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## Let wind pay for Belvoir

By Jodi Rogstad

[jrogstad@wyomingnews.com](mailto:jrogstad@wyomingnews.com)

CHEYENNE - The city has a park project the size of Cheyenne itself.

At 13 miles in length and 18,800 acres, it approaches the scope of a state or even a national park.

The question: What kind of recreation could go into the Belvoir Ranch?

Planners threw out a few scenarios Wednesday, based on what the people had to say at a public input meeting in June:

A gateway center off of Interstate 80 with a museum, gas station and shopping. Campgrounds. Reservoirs. Golfing.

And trails everywhere for biking, hiking and horseback riding.

"This is a huge project," said City Councilman Tom Segrave during a work session Wednesday. "Could we get (State Parks and Historic Sites staff) at this point and ask for their expertise? I don't know anyone else who has done this as a small community."

Building it will take some long-range vision - say 30 years into the future, said Jane Kulik of Wenk Associates of Denver, a planning firm the city hired to help with Belvoir's master plan.

The master plan is being paid for by cows, said Mayor Jack Spiker. Right now, the city leases the Belvoir Ranch for grazing.

The wind may pay for building the trails, the golfing and campgrounds. Segrave said he would like to see turbines built, turning wind into electricity.

"We're talking millions of dollars," Segrave said. "If you have a 25-year lease and bond those, you could have a serious chunk of money. ... The revenues off the energy should be dedicated to development of the ranch.

"Let it pay for itself," he said. User fees can maintain what's built.

The city bought the land in 2003 for water development, to possibly build a new landfill and for recreation.

David Madison, a land planner with Wenk, presented a five- and a 15-year plan.

#### Five-year plan

Getting access - road, parking and trails - to the Big Hole is key, Madison said, because its 800 acres of butte-land will be a "regional magnet," Madison said.

To the Big Hole's north is the Belvoir Ranch. To its south is Colorado and more nature preserve that's owned by Larimer County, Colo. Because the city bought the Big Hole from the Nature Conservancy, not much development can happen on the land itself.

"Get people excited about it without a whole lot of expense," Madison said.

The five-year plan also includes:

- n Building trails for biking, horseback riding and mountain biking on the Belvoir Ranch. Already, the city has about \$16,000 in trail money, which was donated by the Leadership Cheyenne Class of 2005.

- n Installing spotting scopes for wildlife-watching.

- n Building a car-camping area.

- n Building a mountain bike jump park.

- n Hosting special events.

#### 15-year plan

Build the Belvoir gateway center - a visitors center just off of the Warren exit. This could include a gas station, convenience store and perhaps outdoors retail.

"Not only is the gateway into the park, it's the gateway into Cheyenne," Madison said.

This also is the time for other investments, such as:

- n Building one or two reservoirs for recreation, which would be filled with groundwater and replenished by rain and runoff.

- n Building a links golf course, which is a type of course that would not have the typical manicured, thick green grass, but is designed around the natural terrain. It could be self-sufficient in eight to 10 years.