



Will America's public lands be for sale?

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We anticipate a tumultuous year ahead for public lands as the Trump Administration carries out its Project 2025 plans. We're determined not to raise unnecessary alarms without a factual basis, and we're determined to provide our members and the public at large with a credible resource on public land issues. With that caveat, the team at New Mexico Wild believes that our public lands will be for sale (or rent) in ways that would have been unimaginable just a few years ago. This threat began even before the new Administration took office. We see it accelerating now.

The prospect of land seizures is real. The Supreme Court just refused a case from the State of Utah that would have seized half of the state's federal land, with a total area nearly as large as South Carolina. In that case, eleven New Mexico counties supported Utah by filing an amicus brief. You can learn more about that case in this Advisory.

Lands seized by this type of suit could then be sold by the state to meet funding needs. These lands could also lose federal protections that would

limit or prohibit oil and gas drilling and mining.

The first action by the new Interior Secretary, Doug Burgum, was an order called "Unleashing American Energy" which we expect will set the stage for gutting protections to many public lands and encourage more land seizure propositions like the case in Utah.

The good news is that the public overwhelmingly supports public lands. There are abundant ecological and cultural reasons to protect our public land heritage as well as outdoor recreation, which has become an increasingly important economic factor in New Mexico. Your continued support as a member of New Mexico Wild has made a remarkable difference over the past several years and will be more essential than ever in the years ahead. Thank you!

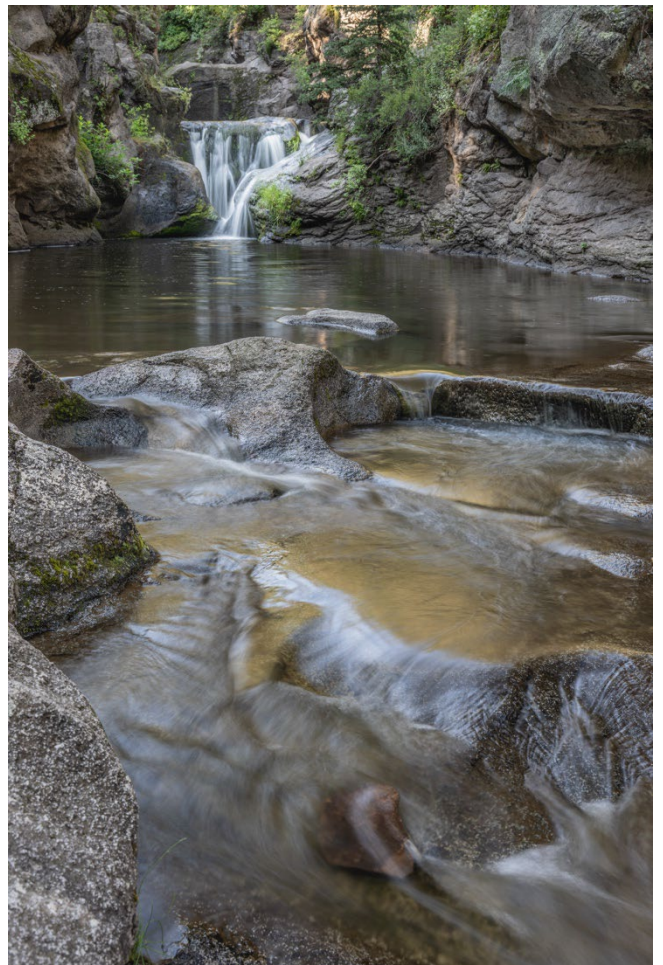
Mark Allison
Executive Director
New Mexico Wild



What the Utah lawsuit tried to do and why we worry that the threat is not over.

The State of Utah filed a lawsuit in the U.S. Supreme Court seeking a ruling that the U.S. must dispose of over 18 million acres of public lands within its borders. A favorable ruling by the Court would jeopardize at least 210 million acres of America's public lands across the West and Alaska and over 19 million acres in New Mexico. Special interest groups, far-right individuals, and drilling, mining, and logging companies have long sought greater control of these lands despite laws dedicating them to the benefit of the public at large.

In January, the Supreme Court refused to take the case, which is a brief reprieve for public lands. In Wyoming, a bill proposing a similar plan was recently rejected by their Senate by a narrow margin. In New Mexico, some southern counties supported the Utah lawsuit by filing an amicus brief with the Supreme



Court. We expect these land seizure attempts to continue in the West where public lands are rich in forests, minerals, energy, and water that are sought by private interests.

Legislative and judicial attempts to seize control of federal lands and give them away to states and/or the highest bidder have, so far, failed. However, those attempts have cost taxpayers millions of dollars in legal fees. If these attempts were successful, states would incur massive new costs to manage these

lands which would likely lead to selling parcels to private interests. Contributing to this threat are billionaires waiting for the opportunity to purchase public land and lock it away as private domain.

Public lands protect what make New Mexico special: abundant wildlife, wide-open vistas, world-class recreation, cultural history, and healthy natural systems. With the stroke of a pen or an adverse court ruling, we risk losing all of that.

What we are doing to fight this land seizure threat

As a response to current and anticipated threats to our public lands, New Mexico Wild has jumped into action. In the past few weeks, we have convened our coalition partners throughout the state to better anticipate threats and discuss coordinated responses. We planned a Rally at the Sante Fe Roundhouse to demonstrate broad support for keeping public lands in public hands. We're hosting gatherings throughout the state to show solidarity with public servants within the land management agencies. We are publishing FAQ's and holding town halls to educate the public about these threats to public lands. We are meeting with editorial boards at newspapers throughout the state and submitting opinion pieces in state and national outlets. We have established a "Legal and Outreach Fund" to provide resources to supplement our staff capacity and to work with like-minded partners. If you can donate to that fund, please note that on your contribution. Thank you for your continued support!



Help save our public lands



The seizure of public lands is an irreversible decision. Help us fight back. Use the enclosed donation form and return envelope or donate online.

nmwild.org/donate

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