

# Protect Adobe Town, July conferees agree

• It has 'unique values,' 'world-class national park quality scenery.'

### Special to The Times

A July 8 conservation summit in Rock Springs highlighted "the unique values" of the Adobe Town proposed wilderness area southwest of Rawlins.

Approximately 60 attendees participated, representing "a broad array of interests and viewpoints," a release said.

"The Badlands of South Dakota (a national park) pale in comparison to Adobe Town," said panelist Craig Thompson, a professor of engineering and earth science at Western Wyoming Community College.

"Very little scientific research has been done on this area and it has great potential to yield important information," Thompson said. "For example, we know almost nothing about the area's hydrology. It should be preserved as wilderness."

Audience members raised concerns about the prospect of oil and gas drilling in the Adobe Town area.

"There could be close to 15,000 new wells in the area around Adobe Town including the Great Divide, Atlantic Rim and Vermillion Basin, putting additional pressure on Adobe Town during

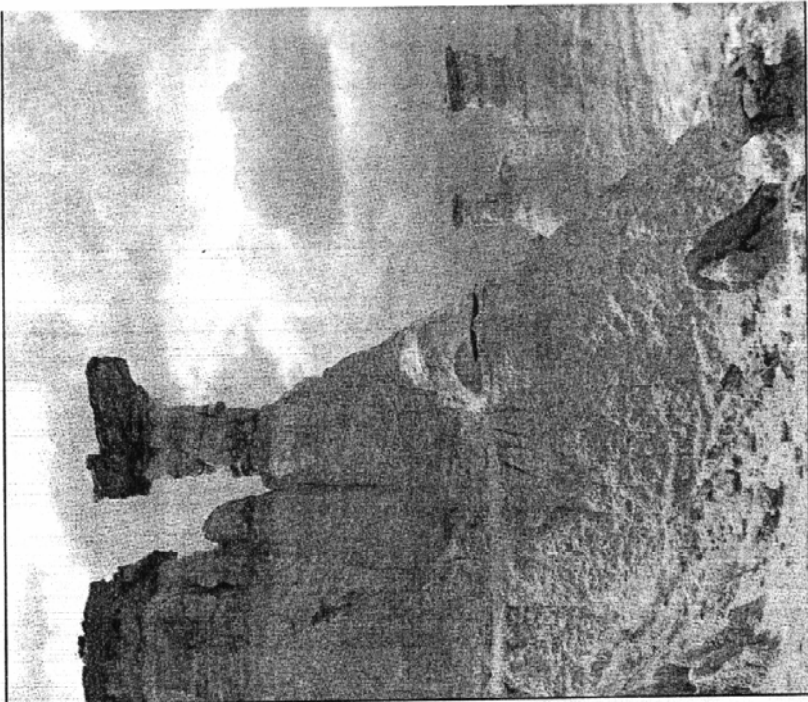
the next 5 to 15 years," said Dr. Ron Surdam, director of the Wyoming State Geological Survey. Other audience members raised concerns that increased tourism could follow protective designation, raising the potential of damage to the landscape from recreational use.

The comments of paleontologist and retired University of Wyoming professor Dr. Jay Lillegraven reflected the opinions of the majority of panelists and audience members at the event a release said.

"We are talking world-class national park quality scenery and arid-land habitat," remarked Dr. Lillegraven. "Such places must be preserved as oases for the wild inhabitants and for human escape from the from the realities of modern life."

According to Lloyd Eisenhauer, a retired Rawlins BLM area manager, "Adobe Town has a special quality, a tour area quality. There should be more advocacy for Adobe Town and for wild horses. The Overland and Cherokee (Historic) Trails should be included in the protected area."

"I feel that it (Adobe Town) should be given permanent wilderness status and we simply must not destroy this place in favor of short-term economic gains," added Lillegraven. "We cannot let all of Wyoming become a landscape resembling the I-80 corridor."



Daily Times / Dave Pe  
Conferees at a July summit in Rock Springs sponsored by conservation groups are calling for protection of Adobe Town and its unique landscape, including these 60-foot towers.