

Public Trust

TAKE ACTION GUIDE

A feature-length documentary about America's public lands and the fight to protect them.

The following guide can be used to facilitate a virtual post-screening discussion with your audience. You can use the below discussion questions to get the conversation started, point your audience to our calls to action, and let them know where they can find further learning opportunities.

Discussion Questions

General Questions

- Before watching *Public Trust*, what did you know about the status of public lands in the United States?
- Did you learn anything that surprised you?
- Do you have a personal connection to any of America's public lands? If so, what is it?
- What do you feel is at stake if we fail to protect our public lands?

Diving Deeper

- Many economies throughout the United States are dependent on public lands, like Minnesota's Boundary Waters. How would you compare the economic success generated from maintaining public lands for public use, with the profit that can be gained through privatization and energy extraction? Why would some advocate for one over the other?
- Utah Congressman Rob Bishop appears at a Management of Public Lands and Natural Resources hearing and says "I'd drill in a cemetery if there was oil there." What does this statement mean to you? Does it echo other American ideologies & practices beyond the issue of public lands?
- In the film, we learn that the issue of public lands protection wasn't always so partisan. Republican President Richard Nixon, for example, created the EPA. Why do you think this has changed?
- Why do Native Americans have such a deep connection to the natural world? Do you think a non-Native American could ever fully understand the Gwich'in's deep connection to their land and the value of the Porcupine caribou herd? Reflect on this, especially in light of the Trump administration's [August 2020 announcement](#) of plans to drill the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
- Hal Herring argues that the transfer of federal public lands to state control equals privatization. Do you agree?
- Discuss the inherent tension between the Trump administration's energy dominance policy (i.e., increasing energy and fossil fuel extraction in the U.S., in the hopes of reducing dependence on foreign energy sources), and the value brought to the public from protection of lands and waters. How can we best navigate this tension? What solutions enable a better energy future for the nation without sacrificing the value brought by our public lands?
- After 80 years of advocacy work, Bears Ears National Monument was established at the end of Obama's presidency in 2016. In the film, Navajo and Hopi filmmaker Angelo Baca remarked, "A place that was important to us, suddenly seemed to matter to everyone else." How did you feel when shortly after, the film showed the Trump administration's rollback of this designation, and a long list of other environmental & public lands protections removed?

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What Can You Do Next?

Text **'DEFEND' to 71333** to stay informed about the latest threats, policy developments, and opportunities for taking action to protect our public lands.*

**By texting 71333, you consent to receive periodic text messages from Patagonia Action Works related to this campaign and other environmental advocacy issues. Message and data rates may apply. Reply STOP to opt out or HELP for help. Privacy policy: pat.ag/privacypolicy*

Visit the **Patagonia Action Works Public Lands page** to learn about grassroots organizations leading this fight on the ground and see how you can support their latest initiatives.

Beyond Public Trust

Resources for continued learning about our public lands and what it will take to protect them:

Broad Overview of Public Lands Issues

- [7 Ways Oil and Gas Drilling is Bad for the Environment](#) By The Wilderness Society
- [Driven by Trump Policy Changes, Fracking Booms on Public Lands](#) By Eric Lipton and Hiroko Tabuchi (The New York Times)
- [How to Protect 1 Million Acres of Public Lands](#) By Jocelyn Torres
- [Public lands in the United States: A curriculum](#) By The Wilderness Society & The Avarna Group
- [Public Lands Spur Local Economies](#) By Joint Economic Committee Democrats
- [Trump's 'Energy Dominance' Doctrine Is Undermined by Climate Change](#) By Lisa Friedman (The New York Times)

Bears Ears

- [Bears Ears At Risk](#) By Indigenous Rights Radio
- [Celebrate Bears Ears](#) By Cassandra Pino
- [The Government Is Moving to Shrink Bears Ears for Good](#) By Heather Hansman (Outside Magazine)

The Boundary Waters

- [Boundary Waters at Risk](#) By Carlos Rivero Lopez and Jenny Rowland-Shea
- [This American Land Podcast: Boundary Waters Mining Threat with Rebecca Rom](#) By This American Land
- [Understanding H.R. 5598](#) By Spencer Shaver

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

- [Trump Administration Moves Closer To Allowing Oil Drilling In Arctic Refuge](#) By Bill Chappell and Liz Ruskin, NPR
- [Arctic Voices: Resistance at the Tipping Point](#) By Subhankar Banerjee
- [Detailed Map of the Arctic Refuge and the Homeland of the Gwich'in](#) By Gwich'in Steering Committee
- [Protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge](#) By The NRDC
- [Protecting the Arctic Refuge is Non-Negotiable](#) By Bernadette Demientieff

“Our voices are the most powerful tool that we have.”

— Bernadette Demientieff, Gwich'in Steering Committee