

2013 2nd quarter issues report for Wyoming Public Media

Issue: Environment

Topic: The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality has been running an Engine Emissions Study for almost two years now. For the most part, Wyoming oil and gas fields are not connected to the grid and so they end up running on engines, which emit pollutants into the air. The study set out to evaluate emissions from these generators around the state. Results from the study show that a large percentage of the engines fail the tests. Wyoming Public Radio's Irina Zhorov spoke with the DEQ Air Quality Engineer in charge of the study, Jon Walker, about why that is.

Time: 7 min

Dates: 4/19/13 at 3pm and 4/21/13 at noon on WPR. 4/21/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: Gasland is a documentary about the negative effects of natural gas drilling. The narrator in the movie is seeking answers about natural gas development in light of a growing play around his own home in the Delaware River Basin, and his inquiries take him on a road trip to communities around the U.S. that have already been drilled into and have something to say about it. When the movie came out, it made big waves, and 'Gasland-2' premieres this weekend. Wyoming Public Radio's Irina Zhorov reports on what's changed since the first movie came out in 2010.

Time: 7 min

Dates: 4/19/13 at 3pm and 4/21/13 at noon on WPR. 4/21/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: A study by the U.S. Geological Survey looks at the ecological conditions that sage grouse need in order to survive, and the amount of human disturbance they can tolerate. We're joined now by Steve Knick, one of the report's authors. He says the goal was to determine the basic requirements that sage grouse have.

Time: 5 min

Date: 4/26/13 at 3pm and 4/28/13 at noon on WPR. 4/28/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: For the last month, state officials have expressed concern about Wyoming's dry winter and the possibility of another bad fire season. But with the moisture the state has recently received, the question is whether that concern has been reduced. Bill Crapser is the state forester and he tells Bob Beck that having more moisture has helped.

Time: 5 min

Date: 4/26/13 at 3pm and 4/28/13 at noon on WPR. 4/28/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: Sublette County has been in the news a lot because of its *air quality* problems, which largely stem from natural gas production. But there's another issue too: Pollutants have been showing up in *water wells*. Wyoming Public Radio's Willow Belden reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/10/13 at 3pm and 5/12/13 at noon on WPR. 5/12/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: Glaciers in the Wind River Mountain Range have been receding for a long time, and a new study looks at how that's affecting the ecosystems in high alpine streams. Wyoming Public Radio's Willow Belden spoke with Craig Thompson, one of the authors of the report. He's a professor of engineering and applied science at Western Wyoming Community College, and he's been studying these glaciers for more than two decades.

Time: 7 min

Date: 5/31/13 at 3pm and 6-2-13 at noon on WPR. 6-2-13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: For the first time, non-motorized trail enthusiasts will gather formally to discuss ways that communities, land managers, and others can improve trails across the state. Tim Young of Wyoming Pathways and Angela Emery, the Director of Casper's Platte River Trails talk with Wyoming Public Radio's Bob Beck about the Wyoming Trails Summit.

Time: 6 min

Date: 5/31/13 at 3pm and 6-2-13 at noon on WPR. 6-2-13 at 9am on WPM.

Issue: Energy

Topic: The Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission recently okayed an aquifer exemption that would permit Encana Oil and Gas to pump waste water from their oil and gas projects in the Moneta Divide into the Madison Aquifer, about 60 miles outside of Casper. Wyoming Public Radio's Irina Zhorov reports that the exemption isn't exactly a rarity, but it does bring up some big questions.

Time: 6 min

Dates: 4/19/13 at 3pm and 4/21/13 at noon on WPR. 4/21/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: Over the years, many researchers have looked at a variety of research and economic development projects using Wyoming coal. The idea is to open up new markets for it and to make it more viable for businesses and the public to use. Much of this has surrounded coal gasification. There has been a belief that coal could be used as a form of liquid fuel, but the interest dropped. Experts say that the other reason interest has waned is because these projects never work out. Wyoming Public Radio's Bob Beck reports.

Time: 5 min

Dates: 4/19/13 at 3pm and 4/21/13 at noon on WPR. 4/21/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: Wyoming Public Radio has for years reported that the state is on the verge of a uranium boom. It turns out the state missed the peak of that boom, and is now betting on slower, more conservative growth. Wyoming Public Radio's Irina Zhorov reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/31/13 at 3pm and 6-2-13 at noon on WPR. 6-2-13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: Wyoming Public Radio's Bob Beck spoke with the new supervisor of the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, Grant Black. Since he started the job a few weeks ago, Black has been dealing with issues ranging from the flaring of natural gas to water contamination.

Time: 7 min

Date: 6/7/13 at 3pm and 6/9/13 at noon on WPR. 6/9/13 at noon on WPM.

Issue: Health

Topic: Wyoming has one of the highest rates of suicide in the country ... nearly twice the national average. Until recently, efforts at *preventing* suicide were left up to individual counties. But now, the state is trying a new tactic which they hope will save more lives. Wyoming Public Radio's Willow Belden reports.

Time: 5 min

Dates: 4/19/13 at 3pm and 4/21/13 at noon on WPR. 4/21/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: Losing 2 sons to suicide: A conversation with B.J. Ayers.

Not one, but two of her sons killed themselves ... and since then, she's dedicated her life to trying to prevent suicide. She started the Grace for Two Brothers foundation and is now the suicide prevention coordinator for southeast Wyoming. Her son Brett was 19 when he died in 2005. She speaks with Willow Belden.

Time: 7 min

Dates: 4/19/13 at 3pm and 4/21/13 at noon on WPR. 4/21/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: As it addressed issues concerning substance abuse, one thing the state never had were Wyoming specific numbers on the financial impact of substance abuse. Wyoming Public Radio's Bob Beck reports that a recent study has found that the cost of alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse is staggering.

Time: 5 min

Date: 4/26/13 at 3pm and 4/28/13 at noon on WPR. 4/28/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: Alternative medicine and the vast red desert of Southwestern Wyoming are not often thought of as synonymous. The endless miles of sagebrush and open range lend themselves to an idea of a rougher existence. Not the sort of place where you might expect to find a good cup of organic herbal tea. But in our occasional series on young upstarts, one woman believes the area has a growing interest in natural health remedies and she's out to prove it.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/10/13 at 3pm and 5/12/13 at noon on WPR. 5/12/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: Wyoming consistently has one of the highest rates of workplace fatalities in the country. Many of these are in the energy industry, though not all. Last year, the state legislature decided to tackle the problem by hiring more safety consultants for Wyoming's Occupational Health and Safety Administration, or OSHA. Most agree that the change has been positive, but some say more still needs to be done, in order to reduce workplace injuries and deaths. Wyoming Public Radio's Willow Belden reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 6/21/13 at 3pm and 6/23/13 at noon on WPR. 6/23/13 at noon on WPM.

Issue: Social Issues

Topic: Guns: After weeks of intense lobbying on Capitol Hill gun control advocates suffered a stinging defeat this week...in part because of opposition from Wyoming's two Republican senators. Matt Laslo reports from Washington.

Time: 5 min

Dates: 4/19/13 at 3pm and 4/21/13 at noon on WPR. 4/21/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: For years, Wyoming has been timid when it comes to gambling. But things might be changing. With a casino on the Wind River reservation, an increase in poker clubs and the recent passage of a lottery bill, many are now wondering how far this issue will go. Wyoming Public Radio's Sara Hossaini has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: 4/26/13 at 3pm and 4/28/13 at noon on WPR. 4/28/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: Restorative justice is an approach to dealing with crime that put the victim of the crime front and center and considers how the offense affected the community, rather than looking at it as an isolated incident. Wyoming Public Radio's Irina Zhorov has a three part series about restorative justice efforts in Wyoming, starting with a case study.

Time: 8 min

Date: 6/21/13 at 3pm and 6/23/13 at noon on WPR. 6/23/13 at noon on WPM.

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Time: 5 min

Date: 6/21/13 at 3pm and 6/23/13 at noon on WPR. 6/23/13 at noon on WPM.

Topic: Restorative justice is an approach to dealing with crime that put the victim of the crime front and center and considers how the offense affected the community, rather than looking at it as an isolated incident. Wyoming Public Radio has a three part series about restorative justice efforts in Wyoming. In [Part One](#) we heard about how Stephen Watt and Mark Farnham initially crossed paths. [Part 2](#) outlined how restorative justice works and fledgling initiatives the state is taking to use it. But since there aren't any restorative justice programs for adults in Wyoming yet, Watt and Farnham had to sort of improvise. Still, it seems to have worked out. In part three of our series, we'll hear what this self-led restorative justice therapy has meant for Watt and Farnham.

Time: 8 min

Date: 6/21/13 at 3pm and 6/23/13 at noon on WPR. 6/23/13 at noon on WPM.

Issue: Native American

Topic: The extent of sovereignty for Native American tribes has long been like a tug-of-war between tribal and non-tribal governments in the United States. Wyoming Public Radio's Irina Zhorov reports that the issue of sovereignty trickles down to everything, even the issuance of traffic tickets, and lawmakers are moving nowhere fast to fix problems caused by disagreements over self-government for tribes.

Time: 6 min

Date: 5/17/13 at 3pm and 5/19/13 at noon on WPR. 5/19/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: The Northern Arapaho Tribe is a mess, financially. They're behind on their audits, past audits have not been flattering, and change has been slow to come. Wyoming Public Radio's Irina Zhorov has been looking into why the audits are less than ideal and the status of the Tribe's future financial solvency.

Time: 8 min

Date: 5/17/13 at 3pm and 5/19/13 at noon on WPR. 5/19/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: The Northern Arapaho Tribe opened the doors to its full-scale casino in 2005. Wyoming Public Radio's Irina Zhorov reports that eight years into the venture, the casino is making money but some wonder where it's going.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/17/13 at 3pm and 5/19/13 at noon on WPR. 5/19/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: The once-faltering Fremont School District 38 in Arapahoe turned a complete 180 since Superintendent Jonathan Braack took the helm in January 2012. Since that time there has been a major turnaround. WPR's Rebecca Martinez has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/17/13 at 3pm and 5/19/13 at noon on WPR. 5/19/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: Substance abuse is a concern for most school districts across the country, but on the Wind River Indian Reservation, it's a red flag for especially high crime and suicide rates. Tribes have been trying – with mixed success – to keep kids from abusing alcohol and tobacco... But a new program from the Eastern Shoshone Department of Juvenile Services is working to train a league of *student* mentors to help their peers avoid risky behaviors. Wyoming Public Radio's Rebecca Martinez filed this report.

Time: 6 min

Date: 5/17/13 at 3pm and 5/19/13 at noon on WPR. 5/19/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: Kit Freedman is a graduate of University of Wyoming, who did his thesis research on the Wind River Indian Reservation. In this essay he reflects on his family's multi-generational history in Lander.

Time: 4 min

Date: 5/17/13 at 3pm and 5/19/13 at noon on WPR. 5/19/13 at 9am on WPM.

Issue: Education

Topic: Oliver Walter came to the University of Wyoming in 1970 to teach political science and became dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in 1989. This summer, he'll be retiring. Wyoming Public Radio's Irina Zhorov sat down with him talk about his tenure at UW and the future for both the school and himself. He started out talking about some changes he witnessed in his decades as dean.

Time: 6 min

Date: 5/10/13 at 3pm and 5/12/13 at noon on WPR. 5/12/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: This weekend a new set of graduates are leaving the University of Wyoming. For some, they are facing an unknown job situation, but others are ready to jump into their careers. The graduates also talked about Wyoming's efforts to keep them in-state. Wyoming Public Radio's Bob Beck sat down with three graduates from U-W's College of business and found that two are leaving and one thinks he'll hang around a bit longer.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/10/13 at 3pm and 5/12/13 at noon on WPR. 5/12/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: In the mid 1990's the University of Wyoming made a conscious effort to attract more Native American students to the University. Over the years recruitment and retention of students from the Wind River Reservation has been challenging. New efforts could change things and many believe that will be important for the long term health of the Reservation. Bob Beck reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/17/13 at 3pm and 5/19/13 at noon on WPR. 5/19/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: Recent leadership and policy changes have caused upheaval in the Wyoming Department of education, but the collection and processing of data has been insufficient for years. An audit of the WDE's Information Management unit is showing that there are major flaws in the system, and that an overhaul of the department is in order. Wyoming Public Radio's Rebecca Martinez reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 6/7/13 at 3pm and 6/9/13 at noon on WPR. 6/9/13 at noon on WPM.

Topic: Monday the President of the Wyoming Education Association Kathy Vetter will join other colleagues from across the nation in Atlanta for the National Education Association Representative Assembly where they will discuss a number of education issues. Kathy Vetter joined Bob Beck to discuss some issues that might come up and give us her thoughts on some education issues facing Wyoming.

Time: 6 min

Date: 6/28/13 at 3pm and 6/30/13 at noon on WPR. 6/30/13 at 9am on WPM.

Issue: Business

Topic: After decades of a boom and bust economy...officials in a town in Southwestern Wyoming believe they may have harnessed the erratic cycle into more sustainable economic growth. Wyoming Public Radio's Amanda LeClaire has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: 4/26/13 at 3pm and 4/28/13 at noon on WPR. 4/28/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: Going to the movies has been a favorite pastime since the dawn of film, but Hollywood studios expect to stop printing movies on actual film before the end of this year. They're switching over to a digital format, which requires all-new equipment and the cost of the transition is proving prohibitive for some small Wyoming theaters. Wyoming Public Radio's Rebecca Martinez filed this report.

Time: 5 min

Date: 4/26/13 at 3pm and 4/28/13 at noon on WPR. 4/28/13 at 9 am on WPM.

Topic: Debate over the immigration overhaul has found its way to the vast open spaces of Wyoming. Here, Peruvian guest workers on H2-A visas tend thousands of sheep. These shepherds make just \$750 a month to be on the job around-the-clock, usually alone for months on end. That's around half of what *other* agricultural guest workers make because sheep ranchers receive a special exemption from minimum wage requirements. Ranchers say it's needed in order to save this small, struggling American industry. But worker rights advocates say it's exploitation. Wyoming Public Radio's Sara Hossaini reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/31/13 at 3pm and 6-2-13 at noon on WPR. 6-2-13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: Where some people see a weed, others see a gold mine... At least that's the case in Richard and Claire Dunne's Absaroka Farm in North Central, Wyoming. A farm that, if you drove past it, you might think was just another stretch of the prairie. Although sagebrush seed is in demand, growing it commercially is a niche market... and some people think it's crazy. Wyoming Public Radio's Luke Hammons filed this report.

Time: 4 min

Date: 5/31/13 at 3pm and 6-2-13 at noon on WPR. 6-2-13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: In our occasional series on upstart businesses we take you to Laramie to tell you about a software company that is making a dent in the world of medicine. Mona Gamboa started Happy Jack Software in 2004 after she left her software job in Texas to join her husband who took a job at the University of Wyoming. Gamboa got a Master in Science in E Business from U-W and started Happy Jack software in the U-W Student Union. Wyoming Public Radio's Bob Beck reports.

Time: 4 min

Date: 6/7/13 at 3pm and 6/9/13 at noon on WPR. 6/9/13 at noon on WPM.

Issue: Politics

Topic: Pete Gosar of Laramie is the new chairman of the Wyoming Democratic Party. He says he's optimistic that the party will be able to gain a better footing in the state in the future. He spoke with Willow Belden.

Time: 6 min

Date: 4/26/13 at 3pm and 4/28/13 at noon on WPR. 4/28/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: National Republican leaders are doing some soul searching after suffering losses in November. Matt Laslo reports from Washington on what Wyoming Republican lawmakers think of the new effort.

Time: 5 min

Date: 4/26/13 at 3pm and 4/28/13 at noon on WPR. 4/28/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: The congressionally mandated budget cuts called sequestration continue to have an impact on Wyoming. And while the state's Republican lawmakers say those cuts aren't having as big of an impact as predicted by Democrats, Matt Laslo reports from Washington that the delegation still isn't happy with the sequester.

Time: 5 min

Date: 6-21-13 at 3pm and 6-23-13 at noon on WPR. 6-23-13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: State agencies worked hard to trim the fat in order to meet an average of 6-percent budget cuts the Wyoming Legislature put into effect this year. The Judicial Branch took a hit of 4-percent budget cut. Because the state revenue forecast is still cloudy, further cuts may be considered. As the state population grows, so does the need for the court system, which makes it next-to-impossible to cut back. Wyoming Public Radio's Rebecca Martinez reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/10/13 at 3pm and 5/12/13 at noon on WPR. 5/12/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: A US senate committee has introduced an immigration reform plan that includes a path to citizenship for immigrants living illegally in the U.S. Opponents claim that such a path rewards people who have broken the law by giving them amnesty. Luke Hammons reports.

Time: 4 min

Date: 5/10/13 at 3pm and 5/12/13 at noon on WPR. 5/12/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: This week President Obama announced he's going to attempt to combat climate change from the Oval Office. Wyoming's three Republicans in Congress are none too happy with his plan. As Matt Laslo reports, they say it could cripple the state's economy and hit your pocket.

Time: 5 min

Date: 6/28/13 at 3pm and 6/30/13 at noon on WPR. 6/30/13 at noon on WPM.

Issue: Wildlife

Topic: If you're looking for big, stately elk antlers to hang on your wall, the National Elk Refuge in Jackson *would* be a great place to find them... except the public isn't allowed onto the elk habitat. Instead, the Refuge and the Jackson Boy Scouts are gathering and bundling antlers to sell at the annual Elk Antler Auction in Jackson next weekend to benefit elk habitat projects. Wyoming Public Radio's Rebecca Martinez spoke with the Refuge's Lori Iverson about it. Iverson says she understands why people want elk antlers, but protecting the wildlife is her first priority.

Time: 5 min

Date: 5/10/13 at 3pm and 5/12/13 at noon on WPR. 5/12/13 at 9am on WPM.

Topic: Since wolves have been taken off the Endangered Species List in Wyoming, they can now be hunted in many parts of the state ... and they can also be *trapped* in areas where they're classified as predators. Rebecca Huntington reports that *that's* raising concerns that unintended animals could end up in the traps.

Time: 5 min

Date: 6/7/13 at 3pm and 6/9/13 at noon on WPR. 6/9/13 at noon on WPM.

Topic: Since the 1990s, elk that migrate between Yellowstone National Park and Cody have been raising fewer calves. But the elk that stay in the foothills near Cody year round and *don't* migrate have been doing very well. A new study looks at why that's the case. Wyoming Public Radio's Willow Belden spoke with the lead author on the report, Arthur Middleton. He says they spent years looking at the elk's predators and habitat, and how those corresponded to elk pregnancies and overall wellbeing.

Time: 5 min

Date: 6/7/13 at 3pm and 6/9/13 at noon on WPR. 6/9/13 at noon on WPM.

Topic: Last year, we reported on a new project to restore sage grouse habitat that's been disturbed by energy development in the Powder River Basin. The Bureau of Land Management, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and other agencies are participating in the effort. And they're starting to make progress. Wyoming Public Radio's Willow Belden spoke with Janelle Gonzales, who's coordinating the project for the BLM, and Bill Ostheimer, a natural resource specialist at the BLM's office in Buffalo. Gonzales says what they're trying to do is restore sage grouse habitat after oil and gas wells are no longer in use.

Time: 7 min

Date: 6/21/13 at 3pm and 6/23/13 at noon on WPR. 6/23/13 at noon on WPM.