



You may have heard the word exurbanite floating around, and many readers of this article may actually be exurbanites. So what does it mean anyway?

Exurban refers to areas outside cities and towns which are neither urban nor suburban. But they are not quite rural – they are something in between. Not much is known about individuals, like some of you, who live in this in-between area, but an increasing number of people are building homes and moving to these exurban areas.

Understanding the needs and values of these people is important to the land resource groups who publish *Backyards & Barnyards*. Exurbanites are a fairly new phenomenon and not well understood. They can have a great effect on the state's natural resources through their resource management practices. To get to know them better, we plan to survey exurbanites (exurban landowners). We particularly want to find out how much communication is taking place between them and natural resource advisers like those at the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service,

and conservation districts. We hope to better provide the information you want and need from your natural resource advisers to support your land-management decisions.

The mail survey we'll use will help us understand how you describe yourself (your age, education, how long you have lived in an exurban setting, your goals, what you value about your property, and your knowledge of natural resources). Natural resource advisers have some general ideas about who exurbanites are, but information from the survey will help us identify any potential gaps in our understanding so we can improve our outreach efforts. We see a great need to get to know who you are, and we are confident this project will fulfill that need.

If you receive a survey in the coming months, we ask you complete and return it to help us in this important effort to better understand Wyoming's exurbanites.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Paul Meiman at pmeiman@uwyo.edu or (307) 332-1840 or Rachel Mealor at rdmealor@uwyo.edu.

Rachel Mealor is a graduate student in the Department of Renewable Resources in the University of Wyoming's College of Agriculture. Paul Meiman is an extension specialist for rangeland resources in the Department of Renewable Resources and Cooperative Extension Service, University of Wyoming