

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, there is an interest by some to force the sale or transfer of these lands. If transferred or sold, there's no guarantee that access and hunting opportunity would remain the same—it would change the whole game. In state hands, there would be immense pressure to sell or privatize public lands to generate income. Take a look at what the sale or transfer of America's public lands could actually do.

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

The transfer of America's public lands to states or private interests would have a negative impact on local economies.

#### Tax increases

A potential reality for 400,000 taxpayers taking over the enormous costs of land management.

#### 27.6 million acres

Wyoming taxpayers could pay for wildfire suppression costs on millions of more acres.

#### \$36.8 million lost

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

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

The financial burden in states of managing public lands would heavily incentivize their sale or privatization. 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 since statehood.

**Outdoor recreation is more restricted on state and private 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.



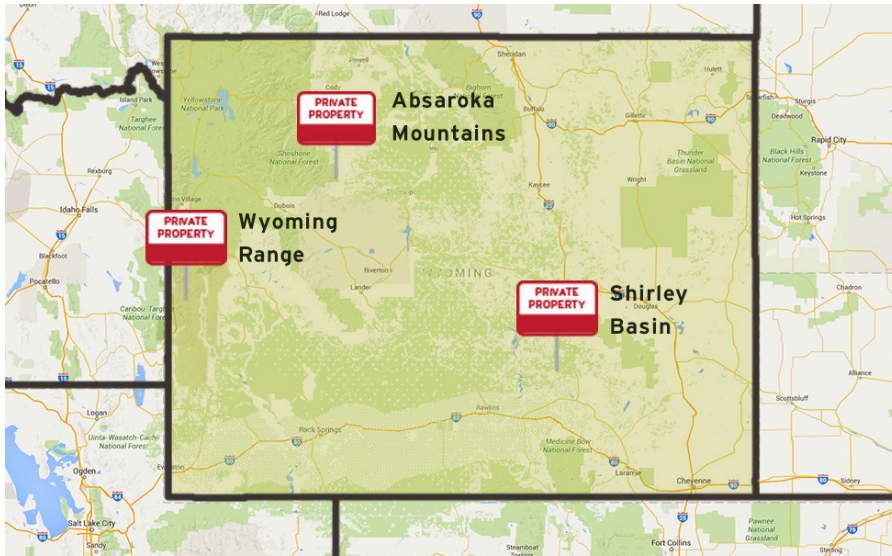
Dispersed campfires are prohibited.



**If the state of Wyoming were to seize 27.6 million acres of BLM and national forest lands, we can expect 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 lands important to sportsmen and the general public could drastically change:



**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 pronghorn than any other state, and world-class hunting opportunities abound on the public lands within the Shirley Basin.

**Wyoming Range:** This mountain range may possibly be 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 the unworkable idea of eliminating federal public lands, it is time for stakeholders to find common ground to improve their management for the betterment of all.

Get involved today and tell your state and federal lawmakers that America's public lands are not for sale.



photo: Dusan Smetana

For more information, visit [huntfishvotewy.com](http://huntfishvotewy.com). To learn more about the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, go to [trcp.org](http://trcp.org).