



In the Grand Canyon State, 23.4 million acres of publicly owned national forest and Bureau of Land Management lands provide fish and wildlife with irreplaceable habitat.

72%
of Western sportsmen depend on public lands for hunting.

Despite the immense value of America's public lands, special interests are working hard to hand lands over to the state of Arizona. When it comes to land management decisions, the state wouldn't just swap in new players – it would change the whole game. In state hands, everything else would come second to generating income from these lands. Take a look at what state seizure of America's public lands would actually do.

1. State and local economies would take a serious hit.

The transfer of America's public lands to state hands would have a negative impact on local economies across the state.

Tax increases

A potential reality for 3.9 million taxpayers taking over the enormous costs of management.

\$109 million for fires

The bill for Arizonans after the 2011 Wallow fire, if the state had controlled an additional 23.4 million acres.

\$34.4 million lost

Arizona counties would lose millions in federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes.

2. It wouldn't take much to sell off our treasured public lands.

State trust lands are constitutionally mandated to be managed for maximum profit. These lands may be sold if they don't generate substantial revenue through resource development, or if they generate a substantial profit through sales. An independent body made up of just five state officials, known as the State Board of Land Commissioners, makes decisions about state land sales.

1.7 million acres sold

Arizona has already disposed of 1.7 million acres of its original land grant.

Outdoor recreation is more restricted on state lands than on America's public lands. For example, on Arizona State Trust Lands:



According to the state of Arizona, "State lands are not public lands."



No one may use state lands without a permit. Access to most national lands is free.



Target shooting is prohibited.



Camping is restricted to no more than 14 days per year.



Lands leased for agriculture, mining, or commercial purposes are not open to public recreation.



photo: Ryan Hatch

If the state of Arizona were to seize 23.4 million acres of BLM and national forest lands, it is indisputable that important lands would be sold off and closed to hunting, fishing, and public access.

3. Public access would be at risk.

Without the resources or mandate to manage world-class hunting and fishing destinations for wildlife or recreational access, these areas important to sportsmen and the general public could be headed to the auction block:



Arizona Strip and Kaibab Plateau: This area has been called the best place on the planet to hunt mule deer, and with more than 3 million acres of public lands and 4,000 miles of roads to explore, it is a hunter's paradise.

Tonto National Forest: Within an hour's drive of the Phoenix metro area, this forest offers public hunting for classic Western big game species, including elk, mule deer, and wild sheep, plus surprisingly good fishing.

Coconino National Forest: This 1.9-million-acre national forest offers quality hunting for elk, deer, antelope, turkey, and javelina, and fishing for rainbow and brown trout in habitats that range from high elevation forests to deep red rock canyons.

4. Arizona long ago relinquished any claim to America's public lands.

"That the people inhabiting said proposed State do agree and declare that they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated and ungranted public lands lying within the boundaries thereof..." –ENABLING ACT, June 20, 1910



THERE IS A BETTER WAY

We live in a democracy where Americans have been rolling up their sleeves and solving problems for more than two centuries. Instead of considering the unworkable idea of land seizure, it is time for stakeholders to find common ground to improve the management of our treasured public lands.

Get involved today, and tell your state and federal lawmakers that America's public lands are not for sale. Urge them to reject any proposed seizure of these lands by signing the petition at sportsmensaccess.org.



photo: Dusan Smetana

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