and negatives had changed over the past 8-10 years (that is whether the respondent would have listed the same positive and negatives aspects of the community 10 years ago) 60.5% of respondents indicated they had changed. By and large, respondents felt that the negative aspects they enumerated had not existed a decade ago, although respondents would have likely listed other negatives aspects if asked at that time. This appears to show that the most prescient negative community aspects for respondents today are

related to the boom. Very few survey participants noted an increase in positive aspects.

6.8 Questions 9, 10, 11: How many neighbors are you on a first name basis with? How many of your neighbors would you consider close friends? How many friends would you say you have in the community? How has your number of friends in Sublette County changed in the last 8-10 years?

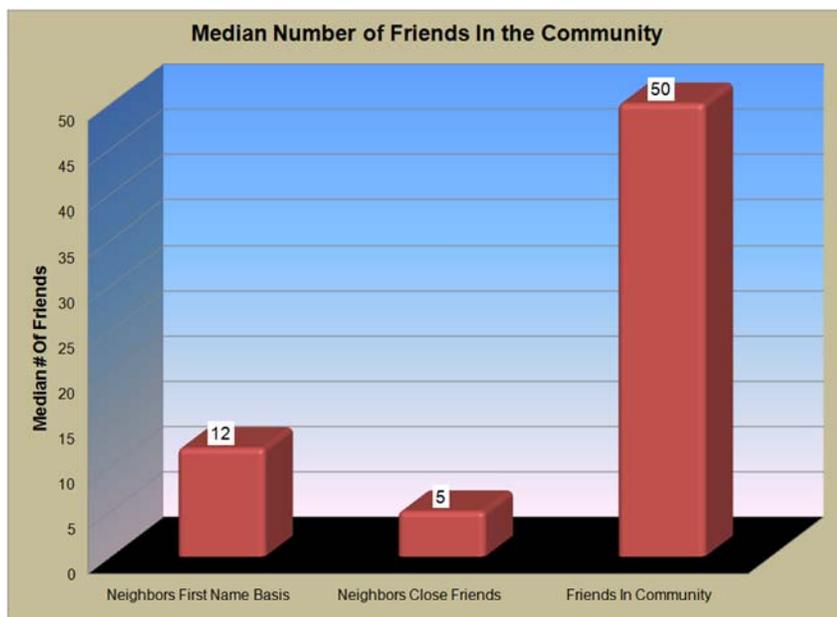
The average respondent reported being friends with 12 of their neighbors, nearly half of whom were considered close friends. Countywide, respondents reported an average of 50 friends⁵. When asked if their number of friends have changed over the last 8-10 years most respondents indicated they have a comparable

Table 6.7-1

	Neighbors on a First Name Basis	Close Neighbors	Friends in the Community
Mean	152.41	125.23	243.3
Median	12	5	50
Mode	10	0	100
Minimum	1	0	1
Maximum	3000	3000	3000

number of friends today. Of those respondents who acknowledged a decline in friends, age was found to be the critical factor. Using regression analysis, it was ascertained that age predicts 46.9 % of the variance within *Number of Friends Changed* (see Table 6.8-2). Consequently, the older the respondent the less friends they reported; typically this loss of friends was attributed by respondents to death and lack of contact with newcomers. Correspondingly, the year one

Figure 6.8-1



moved to the county is directly correlated to change in number of friends over the last 8-10 years. More recent long-term migrants are more likely to experience an increase in number of friends. It is reasoned that individuals who have spent less time in the county have a greater opportunity to cultivate new friendships, they are both more likely to

⁵ Note: Figure is reported in median number of friends because of extreme outliers that skew the mean

encounter individuals they don't know and given their younger age are more likely to participate in the workforce and thus interact with newcomers. This finding must be tempered however, by the limited cases analyzed (25)⁶.

Table 6.8-1

		age	Numberfri endschng	Howlikely move	Yearmoved
age	Pearson Correlation	1	-.362*	-.135	-.552**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.017	.390	.004
	N	43	43	43	25
Numberfriendschng	Pearson Correlation	-.362*	1	.328*	.445*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017		.032	.026
	N	43	43	43	25
Howlikelymove	Pearson Correlation	-.135	.328*	1	.294
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.390	.032		.153
	N	43	43	43	25
Yearmoved	Pearson Correlation	-.552**	.445*	.294	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.026	.153	
	N	25	25	25	25

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

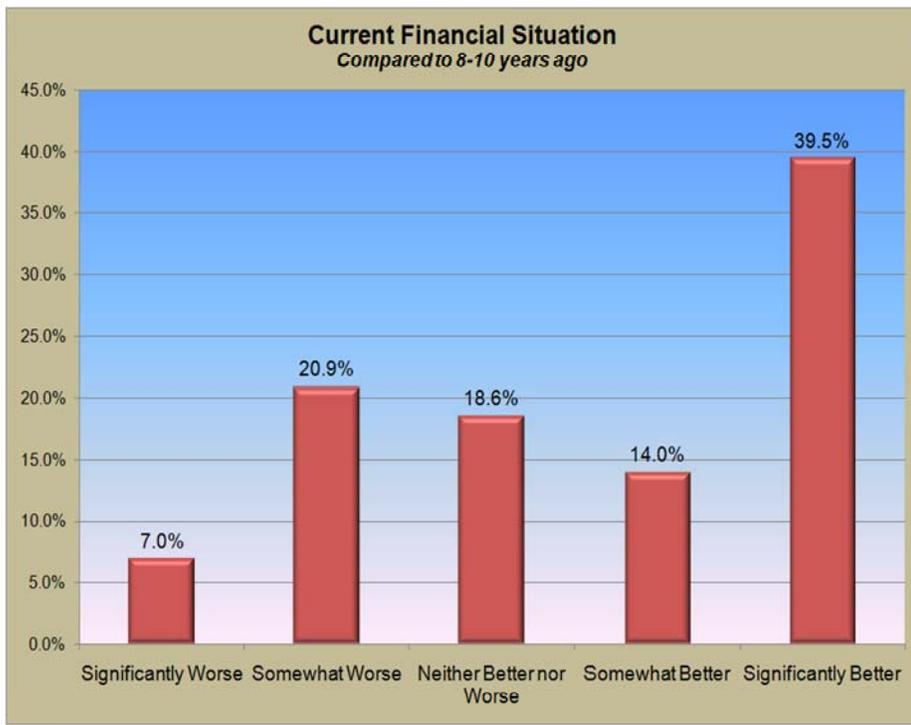
Table 6.8-2 Multiple Regression Model: Comparative Financial Status vs. Age

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.469 ^a	.220	.201	1.237	.220	11.588	1	41	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), age

⁶ When moved to Sublette County was only applicable to 25 of the 43 respondents as 18 respondents were born and raised in the county.

Figure 7.1-1



7 Overall Community Satisfaction

7.1 Question 13: How would you characterize your current financial Situation Compared to 8-10 years ago?

On the whole, most residents of Sublette County report that they are doing better financially than 8-10 years ago. 39.5% of respondents find their current financial

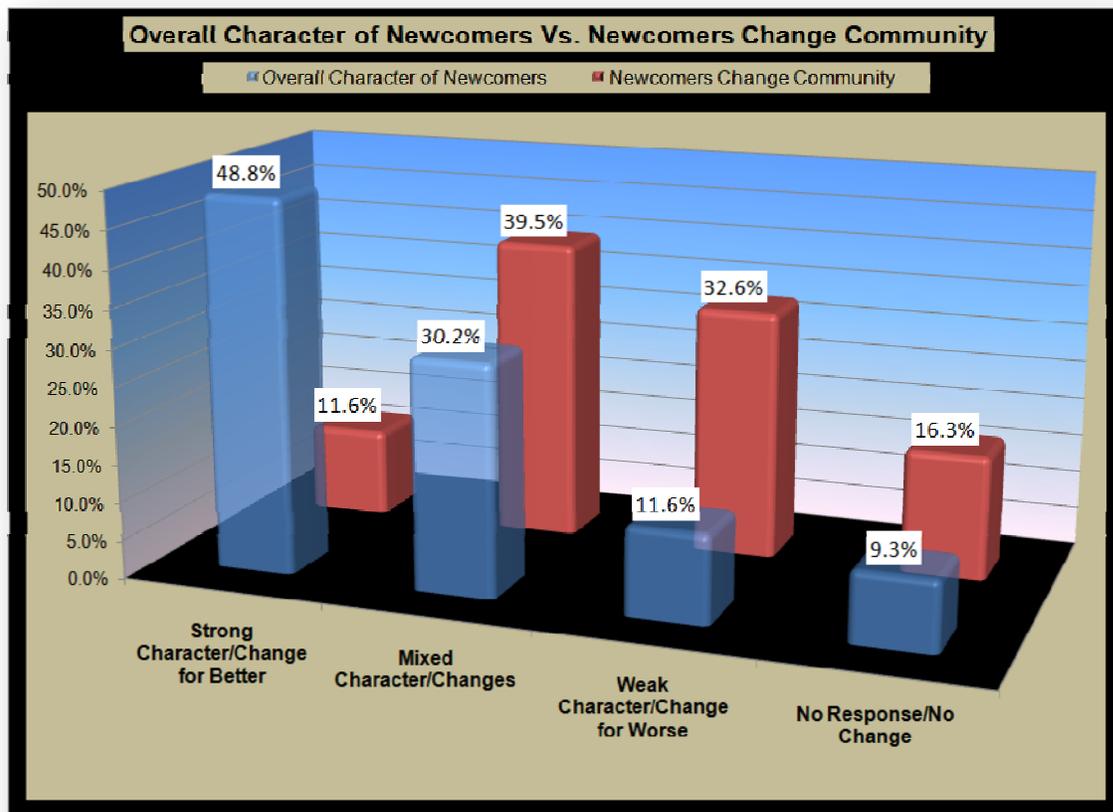
situation significantly better, with an additional 14% reporting their financial situation to be somewhat better; while only 7% indicated they were much worse off financially than a decade ago. Nevertheless not everyone within the county is profiting from the expansion in the local economy. Older residents living on fixed incomes are struggling to meet their needs during high inflationary periods. In fact, age predicts nearly half of the variance within the variable *Current Financial Situation*; as age increases ones financial situation is likely to have gotten worse over the past 8-10 years. Older individuals who no longer participate in the labor force do not reap the benefits from the current oil and gas boom, yet they are disproportionately impacted by the burgeoning cost of living given their fixed incomes. This mirrors the finding presented earlier in the document in which it was noted that older individuals were less likely to provide as many positive aspects of living in the community.

7.2 Questions 14, 15: Generally speaking, how would you rate the overall character of new people moving into the community? Have the newcomers changed Sublette County (the community) for the better, worse, or neither?

While nearly half of respondents believed that newcomers possess a strong character, 71.7% of those same respondents indicated that newcomers had changed the county for the worse or had a mixed impact on the county. Respondents noted that newcomers: demand new services, endeavor to transform Sublette County into a more cosmopolitan community approximating the communities they left, and possess disparate cultural beliefs and norms from

those of Sublette County residents. This finding suggests that people are not upset with the newcomers per se, but rather the sheer number of newcomers who have inundated the county. Moreover, it appears that respondents found nothing fundamentally objectionable with the culture of the newcomers, but rather were despondent about its encroachment into *their* "community," fearful that the incursion of newcomers might lead to a decline of their own culture.

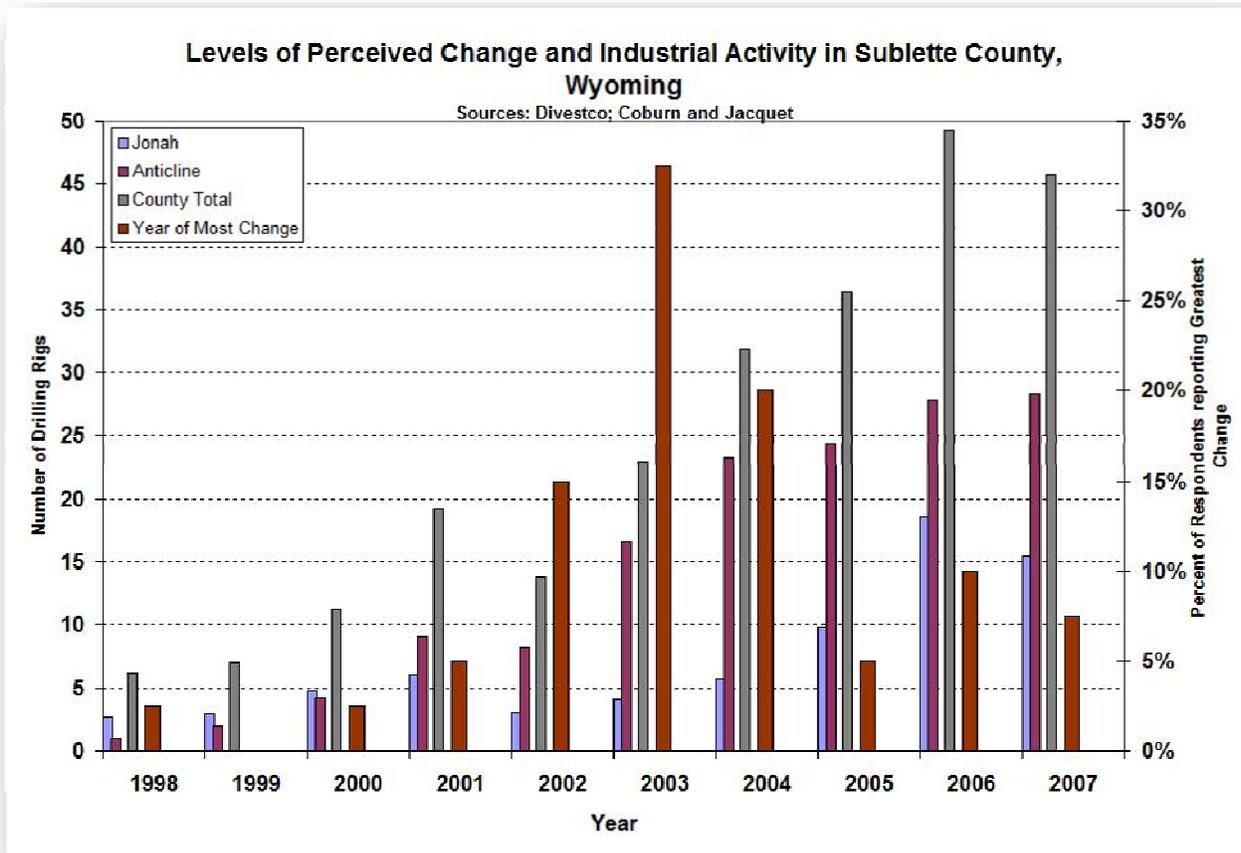
Figure 7.2-1



7.3 Question 16: In your opinion, about what year in the past 8-10 years did Sublette County undergo the greatest amount of change?

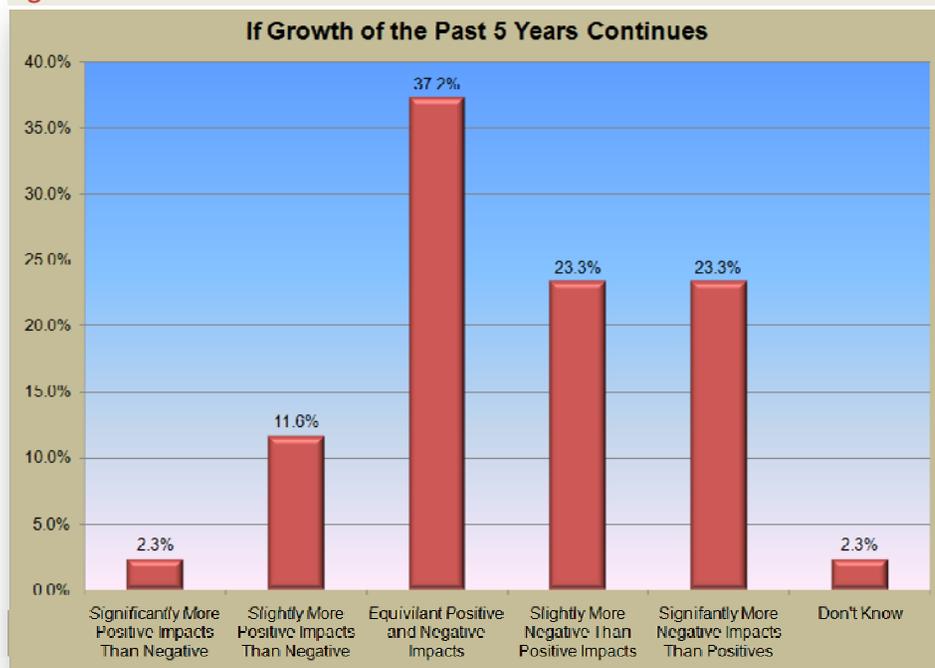
Respondents felt that the greatest amount of change happened near the beginning of the boom, as opposed to the height of the boom, as 2003 was the median response given by respondents to the above question. This date mirrors the time period when the level of industrial activity in the Pinedale Anticline first grew sharply. The greatest amount of industrial activity did not occur in Sublette County until 2006.

Figure 7.3-1



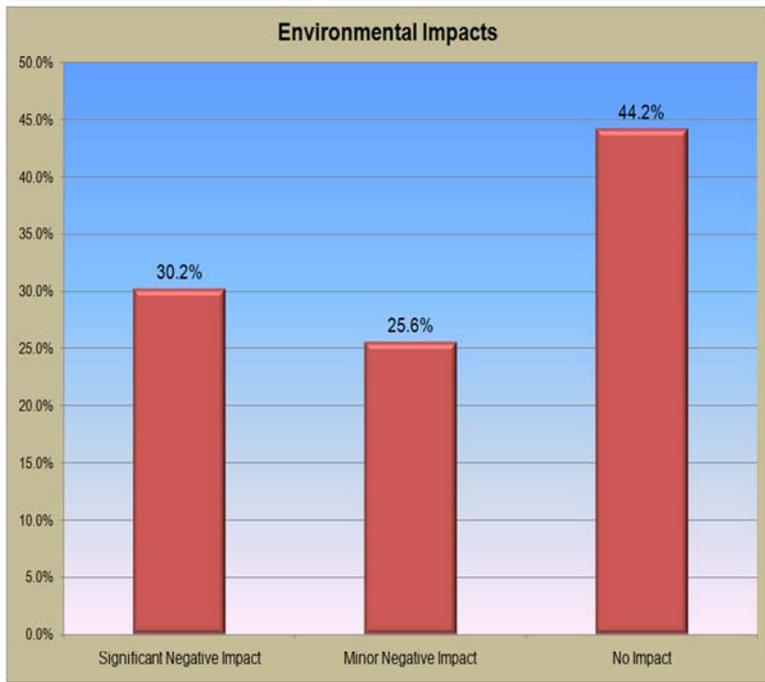
7.4 Question 17: *Suppose the community continues to grow in a similar fashion over the next five years as it has in the previous five years. Overall would this create more negative impacts than positive, more positive impacts than negative, or about an equal number of impacts?*

Figure 7.4-2



Respondents were more likely to believe that if growth continues in a fashion similar to the previous 5 years it will create more negative than positive impacts on whole--56.6% believed that it would create slightly or

Figure 7.5-1



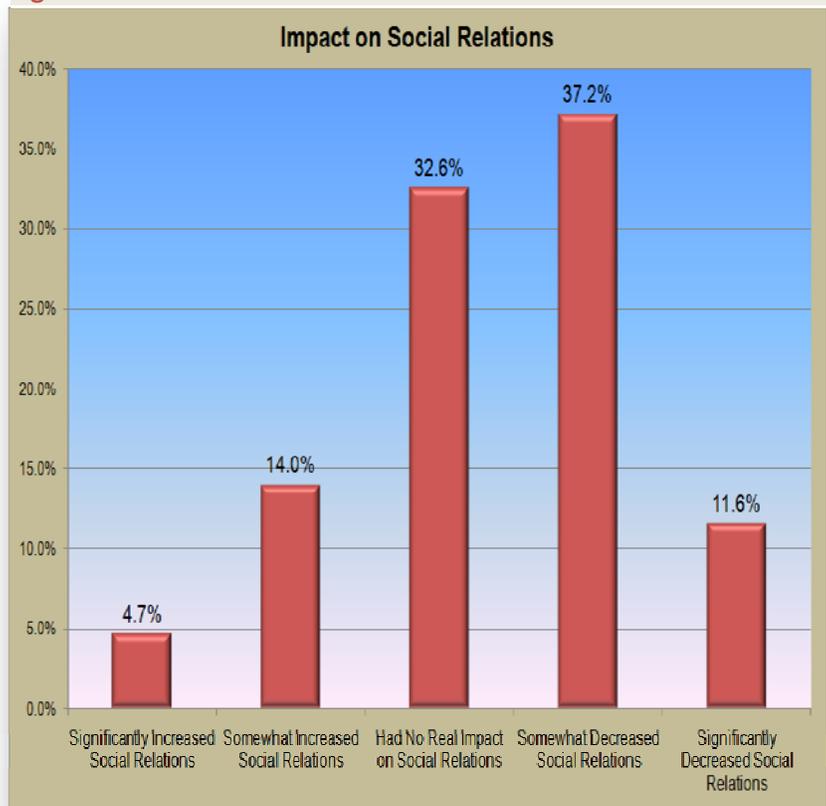
split on whether or not any environmental impacts from oil & gas development had negatively affected their community well being. This question did not directly ask if the respondents believed gas development to have impacted the environment either positively or negatively, but rather asked respondents if environmental impacts had affected their quality of life. 25.6% of respondents believed environmental impacts from oil & gas somewhat negatively impacted their way of life, and 30.2% felt it is a significant impact. Impacts offered by respondents ranged from concerns about the air and water quality to effects on wildlife populations.

significantly more negative impacts. Only 17.9% sampled believed that if previous growth trends continue into the future it would create net positive impacts while the remaining respondents (37.2%) believed that it would create an equal number of positive and negative impacts.

7.5 Question 18: Have environmental impacts due to oil and gas development affected your community well being?

Respondents were virtually

Figure 7.6-1



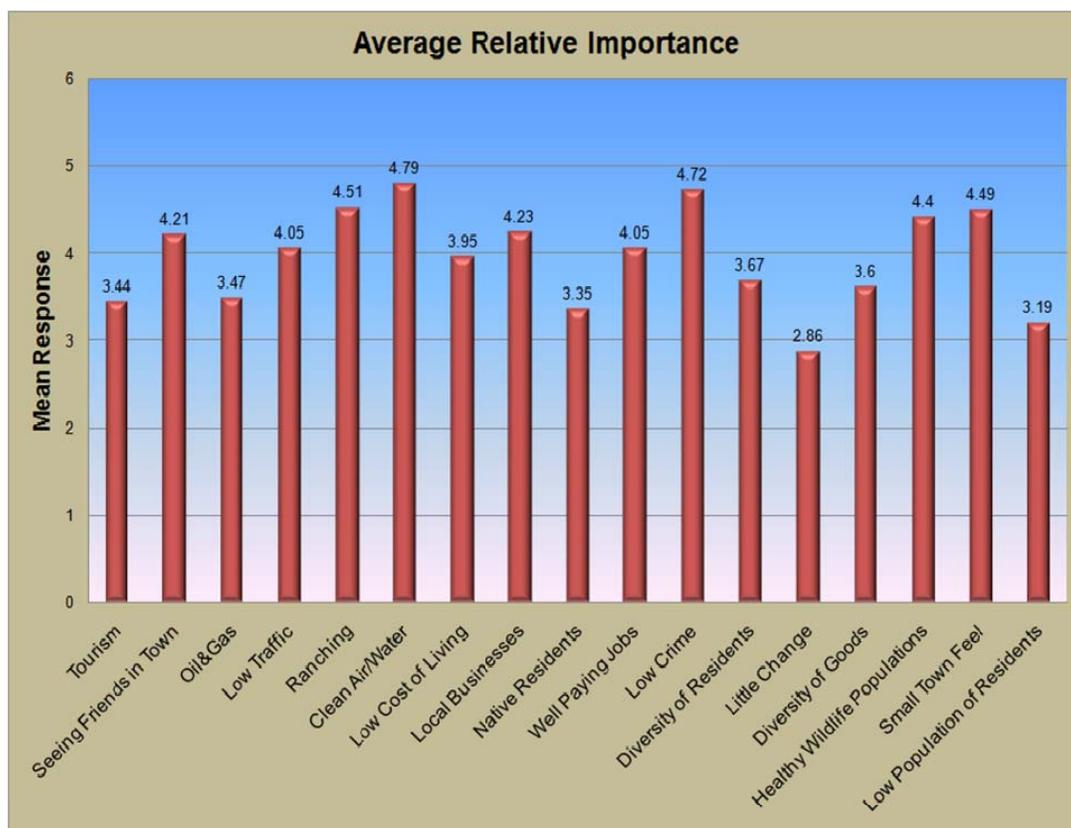
7.6 Question 19: What impact, if any, would you say the oil and gas boom and related growth has had on social relations between people within the community?

Less than half of all respondents believed that oil and gas development had negatively impacted social relations within the county, while some even thought development had increased social relations. Many respondents, particularly in the north county, commented that there was a perceived increase in tension between residents that had grown over the last few years.

7.7 Question 20: On a scale of 1-5 please rate the relative importance of the following factors to your quality of life in Sublette County, with 1 having no importance and 5 being extremely important

Respondents were asked to rate the relative importance of 17 items to their quality of life on a five point Likert Scale with 5 having the greatest importance. While nearly all items within the matrix had a mean positive response *Clean Air/Water*, *Low Crime*, and *Ranching* were rated as most important by respondents. Interestingly, the only item which was rated as unimportant on average was *Little Change within the Community*. On the surface this finding seems incongruous; however, from comments gleaned from the interviews it appears that while change was recognized as a disruptive force to one's quality of life, residents were circumspect about change and its seeming inevitability given the oil and gas boom. While residents were upset about change they assumed

Figure 7.7-1



they could neither prevent nor impede its progress.

7.8 Question 21: Think about the available goods and services in your community. Over the past 8-10 years, has the quality of those goods increased, decreased or stayed about the same?

On average, respondents either felt the available goods and services within the county had stayed the same or had slightly decreased over the past decade with a mean response of 3.12. Several respondents were quick to point out that there were a greater number of restaurants 10 years ago; on the other hand, some respondents perspicaciously noted that there was a greater variety of restaurants today. For instance it was pointed out that that the Rock Rabbit coffee house would not have been viable before the boom.

7.9 Question 22: Compared to 8-10 years ago, how would you rate your overall community satisfaction?

Figure 7.9-1



One of the fundamental questions of the survey asked respondents to rate their overall community satisfaction compared to 7-10 years ago. Overall respondents have been subject to a slight decrease in overall community satisfaction with a mean response of 2.84. Twice as many respondents indicated they were slightly less satisfied with the community than indicated they were slightly more satisfied with the community with a slight majority responding they were as satisfied today as they were 10 years ago. Community satisfaction was correlated with several variables (see Table 7.9-1) in an effort to uncover which factors caused respondents to have either an increase or a decrease in their overall community satisfaction. Within Table 7.9-1 the strength of a given correlation is measured between 0-1 with 1 being a perfect correlation and 0 being no correlation at all.

The Pearson Coefficient (or p value) measures the level of significance of these correlations--confidence that these correlations did not happen merely by chance. For example, a correlation that is significant at the .05 would only occur by chance 5 times out of 100.

Table 7.9-1

		Correlations					
		overallco mmsat	oilgas	betterworse	characte rnew	lowtraffic	diversityres
overallcommsat	Pearson Correlation	1	.399**	-.350*	-.363*	-.319*	.445**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.008	.036	.017	.037	.003
	N	43	43	36	43	43	43
oilgas	Pearson Correlation	.399**	1	-.382*	-.279	-.517**	.204
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008		.021	.070	.000	.190
	N	43	43	36	43	43	43
betterworse	Pearson Correlation	-.350*	-.382*	1	.335*	.380*	-.358*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	.021		.046	.022	.032
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36
characternew	Pearson Correlation	-.363*	-.279	.335*	1	.141	-.192
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	.070	.046		.368	.217
	N	43	43	36	43	43	43
lowtraffic	Pearson Correlation	-.319*	-.517**	.380*	.141	1	-.103
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	.000	.022	.368		.510
	N	43	43	36	43	43	43
diversityres	Pearson Correlation	.445**	.204	-.358*	-.192	-.103	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.190	.032	.217	.510	
	N	43	43	36	43	43	43

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Of the four correlated variables (see Table 7.9-1) only *Oil & Gas* and *Diversity of Residents* predicted a respondent's change in *Overall Community Satisfaction*. These two variables combined explained 54.5% of the variance and are significant at $p \geq .05$ level (see Table 7.9-2). Thus, the more a respondent was likely to rate *Oil & Gas* and *Diversity of Residents* as relatively important to their quality of life, the more likely their *Overall Community Satisfaction* had increased over the past 8-10 years.

This seems intuitive in that the greatest changes within the community have involved oil & gas and an influx of a diverse workforce; those persons that have difficulties adapting to these new realities will experience a lower quality of life and community satisfaction overall.

Table 7.9-2 Multiple Regression Model: Overall Community Satisfaction vs. Diversity of Residents, Oil & Gas

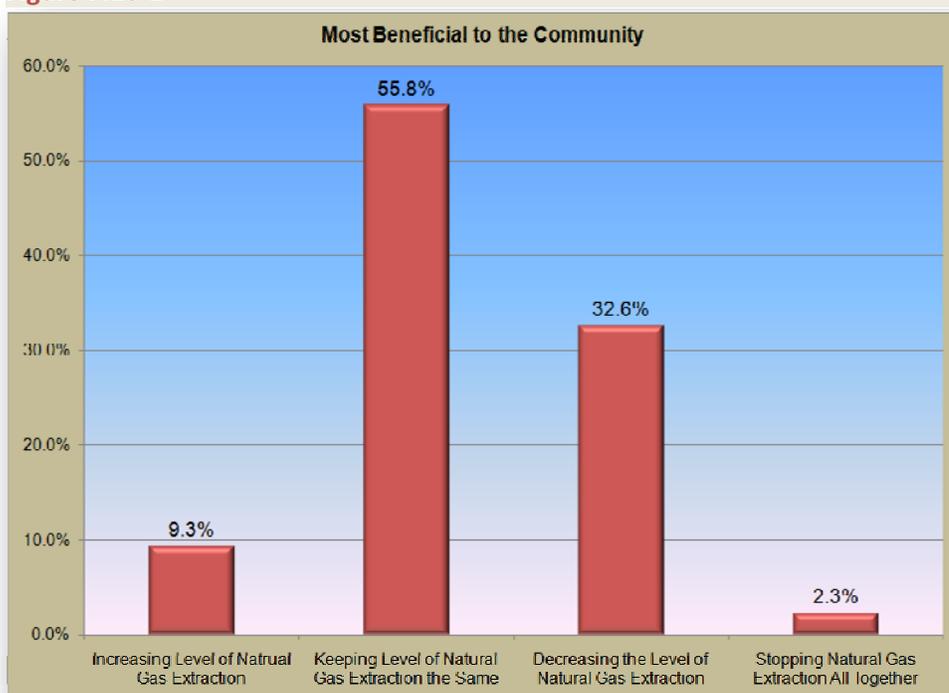
Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.545 ^a	.297	.262	.878	.297	8.460	2	40	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), diversityres, oilgas

Table 7.9-3

Coefficients ^a									
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	.606	.559		1.083	.285			
	oilgas	.265	.111	.322	2.377	.022	.399	.352	.315
	diversityres	.357	.128	.379	2.803	.008	.445	.405	.372

a. Dependent Variable: overallcommsat

7.10 Question 23: In your opinion, what would be the most beneficial to the community?**Figure 7.10-1**

This question sought to uncover the level of oil & gas extraction with which residents were comfortable. Approximately 82.4% of respondents either wanted to keep natural gas extraction at current levels or slow the pace of current

extraction. Only one individual thought that natural gas extraction should be halted within Sublette County all together while only a few more (4) respondents felt that natural gas extraction should be increased.

7.11 Question 24: In your opinion, what have been the greatest changes that have occurred in Sublette County in the past 8-10 years because of the gas boom?

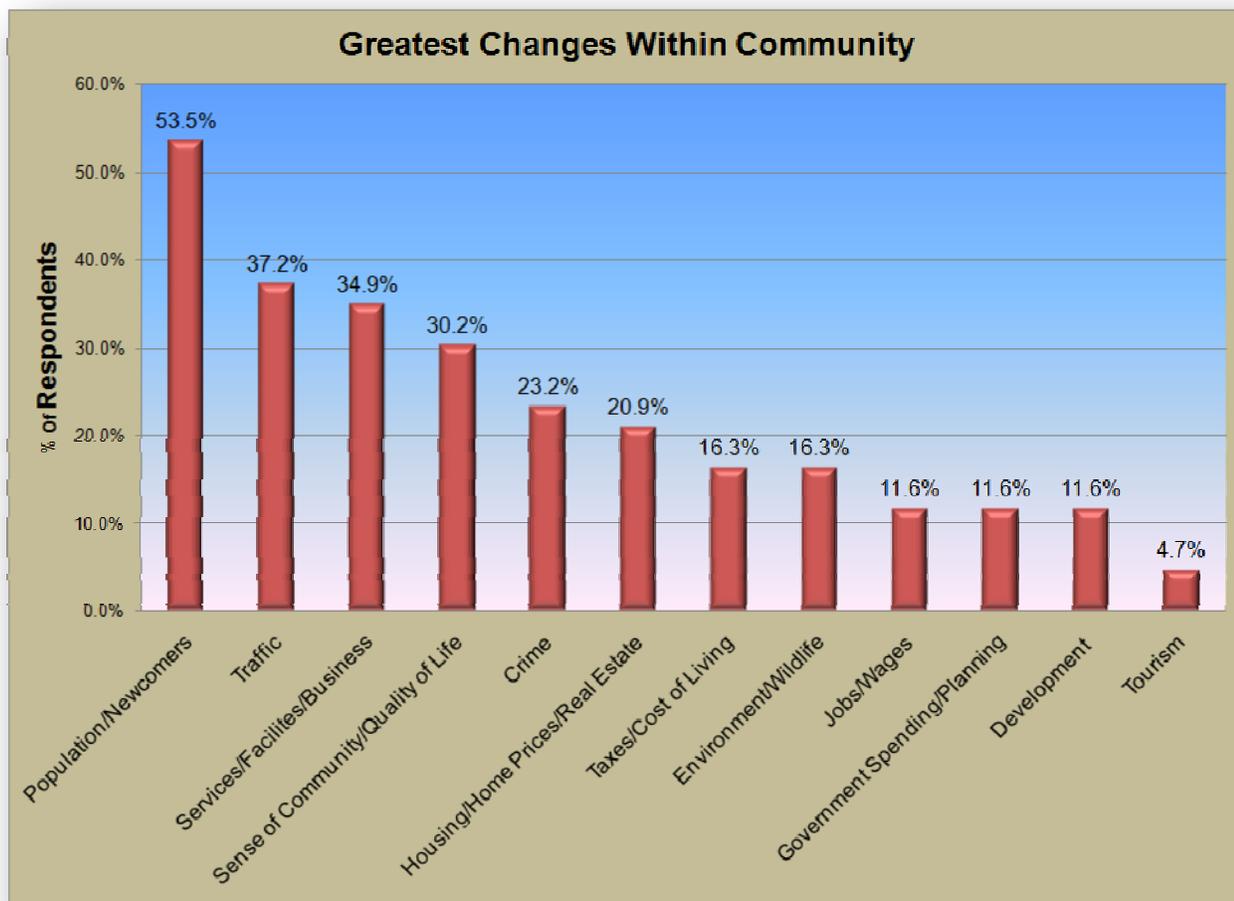
Respondents were asked to list the greatest changes over the past 8-10 years

within the county and were not limited in the number of responses they were allowed to give. The open-ended questions were then coded into 12 parsimonious categories and analyzed. A slender majority of respondents (53.5%)

Table 7.11-1

Greatest Change	# Responses	% of Respondents
Population/Newcomers	23	53.5%
Traffic	16	37.2%
Services/Facilities/Business	15	34.9%
Sense of Community/Quality of Life	13	30.2%
Crime	10	23.2%
Housing/Home Prices/Real Estate	9	20.9%
Taxes/Cost of Living	7	16.3%
Environment	7	16.3%
Jobs/Wages	5	11.6%
Government Spending/Planning	5	11.6%
Development	5	11.6%
Tourism	2	4.7%

Figure 7.11-1



mentioned *Population/Newcomers* as a noticeable change within Sublette County over the past decade, and an additional 37.2% respondents cited *Traffic*. *Services/Facilities*, *Sense of Community/Quality of Life*, *Crime*, and *Housing/Home Prices/Real Estate* were also notable changes for 34.9% 30.2%, 23.2%, 20.9% of respondents respectively.

7.12 Question 25: In your opinion, what are the most important issues facing your community within the next 5 years?

Finally, nearly half of all interview respondents believed that growth management was the most salient issue facing the community. *Environmental/Wildlife Concerns*, *Infrastructure*, and *Facilities/Services* were also considered important by 23.3%, 20.9%, and 20.9% of respondents respectively. Again, this question was delivered in an open ended format and then coded into 12 categories (*Figure 7.12-1*).

Figure 7.12-1

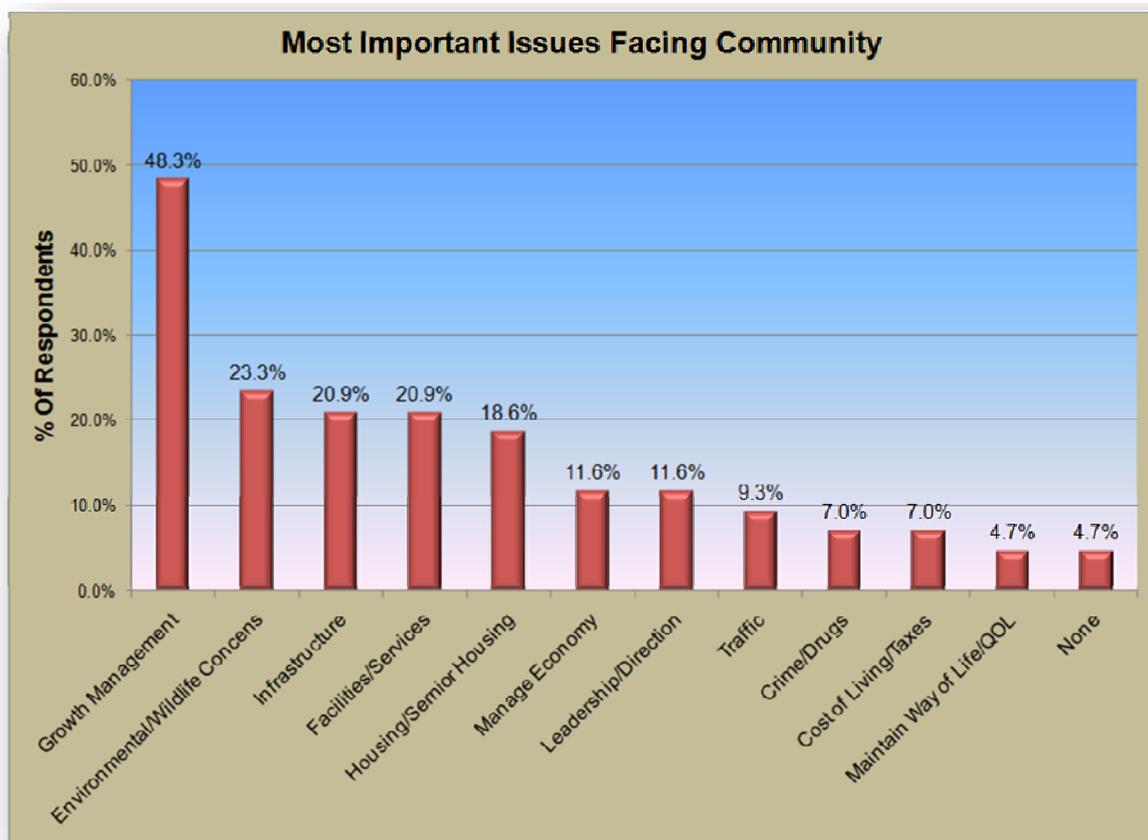


Table 7.12-2

Important Issue	# of Responses	% of Respondents
Growth Management	21	48.83%
Environmental/ Wildlife Concerns	10	23.25%
Infrastructure	9	20.9%
Facilities/Services	9	20.9%
Housing/Senior Housing	8	18.6%
Manage Economy	5	11.6%
None	2	4.7%
Maintain way of life/QOL	5	4.7%
Crime/Drugs	3	7.0%
Leadership/Direction	5	11.6%
Traffic	4	9.3%
Cost of Living/Taxes	3	7.0%

8 Summary

This report began with a cautionary tale of the potential social-psychological consequences that can befall a boomtown and its residents, particularly those communities which have historically had a well developed sense of community.

Fortunately, the social-psychological nadir described within the text has not transpired within Sublette County. In fact, residents, even while their overall community satisfaction has modestly decreased, continue to experience high levels of community attachment. They remain circumspect about growth and newcomers and the challenges they bring to the county. Despite their optimistic outlook, residents continue to be dissatisfied with various aspects of growth and development; the entirety of negative aspects attributed to the community by respondents was industry/growth related while positive aspects were exclusively non-industry/growth related.

Moreover, while the majority of respondents have been tolerant of growth to this point, many indicated that if growth continues along a trajectory parallel to the past five years, it will significantly augment the negative impacts experienced by residents. Corroborating earlier research, residents indicated that the greatest impacts to date occurred at the beginning stages of the boom.

Financial stability remains a concern for many residents, particularly older fixed income residents whose savings have been slowly eroded by mounting property taxes and cost of living within the county—age was found to be directly related to

current financial situation. Interestingly, aside from age, results were constant across all other demographic variables including place of residence.

Finally, by and large most respondents indicated that their community well-being had been negatively affected by environmental impacts due to oil & gas development and social relations within the county had been degraded—with many respondents indicating there was a palpable tension.

In general, residents of Sublette County appear to be weathering a fair amount of the industry/growth related changes. However, challenges remain. Several respondents indicated that while they were currently satisfied, a slight increase in perceived negative impacts would substantially affect their desire or ability to remain within the county. Therefore, efforts should be undertaken to mitigate the stress and anxiety associated with rapid expansion/growth within the county as outlined in this document; to assure that everyone “profits” from the boom.

9 APPENDIX

9.1 Positive Aspects of Community Comments

- *Low population, Low Crime, Social Aspects i.e. Know Everyone, Schools, people in general,*
- *Quiet, safe, few people*
- *Meeting new people, all the views, "hometownness," camaraderie with neighbors, like the change overall*
- *still small community*
- *People I still know, Lifestyle even with boom*
- *Hunting/fishing, history, Desert is one of most valuable areas*
- *Hunting/fishing, small town atmosphere, Always been an amazing community, not a small town of bubbas*
- *Recreations-mountains, solitude-knowing community small community*
- *Quality of life, community involvement, schools*
- *Friends, Family, Good Water*
- *Friendship, low population*
- *Love to hunt, fish, freedom*
- *Mountains, people, family, home, rural area*
- *area is still great--setting (mountains outdoors) still a lot of good people who are interested in the community*
- *Home, comfortable, open spaces, ranching lifestyle*
- *more financial security*
- *Smallness, community spirit, mountains, outdoor life*
- *Still small town atmosphere, very caring people*
- *Hunting, fishing, mountains, people*
- *lack of population, community--people are absolutely wonderful*
- *Small town atmosphere, people--they make the county*
- *next to wilderness area, hunting fishing, "countryside"*
- *Still small town feel, know many people*
- *Still friendly, good potential, good schools, more ambulance runs, swimming pool*
- *small town as important as scenery, yet cosmopolitan*
- *Lack of people, all get along, don't fight much*
- *"ruralness", friendliness,*
- *Environment, small town, schools*
- *Horrible, county land, people, work that we do, opportunities of living in Wyoming*
- *Mountains, the air, general feeling, things are enough the same, not necessarily people it's the atmosphere*
- *Friends, friendly people, sense of home, sense of community, weather*

- *Still really safe community, friendly people, recreation*
- *Outdoors, swimming, cross country, beauty, privacy--although becoming less*
- *Recreation, backcountry wilderness remote scenery*
- *Sparse population, hunting/fishing, little place on the Green River, more affiliation to Big Piney then to Pinedale, lots of Pinedale aren't country people*
- *ranching community*
- *People still care about each other, if you become part of Pinedale, they will take care of you, 100s of things done for me when I was sick*
- *Great recreation*
- *People, Beauty, friends, rivers, neighbors, family feeling, church*
- *Ag people are solid, friendly, climate, fortunate to have great facilities--even medical*
- *come back to roots, hunting, fishing*
- *small town life culture, access to world class hiking, fishing, skiing, snow machining*
- *First of all, number one thing is community. Knowing everyone in the community, being close to family, safety, beauty to live here. Being lucky that I have a family ranch...have the ability to participate in local politics. I really love the changes in the community that have diversified the community. Diversity means age, ethnicity, different walks of life, diversity of different jobs, and make a living here that they used to have.*

9.2 Overall Character of Newcomers Comments

- *Friendly, don't contribute to the community, new/shy somewhat different social groups, most working people interact*
- *Seem like pretty good people*
- *Most pretty good folk, fit in where can*
- *Embrace them, no different than anyone else, good hard working families, a lot of myths about newcomers*
- *Overall good people*
- *Over zealous, want to change our community, want to run for office--input their ideas, old-timers low key don't like fanfare not big spenders*
- *Don't get to meet, different social groups that don't interact*
- *Some giving some taking--no more than before just greater magnitude*
- *Majority Positive and involved, many negative assumptions about these people*
- *Very fine people, generally quiet, nice*
- *mixed bag--some interesting, some not, lots of Spanish people*
- *Just like anyone else, good and bad*

- *People I meet at library are good people*
- *Some are an asset, some aren't, On balance more problems, crime, need for afterschool care, kids with different upbringing, Not much integration on the whole--however those that participate in local functions integrate*
- *All good people, want more change than I want--want all this new stuff, Trying to make it like where they came from*
- *Majority of them from somewhere else, usually means big city with different way of life*
- *City people, less community minded, not as friendly*
- *Mostly good, same dreams and attitudes as us, 90-95% influx of ideas when new people come*
- *Don't see a lot of them, ones we do see have been fairly good*
- *Good and ugly, most are wonderful*
- *Fairly good, few that are interested in the community, think new comers and old timers integrate pretty well*
- *On the whole pretty comparable, no bad experiences, Integration-mix pretty well, always been open to community especially the south*
- *The problem is they many of them are not from Wyoming, want to make it like where they came from, NIMBY*
- *most very good, increased drug traffic, outside students having difficulties--disciplinary problems*
- *Two categories: normal humans, transients trying to find greener pastures, long term job holders are good, with boom you all get the drug*
- *Hedonistic, different ideas and lifestyles*
- *mixed people that work their way in, others work and leave*
- *Mostly favorable, no problems*
- *No opinion, make decisions when I meet people*
- *I don't have much context, I feel sad for all the families*
- *Good, Bring in a lot of things, have new ideas, don't look people in the eye, don't trust, don't say hello*
- *People are people, mixed, single guys don't want to let their hair down, similar to a military base, mostly good character, mostly don't integrate, standoffishness*
- *Don't know most, most seem decent, haven't had unpleasant experience*
- *Hopeful, hoping they make a living a lot of money, but not as advertised, here for jobs, here for the money*
- *2 types of newcomers: oil and gas people concerned with impacts but no problem with people, amenity driven people*
- *I don't know them*
- *Ones I want are trying to become part of the community 60/40 take money and go vs. stay and integrate*
- *Good Group*

- *Most of them good people, hard to know a lot of workers because they work too much*
- *Pretty good overall, don't get to know people in the man camps that is where trouble makers might be, don't see trouble in Pinedale*
- *most of the newcomers definitely hold different values, they brought in the whole new value system, newcomers don't really integrate with the old timers, newcomers don't respect/understand ranching way of life*
- *courteous but lacking qualities becoming of a small town, individualistic, don't have a lot of small town experience/values*
- *Character is good – good work ethic.*

9.3 Why Newcomers Change?

- *Changed for the better, Diversity of opinions and views, all walks of life, new business e.g. organic foods*
- *Going to have growing pains, everything will adjust, what might make you unhappy today will make someone happy tomorrow*
- *People coming in from cities have greater demand for services,*
- *Trying to modernize--Broadway shows etc*
- *Guy from Louisiana follows LSU, not cowboys, no loyalty for community, getting some good people though*
- *not any worse*
- *mixed, small town feel has decreased, but new people are decent with families*
- *slightly for the worse, vandalism, disorderly, social problems*
- *for the worse, business, helter skelter, catching up with the real world*
- *This community has always had people come and go, built into character of community*
- *change for the worse*
- *for worse*
- *For the worse, more people, economic competition has changed, less tourists, less small community,*
- *for worse, not contributors to community, do their job and that's it, don't want to make town better, crime is up*
- *mixed, some good some not so good,*
- *simply because there are more people, a lot more vehicles than there used to be*
- *newcomers want more things and services, Lots of strangers at the bar, just different*
- *some people not so much, a lot of people yes, mostly worse, try to make Wyoming like where they came from*
- *change is not all bad, mixed bag*

- *a little for the better, new companies support community and activities*
- *big changes, not necessarily bad, good and bad, mixed*
- *just different*
- *I'm so isolated I don't know, schools, more rooms for kids*
- *A little bit, have their own ways, not better or worse, just a change*
- *Cajun restaurant, coffee shop, cultural nuance, social changes as mostly positive*
- *Sheer number changed it for the worse, they don't know traditions of Pinedale*
- *Both better and worse*
- *bad impact, higher crime rate, social life revolves around the bar, however this is true of the old-timers as well, a lot of wonderful newcomers but not country people--don't know what they are getting into*
- *For worse, used to be able to leave your car running with a \$100 bill on dash without worry, now think about it*
- *Little bit, just starting, people don't spend as much time thinking about the town--don't want to put the work in. Just change, not good or bad*
- *Conflict, need to adjust*
- *not for better or worse*
- *Yes and no, grocery store, traffic, no housing available, standing in line at the post office!!!*
- *change for the better, can strengthen the community (hard to admit) different cultures are good*
- *yes - but not better or worse*
- *Yes - I see gentrification, more social strata. One negative is the stratification, which is a culture brought from the outside. Less understanding of agriculture nowadays, less understanding. Having Land Trust, too much pressure to put easing. Another negative is the rural sprawl, only going to become worse, due to politics at the county level. County planner doesn't care too much about rural sprawl, rural subdivisions. Town subdivision to the west (Bloomfield) is a good thing. Overall, change has been a good thing.*

9.4 Greatest Changes Comments

- *Population Influx, Crime/Drug use, Transient Workforce*
- *Minor--more traffic, a few more people, Los Cabos Restaurant, Big Piney won't change easily, hostile climate--the weather*
- *Money that has come in, New People, Not all as bad as everybody wants to think it is*
- *Community went from personal to just a number,*
- *Traffic, Still as friendly as it always was, just know smaller % of people*

- *Government spending stressed citizens, Planning--big decisions being made tearing people apart, old timers feel it's a waste of money, Faler's General Store--huge Change--prices are high, stocking poor, population increase, Traffic, Property Taxes*
- *Traffic, Air Quality, Cost of Living, Taxes, Real Estate, Rapid Development*
- *The number of people, Traffic, multifamily dwellings, wages, lack of service industry*
- *Population, Housing prices, Activities for kids has increased*
- *Air, Traffic,*
- *more people but less businesses, less personal hometown feeling, less professionalism, unskilled workers, less personal attention, don't know your name*
- *Traffic, more people, on verge of needing new facilities*
- *Traffic, influx of people, wages are up, crime up*
- *more people, more crime, increased cost of living and doing business, However Rock Rabbit wouldn't exist without boom*
- *Influx of people and the associated problems, Air quality*
- *Community lost its soul and cohesiveness, air quality/haze, tourists have declined--less important, less news, less sunshine, new people have lower standards for governance and accountability*
- *Growth, population*
- *population growth, traffic, crime, business taken a huge jump, inflation cost of goods*
- *Oil and gas, would like to stay out of Wyoming Range*
- *Getting money for the library, Population increase without concomitant increase in services, Quality of life is down even though there is lots of money*
- *More income, more county services, more things provided for*
- *Traffic, Growth in Population*
- *Asphalt, public buildings, bike paths*
- *crime, traffic, housing is terrible, can't get people to do work, services hard to get*
- *Tax revenues, what we spend in the county, more projects county shop etc. "regime building"*
- *Influx of people, used to be comparably free of drugs, demands on state and federal lands*
- *Traffic, industrial activity, air quality*
- *Population, all the good and the bad that goes with it, aquatic center a positive, schools, money in county, change uncomfortable but have to have it to get the positives*
- *More to do--movie theatre, auditorium, nice schools, rec center*

- *New houses, negative is the aquatic center, new people have to have new things, but I guess kids need something to do*
- *Crime, air quality, don't know as many people, sense of community*
- *not as friendly, population increase, in a hurry now to make a fortune before all had time to talk, drink coffee*
- *Stratification, Traffic, too much building less open space, Rural Sprawl, more tension in the community, locals trying to keep up*
- *Don't run into people, used to be all business catered to tourists, now nobody does, traffic/housing, good things are the tax base/aquatic center, lots of overbuilding, not looking to the future, just looking to the money, includes pollution*
- *Population growth, affect on environment, traffic, crime,*
- *New people try to make our community like their old community, Big Piney will Wear them down*
- *More people=more congestion, value of housing is through the roof, property taxes doubled, I guess we have more services but for the life of me I can't think what they are*
- *population, community has changed*
- *Used to be social hour when we went to the store or the post office, cost of living has increased dramatically, new homes and motels that are being built*
- *More money--can't have it both ways, oil and gas so generous, traffic, housing, postal service, never dreamed we'd have so many real estate people*
- *traffic, drugs, family violence, less customer services*
- *lack of available contract work, housing prices, crime, big bottleneck of people, fleecing of America*
- *Traffic, diversity of residents, rural sprawl, little understanding of agriculture with no willingness to learn about them either.*

9.5 Most important issues facing community

- *Infrastructure, Children-related activities, unite people of the county*
- *Don't know of any*
- *Managing growth and subdivision, Senior Citizen housing*
- *Qualified Leadership*
- *How community grows, don't like dense population--10 acre spacing*
- *Property Taxes, Traffic--Divert, growth management, protecting wildlife--water for sage grouse*
- *Environment--air water quality, rapid growth too many hotels, real estate, instability*

- *Crime, affordable housing for young and old, schools, keeping air clean, some jobs that will keep young people here*
- *Housing, pace of development, quality of people to do jobs in town*
- *Streets, Air Quality, Sheriff's department*
- *Medical, need a pharmacy, more business, better medical care, more permanent doctors and nurses, recreation center*
- *Having good peaceful way of life*
- *Air quality, improvement of highways--safer and wider, services--stores new businesses, more things for people to do*
- *Growth of town, managing in a manner that develops community in positive way, zoning in such a way which allows community to develop in positive manner, maintain as attractive place to live, funding to mitigate impacts, relationship with BLM*
- *Handling oil and gas revenues--save it for the future, Loss of family ranchers--open spaces go away with less ranching*
- *Planned growth, will sense of community return? Projects before county commissioners need to be better discussed or advertised and out in open, accountability, air quality*
- *Housing, crime, stressed medical staff--workloads up*
- *Infrastructure in town, available space in the schools, traffic, growth management*
- *Bringing industry in to stabilize community and economy, mitigate boom/bust*
- *Infrastructure, rec center--getting it built*
- *Maintain wildlife mitigation efforts, maintain and organize growth management in the way it happens, don't believe in controlling growth, growth should be around geographical nodes*
- *Make hay while the sun shines, housing hasn't changed within the last 15 yrs*
- *Growth, bust issues, cost of living, traffic,*
- *Growth, managing correctly but there is no correct way, manage in unbiased manner--but won't happen*
- *Get boom under control stabilize infrastructure*
- *Controlled management of oil and gas, important to have oil and gas would like to slow down, slower pace*
- *Schools-keeping a handle on them, keeping them good and strong, managing subdivisions--fixing Bargerville*
- *Important to keep track of what oil and gas people are up to so we are not left with the mess*
- *Oil and gas, how they develop, hate to see the desert torn up, air needs to stay decent, and don't want them to drill Wyoming Range, as oil and gas fades it will be a disaster*

- *Taxes (property) Organization of growth, growth management, plan it well, infrastructure*
- *Development, growth, schools and businesses, firm infrastructure footprint, plan for bust*
- *Intelligent Zoning, Harbor development too big, school site not good*
- *Managing the growth, managing wildlife/air quality/water quality*
- *Environment, drilling in the forest, wildlife, ranchers--hunting*
- *What government entities decide to do with oil and gas development-- where and how they drill*
- *Growth management, giving away too many things, infrastructure will eat us alive*
- *Worried about leadership, preparedness for boom*
- *Senior Housing is critical, housing in general, recruitment of outstanding teachers and good schools*
- *Infrastructure, services, only going to increase*
- *Traffic, drugs, family violence, mental health*
- *Affordable housing*
- *What the hell to do with all this money, and do it in a way that helps the members of this community. Traffic mitigation and management. Community leadership needs to get a spine to deal with some the issues we have to deal with. Housing is still an issues, especially affordable housing (including man-camps and temporary nature)*