



Position Statement on Reformation of the Mining Act of 1872
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Public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Forest Service harbor some of the most important fish and wildlife habitat and provide some of the finest hunting and angling opportunities in the country. For example, public lands contain well more than 50 percent of the nation's blue-ribbon trout streams and are strongholds for imperiled trout and salmon in the western United States. More than 80 percent of the most critical habitat for elk is found on lands managed by the Forest Service and the BLM, alone. Pronghorn antelope, sage grouse, mule deer, salmon and steelhead, and countless other fish and wildlife species are similarly dependent on public lands.

Historically, mining played an important role in the social and economic well being of many communities, and it was vital in the development and settlement of the western United States.

Hunting and fishing, on the other hand, generated more than \$63 billion in revenues to local economies in 2006, which is roughly equal to Americans' total spending at all spectator sports, casinos, movies, golf courses and country clubs, amusement parks and arcades combined, according to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Arizona Wildlife Federation urges legislative reform of the 1872 Mining Law, and consideration in any reform of the following recommendations:

- 1) Allocate funds generated from royalties and fees assessed on mined materials toward state fish and wildlife departments, conservation organizations, and others for fish and wildlife habitat improvement projects associated with past mining.
- 2) Provide "Good Samaritans," that have no connection to the abandoned mine waste or interest in re-mining it for minerals, reclamation incentives and common-sense liability relief.
- 3) Ensure that resource professionals have full discretion in the planning and permitting processes to protect public lands where high fish, water, and wildlife values exist.
- 4) Prohibit the patenting or sale of public lands under this law.
- 5) Provide for harmonious integration of state and federal wildlife habitat and population objectives in permit operating plans.