



The Ranch News January 2010 Volume 5 Number 1



Mission Statement

Our mission is to make the Town of Star Valley Ranch a great place to live. Our focus will be to enhance our culinary water system, improve our roads and public safety for all citizens, property owners, and visitors. Officially adopted March 14, 2006

Vision Statement

Our vision...A pleasant country setting, where the entire community enjoys the beauty of nature, family and friends, recreation, peace and diversity. Officially adopted March 14, 2006



YOU COUNT! The 2010 Census

by Councilman Kent Harker

The 2010 Census will be a snapshot of our nation's population—capturing our changing and diverse America in a fleeting moment in time. But this historic event will do more than tell us who we are as a nation today. It affects **Star Valley Ranch's** future so please be sure to show your place of residency as **Star Valley Ranch**. **Over the last few years each resident of Star Valley Ranch has meant the Town received about \$1,300 per year in shared revenues!**

One of the shortest census forms in history, the 2010 Census form asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. The form is easy, important and safe. For more information on the Wyoming Census go to: http://eativ.state.wy.us/wyoming_counts/

Step 1: The Census is underway. Workers canvassed the country between April and July 2009 to update addresses and maps from the previous census. This process is important because buildings that existed in the last census may no longer be standing, or Star Valley Ranch may have new construction that needs to be recorded.

The federal government distributes more than \$400 billion annually to state, local and tribal governments based on census data. Since 2006, Wyoming has seen substantial population growth and it is vitally important that everyone is counted in 2010 because the decennial census count is what is utilized to determine state revenue distributions for cities, towns, and counties for the **next ten years** as well as federal funding and to establish boundaries for legislative districts.

Step 2: The form will arrive. More than 130 million addresses throughout the nation will receive a census form in March 2010, either by mail or in person from a census worker. Households should complete and return their forms immediately. **Please be sure to show your place of residence as Star Valley Ranch.**

Step 3: Census Day is April 1, 2010. Responses to the census form should include everyone living at your address. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share an individual's personal information with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities.

Step 4: Follow-up because every person matters. Addresses that still have not responded are visited in person by a census worker beginning in late April through July. Don't forget that census workers can be identified by a census badge and bag.

Step 5: The results are in! The Census Bureau will provide the 2010 apportionment counts to the President by December 31, 2010, which will include the total population counts and the number of representatives for each state.

For more information about the Wyoming Census go to: http://eativ.state.wy.us/wyoming_counts

State of the "TOWN" Address

by Mayor Boyd Siddoway

The Town Council is very happy with the progress we made in 2009 and specifically the projects we have completed or have underway. We sincerely hope all of you are as delighted and satisfied as we are with these accomplishments. We have dedicated a major part of this newsletter issue to the accomplishments.

- **** Please check our website under "Documents" for information on our "Objectives" ****
www.starvalleyranchwy.org

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**State of the “TOWN” Address** (continued from page 2)

Our objectives and assignments for 2010 are virtually the same as last year. We have modified some of the categories to better clarify our intent and direction.

The two most significant items for 2010 will be:

1. The Census Count –

We all need to make sure we are all counted.

In addition, as a Council, we are vitally concerned that you make sure you are counted as having your primary residence in the Town of Star Valley Ranch. These numbers will be used by the state for the next ten years as the basis for state funding for our Town. Over the last three and a half years, we have received approximately \$1,300 per (census counted) person, per year so you can see how important it is that everybody is counted.

Funding is being cut or shrinking because of the economy. Most all of the state revenue funding is based on population (resulting from our census count). We must make sure our Town is receiving its fair share of the state revenues, whether the revenues are high or low.

2. State Funding / Town Budgeting –

In our short history as a Town, we have had the luxury of receiving about 90% more in the state revenue funding than we had originally expected (Actual \$1.9 Million annually vs. the anticipated \$1.0 Million). As long as we were professional and precise in our requests, we were awarded the requested grant monies. However, as mentioned above, it appears our anticipated funding for at least the next few years could be significantly reduced.

The good news is with the completion of the projects represented by both grants that have been approved and those in the process of being approved, by the end of 2012, our Town should have adequate water supply for the current population, storage capacity for both current and growth population as well as the capacity to support future fire hydrant requirements.

If funding is made available, the Town is strategically positioned to take advantage of any financial assistance for the replacement of the deteriorated, steel pipe in our culinary distribution system in whole or in part.

The shortages in funding will have to be addressed in several ways, such as;

- a. Current budgets will need to be addressed in light of this years revenue shortages,
- b. In the upcoming fiscal year's (July 2010 through June 2011) budgeting process with potential cutbacks in capital expenditures and services for our citizens,
- c. Extension of the time required to improve our water distribution system.

The Council will do everything we can to ensure these financial impacts are as minimal as possible on our community. However, our Town's largest single expenditure is for maintenance on our roads. Therefore, the roads will be the most visible, as we may see less road maintenance activity and thus the resulting deterioration of the road conditions.

Also the availability of funding for replacement of our deteriorating culinary water distribution system may be extended over several more years. We not only need the grant funding, but also the funds for the Town's matching portion to these grants. To date we have used Town revenues to supplement the Water Department's projects to keep the water fees as low as possible.

Water Projects' Status:Completed

- A dozen fire-hydrants have been installed

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State of the “TOWN” Address (continued from page 3)

- Both 12” and 8” transmission lines have been installed
- Main entrance road and associated water lines are installed

Most of our current projects are on hold for the winter months.

Projects Underway:

- New Well on BLM Property should be on-line in the first quarter of 2010.
- Street Lights and Signs (with lighting) should be done in the first quarter of 2010.
- Bids packages are being prepared for the balance of WWDC Phase I projects.
- Plans are to have all Phase I projects wrapped up by the fall of 2010.

Upcoming Projects:

- Application for the WWDC Phase 11 construction is currently in the Legislature’s 2010 Omnibus Water Bill awaiting their vote.

Third well

Additional storage tank

Pump for crossover line between all the storage tanks.

Muddy String transmission line (Main entrance to Plat 20)

Redevelopment of Prater Springs

We will all see a lot of construction activity this coming summer; dirt, dust and detours!

Please be patient - Please obey Construction Signs - Your safety is our concern!

Town of Star Valley Ranch

Town Council’s 2009 Objectives

1. Census – Councilman Kent Harker
2. Civic Involvement – Councilman Ed Koch
3. Communication – Councilman Carol Warren
4. Domestic Waste Water Program – Mayor Boyd Siddoway
5. Facilities – Councilman Kent Harker
6. Financial – Councilman Ed Koch
7. Grants – Councilman Carol Warren
8. Planning – Councilman Al Redlin
9. Public Safety / Security – Councilman Ed Koch
10. Roads / Water-Operations – Councilman Kent Harker
11. Water–Development (Culinary) – Mayor Boyd Siddoway

Details of the objectives and the Council’s assessment of their accomplishments are on the Town’s website at: www.starvalleyranchwy.org, tab “Documents” or copies may be obtained by contacting Town Hall.

Town of Star Valley Ranch

Town Council's 2010 Goals & Objectives

1. Census – Councilman Kent Harker
2. Community Wellness & Involvement – Councilman Ed Koch
3. Communication – Councilman Carol Warren
4. Domestic Waste Water Program – Mayor Boyd Siddoway
5. Facilities – Councilman Kent Harker
6. Financial – Councilman Ed Koch
7. Grants – Councilman Carol Warren
8. Planning – Councilman Al Redlin
9. Public Safety / Security – Councilman Ed Koch
10. Roads / Water-Operations – Councilman Harker
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Details of the objectives are on the Town's website at: www.starvalleyranchwy.org, tab "Documents" or copies may be obtained by contacting Town Hall.

Financials

by Councilman Ed Koch

The Town of Star Valley Ranch 2009/2010 mid year (July through December) results are presented below with an analysis of results. We are half way through our fiscal year, thus any Revenue YTD actual vs. Annual Budget over 50% is good and if it is under 50% is of concern, and of course the reverse is true for expenses. Some of the YTD totals were impacted by a change in our accounting for cash revenues from a cash basis to a modified accrual method, thus the accrual adjustments made from current periods to prior periods at the direction of our Auditors

Town's General Budget:

- **Fifth Penny Sales Tax** (5th Penny Tax*) is currently at 33% of the annual budget (YTD Actual of 185.1k vs. Annual Budget of 560.1k), The 5th Penny Tax receipts are currently shared between General and Water Funds at approximately a 75/25 split. The low percentage in funds directly correlates to the economic slowdown across the state and nation. * The continuation of this tax is strongly supported by this Town Council as the 5th Penny Tax is the single largest source of funds for the Town. Of these funds, only 17% is a result of our residents everyday spending. The other 83% comes from spending across the county by large energy companies, local businesses, tourists, etc.
- **State Shared Revenues** – State Sales Taxes and shared Appropriations are currently at 25% of annual budget (YTD Actual of 205.8k vs. Annual Budget of 828.5k). This again directly correlates to the economic slowdown across the state and nation. This area is expected to remain well below budget as the Governor has continued to cut state spending and sharing.
- **8-Mil Property Tax** – Currently at 51.5% of the annual budget (YTD Actual of 104.1k vs. Annual Budget of 202.0k), by Town Resolution the funds are split 3-Mil (40.4k) to General Funds and 5-Mil (63.7k) to Water Funds).
- **Licenses/Permits/Postal Unit/Interest/Misc Revenue** combined is at 91% of projection (YTD Actual of 30.2k vs. Annual Budget of 33.3k).
- **Operating Expenses** are at 37% of projection (YTD Actual of 497.5k vs. Annual Budget of 1,352.5k).

Town's Water Budget:

- **Water Revenues** are at 56% of the annual budget (YTD Actual of 388.4k vs. Annual Budget of 698.9k). Includes 5th Penny Tax (78.9k) and 8-Mil (63.8k) assigned sharing. This assigned sharing from the General Fund is

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**Financials** (continued from page 5)

Intended to reduce future water rate increases. Water billing receipts are at 101% through the current period.

- **Water Expenses** are at 37% of the annual budget (YTD Actual of 256.3k vs. Annual Budget of 698.9k). Administration and Wage costs are lagging behind due to accrual adjustments for prior period.

Capital Investment Budget - General:

- **Capital Projects and Equipment are at 76% of the annual budget (YTD Actual of 621.5k vs. Annual Budget of 817.0k).** This reflects the Public Works Building, Pathway, equipment shelter, and 2nd payment for the acquisition of SVRA Maintenance Shop.
- **Equipment Purchases are at 70% of the annual budget (YTD Actual of 190.2k vs. Annual Budget of 272.5k).** Equipment upgrades include a road grader, wheel-loader and a utility truck. A "First Response" emergency truck has yet to be located and obtained.

Grant Funding Reimbursements:

- **Grant funds are** at 72% of projection (YTD Actual of 354.7k vs. Annual Budget of 494.5k). With the number and size of projects to be completed next spring, we may be close on this projection. As noted in prior reports, the expenses must be incurred prior to funding.

Did You Know ?

by Special Municipal Officer Peggy J. Parker

- Betcha' didn't know... that the Town's new pooper scooper ordinance requires that dog owners must pick up and properly dispose of poop their dog(s) leave on roadways and the property of others. The requirement became Town law on January 1, 2010, and as with all Town of Star Valley Ranch animal control provisions, violators may be cited, required to appear in court and face fines of not less than \$150 to \$750 per violation.
- If you have not yet done so... it is time to get new Town of Star Valley Ranch dog licenses and tags for your dogs. Information and requirements for obtaining renewal tags for dogs previously licensed and for obtaining new tags for any new or previously unregistered dogs can be found on the Town's web site or by calling Town Hall.
- Do you know where your dog is now...? All dog owners, or the owner's agents, are required to maintain their dogs on their own property and shall not permit their dogs to roam freely on the roads or on the property of others. Whenever off the owner's property, dogs must be controlled and leashed and the leash must be securely attached to the dog's handler. Loose dogs that chase or harass wildlife or which act viciously towards other persons or their pets, may be impounded, and/or destroyed and the owner subject to legal action and/or civil penalties.
- Shut Up!... Dog owners or their agents shall not permit their dogs to bark frequently, habitually, or for extended periods. Few issues frustrate neighbors more than barking dogs. If you have barking dogs, do not wait for your neighbor to pound on your door or call the Special Municipal Officer. Find a way to stop your dogs from barking so you don't alienate your neighbors or find yourself explaining to the judge why you didn't control your barking dogs.
- Move It or Lose It... Town ordinances prohibit parking on Town roadways at any time year round. Vehicles left on the roadways during winter create serious hazards, hamper the safe flow of traffic, and impede Town snow removal operations. It is the responsibility of the driver of any vehicle that becomes stuck or disabled on the roadway to arrange to have the vehicle towed immediately from the roadway and to put out flares or other safety devices to alert others to the hazard. Drivers / owners of vehicles parked on the roadway may be cited, the vehicle towed at the owners expense, and be held legally and civilly responsible for any injury or damage incurred because of the illegally parked vehicle.
- Push, Pull, or Drag... Pushing, blowing, plowing, shoveling or otherwise placing snow from your property, driveway, or end of driveway onto or across the Town roadways is prohibited and punishable by citation, court appearances and fines of up to \$750 per violation if convicted.

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Did You Know? (continued from page 6)

- Is the Town really serious about public safety?... You bet we are! We continually try to do as much educating of our ordinances as possible with visits and warnings. However, there are situations where the solution is a citation. If you just look at the last ten citations that were issued you will see the Town is very serious about enforcing our ordinances: Ten citations; ten court appearances. Ten court appearances; ten convictions. The average fine assessed was \$259.00 plus a \$20.00 court fee with the highest fine \$750.00. The citations issued were: 6 “dog” related, 3 “parking” and 1 “contractor” building ordinance related.
- Get Your Copies Here... Full copies of all Town ordinances may be obtained at Town Hall or on the Town website (www.starvalleyranchwy.org). For questions about these or any ordinances, contact Town Hall or Special Municipal Officer Peggy J. Parker 880-2666.

Taxes - Taxes - Taxes

by Mayor Boyd Siddoway

The State's preliminary budget and the Wyoming Association of Municipalities are forecasting our next fiscal year's (July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011) revenue could be reduced by more than 50%. With approximately one third of our General Fund revenues coming from the 5th penny tax, should the Town support the continuation of the 5th penny Sales and Use Tax? We think so.

Here are some facts for all of us to ponder:

The Town of Star Valley Ranch's **Revenues** (Exclusive of the Water Department) are made up primarily from the following sources:

The four percent General (<i>State Wide</i>) Sales and Use Tax	37%
The 5 th Penny Local (<i>County Wide</i>) Sales and Use Tax.	32%
Property Tax (<i>County Wide</i>)	11%
Annual Payments from (State Wide) Section 328 & 329	10%
Mineral Royalties	4%
Severance	2%
All others; Fees, Fines, Gas Tax, etc.	4%

The vast majority of all funding (except for Property Taxes), both state and county are distributed based on population.

45% of the county's population lives outside of an incorporated town, therefore Lincoln County's share of most taxes is approximately45%

The Town of Star Valley Ranch's population puts us a little over 10% and therefore10%.

Property Taxes are distributed exclusively on a “mil levy” basis, of the personal property taxes collect in our Town (see Lincoln County Personal Property Tax notice);

Schools receive approximately	54%
Lincoln County and County Wide Entities receive approximately	34%
Town of Star Valley's 8 mil levy entitles us to receive just under	12%

5th Penny Sales & Use Tax

This tax has been in force, has been collected and has been distributed to the county and towns off and on for some time now. This tax was last voted on and approved by the voters as recently as the November 2007 General Election.



Taxes - Taxes - Taxes (continued from page 7)

There are two statutory options for continuing this tax as provide for by the Wyoming State Statues SS 39-15-203 paragraph (c) ...by vote on each "General Election"... or paragraph (f) ...by ordinance of at least (50%) of the towns plus a resolution of the County Commissioners...

(This tax may also be terminated by either of the two above methods)

To date: Cokeville, Diamondville, Kemmerer and Star Valley Ranch have had all three readings of a "continuation" ordinance and thus have passed their respective ordinances. Alpine, LaBarge, Opal and Thayne have had one or more readings of their "continuation" ordinances and are working toward the final passage. Afton is holding a town hearing on the 9th of February (check the Star Valley Independent for an update.) We hope the County Commissioners are listening to the majority of us who believe this tax is necessary for the towns and county to continue providing essential services to our respective citizens.

Our road maintenance and improvements and our ability to continue with our water upgrade plans would be significantly impacted by the lack of this tax revenue. Specifically of the total "5th Penny Sales & Use Tax" received (32% of our total) by the Town, our average citizen will contribute only about 17 cents toward each dollar we receive. That is equal to 5.9 times return on our contribution.

By instituting this tax on a continuing basis, the county and towns can more confidently rely on this revenue over a longer period of time. Taxes are both financial and emotional. This action does not take away anyone's right to vote or their ability to terminate the tax by the exact same methods described above.

Public Safety

by Councilman Ed Koch

Welcome to Winter. Please help us to keep the Town of Star Valley Ranch a safe place to live and play. Just a few reminders for winter (some thoughts borrowed shamelessly from David Ward – Town Public Safety Advisor):

- Snow plows have the right-of-way even if it does not seem like it! Please provide them with the courtesies that the rules of the road dictate, whether you are driving or walking. When approaching a snow plow from the front, make yourself as visible as possible and move to the side of the road that is not being plowed. If you are approaching from the rear, do not pass unless you are sure that the plow operator has seen you and that you can pass safely.
- Snow machine operation around the Town of Star Valley Ranch is fun but can present a hazard not only to the sled rider but also to those driving on the roads. Snow machine use is permitted on the Golf Courses by the Star Valley Ranch Association. Snow machine use is allowed on the Town Roads by the Town of Star Valley Ranch. Please be respectfully of private property. Just because there are sled marks across a vacant lot does not mean you have permission to ride there. Sled operators should slowdown and use caution when crossing or approaching roads. Allow other vehicular traffic to pass prior to proceeding.
- Public roads are for "Licensed Drivers Only" even during the winter. Off-road sled operation on the golf course is by permit only. (Contact the SVRA Office for specific rules and regulations).
- The maximum speed limit for any motorized vehicle throughout the Town is 25mph.

Back country recreation is plentiful in Star Valley. Before venturing out into the public lands for hiking / skiing / snowshoeing or snowmobiling, consult with the local authorities regarding avalanche potential and weather conditions. Dress appropriately and be sure to take extra clothing, food and water. Do not go out alone and let someone else, who is not going, know where you are going and when you plan to return. Always bring an emergency locating beacon, probe and shovel.

Be Safe, Stay Warm and Enjoy Your Winter!!



Town Planning

by Councilman Al Redlin

Three Reminders: **1.** The public is reminded that a building permit application must be submitted to the Town and a permit obtained and posted at the project site for any new building construction and any construction project that involves exterior modifications or structural modifications. **2.** The new zoning ordinances went into effect on January 1; they contain items governing exterior lighting, driveways, and signs in residential, recreational and commercial areas. **3.** Applications for a building/zoning variance must be filed with the Town Clerk a week before a meeting of Planning and Zoning Board (P&Z Board) to be considered at that P&Z Board meeting. Further information on the requirements and procedures may be found in Town Ordinances which are available on the Town Website or by contacting the Town Hall.

Building Permits: Construction activity was certainly down in 2009. There were many permits issued for new garages and residence modifications but only two permits were issued for new residences. The most new residence permits issued in a single year was about four years ago, prior to the Town being involved, when 79 permits were issued.

Meeting Time: The new starting time for the P&Z meetings is 5 p.m. items concerning the public will not begin until 6:00 pm (last year's starting time) to allow the public an opportunity to attend. P&Z Board meets at the Town hall on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. During these meetings they review and act on all building permit applications.

Other Activities: The P&Z developed Ordinance 2009-09 providing guidance and regulation for commercial development within the Town as well as general items on streets, sidewalks, exterior lighting, signs, driveways, and parking. This task took several months and many revisions of draft documents before a final forty page document evolved which was passed on third reading at the December 8, 2009. We thank the P&Z Board members for their untiring professional efforts in development of this ordinance and all other activities that they perform for the Town.

Planning for 2010 will present many challenges as we attempt to cope with reduced revenues and tightening budgets throughout our Nation, State and Town. The extent of the reduction of revenue is still unknown at this time, but we are confident that it will create major impacts in not only our fund availability but the ability to obtain grants. Our dreams of expediting improvements to our water system and providing additional Town services and facilities will undoubtedly be impacted.

Facilities Report for 2009

by Councilman Kent Harker

2009 was a very productive year for the Town's facilities. We were able to move Town Hall back into the Town. We are all very happy with our new office location. If you have not visited the New Town Hall, we invite you to come in and look it over.

Our Public Works crew did most of the construction on our new storage building on the BLM property. This building is able to house all of the equipment and materials for the Road Department and the Water Department. This building was paid for using \$108,000 of consensus grant funding and about \$77,000 Town money. The total cost was about \$185,000.

We moved in to our new Public Works maintenance building during November and December. This building has room and equipment to enable us to do most of our own equipment maintenance and repairs, which should save money and time over sending jobs out to other shops.

The building has offices, a break room, a water quality testing lab, plus a wash bay large enough to clean our biggest piece of equipment.

We used \$464,383 of consensus grant money and about \$185,000 Town money. The total cost was about \$650,000.

We have moved all of our equipment and supplies out of the old maintenance building on Vista Drive. We will now be able to use that building to house first responder equipment to improve emergency response time in the event of fires.



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