

Regulations 'breaking country,' speaker says

By GARY HARMON

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Federal regulation is stifling the nation's economic recovery, a Wyoming natural resources attorney told Club 20 on Saturday.

Regulation "has become so costly that it is breaking our country," Harriet Hageman, who represents businesses seeking regulatory approvals, told about 200 people attending the fall meeting of the West Slope advocacy organization at the Colorado Mesa University Student Center.

The federal government imposes a \$1.75 trillion regulatory burden on businesses, Hageman said, citing a report from the Office of Advocacy in the U.S. Small Business Administration. That's more than half-again as large as the regulatory burden in 2005, the government agency.

Hageman, a niece of former Club 20 Chairwoman Kathy Hall, said the full effect of federal regulation, combined with state and local regulation, is hamstringing businesses, but government officials have not looked at the

result.

"They don't know what these regulations are doing to business," Hageman said, citing her own experience trying to gain a permit for a gravel pit in Wyoming.

It cost \$250,000 to file for the permit for the pit "in the middle of nowhere, and in Wyoming there's a lot of nowhere," Hageman said.

The operator of the pit, if it's approved, will recoup the cost by passing it along to customers, Hageman said.