



Land-Use Dilemma

This is a fictional scenario, but communities all across the United States are faced with zoning issue debates and conflicts. Pleasant Valley is a ranching and logging community on the western slope of the Snow Mountains. Silverton—a town of 20,000—is the trade center of the area. Cramer Lumber Company is expanding its operations. This expansion will provide 250 new jobs, but housing is very limited. A 200-home subdivision has been proposed for an 80-acre plot of undeveloped land on the south edge of town. This forested area is bordered by Rattlesnake Creek on the west. Rattlesnake Creek provides excellent fishing for rainbow trout. Fifty-three species of birds have been sighted in this area, including some rare species. In the spring and fall, the area is used by migrating waterfowl, and deer feed in the area. Many small watchable species—such as ground squirrels and pocket gophers—inhabit the area. This 80-acre plot is currently zoned for agriculture and forestry and would have to be rezoned for residential use by a vote of the county commissioners. The subdivision would be on a central water system, but each home would have its own septic system.

