

# CELEBRATING OUR PUBLIC LANDS!

Show your support for HB 99: Wyoming Public Lands Day  
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KEEP IT PUBLIC,  
*Wyoming!*



PUBLIC LANDS  
*in public hands*

## OVERVIEW

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House Bill 99, sponsored by Rep. Andy Schwartz and cosponsored by Reps. Brown, Roscoe, Sommers, and Stith and Senators Coe, Dockstader, Gierau, and Nethercott, proposes a Wyoming **Public Lands Day** established on the fourth Saturday in September. Public Lands Day pays tribute to the importance of public lands in our state, including supporting our economy, open spaces, wildlife, and recreational opportunities.

The bill requires the Governor to issue an annual proclamation encouraging the observance of this day, and indicates that the holiday may be celebrated by the public and in public schools.

## BACKGROUND

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- Two states have created their own Public Lands Days to recognize the importance of public lands to their states and residents: Colorado in 2016 and Nevada in 2017.
- The fourth Saturday in September has been recognized as National Public Lands Day since 1994. This proposed legislation would use the same date. This timing would work well with hunting and pre-hunting activities for Wyomingites, and help amplify conservation stewardship activities planned on that day.

## WHY A WYOMING PUBLIC LANDS DAY?

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- **Public lands are in Wyoming's DNA—they make us who we are.** This bill creates the opportunity for Wyoming people of all stripes and interests to celebrate our public lands legacy and values, and the way of life that our public lands enable. Our wild open spaces, free roaming wildlife, outstanding recreational opportunities, and the state's economy depend upon our public lands.
- The bill affirms Wyoming support for **keeping our public lands public and open for public access** to everyone, regardless of an individual's income or background. As an annual event, the Public Lands Day will serve as a reminder of these values as well as an opportunity to highlight outdoor opportunities for families and residents. Polls and citizen activism have shown that there is huge public support for our public lands.
- This day would create opportunities for Wyomingites to **come together and complete community conservation and enhancement projects**. Volunteering is a vital part of National Public Lands Day, and a Wyoming-specific celebration would encourage and empower local community participation.
- **Outdoor recreation and tourism are Wyoming's fastest growing industries\***, and are almost entirely dependent on access to public lands. Both industries are key to the diversification of the state's economy. At a time when outdoor rec is the second largest economic sector in Wyoming, we must champion good stewardship of, and access to, our public lands.

\* A recent report by the Outdoor Industry Association shows outdoor recreation generates 50,000 direct jobs and \$5.6 billion in spending in Wyoming; the Wyoming Office of Tourism reports that tourism creates 32,000 jobs and \$3.2 billion in consumer spending, annually (figures for 2016).