

# WYOMING STATE POLICIES

The Center for Western Priorities' **Western States Conservation Scorecard** evaluates each Western state in three areas: Lands and Access, Outdoor Recreation, and Responsible Energy Development. Our aim is to illuminate best practices and gaps in state-level public lands-related policy in the West. We hope to highlight where Western states are demonstrating leadership, as well as where they can improve. Please see the full report for a breakdown of methodology and the complete grading rubrics with scores at [www.westernpriorities.org/statescorecard](http://www.westernpriorities.org/statescorecard).

WYOMING	LANDS AND ACCESS	OUTDOOR RECREATION	RESPONSIBLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT
	AVERAGE	AVERAGE	AVERAGE

## AVERAGE — LANDS AND ACCESS

In Wyoming, state trust lands are open to hiking, hunting, and fishing, but not camping. Many of the state's trust lands are trapped by private property, but the **AccessYes!** program and an easy-to-navigate online **map** help guide recreationists. In Wyoming, floating is permitted through private land, but wading is not. Both the streambank and streambed are **considered private property**, and wading and anchoring are only allowed with permission from the landowner. In 2005, the Wyoming legislature established the **Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust**, dedicating interest earned on a permanent account towards conserving wildlife habitat. The trust provides roughly \$8 million annually in grants. Wyoming also requires a **conservation stamp** be purchased with a hunting license.

## AVERAGE — OUTDOOR RECREATION

Though Wyoming has taken steps to boost outdoor recreation, the state has room to enact and strengthen policies. In late 2016 Wyoming Governor Matt Mead formed a 26-person Wyoming **Outdoor Recreation Task Force**. The diverse group of stakeholders shared their **recommendations** in the summer of 2017. Wyoming does not have specific funding for outdoor infrastructure or environmental education, but does offer free access to state parks for fourth graders through their **Every Kid in a Park** program.

## AVERAGE — RESPONSIBLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Energy development is widespread in Wyoming, and the state has a range of energy-related policies. Wyoming requires an oil and gas development setback of **500 feet**, allows blanket bonding for oil and gas well reclamation, and allows coal operators to "self-bond," putting taxpayers at risk. When it comes to spill reporting and transparency, Wyoming requires industry reporting within 24 hours. Though Wyoming collects spills data, the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission does not publish the data online. The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality does post **some data** on certain spills in the state; however, this list is not comprehensive. Wyoming was the first state to require disclosure of fracking chemicals. Today, the state requires companies report through **FracFocus**. Like most Western states, royalty rates on energy extracted on public lands exceed the federal rate of 12.5 percent. Wyoming charges a severance tax but no conservation tax on production. Wyoming **requires** pre-drill testing and two rounds of post-drill testing at four locations within a half-mile of the well. There are no statewide methane capture rules.