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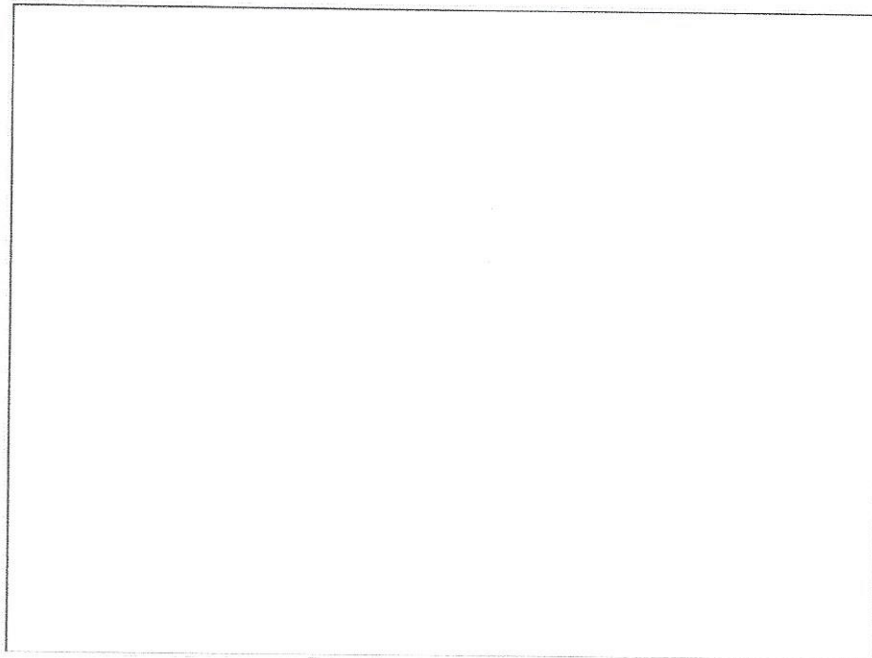
By [Nate Martin](#) on August 2, 2018

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Register Republican in the August primary to stop Hageman



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(Robyn Vincent)

JACKSON HOLE, WY – Jackson residents concerned about the future of public lands should be paying attention to one contest above all others this election: the race to become Wyoming's governor.

Many informed citizens reading *Planet Jackson Hole* already recognize this fact. You likely understand the tremendous uncertainty created by the departure of Gov. Matt Mead, who's been about [as good on public lands](#) as the state could hope for in this political climate.

But what voters might not know is that the election for Mead's replacement is not taking place on November 6, when races for other important seats like county commission and state legislature will be decided.

Instead, the election for Wyoming governor is August 21: the date of the GOP primary.

Yeah, yeah. I recognize that, historically, Wyoming has elected some Democratic governors. I also recognize that Democratic frontrunner Mary Throne, a centrist oil and gas attorney, would fit

Wyoming's proud tradition of moderate governors.

But the fact remains that Wyoming politics has turned hard right in recent years, and Throne—or any Democrat—is simply a very long shot for the office. The sober truth is that we'll likely know Wyoming's next governor on August 22.

The reason public land lovers in Wyoming should register Republican and vote in the GOP primary is simple: [Harriet Hageman](#) would be a nightmare for Wyoming public lands, and thanks to a bizarre turn of events, she has a real shot at clinching the GOP nomination.

Environmentalists are likely familiar with Hageman's history. She's proud to have been dubbed "[The Wicked Witch of the West](#)" for her role in fighting the National Forest Service's roadless rule. She considers conservation easements "[federalizing private property rights](#)" and claims conservationists want to "bring in all the endangered species from all over the world and release them [in Wyoming]."

"They will simply move the people off and bring in lions, elephants, and cheetahs," she [told an audience at Casper College](#).

Bashing conservationists, of course, is a GOP pastime. But Hageman's stance on public lands is far beyond anti-environmentalism. She's a devoted proponent of the biggest threat Wyoming public lands face today: the movement to [transfer federal public lands to the state](#) so they can be opened for privatization and unchecked development.

Hageman makes no bones about her passion for public land transfer. She declares on her campaign website that as governor she would work to [transfer 1,000,000 acres of federal public land in Wyoming to state control](#). This "pilot project" would be just the tip of the iceberg. Hageman's beliefs are in lockstep with radicals like [Utah Rep. Ken Ivory](#), founder and former president of the American Lands Council, which birthed the mainstream land-transfer movement. Hageman's goal is the full state seizure of all federal public lands within Wyoming's borders.

Hageman explained some of her beliefs in a [radio interview with Ivory](#). She said, for instance, that the National Forest Service's sole purpose is to provide the nation with a continuous source of lumber and water. But the agency has been corrupted, she said, by a "radical environmental agenda" that has resulted in large swaths of National Forest being criminally set aside "to do nothing with."

Of course, Wyoming's robust culture of hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation depends on those forests in which "nothing" is being done. And setting aside public lands is critical for Wyoming's [growing outdoor recreation economy](#), which already generates upwards of \$6 billion in annual consumer spending, as well as 50,000 jobs.

Up until a few weeks ago, Hageman's stances made her seem like too much of a kook to get elected. According to a [Wyoming PBS poll](#) earlier this month, she was trailing Wyoming State Treasurer Mark Gordon and Casper businessman Sam Galeotos among registered Republicans.

But one of Hageman's main kook competitors in the GOP primary, Taylor Haynes, may now be eliminated from the race because of an [election law violation](#) (the result of a complaint that almost certainly originated from Hageman's campaign). Haynes ran for governor in 2014. Although his campaign at that time was largely derailed when he argued we should [open up Yellowstone National Park for mineral development](#), he nevertheless got 30,000 votes. If a [judge decides](#) that Haynes indeed cannot run in this year's GOP primary, Hageman is well poised to scoop up many would-be Haynes voters.

A strong moderate Republican frontrunner could still easily thwart Hageman. But there isn't one—Gordon and Galeotos seem likely to split the moderate Republican vote. If the kook voting bloc is more consolidated than the moderates, the kook candidate can win. That's why Wyoming public land lovers of all affiliations should register and vote in the GOP primary—to save our public lands from the kooks.

I'm not going to tell you which GOP candidate to pick, but Hageman's website attacking Gordon and Galeotos, "[Wrong for Wyoming](#)," provides helpful information. It also shows a hellish future for Wyoming if we don't elect her—renewable energy, intact ecosystems, businesses with American flags in front of them...

You can help make Hageman's hell a reality and protect Wyoming's public lands.

Wyoming makes it simple—change your registration and vote in the GOP primary on the same day.

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