



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WYOMING

April Voter

President's Message

A tardy greeting to all, with an especially warm invitation to join us at state convention May 6 and 7 here in Laramie. We'll try not to have snow, but of course no guarantees. We have a lot to work on this year, and we are most fortunate in having our new LWVUS Board Liaison, Jessica Rolhloff, with us for the entire meeting and the banquet Saturday evening. She is bringing a future member, her niece, who is 11 years old. We would love it if some others would bring some future members!

We'll be talking about a lot of very interesting issues, and deciding on whether, in light of the several movements to have either the Legislature or the citizenry via a ballot item, for a Constitutional Convention, League has a role in educating Wyoming voters about pluses and minuses of going that route. It is complicated, and more so by the fact that Article 5 of the Constitution does not give any working guidelines, so even the selection delegates needs to be invented.



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We have another fine nominee for the Making Democracy Work award, Arshi Nisley, and we'll have some reports on the webinars which our national president, Chris Carson, holds for state presidents. New and interesting programs for League!

We will also be electing officers, and we welcome any nominations from the floor, especially for the positions of Secretary and elected Directors (2). We need representation from all our Leagues, and it does not mean driving all over the state 4 or 5 times a year, as we do nearly all our meetings via conference call. Please step up and take a 2-year term.

Hoping to see many of you here,

Amy K. Williamson

SECOND CALL TO CONVENTION 2017

Where? - AmericInn, 4712 E. Grand Ave., Snacks both days, coffee, etc.

**When? - May 6, 2017 Begins at 1:00 – 5:00p.m. Website workshop begins 11 a.m.
May 6, lunch provided by LWV Laramie**

MLD Workshop 12 to 1 p.m. May 6, lunch as above

May 7, 2017 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Dinner May 6: O'Dwyer's Public House – Banquet Room 1622 E. Grand

Speaker: Stephanie Anderson, Assoc. Director, UW Center for Global Studies

Lodgings - AmericInn, 4712 E. Grand Ave., Exit 316 off I-80. Rooms are \$89.00 per person and include hot breakfast buffet. **Reservations must be made by April 6: 307-745-**

0777 or online: <https://www.yourreservation.net/tb3/index.cfm?>

[bf=americinn_hotels&hotelCode=HY4ALRME&arrivalDate=5/5/2017&iatanumber=LEAGUEOF](https://www.yourreservation.net/tb3/index.cfm?bf=americinn_hotels&hotelCode=HY4ALRME&arrivalDate=5/5/2017&iatanumber=LEAGUEOF); Booking Code: Put

LEAGUEOF in the Rate Code box on <http://www.americinn.com/hotels/wy/laramie>

**Silent Auction: Bring some irresistible goodies to help bolster our treasury!
Food is always very popular, along with gift items and wine.**

PLEASE JOIN US, AND BRING ANOTHER MEMBER

Transfer of Public Lands Issue

LWVUS positions state:

1) Under Natural Resources:

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

2) Under Representative Government:

Privatization:

Ensure transparency, accountability, positive community impact and preservation of the common good when considering the transfer of governmental services, assets and/or functions to the private sector.

Wyoming LWV position states :

Under LAND USE POSITION: Adequate land use planning is essential in maintaining the quality of life in Wyoming. The public should be allowed to participate in land use planning decisions on a continuing basis. (Adopted 1974, revised 1983)

Groups who oppose public lands transfer in Wyoming include (According to the website of Sportsmen's Access)

- Albany County Commission
- Town of Jackson

- Sweetwater County Commission
- Teton County Commission
- Wyoming Sportsmen’s Alliance
- Casper Star-Tribune “Keep federal control...These lands are irreplaceable”
- Wyoming Tribune Eagle “Legislature...stop pushing for public land transfer”
- Petition to state and national decision makers signed by these groups in Wyoming “support America’s public lands legacy...reject efforts to dispose of, sell or transfer federal public lands”
 - Izaak Walton League (national organization)
 - Pheasants Forever (national organization)
 - Public Lands Foundation (national organization)
 - Trout Unlimited (national organization)
 - National Wildlife Federation (national organization + 20 other groups)
 - Bowhunters of Wyoming
 - Wyoming Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
 - Wyoming Federation of Union Sportsmen
 - Wyoming Wildlife Federation
 - Yellowstone County Bear Hunters Association

Also known to be opposed to federal land transfers are

- Wyoming Wilderness Association
- Sierra Club (national and Wyoming chapter ??)
- Wyoming Outdoor Council
- Powder River Basin Resource Council

Comments from prominent individuals

- Former Senator Al Simpson: “...The state would have the power to dispose of it, and when they get in a crunch—like all of them are—they are going to peddle it off and put it into the coffer...”
- Governor Matt Mead:”Legally and financially impractical”
- President Theodore Roosevelt: “We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the nation is worthy of its good fortune.”

Facts and questions to consider:

- 1) Wyoming released its claim on federal lands in both our Constitution and the Act of Admission. The Wyoming Constitution, Article 21, section 26 contains this

statement: “The people inhabiting this state do agree and declare that they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated public lands lying within the boundaries thereof, and to all lands lying within said limits owned or held by any Indian or Indian tribes, and that until the title thereto shall have been extinguished by the United States, the same shall be and remain subject to the disposition of the United States....” Therefore all action to divest itself of public lands must begin with the Federal government, not with the states, and action to the contrary is unconstitutional in Wyoming.

- 2) Senate Joint Resolution 0003 was drafted but as of 1/18/2017 had not yet been introduced. It was prepared by the “Select Federal Natural Resource Management Committee” of the Wyoming legislature. It is a Wyoming Constitutional amendment that would provide that any federal lands granted to the state after January 1, 2019 would be managed for public access, multiple use, and sustained yield, and these lands could be exchanged but not sold. “A vague solution looking for a problem” as the headline in WyoFile (January 17, 2017) puts it. The proposed amendment doesn’t deal with any mechanism for the Federal “grant,” it just specifies how the lands would be managed, and exempts all national parks, monuments and wilderness areas. No appropriation is attached. Is this worthy of legislative consideration now when it is so “pie in the sky” in that it is related to a situation that may not in the near future, or ever, occur?
- 3) Wyoming Public Radio reported Oct. 25, 2016 on a study mandated by the Wyoming Legislature in 2013 to examine land management practices, costs and revenues. It found that “transferring, without major changes in federal law, would not substantially increase revenue for Wyoming, and that the negotiations would be complicated—and the process exceptionally drawn out and contentious.” The state paid the Jackson-based Y-2 Consultants \$75,000 for this study. Doesn’t this settle the argument that transfer would increase revenue for Wyoming?
- 4) The Wyoming Tribune Eagle reports (Jan. 3, 2017) “Currently the state manages only 3.5 million acres and the transfer could add another 25 million. [Note: that 25 million figure is probably larger than most proponents of transfer propose] “A large wildfire could wipe out the budgetTwo-thirds of the House and Senate must adopt (a constitutional amendment), Rep. David Miller of Fremont County, a proponent of transfer has said “it won’t pass.” Is this why the transfer is being masked by a “countermand” amendment to the US Constitution introduced in the 2017 Wyoming legislative session?
- 5) A bill (HB 142) to require transfer of public lands was introduced in the Wyoming House in the 2016 budget session, sponsored by representatives Clem, Miller and Steinmetz and Senator Meier. As written, it said that 5% of the proceeds from a sale of public lands would go to the state school fund, 95% would go to the federal government. It did not pass. A similar bill passed the house in 2015 but failed in the senate. What motivates lawmakers to introduce this legislation; is it the philosophy the “Sagebrush Rebellion movement of the 1970s renamed?

- 6) Leases for oil and gas development on public lands are sold by the BLM or Forest Service to the highest bidder when the private companies nominate specific parcels for development. The agency alone determines if the nomination is suitable, no public participation or comment period exists, the public's only recourse is to protest the lease sale. Federal leases generally last 10 years. The last company operating a well is responsible for final reclamation, but often that does not happen. Would states provide more oversight? Is this the reason for the bill now being debated?
- 7) The Republican Party platform of 2016 contained this statement "Congress shall immediately pass universal legislation providing for a timely and orderly mechanism requiring the federal government to convey certain federally controlled public lands to states." Senator John Barasso of Wyoming was the Chair of the committee that wrote this platform. What will his role be in the future as the issue is debated—can't we expect him to introduce or co-sponsor legislation to this effect?
- 8) The Democratic party platform of 2016 contained this statement: "As a nation, we need policies and investments that will keep America's public lands public, strengthen protections for our natural and cultural resources, increase access to parks and public lands for all Americans..." Does this reflect partisan approaches to the issue in Wyoming, or is the issue being driven either by outside Wyoming mineral development interests or local sportsmen groups concerned about access to hunting and recreational areas?
- 9) State lands do not necessarily provide public access—some are roadless with no accessibility, most do not allow camping—the state Land Board sets all policies governing their use. Assuming that transfer would be limited to those lands with mineral development potential, is there adequate potential for the State Land Board to consider social and governmental costs to this type of development on state owned land?

Observations by J. Knight:

- 1) LWV positions at the state and national levels have not been updated.
- 2) Authority to oppose does exist through a broad interpretation of the LWVUS positions which could be applied in Wyoming; however, generally action is not taken on such vague positions unless there is member understanding of the issues.
- 3) The Wyoming position is vague, outdated and concerned most with public input.
- 4) Social service organizations, and non-governmental organizations like the LWV have generally not taken a stand on this issue.
- 5) State LWV program ideas must be submitted by local LWVs 2 months before the Annual state meeting, the Board reviews and suggests a proposed program one month prior to the Annual meeting. Therefore there is time for the Laramie LWV to suggest an action priority on this issue, through interpretation of the national and state positions.

- 6) Wyoming LWV by-laws do contain a provision for Directions to the board, suggestions for prioritizing action that do not require a vote but shall be noted in the minutes. This action would not assure member understanding of the issue since there would be no vote on it, and could therefore be divisive.
- 7) Therefore the issue is appropriate for either a concurrence statement to be adopted by local LWVs and ratified at the State Convention, or a new Wyoming LWV study.

Recommendation

- 1) Draft a proposal for concurrence wording to a statement for LWV to adopt, opposing transfer of Federal lands to the state of Wyoming.
- 2) Present it to the Laramie LWV in program planning, urge other local Leagues to do the same.
- 3) Suggested wording: Concurrence position statement under NATURAL RESOURCES : The LWV of Wyoming supports the Wyoming Constitution’s provision in Article 21, Section 26 which says “The people inhabiting this state do agree and declare that they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated public lands lying within the boundaries thereof...” We support public input on how these Federal lands will be managed and oppose efforts to have Federal lands transferred to state control and management.

Proposed LWV of Wyoming Budget 2017-2018

	FY16_17 Budget	Est FY16_17 Actual	FY 17_18 Proposed
Operating Account Balance FY End	\$4,563.92	\$4,695.39	\$4,328.39
Education Fund Balance FY End	\$871.66	\$1,251.66	\$1,131.66
Reserve/Grant Account Balance FY End	<u>\$15,070.00</u>	<u>\$15,063.00</u>	<u>\$15,100.00</u>
Total	\$20,505.58	\$21,010.05	\$20,560.05
INCOME			
Per Member Payments			
Campbell County	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$195.00
Casper	\$240.00	\$135.00	\$135.00
Cheyenne	\$195.00	\$240.00	\$240.00
Laramie	\$720.00	\$720.00	\$705.00
Members-at-Large Dues	\$350.00	\$150.00	\$200.00
Convention Income	\$1,300.00	\$2,177.25	\$2,200.00
Annual Giving	\$2,000.00	\$1,721.00	\$1,800.00
LOOK Sales	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Sales Tax	\$4.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Transfer from Ed Fund	\$500.00	\$120.00	\$120.00	Note 1
Contributions - Cash	\$100.00	\$1,165.00	\$600.00	Note 2
Contributions for Ed Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Contributions In-Kind (See Fiscal Notes)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
PayPal Donations	\$10.00	\$19.12	\$0.00	
LOOK Contribution (Knesel)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Total Income	<u>\$5,599.50</u>	<u>\$6,552.37</u>	<u>\$6,195.00</u>	
EXPENSES				
Per Member Payments LWVUS	\$325.50	\$488.00	\$240.00	
National Convention/Council	\$1,000.00	\$1,455.13	\$1,000.00	
State Convention	\$850.00	\$894.41	\$900.00	
MLD/Board Expense	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	
Voter	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Website	\$240.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Note 3
Voter Service	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Lobbyist	\$4,000.00	\$3,500.00	\$4,000.00	
LOOK (shipping costs)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Sales Tax	\$4.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Fundraising	\$125.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	
Mailing/Postage	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$20.00	
Wyoming Fees	\$25.00	\$27.00	\$27.00	
PayPal Fees	\$5.00	\$0.00	\$5.00	
Contributions	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Transfer to Ed Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Publicity/Publications	\$120.00	\$119.00	\$120.00	Note 4
Other/Miscellaneous	\$75.00	\$949.54	\$50.00	Note 5
Total Expenses	<u>\$7,495.00</u>	<u>\$7,433.08</u>	<u>\$6,562.00</u>	

Note 1 - One half of PMP for Wyoming MAL

Note 2 - 2017 Ask from Wyoming Business Community

Note 3 - This fee is being covered by the Laramie League

Note 4 - 20 Copies, Updated Impact on Issues

Note 5 - 2016 Making Democracy Work Reimbursement

From Contributions specifically for that event: \$940.00

Other Budget Notes

2016 State Convention

Revenue **Expenses:** **\$2,077.00**

Revenue: Registration, meal payments **\$1,636.00-** **Saturday Night Banquet \$ 794.41**

Auction/Sales proceeds

\$ 441.00

PLEASE JOIN US, AND BRING ANOTHER MEMBER

Registration Form- Cost \$75.00 (\$80.00 after April 15)

Registration includes all meetings, snacks, and dinner. Dinner guests welcome at \$40.00 each.

Dinner Buffet: Roast beef or lemon sage chicken, Vegetarian: garlic-balsamic Portabella.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Dinner Guest(s) @ \$40.00: _____

Prefer Vegetarian: _____

Please send registration to Katie Morgan, Treasurer.

