



# SPEAK UP FOR MULE DEER

**Tell the State Lands Board not to approve leases in migration corridors!**

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Here in Wyoming, we value our ability to roll up our sleeves, work with our neighbors, and take on difficult challenges. That's why the Wyoming Outdoor Council has been supportive of Gov. Gordon's Big Game Migration Corridor Advisory Group, which represents a diversity of interests and has come together to recommend strategies to sustain migration corridors.

Recently, this group met in Lander. Among the topics discussed was oil and gas leasing on state lands, and what rules should apply when parcels are located in migration corridors.

The group seemed to agree that there are some common sense, science-based rules that should be in place to ensure that corridors aren't disturbed and degraded. **Unfortunately, the most recent Wyoming Office of State Lands sale proceeded without strong enough protections for migrating mule deer.**

**Write to the State Board of Land Commissioners today, and ask them to cancel the sale of parcels 128, 129, 140, 160, and 164–166**, which are within the Baggs and Sublette mule deer migration corridors. Parcels 128, 129, and 140 are in stopover habitat — the most critical. Let them know that Wyoming needs to get it right the first time. That means not leasing parcels until we have a strong enough stipulation in place to protect the best quality habitat for our migratory mule deer.

Currently, the rules that govern oil and gas leasing on state lands **are not effective enough for our deer**. We anticipate sound recommendations from Gov. Gordon's advisory group — but until then, **we can't let the sale of these lease parcels proceed without adequate, science-backed protections.**

## A FEW THINGS YOU COULD MENTION:

- **Mule deer have been in decline for decades.** Statewide, our populations have declined by more than 30 percent since the early 90s.
- **Mule deer are incredibly faithful to their migration routes.** Once they learn their routes, they do not deviate from them. This means that deer can't simply go around energy infrastructure once it's installed. Development causes them to miss out on key forage that helps them survive after a harsh winter.
- **Mule deer don't get used to the presence of energy infrastructure**, not even over generations.
- **The parcels that were sold in the Baggs corridor (128, 129, and 140) contained stopover habitat**, which provide the most critical, make-or-break forage on a migration route. Stress to the commissioners that these are the most important habitats of all.