



In the Centennial State, 22.8 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 Colorado. 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 3.5 million taxpayers taking over the enormous costs of management.

\$92 million for fires

Coloradans would pay for wildfire suppression costs on an additional 22.8 million acres.

\$34.6 million lost

Colorado 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 are 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 Colorado State Land Board, decides the fate of these state lands.

1.7 million acres sold

Colorado has already sold 38 percent of its 4.5-million-acre land grant.

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



No hunting



No fishing



No camping



No shooting



No off-road vehicles



To enter these lands without written permission from the State Land Board is considered trespassing.

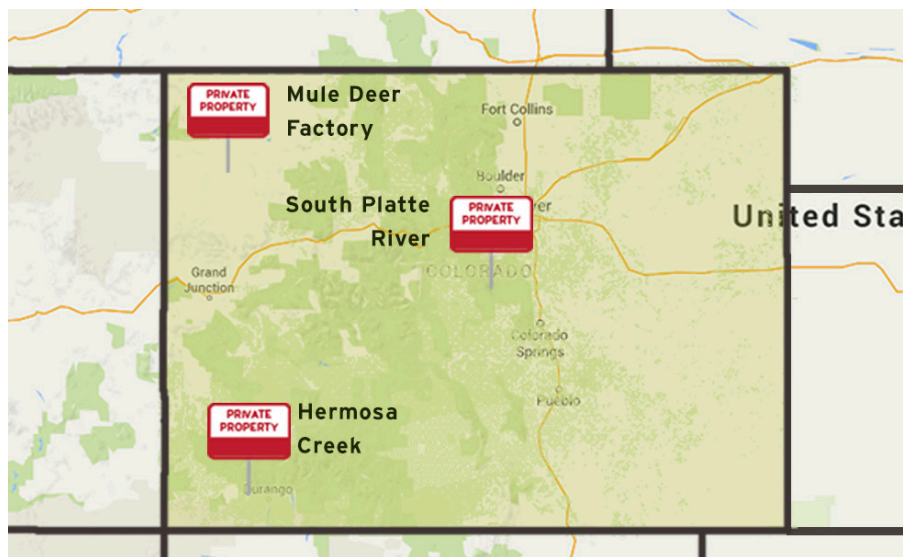


No one may use state trust lands without a lease from Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

If the state of Colorado were to seize 22.8 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:



Mule Deer Factory: Units 22 and 10 in northwest Colorado are famous for producing trophy mule deer and elk, respectively. Sportsmen apply for 20 years before drawing a tag.

South Platte River: Within an hour of the Front Range, public land access to the South Platte River and its tributaries provides world-class wild trout fishing for thousands of Coloradans.

Hermosa Creek Watershed: In southwest Colorado, this area boasts a multitude of hunting and fishing opportunities. It offers trophy mule deer and elk hunting and some of the best native trout fishing in the state.

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

"That the people inhabiting said Territory do agree and declare that they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated public lands lying within said Territory, and that the same shall be and remain at the sole and entire disposition of the United States..." -ENABLING ACT



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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