



East Yellowstone Chapter #540 Trout Unlimited

P.O. Box 3008

Cody, WY 82414

<http://www.eastyellowstonetu.org/>

To:

Senators: Eli Bebout, Larry Hicks, Gerald Geis

Representatives: JoAnn Dayton, Norine Kasperik, Tim Stubson

Re. Public Lands - Constitutional Amendment

Dear Member of the Select Federal Natural Resource Committee:

The East Yellowstone Chapter of Trout Unlimited would like to go on record opposing the transfer of federal lands to Wyoming state ownership and the amending of the Wyoming State Constitution to enable such a transfer.

These lands are far too valuable to transfer to the ownership of the State of Wyoming. The ownership of BLM, NPS and USFS lands was established by far sighted individuals for the enjoyment and recreation of all Americans. Open access to these lands is an accepted fundamental right. Current residents and future generations of individuals are depending on state legislatures to remember this when they debate this subject.

We do not believe that the State of Wyoming has the resources to manage these public lands adequately for continued public utilization for all Americans. We suspect that eventual sale of these lands to private ownership might well take place when Wyoming general funds budget shortfalls occur or if costs to manage these lands exceed projected expenditures. The temptation would be too great for an administration to quietly sell these public lands, to cover budget shortfalls, instead of finding other solutions. This has occurred in neighboring states, with state owned lands in recent years, so it's obvious the possibility could exist in Wyoming as well.

It would be a much better use of Wyoming legislative resources to collaborate with the Federal agencies currently managing BLM, NPS and USFS lands to improve management plans along with local input. Is this not the focus that the Governor's Task Force recommended?

Please take these thoughts into account when you debate this subject on December 14th, 2016. We, our children and our children's children are depending on you to do the right thing, leave these lands in federal ownership and concentrate on collaborative improved management plans for all who will use our public lands for future enjoyment.

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