

Residents mull how to use sales tax hike

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LARAMIE - Laramie residents are hoping to use proceeds from a proposed county sales tax hike to set up a publicly owned preserve that will boost recreation and help protect drinking water.

In their push to add a so-called "land chain" stretching from Laramie city limits to Pole Mountain, proponents compared the effort to the new 19,000-acre Belvoir Ranch, a Cheyenne city-owned property to be dedicated to outdoor recreation.

Next May, Albany County voters will be asked to weigh in on 1 percent sales tax increase, to raise about \$50 million over 10 years to fund specific projects.

The race is on to find projects that may benefit.

Laramie resident Jason Lillegraven, a backer of the preserve plan, said, "I really can't think of a better way to spend our money in terms of quality of life."

There are plenty of ideas for how to use any eventual proceeds, however, with airport advocates also hoping some cash could go to terminal expansion.