

Protecting the Red Desert for Generations to Come

*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,
for everything in heaven and earth is yours.
Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.
~Chronicles 29:11*

Throughout the Bible, we are reminded that Creation belongs to God, and we as God's children are responsible for creation and must be caretakers of all of Creation. The Red Desert, a distinct part of Wyoming's landscape, is no exception. This unique place highlights the true beauty of God's Creation and diversity of Wyoming. In this hard-to-reach piece of the United States, the Red Desert is known for being the hideout of Butch Cassidy and the year round home of the Steamboat desert elk herd.



History

The Red Desert, located in the south central Wyoming, is unlike any other place in the United States and unlike many places in the world. This high arid desert defined by large and rolling sand dunes, diverse plant and animal species, and various cultural and historic resources, is similar to ecosystems found only in Mongolia. This distinct and rare part of God's creation has a rich history and should be protected for this generation and the next.

For more than 100 years, communities and individuals in Wyoming have sought protection for the Red Desert, recognizing its beauty. Some small pieces of the Red Desert have been classified as wilderness study areas, meaning they were identified as valuable places that need to be studied to further understand the ecosystems in these specific locations. However, these are the only places that have received any type of protection within the Red Desert.

Red Desert – A Unique Place in God's Creation

The Red Desert encompasses more than eight million acres in Wyoming, from the Colorado border almost all the way to Lander, WY. Within this area, one will find:

- At least 350 species of wildlife
- The largest active sand dune system in North America
- More than 1,000 species of plant
- 40-50,000 pronghorn antelope which is the largest migratory herd in the lower 48 states
- Historical and cultural sites including ancient petroglyph sites and Native American vision quest sites as well as Butch Cassidy's hideout and historic ranches from the expansion era

The Red Desert is currently a place for hunting, fishing, hiking, and





countless outdoor and recreational activities. It is also a place of great cultural and historical importance, central to Native American traditions and westward expansion alike.

Cultural History

Studies show human presence in the Red Desert dating back 12,000 years and the Desert may contain some of the continent's oldest rock art. The rock art, as interpreted by anthropologists, represents biographical, ceremonial and spiritual expressions.

Seeking Larger, More Permanent Protection

While there are a few places in the Red Desert that have been identified as wilderness study areas (which means they are believed to be valuable enough to justify consideration of permanent protection), there are many places in the Red Desert that should receive more permanent protection than what has been put in place. The Red Desert is an irreplaceable part of God's creation that should be protected for future generations to enjoy and for the benefit of all of God's creatures.