

**PRIVATE  
PROPERTY  
KEEP OUT**

# Locked Out

**Public Lands Transfers  
Threaten Sportsmen's Access**



Erick Petlock

Joel Webster

# Federal public lands and sportsmen's access



Joel Webster

In an increasingly crowded and pay-to-play world, America's 640 million acres of public lands – including our national forests and Bureau of Land Management lands – have become the nation's mightiest hunting and fishing strongholds.

This is especially true in the West, where according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 72 percent of sportsmen depend on access to public lands for hunting. Without these vast expanses of prairie and sagebrush, foothills and towering peaks, the traditions of hunting and fishing as we have known them for the past century would be lost. Gone also would be a very basic American value: the unique and abundant freedom we've known for all of us, rich and poor and in-between, to experience our undeveloped and wild spaces, natural wonders, wildlife and waters, and the assets that have made life and citizenship in our country the envy of the world.

## Where will you go?

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Derrick Reeves

# The Public Lands Transfer Movement: An unprecedented threat to public access

**O**ur public lands were created as a uniquely American solution to natural resource challenges that have plagued nations for centuries. How should we manage lands and waters located within our borders to best serve the interests of the public at large?

In the rough-and-tumble closing of the American frontier in the late 19th century, millions of acres of land – too remote, rugged or dry for settlement – went unclaimed. These

unclaimed lands were subjected to a ruthless free-for-all of mining,

dreams. Rangelands are mostly restored. Rivers – without which there is no agriculture, towns or cities in the arid West – provide excellent fishing and run clear from mountain snow packs protected on public land.

Big game and other wildlife populations have recovered. There is a constant and often frustrating struggle between conservation and development – but that conflict, too, is uniquely American, a nation that owes its very existence to the fertile soil of conflicting ideas. What is important is not the argument over the management of the lands, but the lands themselves, which, in addition to natural resources, provide access to millions of Americans for recreation and fuel an outdoors-dependent economy: the \$646 billion dollars spent by people enjoying America’s outdoors every year and the 6.1 million jobs directly related to publicly accessible waters, prairies, forests and mountains. A third of that economy – \$256 billion – comes from the West alone.

Some claim that the states can manage these lands much more efficiently than the federal government and so ownership of the lands, the birthright of all Americans, should be transferred to the states in which they are located. Various efforts are afoot across nine Western states (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming) to wrest public lands away from the federal government and put them under state ownership. Such plans are rife with shortcomings. While no Westerner would say that federal management of our lands is perfect, the idea that individual states will do a better job is fundamentally flawed.

*“While no Westerner would say that federal management of our lands is perfect, the idea that individual states will do a better job is fundamentally flawed.”*

logging and overgrazing that threatened to make them a wasteland. The original “forest reserves” were set aside in 1891 to protect the mountain headwaters of the major Western rivers. Between 1901 and 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt, America’s most famous sportsman-conservationist, expanded the “forest reserves,” now known as national forests, to almost 148 million acres. The Bureau of Land Management was created to oversee 245 million acres of unclaimed rangeland and to restore marginal lands abandoned by homesteaders. The solution has worked, probably beyond Roosevelt’s wildest



Mia Sheppard

## The business of selling public lands

Western states were granted millions of acres by the federal government when they attained statehood. Many of these lands have been sold to private interests. Nevada, for example, was given 2.7 million acres when it became the 36th state in the union in 1864. It now has only 3,000. Utah has sold more than 50 percent of its original land grant. Look across the West, and you'll see that the story is the same: Western states have remained committed to selling off public lands, and you can count on them doing it again if given the chance. Once privatized, these lands will become off limits to most sportsmen in perpetuity.

## The expense of public land management

Current state budgets would struggle to cover the costs of managing millions of acres of public land. Firefighting costs alone – the federal government faced a \$1.74 billion price tag for wildfire management on the nation's public lands in 2013 – would break most state budgets, as would the massive expansion of state government that land management would require, unless state legislators could quickly push through some exorbitant tax hikes. For example, studies show that Idaho would run a deficit of about \$111 million per year if it were to take on management of just 16.4 million of the 34 million acres of public land within the state's boundaries. Montana's land management costs, if awarded all of its federal lands, would range from \$300 million to \$500 million annually. Furthermore, these figures do not address the lost federal Payments In Lieu of Taxes money, which currently is given to counties with federal public lands.

State ownership of lands presently owned and managed by the federal government would result in only one likely outcome: the sale of any lands not producing significant quantities of timber, minerals or energy to private interests. Stark financial reality will trump any other concerns.

## Industrialization and fire sales

National forest lands are currently managed under the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960. The Act requires that Forest Service undertake "management of all the various renewable surface resources of the national forests so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the needs of the American people."

The act also defines sustained yield as "the achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high-level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the national forests *without impairment of the productivity of the land*" (italics added). Bureau of Land Management lands are managed under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which has similar goals, to prevent a repeat of the degradation of these lands that led to the Dust Bowl and other resource disasters of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Contrast these laudable goals with state trust lands, which are publicly owned and managed but are not "public" like national forests. Rather, many states managed their lands to support specific beneficiaries and do not attempt to manage for multiple uses or to achieve conservation objectives.

*"The American hunting and fishing tradition would be eliminated, replaced by a model that resembles the old world system where only the elite few can pursue the 'king's' fish and game."*

This description fires a warning shot to anyone who uses our public lands now: A change to state ownership will result in a radical conversion of the Western landscape. Idaho's projected land management deficit of \$111 million per year depends on increasing current logging levels by a half-billion board feet annually. The kind of management demanded by state



control of our public lands will produce much the same kind of management that we saw in the 19th century: industrialization wherever there are resources to be extracted. The beneficiary funding requirements of state lands and the desperate need for property tax-funded services in counties will require that any lands not producing valuable, quantifiable resources – coal, timber, energy or maximum grazing leases – be sold off and the funds placed in investment accounts. Billionaires and global corporations who may neither understand nor value America’s outdoor heritage would be the ones to buy them.



Ed Arnett

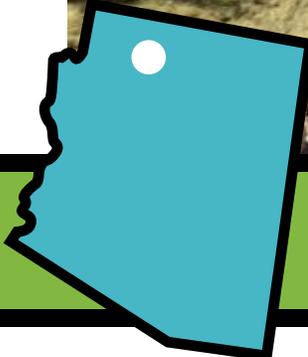
The most valuable real estate, and the first to be sold, would likely be riverfront and lakefront acreage and the most scenic parts of the deserts and mountains. The West as we know it now, with abundant hunting and fishing, rivers to swim and float, and mountains to climb, would be gone. What would be the long-term impacts on our nation’s vibrant outdoor economy of, for example, industrializing these lands for minerals development or cutting more than a half-billion board feet of timber every year? The outcome – and its consequences

for our cherished hunting and fishing traditions – is clear. The American hunting and fishing tradition would be eliminated, replaced by a model that resembles the old world system where only the elite few can pursue the ‘king’s’ fish and game.

Read on to learn about some of America’s finest hunting and fishing destinations that could be permanently seized from the public if politicians have their way. 🗝️



Ryan Hatch



## Arizona: Arizona Strip

**T**he Arizona Strip has been called the best place on the planet to hunt mule deer, and with more than 2 million acres of Bureau of Land Management public lands and 4,000-plus miles of roads to explore, it is a hunter's dream country.

Most of the 5 million annual visitors to the Grand Canyon, which lies just to the south, have no idea that just beyond the mighty Colorado River is located another, even wilder universe of slot canyons, sagebrush plains, lost rivers and Ponderosa pine-clad mountains. The rugged Grand Canyon cuts off the Strip and makes this some of the most remote country in the Southwest, where bighorn sheep clatter in the scree, bison wander and turkeys thunder in high elevation aspen groves that seem utterly removed from the deserts below. It's the Kaibab Plateau and the Vermillion Cliffs, the Poverty Mountains, the Parashant, all names that conjure up monster bucks in desert solitude.

You'll need your extra water and your best boots, because the Strip is a sprawling place where the deer densities are low (population estimates are around 2,000 animals most years) but you'll find some of the largest bucks on earth. As you hunt, you'll see the same country traversed by the pioneers who launched from Fort Smith, Arkansas, bound for the Colorado River and westward on the Beale Wagon Road. At Laws Spring you can study the pictographs left by hunters like yourself hundreds and thousands of years ago. The most unique fact

about this country, other than the fact that it is ours for the roaming, is that you will see it much as those long-ago hunters saw it.

In 2012, Arizona passed Senate Bill 1332, demanding the transfer of all federal lands to the state and giving the state the right to sell them to promote development. Arizona Proposition 120, a ballot measure defeated by two-thirds of Arizona voters, would have amended the state's constitution to "declare Arizona's sovereignty and jurisdiction over the air, water, public lands, minerals, wildlife, and other natural resources within the state's boundaries." What the legislature proposed is a fundamental and radical remaking of Arizona, with no regard for the quality of life or natural resource protection that the public lands have provided for more than a century. It is hard to imagine the price that would be paid for the Arizona Strip, but the outcome would be clear: a state where access to the best hunting and other recreation is reserved for those wealthy enough to buy what once belonged to all of us.



Ryan Hatch



Nick Payne

# Colorado: Moosehead Mountain

**T**he big game hunter's bucket list may include a trip to the slopes of Alaska's Brooks Range for Dall sheep or deep into the southwestern deserts for the beautiful little Coues deer. One thing is certain – that list will hold a hunt for big bull elk, and there is no better place to do that than on high-country public land in Colorado.

Moosehead Mountain is in the northwest part of the state, south of Dinosaur National Monument and not far from the towns of Rangely and Dinosaur. It tops out at about 8,400 feet in big sagebrush, mountain mahogany, pinyon pine and juniper – a classic glass-and-stalk hunt, using the terrain to get in front of moving elk. There is a lot to see here with bands of pronghorn in the warmer months and big mule deer bucks, most of them transitioning from high country to low as the snows come in.

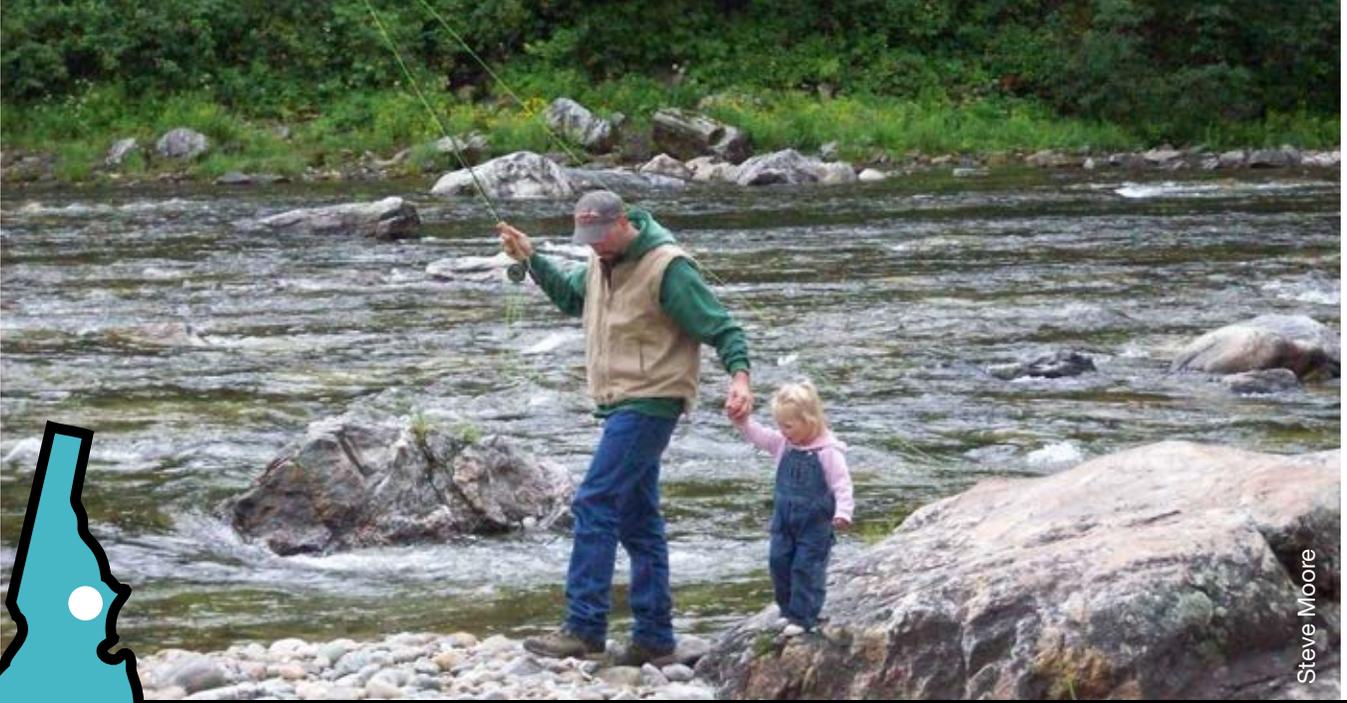
This is part of the home range of the second largest elk herd in North America, and it encompasses

a migration corridor that

carries not just herds of elk but some truly big bulls – scoring up to 370. It's a wild place, remote and empty, and accessible to hunters on foot or horseback. The bull tag for Game Management Unit 10 is one of the most coveted big game tags in America and has been for decades. Current federal management is bound by law to manage public lands like Moosehead Mountain for multiple use, including wildlife and hunting. The state of Colorado has no such mandate, and, to the contrary, its mandate is to maximize profits from state lands – not conserve resources like hunting or fishing. State management of these lands could result in unrestricted development based on the highest profit or, for game-rich lands like Moosehead Mountain, sale to private interests that could make a fortune selling access or high-priced hunts on what now belongs to every American hunter.

Colorado elk hunters have been among the first citizens to oppose proposals for land transfer because they know best what is at stake: their access to places like Moosehead Mountain and, with the loss of that access, the future of hunting in Colorado. Despite public opposition to public lands transfer, some Colorado politicians are pushing the idea, and bad proposals demanding the seizure of public lands are expected during the 2015 legislative session.

*“Colorado elk hunters have been among the first citizens to oppose proposals for land transfer because they know best what is at stake”*



Steve Moore



## Idaho: Upper St. Joe and the North Fork of the Clearwater Rivers

**T**he narrow trail unfolds before you, cut into a steep sidehill that descends into a thicketed creek bottom where, through breaks in the brush, you can see the creek and long, green pools where cutthroats rise. The trail goes on and on, and there's a long roll of last winter's snow on the ridge far above you.

The view opens down a wide forested valley with a torrent of blue-green river, endless meadows and parks that look like God's own version of elk country. There's no road here, and only the wind in the lodgepoles and the distant, muted roar of the river break the silence. This is Kelly Creek, north-central Idaho, above the North Fork of the Clearwater River.

You'll find backcountry bear and wolf hunting, fishing for big Westslope cutthroat trout, elk hunting or simple freedom – to make camp where night finds you, wake in the morning and wander again.

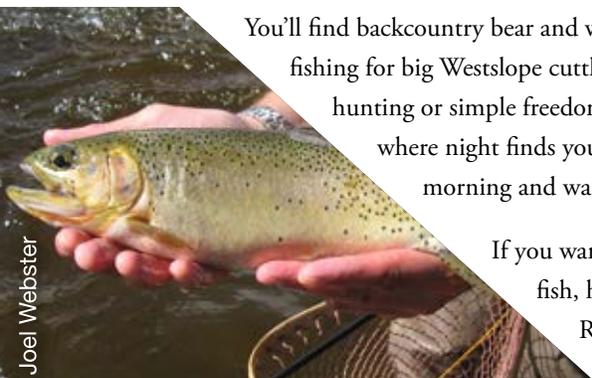
If you want to car camp and fish, head for the St. Joe River above Avery or fish the North Fork of the

Clearwater out of Pierce. There are dozens of campgrounds to choose from and a maze of logging roads to take you up high where the huckleberries grow in thickets. You could spend a

lifetime hunting and fishing here and not see it all, and many people do just that. Every tumbling tributary has wild trout, forest grouse and game trails leading to other worlds of big timber and shadowed glens.

The Idaho legislature has been front and center in demanding that the federal government transfer these and the rest of the 34 million acres of federal public lands in Idaho to the state. The issue has been hotly debated by Idaho residents, because state management of these lands could result in a fire sale to private interests, just as it did when timber companies began selling off their lands a decade ago. Private ownership of former federal lands would impact access to lakes and hunting country on which locals – and visitors – have depended for generations.

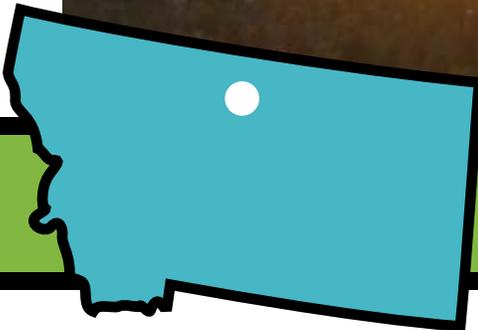
With its lush forests and excellent, accessible hunting and fishing, the Upper St. Joe is some of the most desirable real estate in the West. For long-term and big picture investors, the value lies in the area's water resources — the Upper St. Joe, including Kelly Creek, makes up more than a quarter of the Clearwater River watershed. When President Theodore Roosevelt created the Clearwater National Forest in July of 1908, he knew exactly what he was doing. The only question now is whether Americans have the will to carry on one of the world's great legacies of publicly accessible hunting, fishing and camping, or whether we will let it disappear in a haze of bad ideas and short-term greed.



Joel Webster



Liz Bradley



## Montana: Missouri River Breaks

**T**housands of years ago, the Missouri River in Montana ran north of where it is today. As the ice ages ended, the river took a new course below the Bears Paw Mountains near the present-day town of Havre, cutting a wide channel through the fine clay soils of the plains. Rain and snow since have carved the earth into a vast and twisted maze of coulees and canyons, some of them hundreds of feet deep, marked by cliffs of yellow sandstone and weathered buttes, steep slopes of scree and gumbo soil.

The Breaks were one of the last places to be settled in the West. Much of the land went unclaimed during the homestead years. A lot more was abandoned later, when fierce winters and seemingly endless droughts forced even the toughest families to leave.

Today, most of the Missouri Breaks is public land in the care of the Bureau of Land Management. American hunters know it as perhaps the most unique and legendary elk, mule deer and bighorn sheep country in the world. Ponder this: mountain hunters are accustomed to going up into the hills to seek their quarry. In the Breaks, you hike down, eventually reaching the big river itself. This is the home of the second largest elk herd in Montana and some of the West's biggest trophy bulls.

Nothing comes easy here. There's galling heat during bugling season, clouds of mosquitoes and big rattlers. Snow in September. Gumbo mud that will defeat the most determined

off-roader. Howling blizzards and subzero temperatures in November. Packing meat uphill and the risk of missing that one coulee that leads back to the truck. It's a tough place, and that's the way Missouri Breaks hunters like it.

The Missouri Breaks are in the crosshairs of the movement to transfer public lands into state – and possible

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private – ownership. On June 24, 2014, the Montana GOP announced that it had taken a position of “shifting public land management away from Washington, D.C., control.”

Interest in private ownership of Missouri Breaks land is at a record high. One Texas family has recently purchased more than 300,000 acres in the area for hunting purposes. The once abandoned and unclaimed lands, now rich with big game, solitude and adventure, are the modern equivalent of diamonds and gold. If transferred to the state of Montana, these lands could be sold and closed forever to access for the average American sportsman.



## New Mexico: Bootheel

It is often said that living well is the best revenge. For a hunter, that could mean stalking a high-desert Coues deer buck in short sleeves while your friends shiver in rain and snow far away to the north.

The Bootheel of far southwestern New Mexico is the answer to a lot of hunters' winter prayers. Sprawling and mostly uninhabited, more than a third of the Bootheel is public lands, giving hunters 488,320 acres of roaming room managed by the BLM and Forest Service. It's a Chihuahuan desert, cholla and chaparral world, dry and bony until you get some rain- and snow-catching altitude in the mountains. The Peloncillos, Animas and Guadalupe are the major ranges, towering from 6,000 to 8,500 feet. The high country encompasses an ecoregion called the Madrean forest, a mixture of piñon pine, junipers and five different species of oak. There are wild places here, remote and requiring the utmost self-sufficiency, in the Big Hatchet Mountains and the Peloncillos.

The star of this country is the elusive little Coues deer, but there are plenty of other opportunities to spend long days afield. You can hunt three species of quail in one day, starting out in the lower country with Gambel's and scaled quail and climbing the mountain flanks for the close-holding Mearns' quail. There are javelinas, mule deer, rare desert bighorns and a recovered population of Gould's turkeys – the largest of all the wild turkey subspecies.

Some New Mexicans, like so many Westerners, have a deep-rooted distrust of the federal government. This distrust has been used by some politicians who care little for the state's hunting and outdoor heritage and are pushing to have New Mexico's federal public lands transferred to state control. Popular opinion opposes the idea of transferring the lands as a solution to the conflicts over federal management because the burdens of management far outweigh any benefits that would come to most residents (federal firefighting costs in New Mexico exceeded \$240 million in 2012 alone).

Sen. Martin Heinrich of New Mexico, who opposes state takeover of federal public lands, told reporters, "The states would have no choice but to auction off the best public lands to cover costs. That would devastate our outdoor traditions like hunting and fishing as well as the 68,000 jobs associated with outdoor recreation in New Mexico. These lands belong to all of us, and it is imperative that we keep it that way."

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Erick Petlock

## Nevada: Hunt Areas 6 and 7

In Nevada, the American West is alive and well. Vast distances and empty highways beckon. Desert basins and island range peaks are visited by hard-working people who know the value of extra gas jugs, a high lift jack, some guns and a strong sense of adventure.

Nevada is the driest state in the Union, with an average rainfall of about 7 inches, which accounts for the fact that 80 percent of the state remained public land during the homestead era. Homesteaders filed their claims on the water sources and river bottoms and counted on the public lands for grazing. That's still how it is done today. The result is that Nevada, from the pronghorn and mule deer to elk and chukar partridge, is a harsh paradise for the American hunter to explore.

It is almost impossible to overstate the availability of places to hunt and fish in this state. But Nevada Department of Wildlife Areas 6 and 7, in the northern part of the state, offer extraordinary opportunity. Both areas hold an immensity of public land managed either by the BLM or the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. This is classic mule deer territory, with enough big bucks in hidden pockets and in the high country to keep a hard core fan club of hunters returning as frequently as they can draw tags. Elk numbers continue to increase, and big bulls are not uncommon. For those who wish to chase game birds, the chukar hunting is world class in places like the



Erick Petlock

Bruneau River canyon, where the unique redbands, a native rainbow trout, rise to hoppers during the summer.

Nevada politicians have joined the newest movement to take over public lands in their state. Nevada has sold off all but 3,000 of the 2.7 million acres granted to it by the federal government when it attained statehood, and legislation is expected in the 2015 state legislature that would propose the transfer of millions more acres of federal lands to the state.

Nevada state lands (what is left of them) are used for revenue production, and at this time there are no specific mandates for conserving wildlife or recognizing the value of hunting and fishing to the economy. The state also lacks the resources to restore and enhance habitat on large swaths of land. Given the costs of managing these arid landscapes, any transfer of federal public lands to the state would likely result in the lands being sold to private interests and in public access being lost forever.



Marty Sheppard

## Oregon: Deschutes River Canyon

**F**or early conservation pioneers like President Theodore Roosevelt, strenuous lives spent in the outdoors, with room to hunt and fish, were key elements of the American experience and essential to a strong and engaged citizenry.

Nowhere in America is a strenuous outdoor life more available than in the heart of Oregon, in the Deschutes River country. This major tributary of the Columbia River on the east side of the Cascade Range wanders north through basalt cliff canyons and offers world-class fishing and great hunting to anyone wanting to access the river canyon through public land.

Prime mule deer hunting on BLM lands and upland bird hunting for chukar partridge makes this a year-round destination for outdoorsmen and -women. Anglers come here from all over the world to fish for the “redsidés,” a variety of powerful redband trout. Steelheaders, oblivious to cold water and rain and the thousands of casts it takes to hook into their obsession, flock here from near and far. Steelheading doesn’t get much better than on the Deschutes.

The answer to both access and conservation was the early establishment of public lands. The Deschutes River is born in Little Lava Lake, which since 1908 has been protected in the 1.8 million acre Deschutes National Forest. Access is a given here, with much of the lower Deschutes managed by the BLM as a designated Wild and Scenic River, with multiple campgrounds

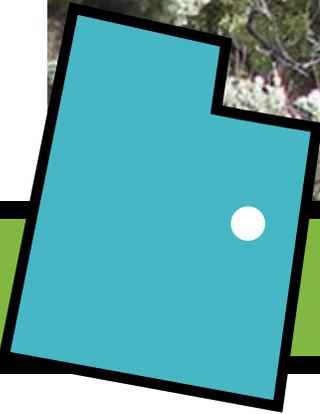
for fishermen, whitewater rafters, and anyone else who wants to follow some very simple rules and experience the river.

Oregonians seem to appreciate and celebrate the tradition of public lands, but the takeover

fever that has gripped other Western politicians (even if it has not gripped Westerners themselves) is here, too. In 2014, the Klamath County Board of County Commissioners announced that they would be “the tip of the spear” in supporting the Transfer of Public Lands Act, state legislation that originated in Utah and demands that federal public lands be transferred to individual states. Oregon’s ranching interests might block the efforts – the current grazing fee on Oregon state lands is seven times more than the federal charge. Hunters and fishermen are stepping up to oppose the transfer, knowing that the state has already sold all but 776,000 acres of the 3.4 million it was granted upon attaining statehood. Rivers like the Deschutes, and its headwaters in Oregon’s high elk country, do not exist anywhere else on earth. On the international market, they would bring a premium price. The loss would be felt by all Americans who once had unfettered access to some of the world’s finest hunting and fishing and the lifestyle that went with it.



Marty Sheppard



## Utah: Book Cliffs

**S**tretching almost 200 miles from Price, Utah, to Palisades, Colorado, the Book Cliffs comprise the longest continuous escarpment in the world. High plateaus of ponderosa pines, firs and aspen groves, and staggered lines of towering cliffs and isolated canyons open out onto arid plains. Because the terrain and the vegetation changes so much with altitude, it is near-perfect mule deer and elk country, where summer range and winter range are closely connected.

When American sportsmen began restoring the wildlife lost during the settlement of the West, it was BLM public lands like those in the Book Cliffs that made the experiment the most successful wildlife recovery on earth. Today, it's a limited draw hunt for trophy elk and mule deer. Colorado River cutthroat trout, wild bison and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep have been restored, and pronghorn numbers are strong. All of these success stories were written almost entirely with sportsmen's dollars, on healthy public lands accessible to all Americans.

In 2012, the Utah legislature passed H.B. 148, "Transfer of Public Lands Act and Related Study," a demand for 31 million acres of public lands like those in the Book Cliffs to be given to the state. The Book Cliffs are a rich source of natural gas, coal, oil, helium and potentially new reserves of oil.

Energy development under federal management already has been extensive enough here to pose real threats to big game and

other resources. But federal management under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield has forced the BLM to create management plans that at least lessen the impact of development on wildlife.

As reported in a recent Utah study, the transfer of public lands would mean that the state would face huge new expenses in managing the lands (estimated to be about \$280 million per year). Utah has already sold 4.1 million acres of the 7.5 million acres it was granted at statehood, and it could sell millions more acres of the most valuable public lands to foreign companies and billionaires, cutting them off from public access forever. But for energy rich lands like the Book Cliffs, the state would have no choice but to aggressively develop mineral resources in order to try and cover the enormous costs associated with the management of lands that are retained by the state. Energy-producing landscapes like the Book Cliffs would be industrialized at a scale that far exceeds levels under federal management, leaving nothing left that is worth accessing.



Joel Webster



## Wyoming: Shoshone National Forest

**T**he bighorn rams stand against a backdrop of wind-carved rugged peaks. They swing massive heads and lunge at each other, slamming their horns together with a crack as loud as a 30-30 Winchester.

The Shoshone National Forest is world-renowned for its bighorn sheep herd. It's a place where things are just bigger and wilder. The early fur trappers knew a dangerous paradise when they found one, and many of them called this land home. A modern hunter can walk in their footsteps, see what they saw and feel what they felt.

The Shoshone National Forest was the first federally managed forest in the United States. Theodore Roosevelt hunted here in the 1880s, and President Benjamin Harrison chose what is now the Shoshone for the first forest reserve in 1891.

Come to this place and pack in to the famed Thorofare country just south of Yellowstone National Park. You can hunt bugling bulls, bighorns and mule deer. You can sit at a campfire in one of the most remote places left in the lower 48.

Or you can run a do-it-yourself expedition closer to the roads – there are 32 campgrounds and 1,600 miles of trails here. Whether meat hunting or trophy hunting, sportsmen rank the Shoshone National Forest high on the list of the best do-it-yourself elk hunting in North America. Come in the summer

and fish the forks of the Shoshone River or the Greybull, with big Yellowstone cutthroats in the upper reaches and browns and rainbows downstream. A half-million Americans visit the Shoshone every year, hunting, fishing, hiking, mountaineering and celebrating our country and its heritage.

Such a wealth of fishing and hunting, wild country and water has attained values beyond anything Presidents Roosevelt or Harrison could have foreseen. There are also energy resources, mostly natural gas, in parts of the Shoshone. Predictably, a movement is afoot to wrest these lands from the American public. The Wyoming legislature voted in 2013 to create the Wyoming Task Force on the Transfer of Public Lands to study the feasibility of seizing these and other public lands from federal management.

Under Wyoming law, state lands, or “trust lands,” are used for creating maximum profit. They are not considered public lands, although the Board of Land Commissioners can grant the public the privilege of recreating on them. Camping, bicycling and motorized use are prohibited. Of the 4.2 million acres of trust lands granted to Wyoming at statehood, the state has sold off 700,000. There is no reason to expect any different outcome from the current proposals to transfer public lands. Americans can choose their future: one of privatization and loss of our hunting and fishing traditions, or keeping what they have.

Get involved today!  
Protect your access  
to 640 million acres  
of public lands.



Joel Webster



Go to [www.sportsmensaccess.org](http://www.sportsmensaccess.org)  
to contact your elected decision makers.  
Tell them that public lands must stay in the public's hands!

Stand up for your birthright as an American citizen! Know what is at stake. Don't allow trickery, abstract ideologies or the greed of the few to deprive us and our children of our freedom – or our traditions of hunting and fishing and enjoying the great outdoors.



Joel Webster



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