

PUBLIC LANDS SPEECH

Thanks.

Public Lands. Hey, we're going to do a little shout out to let Sheridan know we are here. KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF PUBLIC LANDS

Public lands have been under attack since their inception. The Bighorn Forest reserve was called a "dastardly blunder"... a dastardly blunder...?!... in local newspapers when it was established in 1897. What da ya think.... Was that a "dastardly blunder"? Those of you of my vintage will remember Ronald Reagan, James Watt, and the Sagebrush Rebellion in the 1980's. The same sagebrush rebellion spirit is still very much alive in our Federal and State elected officials.

Let's give a shout out here, KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF PUBLIC LANDS.

You all know what the Kings and Oligarchs want to do: they want to sell off public lands or give it to the states. They want to open them up to exploitation, and make big tax cuts to their rich, ruling class friends. Hey, and we can't forget about the devastation they're causing to the federal employees in general, and in particular to the employees of the federal land management agencies. The King says "Fraud and waste", but we know that is not true, nor the real reason for this purge. They want to land management agencies to fail, so there is greater clamor to sell and give away our public lands.

We know what we need to do: We need to Vote, We need to speak up against the efforts to make voting harder with voter IDs, abolishing voting drop boxes, and the like; we need to raise our voices at rallies like this, share our stories with our neighbors, and let our elected officials know what our public lands mean and how valuable they are.

Shout out, KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF PUBLIC LANDS

I'm gonna wrap this up with sunshine and rainbows. Ya know, sometimes it is disheartening living in this Trumpiest of states. But, on this public lands issue, we have a great chance of winning this battle if you continue telling our Neanderthal-like Wyoming Legislators to keep public lands intact. Polls show a majority of Wyoming citizens favor maintaining our public lands. And, even the red state congressman from neighboring Montana, Ryan Zinke, voted against the legislation to sell public lands this session, saying, "This is my San Juan hill. I do not support the widespread sale or transfer of public lands. Once the land is sold, we will never get it back." We can do this, as long as we remember to do our work, and remember that this 'war' over our public lands has been going on for over 100 years, and we need to keep fighting.

Give yourselves a giant round of applause, you are the success of this effort.

Thanks.

The fight over public lands has been going on ever since the first public lands were withdrawn from the public domain in the 1800's. It will continue to be an issue in the future, so we need to make our voices heard to protect our public lands, and not give up on this fight.

The Bighorn Forest reserve was called a "dastardly blunder"... a dastardly blunder...?!... in local newspapers when it was established in 1897. It is safe to say that all of us today greatly enjoy that "dastardly blunder". Those of you of my vintage will remember Ronald Reagan, James Watt, and the Sagebrush Rebellion in the 1980's. The same sagebrush rebellion attitude is still alive and is being championed by our Federal and State elected officials:

- Ms. Hageman has supported legislation that would authorize the sale of federal land; and our Senators voted against legislation that would block the inclusion of land sales in the federal budget. (*Pete Madsen, Wyofile, 5/29/25*) The proposed sale of federal land is still alive and well in current draft legislation, and is way more of a "Dastardly Blunder" than the reservation of our public lands ever were.
- Hageman, Gov. Gordon, and 26 members of the Wyoming legislature filed supportive briefs in a lawsuit brought by the State of Utah to turn over 18 million acres of public land to the state of Utah. (*Leo Wolfson, 10/30/24, Cowboy State Daily*)
- Trump and his lackey puppets in charge of the federal land management agencies have tried to fire or encourage the resignation of thousands of BLM, Forest Service, Park Service, and other agency personnel. They don't care about saving money – Not with a \$50 million dollar military parade ; or giving massive tax breaks to

the billionaires and oligarchs. The intent of thrashing the work force of the public land management agency employees is to have the agencies fail, thus raising the clamor to sell public lands or turn them over to the states.

So, what can we do to keep public lands in public hands, and NOT in the hands of the Elon Musks, Fred Eshelmans, and the rest of the oligarch class? That is the point, Right? What are we going to do? We need to vote, stay connected with each other, and mobilize.

- We need to vote, and make our voices heard at the ballot box:
 - Be there every 2 years at election time to vote; and,
 - More immediately, speak up against SOS Chuck Gray, and his henchmen's, efforts to make voting in Wyoming less accessible. public comments for the proposed regulations for the New Voting law that is slated to go into effect July 1. Public comments are due by June 20th – go to the Sheridan County Democrats Facebook page for a comment address. *(does the specific comment reference seem muddy? Maybe just generally say fight/advocate against the attempts to restrict voter access.??)* *(Wyoming voters will soon be required to provide proof of residency and U.S. citizenship when registering to vote. Maggie Mullen, Wyofile, 5/7/25)*
- Stay connected and informed by getting on the Sheridan County Democrats e-mail list, and check out the Sheridan County Democrat facebook page.
- Mobilize folks – talk to your neighbors and friends about this, and even better, show your support through events like this – this is awesome support. *(do something like “3 hu-rah” shout out here to celebrate the participation?)*

Here's the wrap up:

- Our public lands have been under attack ever since their establishment, and will continue to be;
- So we need to:
 1. Vote and work to protect voting rights;
 2. Stay connected;
 3. Mobilize and speak up.

I'm gonna wrap this up with sunshine and rainbows. Ya know, sometimes it is disheartening living in this Trumpiest of states. But, on this public lands issue, we have a great chance of winning this battle if we do our work of voting and protecting the vote, and telling our Neandrathal-like Wyoming Legislators to keep public lands intact. Polls show a majority of Wyoming citizens favor maintaining the status quo on public lands. And, even the red state congressman from neighboring Montana, Ryan Zinke, voted against the legislation to sell public lands this session, saying, “This is my San Juan hill. I do not support the wide spread sale or transfer of public lands.” We can do this, as long as we remember to do our work, and remember that this ‘war’ over our public lands has been going on for over 100 years. To conclude this, I want you all to give yourselves a big hurrah. Your enthusiasm here today, and commitment to speaking up and make a difference is really cool. So, give yourselves a big round of applause!

Bernie Bornong recently retired from the US Forest Service after 40 years of service; with 36 of those years on the Bighorn National Forest. Bernie and his wife Joanne have 2 sons who also got addicted to public land management as they are both wildland firefighters with the BLM.