



The Consequences of Public Land Takeover in Wyoming

In the Cowboy State, 27.6 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 Wyoming. 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 400,000 taxpayers taking over the enormous costs of management.

\$55 million for fires

Wyoming taxpayers would pay for wildfire suppression costs on an additional 27.6 million acres.

\$27.2 million lost

Wyoming counties could lose millions in federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes.

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



Hunting is prohibited on cultivated cropland and other areas closed by the Land Commission Board.



Dispersed camping is prohibited.



Dispersed campfires are prohibited.

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 can generate a substantial profit through sales. An independent body of just five elected officials, known as the State Board of Land Commissioners, makes decisions about state land sales.

700,000 acres sold

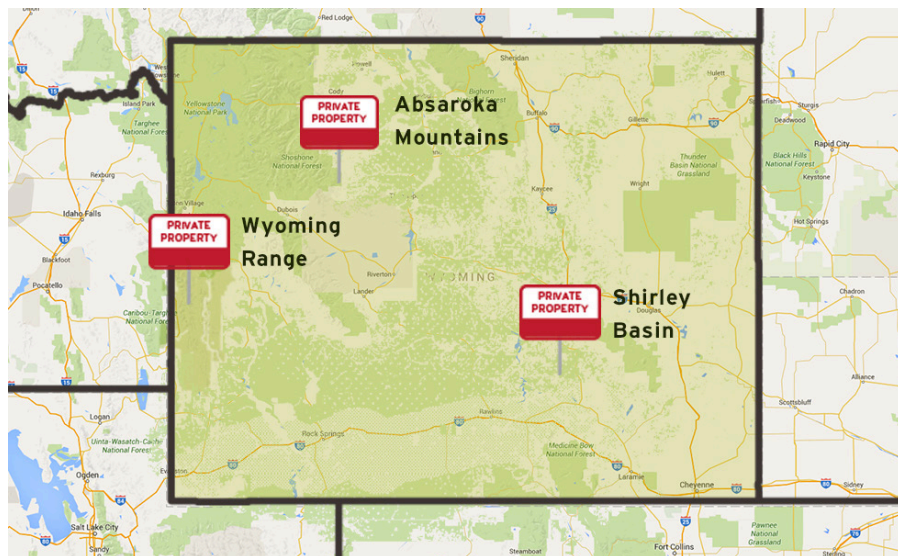
Wyoming has already sold off 700,000 acres of its original land grant.



If the state of Wyoming were to seize 27.6 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:



Absaroka Mountains: Managed primarily by the Shoshone National Forest, these public lands are what most people picture when they think of Western hunting and fishing, with abundant herds of elk, mule deer, and bighorn sheep, plus excellent fishing for native cutthroats.

Shirley Basin: Wyoming has more pronghorns than any other state, and world-class hunting opportunities abound on the public lands within the Shirley Basin.

Wyoming Range: Quite possibly the best high-country mule deer hunting in North America.

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

"The people inhabiting this state do agree and declare that they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated public lands lying within the boundaries thereof..."

—WYOMING CONSTITUTION, ratified in 1889



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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