



2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

GOVERNOR

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 on the 2018 general election ballot for Governor. 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.

Two individuals are vying to become the next Governor of New Mexico, Democrat Michelle Lujan Grisham and Republican Steve Pearce, both of whom are currently members of Congress. We submitted the same questions to each campaign on Aug. 27, then followed up in equal measure to ensure each campaign had received the questionnaire. Each campaign had more than a month to respond. We followed up again in equal measure with reminders and gave the campaigns additional time if requested. Both campaigns responded.

The candidates' answers are on the following pages, along with a short, campaign-provided biography 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. You can see the candidates' answers to a different set of questions posed before the 2018 primary election by visiting the NM BHA website (www.backcountryhunters.org/new_mexico_bha) and clicking on the "Issues" tab.

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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MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM DEMOCRAT

A 12th-generation New Mexican, Michelle learned about our shared responsibility to look after others from her family. Michelle is a caregiver for her aging mother Sonja, who herself was an advocate for children with disabilities. A widow who raised her two teenage daughters as a single mom, Michelle advocates for families across the state every day. As New Mexico's Secretary of Aging, Michelle went undercover to expose abuse of seniors in nursing homes and made changes to ensure that the people who helped build our families and communities have the respect they deserve. As Secretary of the Department of Health, Michelle recruited doctors to underserved rural communities and doubled New Mexico school-based health centers. Michelle currently serves in Congress where she has passed legislation to build stronger communities by investing in law enforcement training, our local tribes, and in better public schools.

Bio provided by candidate

1. AS GOVERNOR, WHAT CAN YOU DO TO IMPROVE THE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY OF AVERAGE NEW MEXICANS, THOSE WHO CANNOT AFFORD TO HUNT OR FISH ON PRIVATE PROPERTY?

The immense and beautiful resources New Mexico lands and waterways have to offer should be accessible to everyone in the state. Our game and wildlife are held in public trust by New Mexico residents and future generations, who are the beneficiaries of these populations. In order to promote this beneficial access, I will develop strategies to ensure the accessibility of our public lands to New Mexicans across the state.

For instance, many prime hunting areas are surrounded by private land, and roads that counties used to maintain have been abandoned or are being purposely taken out of commission at the request of some private landholders. This makes what should be public land effectively private. I will work with the State and Federal land management and wildlife entities to identify landlocked areas and develop a plan to address this issue.

2. DO YOU BELIEVE NEW MEXICANS ARE GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH THE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DECISIONS MADE BY THE STATE GAME COMMISSION IN RECENT YEARS? ARE YOU SATISFIED?

Talking with hunters and anglers across the state, I am deeply concerned that the commission has failed to take into account public input and the opinions of New Mexico hunters, anglers, and wildlife experts when making key decisions. This has led to decisions in wildlife management and access that have not reflected either the views of most New Mexicans or the interests of the state in maintaining diverse and resilient wildlife populations in the public trust.

As a first step I will support the appointment of game commissioners with real expertise and close ties to stakeholder communities. Members should represent diverse experience in wildlife management, conservation, and hunting and fishing, while also bringing to the table a distinct understanding of their region's unique dynamics and needs. I am also open to working with stakeholders and the legislature to consider reform of the commission that may increase its democratic representation.

3. GAME WARDENS AND BIOLOGISTS HAVE CRITICAL ROLES IN SAFEGUARDING AND MANAGING THE STATE'S WILDLIFE RESOURCES. WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH CURRENTLY SPENDING ABOUT \$40 MILLION A YEAR, DO YOU BELIEVE THE FUNDING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FIELD BIOLOGISTS IS ADEQUATE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE STATE'S WILDLIFE RESOURCES AND THE INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES THAT RELY ON THEM? PLEASE ELABORATE.

We must hold ourselves accountable to taking all steps necessary to effectively manage our wildlife and preserve resilient populations for the long term. Having enough well trained field biologists and enforcement officers to both understand the status of wildlife in New Mexico, and to ensure that the necessary laws and regulations are followed is essential.

As governor, I will work with staff and leadership at NMDGF as well as stakeholders from across New Mexico to come to an understanding of if and how investment in these personnel should be approved.

4. HUNTERS AND ANGLERS PROVIDE A MAJORITY OF FUNDING FOR THE NMDGF, WHICH IT USES TO MANAGE BOTH GAME AND NON-GAME SPECIES. DO YOU THINK ALL STATE TAXPAYERS SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE FUNDING OF NMDGF TO HELP COVER THE COSTS OF NON-GAME WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT?

Bills have been introduced in recent years that would expand and/or alter the scope of operations for NMDGF. Expanding the department's mandate to cover all wildlife across the state would be an important step in order to streamline and improve game and wildlife management across New Mexico, and also ensure adequate resources for the management of non-game species currently under the purview of NMDGF.

Any such change must be conducted with careful preparation and analysis to ensure that there are no discontinuities in important services, and that that funding is available for all aspects of service. I will work to evaluate this change, solicit public and stakeholder input, and ensure any such change is coupled with adequate funding for the department to meet its goals.

5. UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD YOU SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FEES TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO NMDGF?

NMDGF is responsible for creating and using its own revenue, and does not receive money from the state's general fund. Under current law this means that the department must decide to raise additional revenues through fees and licensure.

I will support leadership at the department who will work both to ensure that every dollar of revenue is being used as effectively as possible to undertake the department's mission, but will also be responsive to needs for increased funding to finance core responsibilities of the department. If fee raises are necessary, we must continue to ensure that New Mexico residents are not priced out of hunting and fishing, and increases must not be too steep in any year. We can also help achieve this goal by looking at the feasibility of fee increases on out-of-state licenses.

6. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT NEW MEXICO'S RIVERS AND STREAMS ARE PUBLIC RESOURCES THAT SHOULD BE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC, AS SPELLED OUT IN THE NEW MEXICO SUPREME COURT'S 1945 RED RIVER VALLEY DECISION, OR THAT PRIVATE LANDOWNERS OWN THE WATER AND RIVERBED ON THEIR PROPERTY AND CAN THEREFORE PROHIBIT PUBLIC ACCESS TO THOSE WATERS?

The current law and previous case law seem to be in conflict or unresolved when it comes to the extent of accessibility to streams and rivers. My immediate obligation is to uphold the law until the law is changed or further clarified while working the Attorney General to resolve this conflict.

7. DO YOU THINK NEW MEXICO NEEDS OR COULD USE AN OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION TO FURTHER DEVELOP OUR HUNTING, FISHING, HIKING, CAMPING AND OTHER OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Yes. Outdoor recreation generates nearly \$10b in spending annually. I am fully in support of putting in place an Office of Outdoor Recreation in New Mexico. Western states have used these as a resource to promote, coordinate, and develop opportunities in outdoor recreation, outdoor tourism, and hunting and fishing, while building stronger outdoor industries.

This effort to open an Office of Outdoor Recreation is a clear step towards promoting our public lands to New Mexico and the world and creating a stronger economy that will support their continued protection as well as good-paying jobs.

8. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON THE REINTRODUCTION OF MEXICAN WOLVES IN NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA?

Humans nearly drove these wolves to extinction almost a century ago. We have an obligation to help rebuild and retain healthy ecosystems in New Mexico that include this species. The current number, about 113, is not enough to sustain a genetically diverse population and needs to be increased to at least several hundred.

Unfortunately, the response to reintroduction efforts under the current administration has been to put up roadblocks through lawsuits and a lack of cooperation with federal and nonprofit partners. Under a new administration NMDGF should work proactively with the federal government and stakeholders across the state to build up the population to sustainable levels in a sensible manner, incorporating public input.

9. SCIENTISTS AGREE THAT HUMAN-CAUSED CLIMATE CHANGE IS AFFECTING THE NATURAL WORLD, INCLUDING WILDLIFE AND WATER RESOURCES. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND HOW WILL THAT INFLUENCE YOUR POLICY DECISIONS?

Climate change could have a profound effect on New Mexico's environment and wildlife. We have an obligation to act both to limit the extent of climate change, as well as to understand and respond to its impacts.

I support joining the US Climate alliance and committing New Mexico to meeting the Paris Agreement goals so that we are doing our fair share to limit greenhouse gas pollution, and increasing our utilization of renewable energy sources.

I will also ensure that our policies, from economic development to wildlife management, to fire response and agricultural policy reflect the reality that climate change is already impacting communities across New Mexico. We cannot afford to ignore this profound threat.





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STEVE PEARCE REPUBLICAN

A former Air Force combat pilot and small business owner, Steve Pearce serves New Mexico's Second District in Congress. Born into a large working class family, Steve grew up in Hobbs, New Mexico, and attended local public schools before receiving his degree in Economics from New Mexico State University and his MBA from Eastern New Mexico University. He has been married to his wife Cynthia for nearly 37 years, with whom he operated a small New Mexico business, creating 50 jobs in their community. Steve is running for Governor of New Mexico to fix our education system, help lift families out of poverty, tackle the crime plaguing our communities, and create good paying jobs for New Mexicans.

Bio provided by candidate

1. AS GOVERNOR, WHAT CAN YOU DO TO IMPROVE THE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY OF AVERAGE NEW MEXICANS, THOSE WHO CANNOT AFFORD TO HUNT OR FISH ON PRIVATE PROPERTY?

We must continue to prioritize access and management of our public lands, as well as management and protection of our game species. NMDGF do tremendous work on wildlife conservation and management, we must continue to this positive action. With proper management, our public lands will have the same level of access and resources as many of the private lands in the State.

2. DO YOU BELIEVE NEW MEXICANS ARE GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH THE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DECISIONS MADE BY THE STATE GAME COMMISSION IN RECENT YEARS? ARE YOU SATISFIED?

I am. NMDGF has a good reputation. Programs are working. Conservation and access are taking place at an appropriate level. The next Administration must keep the positive momentum that is taking place at the department going.

3. GAME WARDENS AND BIOLOGISTS HAVE CRITICAL ROLES IN SAFEGUARDING AND MANAGING THE STATE'S WILDLIFE RESOURCES. WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH CURRENTLY SPENDING ABOUT \$40 MILLION A YEAR, DO YOU BELIEVE THE FUNDING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FIELD BIOLOGISTS IS ADEQUATE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE STATE'S WILDLIFE RESOURCES AND THE INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES THAT RELY ON THEM? PLEASE ELABORATE.

I do. NMDGF and those who work for it have a good reputation, and the department is running well. This points to the work being done to conserve and manage the lands and species we are fortunate to have in our State. NMDGF have continued to face habitat programs head on, with much success. The Department is working, and it does not need a shake up, as I have said before. I believe the Department is doing what is necessary to make sure that today's hunters and future generations, including my granddaughter, have the same experience.

4. HUNTERS AND ANGLERS PROVIDE A MAJORITY OF FUNDING FOR THE NMDGF, WHICH IT USES TO MANAGE BOTH GAME AND NON-GAME SPECIES. DO YOU THINK ALL STATE TAXPAYERS SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE FUNDING OF NMDGF TO HELP COVER THE COSTS OF NON-GAME WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT?

No. Habitat and management programs for all species have been working well under NMDGF's current funding structure. At this point, I do not see a need to place further burden on New Mexico families.

5. UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD YOU SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FEES TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO NMDGF?

At this point, I do not believe NMDGF has a need to change cost on hunters and anglers. It is vital that hunting and fishing remain obtainable and available to anyone in New Mexico who wants to partake. Prior to supporting any increase, I would direct my Administration to look to other funding methods, including General Fund appropriations, if the State were in that position.

6. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT NEW MEXICO'S RIVERS AND STREAMS ARE PUBLIC RESOURCES THAT SHOULD BE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC, AS SPELLED OUT IN THE NEW MEXICO SUPREME COURT'S 1945 RED RIVER VALLEY DECISION, OR THAT PRIVATE LANDOWNERS OWN THE WATER AND RIVERBED ON THEIR PROPERTY AND CAN THEREFORE PROHIBIT PUBLIC ACCESS TO THOSE WATERS?

As I previously wrote in a NMBHA questionnaire, balance is the cornerstone of any stream access law in New Mexico. Both New Mexican anglers and landowners have rights, which must be protected as much as possible. Landowners should not be preventing access to public lands, at the same time, anglers should not be accessing private property without permission. The makeup of our State's lands makes this a challenge. Signage, better understanding, and work on the checkerboard makeup of our lands are all positive steps that will help aid in this solution.

7. DO YOU THINK NEW MEXICO NEEDS OR COULD USE AN OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION TO FURTHER DEVELOP OUR HUNTING, FISHING, HIKING, CAMPING AND OTHER OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

No. New Mexico needs proper Administration and oversight of the agencies we have now. NMDGF and State Forestry have the resources and personnel to do the mission they have been charged with. What is needed is a Governor who understands and respects outdoorsmanship. I have been backpacking my whole life. Our lands are one of the things I love most about our State. I am dedicated to protecting access and opportunity for all.

8. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON THE REINTRODUCTION OF MEXICAN WOLVES IN NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA?

The reintroduction to date has completely failed to live up to the mission it set out to perform. First and foremost, the science behind the genetic makeup of the Mexican wolf is flawed and biased. The Fish and Wildlife Service has continually changed the metrics by which it defines success in the program. Instead of reevaluating the actions being taken, it has double-downed on failed policies and expanded the range for the wolves. I do not oppose the conservation of threatened and vulnerable species; however, it cannot come at the expense of economic drivers in the community or other species.

9. SCIENTISTS AGREE THAT HUMAN-CAUSED CLIMATE CHANGE IS AFFECTING THE NATURAL WORLD, INCLUDING WILDLIFE AND WATER RESOURCES. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND HOW WILL THAT INFLUENCE YOUR POLICY DECISIONS?

New Mexico faces several resource issues ranging from water conservation and usage to management of our forests. My administration will focus on policies that will promote a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for generations to come. That includes ensuring access to public lands and the natural resources we all hold so dear.

