



2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

U.S. SENATE

Outdoor recreation including hunting and fishing is a multi-billion-dollar industry in New Mexico and the United States, supporting jobs and economic development in rural communities. But for many sportsmen and women, hunting and fishing are more than a pastime – they are a passion. Hunters and anglers care deeply about wildlife, habitat and the public lands they have used for generations. They also have a long track record of civic engagement.

For all of those reasons, the New Mexico Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, with the concurrence of the New Mexico organizations listed below, developed a short general public interest questionnaire for every candidate listed the 2018 primary ballot for Governor, Commissioner of Public Lands, U.S. Senate and U.S. House. Our goal was to develop questions that affect all New Mexicans, but which are not often considered during the course of a typical political campaign.

Three candidates aspire to represent New Mexico in the U.S. Senate for the next six years. All three are running unopposed in their respective primaries. We submitted the same questions to each campaign on April 16, then followed up to ensure they had received the questionnaire. We followed up again with a reminder on April 26, and gave the campaigns additional time if needed.

We received responses from Democrat Martin Heinrich and Republican Mick Rich. Libertarian Aubrey Dunn did not respond.

The candidates' answers are on the following pages, along with a short, campaign-provided biography of the candidate and a photograph. We specifically asked the candidates to keep their answers short. We hope that New Mexico voters of all political backgrounds will find the responses informative.

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers and the following groups are nonprofit charitable 501(c)(3) organizations. We do not endorse or oppose any candidate or party for any political office. We do urge all eligible New Mexico residents to vote.

Jarrett Babincsak, Chairman
New Mexico Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

On behalf of:

- New Mexico Wildlife Federation
- Albuquerque Wildlife Federation
- United Bowhunters of New Mexico
- Wild Turkey Sportsmen's Association
- Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen
- Doña Ana County Associated Sportsmen
- Sportsmen Concerned
- New Mexico Sportsmen





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MARTIN HEINRICH DEMOCRAT

The son of an immigrant lineman and a factory worker, Martin Heinrich is a natural problem solver committed to rebuilding New Mexico's middle class. His top priority is diversifying New Mexico's economy and creating new jobs by securing forward-looking missions for our military installations, pushing for public land protections that fuel our outdoor recreation industry, and working to position New Mexico as a leader in renewable energy. He is running for re-election to ensure every New Mexican has a shot at a fair deal — access to affordable health care, a job that pays a living wage, and the ability to retire with dignity. Martin is working to build a safer and more prosperous New Mexico. There's much more to do, but he won't stop until every New Mexican is thriving.

Bio provided by candidate

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. SENATE?

Protecting our public lands from privatization and creating new public lands protections are top priorities of mine in the Senate. As a hunter, I know too well the frustration associated with locked gates and no trespassing signs. I'm working across party lines on the Sportsmen's Act, a comprehensive bill to increase opportunities for hunting, improve access to public lands, and reauthorize conservation programs. It includes provisions I've championed that would require federal public land agencies to identify federal lands where hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation are permitted but access is non-existent or limited and develop a plan to open the lands up.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

Public lands are our birth right — they belong to all of us. They were never meant to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. Privatization will inevitably mean closed gates and no trespassing signs. Once that access is lost, we won't get it back. Some have tried to make a state's rights argument, but we know that they do not have the money needed to manage federal public lands. It would bankrupt their budgets and inevitably lead to selling off our public lands. There are areas the federal government can do better in managing our public lands — like improving access — but turning them over to states or private interests to manage will ruin hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities, particularly in the West. I am proud to be standing up to the Trump administration's attempts to shrink our national monuments, raise fees at national parks, and allow drilling in pristine areas like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

Funding for land and wildlife management is not adequate. It's evident in the maintenance backlog in our national parks and in the practice of "fire-borrowing" to combat wildfire. These are issues I have raised consistently since I was sworn into Congress. I recently introduced the National Park Restoration Act, a bipartisan bill to tackle the maintenance backlog at our national parks. I was also successful in passing a fix to "fire-borrowing" in the most recent government funding bill so we stop raiding money meant for fire-prevention to pay for putting fires out. I have been outspoken about the troubling dynamic where Congress refuses to properly fund our land management agencies, then accuses the agencies of mismanagement and claim this is evidence states could do a better job. Congress must do a better job of properly funding these agencies in the first place.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is our most successful conservation program for preserving treasured lands for future generations. It's helped protect places like the Aztec Ruins and the Gila National Forest. I began working as soon as I was elected to permanently reauthorize and fully fund the program before its prior September 2015 expiration. We secured a three-year extension in a deal extending clean energy tax incentives I helped negotiate, but we must make LWCF permanent. I am an original cosponsor on S. 896, a bipartisan bill to do just that. I also stood up to the Trump administration's attempt to eliminate the LWCF entirely. Instead, we secured a \$25 million increase over last year's funding levels in the government funding bill that passed in March 2018.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

Protective designations for public lands protect hunting and fishing opportunities by ensuring the land is kept in public hands rather than sold to private interests who would shut out hunting and fishing or lead to development that is inconsistent with hunting and fishing. These designations safeguard wildlife habitats and fisheries, allowing species to flourish. Wilderness designations specifically protect access for hunting and fishing and offer pristine, often remote lands to hunt, fish, and find solitude. By designating land as wilderness we can ensure these lands — our heritage — are passed down to our children and grandchildren to keep traditions of hunting and fishing alive. I'm proud to have created wilderness designations in the Carson National Forest and to have worked to unlock the Sabinoso Wilderness so hunters, fishers, and outdoor enthusiasts can finally access this jewel.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

I believe energy companies have an obligation to minimize their impact on our natural resources, particularly our air and water. I have been a lead proponent of the methane rule to limit natural gas waste to protect our air quality and I supported the Obama administration's work to cut carbon pollution. While the industry is diverse, many companies require more oversight and accountability to ensure they properly pursue the mitigation work required when being entrusted with use of public resources. One area where we have seen woefully inadequate stewardships with hardrock mining — as we saw with the Gold King Mine spill. I'm working to impose royalties on hardrock mining to help pay for abandoned mine cleanup and prevent future disasters from happening.

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD THE SENATE DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

Access is one of the biggest issues, which is why the Sportsmen's Act requires federal land management agencies to identify areas where hunting and fishing is permitted but access is non-existent. It would require these agencies to develop a plan to open these lands to the public. A perfect example is the Sabinoso Wilderness, a designation I was involved with every step of the way. After it was declared wilderness, it was landlocked with no legal way for sportsmen to access. I was able to work with the Wilderness Land Trust on a private donation to ensure access and then join the Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, among others, to press Interior Secretary Zinke to accept the donation. The wilderness finally became accessible to the public in October of last year. In the most recent government funding bill, we successfully reauthorized the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act, which makes it easier to protect lands of exceptional conservation value — like hunting spots.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

I am carrying a bipartisan bill to address the national parks maintenance backlog, funded by revenues from onshore and offshore energy production on federal lands. I also believe Congress needs to do a much better job of adequately funding these agencies in the first place — the backlog in the National Parks System costs nearly four times what the National Parks Service receives in annual appropriations. That's unacceptable. I am generally opposed to increasing user fees for access to public lands. The beauty of our public lands is that they don't require a thick wallet to enjoy; making entrance into them more expensive will shut people out.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

Grazing on public lands is tradition and critical for our ranchers in New Mexico, but it's critical that we all work together to ensure grazing areas are managed to benefit the land for the generations of ranchers and outdoor enthusiasts. I believe it is important to continue to allow for grazing rights in existing areas in our wilderness areas, as the federal Wilderness Act allows. It's important we strike a balance between conservation and allowing ranchers to make a living. I have worked to establish a pilot program allowing ranchers to voluntarily retire their grazing permits on public lands that would permanently retire these allotments.

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

I support the Endangered Species Act as one of the most important tools to protect our country's wildlife. It's been successful in its mission to bring animals back from the brink of extinction. I believe any decisions under the act must be made on the basis of science — not political ideology. I also think we should do a better job of collaborating at the state, federal, and local level to protect species before they reach the point of being endangered. The work to protect the dunes sagebrush lizard is a perfect example of the sort of collaboration we should be doing.





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MICK RICH REPUBLICAN



Mick Rich is the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate in New Mexico. Mick grew up and became an Eagle Scout in the Bay Area. He received his civil engineering degree from Oregon State University. Seeking opportunity, he moved to New Mexico in 1980 carrying his tool belt and a hammer. In 1982 he married his college sweetheart, Marion, and they raised four children: Audrey, Jim, Grace, and Margaret. Since 1983, Mick has been a commercial and industrial contractor, with clients including New Mexico's cities, school systems, churches, healthcare providers, national labs, military bases, pueblos and tribes, retailers, and private employers. Since 2013, Mick has served on the New Mexico Labor and Industrial Commission. He has served on the boards of Albuquerque Economic Development, Albuquerque Vocational High School, Associated Builders and Contractors, and Catholic Charities.

Bio provided by candidate

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO NEW MEXICO SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. SENATE?

Protection of their Second Amendment rights.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

In New Mexico, 35 percent of all land is owned by the federal government, with the Bureau of Land Management holding the most.

Politicians and bureaucrats are never directly and solely responsible for the consequences of their decisions. This does not mean that all land should be placed in private hands. For example, the national parks have been set aside as places of unusual natural beauty. These properties are managed in a way intended to preserve them for future generations suggest that any other type of management is appropriate. Wildlife refuges and wilderness areas represent similar cases of public lands set aside because of unique, irreplaceable characteristics.

Much of the government-owned property, however, falls outside these categories and could legitimately be considered for privatization. Private property rights make the individual property owner solely responsible for the consequences of his decision. This gives the owner an incentive to use his property in a productive and efficient manner.

DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

Historically our mixed-use federal lands were close to self-sufficient. Recently we have seen New Mexico's long tradition that has enabled hard-working New Mexicans to earn a living – supporting their families while being good stewards of the land – being curtailed. Now these lands are either single use or close to it – recreation and preservation – and necessary funding to support the single use was not addressed. This has created budget shortfalls.

There are three options: recreational users make up the budget shortfall, the federal government makes up the budget shortfall, or the federal lands are reopened to hard-working New Mexicans who earn a living and support their families while being good stewards of the land.

A single-species forest is unhealthy. A single budget source for managing our forests is just as unhealthy.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

The original intention of the LWCF was to assist in expanding and preserving Americans' access to outdoor recreation. Over the years, Congress, the U.S. Interior Dept., and the U.S. Forest Service have used the fund primarily to grow the massive landholdings of the federal government – despite its incapacity to effectively manage the land it already owns.

Rather than expanding federal lands, Congress and federal land management agencies need to redirect their attention to better maintaining current lands and to granting more control to states and individuals. Private property rights are paramount to both economic freedom and environmental protection. To these ends, Congress should not permanently reauthorize the LWCF. Instead, Congress should allow the LWCF to expire and enable more state and local government and private control of America's land and water. Sunsetting the fund will result in more efficient and accountable land management, creating and preserving opportunities for economic development, outdoor recreation, and environmental protection.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

Under the right administration, they can improve opportunities. In November 2017, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service opened or expanded hunting and fishing opportunities across 132,000 acres on 10 national wildlife refuges. This will bring the number of refuges where the public may hunt up to 373 and up to 311 where fishing is permitted.

ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE? .

In all cases, we must weigh risk against sacrifice. If the gain in energy production is minimal but the sacrifice to wildlife is large, that project should be questioned. However, if the gain in energy production is large, the benefits ripple outwards to creating local jobs and growing our national energy independence, which strengthens national security. The issue is never as simple as "oil vs. wildlife."

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD THE SENATE DO TO IMPROVE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO?

Congress can stop closing off and restricting access to New Mexico's public lands. Our public lands are meant for public use by all New Mexicans, including those with mobility issues. They are not meant to be sportsmen's theme parks for rich trophy hunters from California and New York.

THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

The question presents a false choice. What about volunteer work? Or work programs for able-bodied adults on public assistance? There could be many better options than increasing spending, taxes, or usage fees. However, in general, national park lands are designed for all Americans – whether or not we actually use them – so maintenance costs should not rely solely on increased user fees.

DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

Rangelands cover about one-third of the United States. More than half of U.S. rangelands are privately owned, with the remainder managed by governments.

Grazing allowed on federal lands has fallen by more than half in the past 60 years. Every day, America loses more than 4,000 acres of working farms and ranches to development. Actions to protect open space – regulations, land acquisition, conservation easements, and tax policy – have not done enough to solve the problem. So in addition, ranchers should diversify their operations to include ecotourism, hunting, and fishing, while federal policy for rangelands should emphasize sustainability

WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service inverted a regulatory structure established by Congress for the management of endangered and threatened species. This improper regulation erases the intended distinction between "threatened" and "endangered" species, creating potential conservation disincentives and conflict. We should not apply regulations regarding endangered species to "threatened" species and should consider eliminating this regulation altogether.