# THE ABUNDANT STATE WILDLANDS (ASW) ACT

This document is a model legislative framework drafted by the High Lonesome Society. It is an educational and grassroots advocacy tool designed to prove that active human management—logging, ranching, and hunting—creates a superior ecological and economic reality compared to the current "Nature balances itself without humans" philosophy. This is not an enacted government law. It is the standard we are demanding. Download and distribute freely.

## THE ABUNDANT STATE WILDLANDS ACT: DECLARATION OF INTENT

For decades, the management of our public lands has been driven by a fundamental misrepresentation: the idea that the only way to safeguard the wilderness is to lock the gates, ban the industry, and let nature take its course.

Today, we are looking at the reality of that passive abandonment. We are watching hundreds of thousands of miles of public trails and backcountry roads fall into ruin. We are watching our forests overgrow, our wildlife forage choke out, and our wild places turn into multi-billion-dollar financial black holes. We have been asked to bankrupt our own communities to maintain a museum that is burning to the ground.

That era ends here.

The Abundant State Wildlands Act is built on a single, undeniable truth: a pristine, thriving landscape is not an accident—it is engineered. True biological abundance, the kind that produces massive elk herds, lush mountain meadows, and world-class backcountry recreation, requires active, physical stewardship.

Through this Act, we are legally establishing that the supreme priority of our public land is human recreation. The public's right to an accessible, abundant, and visually stunning wildland is the absolute foundation of our Western heritage.

To guarantee that outcome, we are changing the financial and ecological model of the West. We are no longer treating industry as a parasite; we are deploying it as a fundamental ecological tool.

We will use regulated, mechanical timber harvesting to open our forest canopies, eliminate fire hazards, and cultivate the early-seral feed our wildlife desperately need. We will use strategic, high-density cattle grazing to physically replicate the vital hoof action of the historic bison herds, cycling the nutrients and regenerating the land. We will utilize hunting and fishing not just as a pastime, but as the mandatory tools required to balance the ecosystem.

We are not selling off our public land to the highest bidder, and we are not going broke trying to lock it up. We are going to make the land pay for its own survival.

We will dictate the outcomes. We will mandate the habitat. And we will put the economic engine of industry to work to fund and maintain the greatest recreational playground in the world.

This is how we end the era of abandonment. This is how we build the Abundant State.

**A BILL** To establish a comprehensive management framework for all designated state public lands; to prioritize human recreation, camping, hiking, fishing, and wildlife watching as the supreme management directives; to designate regulated hunting, fishing, timber management, and historically replicated grazing as the fundamental ecological tools required to sustain these recreational experiences; and for other purposes.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE,**

**SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.** This Act may be cited as the "Abundant State Wildlands (ASW) Act."

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND DECLARATION OF PURPOSE. (a) Findings.—** The Legislature finds that:

(1) **The Recreational Priority:** The supreme priority and most equitable use of state public lands is the perpetual enhancement of human recreation, camping, hiking, fishing, and wildlife watching. The public's right to a pristine, accessible, and abundant wildland is the foundation of this state's outdoor heritage.

(2) **Targeted Ecological Outcomes:** To guarantee this pristine recreational environment, state lands must be structurally managed to produce specific, measurable ecological outcomes. These required outcomes include permanently thinning overgrown forests, maintaining an open timber canopy, eliminating hazardous ladder fuels, and cultivating the continuous generation of early-seral vegetation and abundant forbs to maximize wildlife feed and carrying capacity. Furthermore, the state shall actively create programs to incentivize fishing and continuously expand aquatic and terrestrial recreational opportunities.

(3) **The Tools of Abundance:** These pristine recreational outcomes and abundant wildlife habitats are engineered and sustained exclusively through active stewardship. Regulated hunting and fishing are the fundamental tools utilized to maintain trophic balance and ensure perpetual wildlife abundance. Simultaneously, regulated timber management is deployed specifically to open the canopy, create vital wildlife feed, and enhance the visual beauty of the land. Strategic cattle grazing is utilized as a biological mechanism to replicate the vital hoof action and soil impact of historic bison herds, ensuring long-term land health and watershed retention.

**(b) Purpose.—** The sole purpose of this Act is to guarantee that state public lands are managed for the ultimate enhancement of human recreation, public access, and outdoor enjoyment. To perpetually secure these outcomes, this Act establishes a structural framework requiring that the specific tools of hunting, fishing, regulated logging, and historically replicated cattle grazing be actively deployed to engineer wildlife abundance, enhance the natural beauty of the landscape, and cultivate the public's wildland playground.

**SEC. 3. JURISDICTION AND ECOLOGICAL BASELINE. (a) Jurisdiction.—** The mandates of this Act shall apply to all forested, mountainous, and rangeland parcels currently under state jurisdiction, as well as any future lands transferred to state ownership. **(b) Baseline Audit for Recreational Enhancement.—** To guarantee the continuous enhancement of the public's recreational experience, an independent audit shall establish a starting baseline of

current surface water, timber density, and estimated game populations. All future management shall be measured by its success in expanding these metrics for public enjoyment.

**SEC. 4. PUBLIC ACCESS, ZONING, AND RECREATIONAL CAMPING.(a) Unrestricted Dispersed Enjoyment and Management.—** To fulfill the supreme directive of human recreation, the AWLA landscape shall be permanently open and accessible for public camping, hiking, and exploration. All zones within the AWLA, regardless of access type, shall be actively managed to maximize the abundance of natural beauty, harvestable wildlife populations, and human recreational utility.

**(b) Three-Tiered Recreational Access.—** To serve diverse outdoor pursuits while avoiding high-density impact clustering, the AWLA shall be distinctly zoned into three management tiers: (1) **Dispersed Campground Zones:** Explicitly rejecting modern high-density models designed to densely pack human impact into minimal acreage, AWLA campgrounds shall feature widely dispersed, isolated sites to guarantee family privacy and genuine wilderness immersion. (2) **Roaded Access Zones:** Designated corridors actively maintained for highway and off-highway vehicle (OHV) access, allowing the public to drive for wildlife viewing, reach active fishing sites, and access remote trailheads. (3) **Motorless Isolation Zones:** Designated interior sectors strictly closed to motorized vehicles of any kind. These areas are entirely reserved for traditional hike-in and horseback (ride-in) access, providing a remote, rugged backcountry experience.

**(c) Duration Limits.—** A maximum consecutive 14-day stay limit shall be enforced for any single campsite across all AWLA zones to ensure pristine conditions and equitable rotational access for all citizens.

**SEC. 5. FOREST CANOPY AND VISUAL LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT.(a) The Biological Outcome.—** Maximum wildlife abundance requires the continuous generation of early-seral vegetation, young forbs, and open transition zones for ungulate foraging. Furthermore, public recreation requires visually pristine, easily navigable forests free of hazardous ladder fuels.

**(b) The Mechanical Tool.—** To achieve this pristine visual and biological outcome, the state mandates the use of regulated mechanical timber harvesting. Strategic commercial logging shall be aggressively deployed to permanently thin overgrown canopies and eliminate ground-level fuel hazards. To address over-abundant, stagnant sapling growth, the use of heavy mechanized forestry equipment is explicitly mandated. This mechanized action is legally recognized as a necessary ecological disturbance required to break soil capping, integrate biomass into the land, and maintain a wild, healthy soil profile.

**(c) Landscape Shaping and Engineered Meadows.—** Harvesting shall not be uniform. To maximize the transitional edge habitat required for wildlife security and robust feed generation, managers must purposefully shape the landscape utilizing "contoured edges" rather than linear clear-cut blocks. This shaping shall actively create: (1) **Engineered Meadows:** Completely cleared zones designed to maximize sunlight penetration, snowpack accumulation, and high-yield grass production. (2) **Thinned Transition Zones:** Areas where up to 90 percent of small-diameter timber is removed to eliminate resource competition while maintaining necessary thermal cover for wildlife.

**(d) Biochar Reapplication and Prescribed Fire.—** To permanently restore the water cycle and soil health following mechanical harvest: (1) **Biochar Mandate:** A minimum of 10 percent of all biochar produced from small-diameter timber slash must be mechanically reapplied to the ASW soil profile to guarantee aquifer retention and soil fertility. (2) **Prescribed Fire:** Land managers are fully authorized to utilize prescribed burning on harvested plots to eliminate residual slash and naturally sterilize the ground against invasive pests.

**SEC. 6. WATERSHED HEALTH, HYDROLOGICAL RESTORATION, AND AQUATIC RECREATION.**

**(a) The Biological Outcome.—** A thriving recreational landscape requires sustained water tables, lush mountain meadows, and expansive aquatic habitats to support waterfowl, robust fisheries, and terrestrial wildlife. Furthermore, restoring sub-surface hydrology is essential to maximize high-yield forage production in engineered meadows and grazing valleys.

**(b) The Mechanical Hydrological Tool.—** To engineer this aquatic abundance, the state mandates active hydrological stewardship. Surface water shall be strategically diverted from primary drainages to create natural sub-irrigation systems across the ASW. Strategic earthworks shall be authorized to construct catchment basins and recreational ponds, capturing runoff to hold water on the landscape, recharge the local aquifer, and create new permanent public fishing access. Where biological beaver activity is not feasible, human-engineered dams replicating beaver hydrology shall be utilized as a primary mechanical alternative to slow runoff and build riparian zones.

**(c) The Biological Hydrological Tool and Infrastructure Protection.—** To assist mechanical water retention efforts, *Castor canadensis* (North American Beaver) shall be systematically deployed as a biological tool to engineer sustained water tables. However, this deployment is strictly limited to targeted drainages where their activity will not degrade, flood, or destroy human infrastructure, public roads, or adjacent private property.

**(d) Mandatory Population and Location Regulation.—** To maintain this strict infrastructure balance, regulated human trapping and hunting are explicitly designated as the mandatory ecological tools used to continuously manage beaver populations. Trapping shall be aggressively utilized to control their geographical locations, prevent infrastructure damage, and ensure their biological utility remains an asset to the ASW rather than a liability.

**SEC. 7. SOIL REGENERATION, FORAGE ABUNDANCE, AND ADAPTIVE HERD MANAGEMENT.**

**(a) The Biological Outcome.—** The foundation of wildlife abundance is rich, biologically active soil capable of producing massive quantities of high-yield forage for primary game species (elk, deer, and antelope).

**(b) The Agricultural Tool and Expected Impact.—** To cultivate this soil health, the state mandates the strategic use of short-duration, high-density cattle grazing across the ASW. Cattle shall be deployed as a highly regulated biological mechanism to physically replicate the vital hoof action and soil impact of historic bison herds. This biological hoof action is explicitly

required to break capped soil crusts, trample standing biomass into the soil layer, aerate the ground, and naturally cycle organic nutrients without the introduction of synthetic inputs, thereby stimulating the rapid regrowth of young grasses and forbs required by wildlife.

**(c) Recommended Movement Methodologies.—** While grazing management shall remain strictly outcome-based to afford ranchers operational flexibility, the following active management methodologies are explicitly authorized and highly recommended to achieve the targeted ecological disturbance and high-frequency rotations: (1) **Human-Guided "Inherding":** Continuous horseback herding by mounted range riders to actively guide herd trajectory, concentrate hoof action, and enforce rotational targets within engineered meadows. (2) **Nighttime Predator Shielding:** Gathering herds each evening into high-density, temporary paddocks (utilizing portable electric fencing or localized virtual boundaries) to eliminate livestock depredation, heavily concentrate localized soil nutrient deposition, and deter apex predators through human presence. (3) **Virtual Fencing and GPS Collars:** Automated GPS-collar virtual fencing technology to maintain dynamic boundary control and rapid rotational cadence in rugged terrain.

**(d) Sovereign Data Protection and Privacy Shield.—** To protect the sovereignty of the agricultural operator, if a rancher elects to utilize GPS collars, virtual fencing, or telemetry tracking, the following data protections are absolute: (1) **Private Property Guarantee:** All telemetry, location, grazing intensity, biological monitoring, or sensor data generated by livestock collars, ear tags, or related herd-tracking technology within the ASW is classified strictly as the private, proprietary property of the individual rancher. This data shall never become the property of any government official, state agency, or local range authority. It may only be shared with local offices at the sole, uncoerced discretion of the rancher. (2) **Prohibition of Global Framework Compliance:** Telemetry or movement data generated within the ASW shall not be shared, reported, integrated, indexed, or utilized for any compliance, monitoring, reporting, or verification (MRV) mechanism associated with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the United Nations System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), or any federal or international natural asset inventory. (3) **Nature Credit Firewall:** GPS collar data shall not be tokenized, audited, or packaged to mint, substantiate, or trade any carbon offset, biodiversity credit, ecological intactness metric, or nature-based financial instrument.

**(e) Human Capital and Rural Heritage.—** While technological management tools are fully authorized, the ASW shall actively incentivize and prioritize human-led stewardship. State grazing fee structures and local management revenues shall be utilized to support Range Rider apprenticeships, creating direct employment opportunities and preserving the generational heritage of active livestock husbandry on the landscape.

**SEC. 8. WILDLIFE ABUNDANCE AND TROPHIC EQUILIBRIUM. (a) The Biological Outcome.—** The ASW landscape shall be managed to achieve maximum ecological biocapacity, defined as the highest possible sustainable yield and abundance of primary wildlife and ungulate populations to support robust human wildlife watching and hunting. **(b) The Harvest Tool.—** To ensure that apex predator densities do not exceed the carrying capacity of the ecosystem or degrade the maximum wildlife potential of the land, the state mandates strict trophic equilibrium. Regulated human hunting, trapping, and harvesting are designated as the essential ecological

tools used to apply adaptive population suppression. These tools must be continuously deployed to balance predator-prey ratios, prevent disease vectors, and guarantee that biological abundance is perpetually sustained.

**SEC. 9. RECREATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYMBIOTIC INDUSTRY. (a) The Economic Outcome.—** To guarantee that this pristine recreational environment is permanently funded without burdening the taxpayer, the ASW landscape must achieve financial self-sufficiency and robust infrastructure development (roads, trails, and catchment ponds). **(b) The Industrial Tool.—** Symbiotic industrial development (including mineral extraction and energy production) is authorized exclusively as a financial and structural engine for the public's landscape. Any industrial operation must empirically demonstrate a net-positive ecological contribution. Operators must structurally integrate their footprint to advance ASW objectives, such as financing targeted timber canopy clearing or constructing required hydrological catchment basins as a localized byproduct of their core operations.

**SEC. 10. AGENCY ENFORCEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY MANDATES.(a) Statutory Alignment and The Supreme Directive.—** All state agencies charged with the administration of public lands, wildlife, and natural resources (including but not limited to the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Forestry) shall immediately realign their internal charters, regulatory frameworks, and operational budgets to reflect the supreme directives of this Act. The perpetual enhancement of human recreation and wildlife abundance is hereby established as the overriding legal standard by which all agency actions, permits, and denials shall be judged.**(b) The Prohibition of Ecological Negligence.—** To guarantee the outcomes established in Sections 5 through 8, the doctrine of active stewardship is mandatory. In all environmental reviews, land management plans, and wildlife biological assessments, state agencies are legally prohibited from selecting a "No Action" or "Passive Management" alternative if empirical data indicates that inaction will result in canopy overgrowth, hazardous fuel accumulation, suppressed forage yield, or a decline in game species abundance. Under this Act, passive abandonment is legally defined as ecological negligence.**(c) Mandatory Tool Deployment and Quotas.—** State agencies shall not merely permit, but shall actively cultivate and deploy the required ecological tools defined in this Act. (1) **Forestry and Lands:** The state forestry agency is legally required to execute the mechanical tools (timber harvesting) and agricultural tools (cattle grazing) at the exact scale necessary to maintain the ecological baseline of an open canopy and rich soil cycling. The agency must issue sufficient stewardship contracts and grazing leases to achieve these required biological outcomes. (2) **Fish and Wildlife:** The state wildlife agency is legally required to aggressively deploy the harvest tool (hunting and trapping). The agency shall not restrict human hunting access or limit tag allocations for social or ideological reasons, provided the targeted prey or predator population exceeds the baseline required for trophic equilibrium and maximum landscape biocapacity.**(d) The Recreational Supremacy Audit.—** To ensure total transparency and public accountability, the overseeing agencies shall publish an annual "Recreational Supremacy and Habitat Audit." This audit must empirically prove to the Legislature and the public that the agencies successfully utilized symbiotic industry (timber, grazing, hydrology) to: (1) Expand or maintain the total mileage of accessible, cleared public trails and roads. (2) Achieve the required biological removal of hazardous ladder fuels. (3) Cultivate the required acreage of early-seral vegetation and riparian zones. Failure to meet these habitat and recreational benchmarks shall trigger a mandatory

administrative review and the immediate reallocation of agency leadership or resources to ensure compliance with the ASW mandate.

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