



Leading the Charge: Conservation and the Wyoming Energy Strategy

ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY



Governor Matthew H. Mead • 2013

Wyoming
will achieve
excellence in energy
development, production,
and stewardship of its
natural resources for the
highest benefit of its citizens.



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Achieving Excellence

Lead in Energy Development, Production,
Generation and Export

Innovate in Adding Value to Resources

Be the Standard Bearers in Responsible
Development

Highest Benefit

Maintain and Grow Energy Market Share, Good
Jobs and a Strong Economy

Create Affordable, Abundant, Reliable Power and
Fuel Production

Conserve Natural Resources and Heritage

Economic
Competitiveness,
Expansion and
Diversification

Efficient, Effective
Regulation

Natural Resource
Conservation,
Reclamation, and
Mitigation

Education, Innovation,
and New Technologies



Natural Resource Conservation, Reclamation and Mitigation

Conservation

Wyoming will manage, utilize, protect and preserve natural resources in a balanced manner.

Reclamation

Wyoming will make it a priority that developed land be returned to an equal or more productive ecological state with a positive transitional trend.

Mitigation

Wyoming will achieve excellence in mitigation practices and create innovative approaches for both on-site and off-site mitigation.

Bonding

Wyoming will have a consistent, effective approach to bonding for the financial assurance of reclamation.



Mitigation

“Wyoming will achieve excellence in mitigation practices and create innovative approaches for both on-site and off-site mitigation.”

Initiative 11A. Development of the Wyoming Off-site Mitigation Program

A statewide mitigation program will be developed and managed to reclaim or maintain key habitat and natural resources. This program’s focus will be on the reclamation, rehabilitation and conservation efforts in the places that are most likely to be adversely impacted by development.



Principles

- Allow individuals, groups and companies to act on their own knowledge, guided by defensible baseline data, good science, and clear regulations
- Frame issues and solutions in terms of simple, generic units that can be combined and used in different ways over time to meet today's needs
- Create credible, understandable, enduring, and enforceable commitments
- Have verification and monitoring, conflict resolution, and enforcement
- Protect competition, employ constant feedback, create alternatives based on lessons learned



Initiative Implementation: The Charge

- Background:
 - Need for tools to address the areas and species of “highest concern”
 - Flexibility to address temporary and permanent impacts
 - Effectiveness requires consistency across land ownerships jurisdiction
 - No net loss of conservation goal
- Purpose:
 - Create certainty by developing a state recognized conservation exchange process
- Activities:
 - Cooperatively facilitate the development of functional pieces necessary for “banking” to occur under a the guidelines, standards, key administration
- Outcomes:
 - Guidelines, rules, structure, validation procedures, recommendations necessary for implementation...functional exchange
- Responsible Parties:
 - WNRTF (Lead), WGFD, WDEQ, SHPO, WDA – in consultation with federal agencies, conservation districts, conservation groups with demonstrated expertise, industry, academia
- Cost, Timeline, Milestones...

Wyoming Conservation /Mitigation Exchange

Background: Natural resources, species such as the Greater Sage-grouse, and habitat can be negatively affected by development. Areas and species identified as those of “highest concern” in Wyoming need to be planned for as part of industrial, commercial, housing and other development. Adequately addressing key habitat that is either temporarily or permanently altered or lost is critical to ensuring that there is no net loss of natural resource conservation over time. Past efforts to mitigate impacts of development have been inconsistent. In part, mitigation has failed to consider broad-scale biological results. Differing approaches have, at times, been ineffective across land ownership and jurisdictional boundaries. To facilitate a successful approach, the State of Wyoming will create a mechanism that is consistent, fair, and transparent to attract and allocate conservation measures and mitigation where they can be most effectively applied to address key issues and concerns in natural resource conservation throughout the State.

Purpose: The purpose of the initiative is to establish certainty in mitigation throughout the state in a manner that maintains and improves habitat and natural resources by directly focusing reclamation, rehabilitation and conservation effort in places that have the most potential for success. This initiative will afford industry and others a clear, defensible mechanism to allow development by providing conservation outcomes either locally or in areas where conservation can be most effectively leveraged through off-site mitigation. Where feasible, mitigation at the point of impact is sound, however, off-site mitigation is an effective solution to be employed when necessary.

Activities: The State of Wyoming will develop guidelines and standards for conservation exchange within the state, functioning as the key administrative to legitimate allocation and mitigation exchange. The Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust (WYNRT), and will oversee and develop mechanisms for the tracking of agreements and if necessary the allocation of funds, for conservation in a manner similar to the procedures used by the WYNRT. The WYNRT Board will act in oversight and allocation of funds, doing so with the counsel of an advisory committee consisting of representatives of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Wyoming Department of Tourism, Office of State Lands and Investment, Department of Environmental Quality, representatives from agriculture, oil and gas, mining, conservation groups, and other appropriate entities in consultation with and representation from the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and local government. Rulemaking will be initiated by the WYNRT to guide this process. WYNRT will develop a methodology for prioritizing mitigation in key areas such as habitat for threatened and endangered species, watersheds with impaired streams, or cultural resource priority areas. The exchange will be developed to allow the private sector or local governmental entities to create banks or to “bundle” conservation credits with multiple landowners. This certification will allow conservation /mitigation “banking” to take place with affirmation of the conservation benefits by the State of Wyoming.

Achievements: The development of guidelines, rules, structure, validation procedure, and recommendations necessary for the implementation of a mitigation /conservation exchange in Wyoming for, but not limited to, habitat, impaired stream, cultural resources, and other natural resource objectives.

Responsible Parties: This initiative will be led by the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust Fund in coordination with Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Department of Environmental Quality, State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Agriculture, and other Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittees as required in consultation with the Conservation Division, the Petroleum Association of Wyoming, Wyoming Land Trust, conservation groups with demonstrated expertise, The University of



Direction

- Functioning market (exchange), not a single “mitigation bank”
- Verifiable transactions, rights and rules
- Assurances through agreements and primacy of regulation
- Quantification tools, methodologies and mechanisms
- Market development, verification and oversight (WNRT)
- Advisory group for ranking processes (WDEQ, SHPO, others...)
- Metrics? (acres, stream feet, etc.)
- Management Units? (Forest, Sage Brush, Stream Class, etc...)

