

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 25, 2017

Contact:
Colin Davis, 406.220.9010
Bryan Wells, 406.223.9162

Montana businesses welcome hearing on job-protecting Yellowstone bill

Bill responds to local concerns, protects private property, and offers a permanent Montana-made solution

(EMIGRANT, Mont.) – Montana business owners are applauding tomorrow’s hearing on a bill that will prevent new large-scale gold mining at the gateway to Yellowstone National Park, and protect Montanans’ jobs and way of life.

The *Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act*, introduced by Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) in April, will permanently protect more than 30,000 acres of public lands north of Yellowstone from gold mine proposals. It will be heard in the Senate Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining on July 26. Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) sits on this important committee, and this panel’s consideration of the bill represents an important step forward.

"On behalf of the Yellowstone Gateway Business Coalition, we thank Sen. Daines and the Senate Subcommittee for reviewing this legislation – a made-in-Montana solution to protect our businesses, and the doorstep to a place that belongs to all Americans: Yellowstone National Park," said Colin Davis, owner of Chico Hot Springs Resort, one of the Business Coalition’s founding members. "People from the valley and from all walks of life have come out in opposition to the mines and in support of the legislation. They love this place and want to stand up for their land, for future generations and for the local economy."

Earlier this month, members of the [Yellowstone Gateway Business Coalition](#) (YGBC) met the Montana delegation in Washington, D.C. and called for a Senate hearing of the bill. Some 360 local businesses have joined the YGBC to defend the local economy from two proposed large-scale gold mines on the northern edge of Yellowstone National Park. The bill is a step that protects jobs and private property, responds to local concerns, and offers a permanent Montana-made solution.

"The American Fly Fishing Trade Association supports the *Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act* because it’s straightforward and commonsense legislation that protects the people and the healthy economy of Yellowstone’s Gateway," said Ben Bulis, President and CEO of the American Fly Fishing Trade Association.

"Gardiner and Yellowstone National Park had the second busiest June on record and our healthy economy is bursting at the seams," said Sabina Strauss, owner of the Yellowstone Basin

Inn and a member of the Gardiner (MT) Chamber of Commerce. “For most of us, our successful businesses are dependent on healthy Yellowstone Ecosystem, and are our lifestyles and homes. The trickle-down impacts from the proposed mining operation on the border of the Park will cook our golden goose. We need our entire Montana delegation to work together to permanently protect the future of our businesses and homes, by protecting the Yellowstone Ecosystem: the goose that's laying the golden egg.”

“Joshua Green Corporation and its shareholders view industrial gold mining in Yellowstone’s Gateway as a significant threat to the long term sustainable operation of businesses dependent on the Yellowstone River and outdoor recreation in the valley,” said Stanley McCammon, President and CEO of Joshua Green Corporation, which is building The Sage Lodge in the Paradise Valley. “Mining operations come and go for short-term profit of a few. The Sage Lodge will for generations provide employment and support the clean water, land and wildlife that drives the healthy economy and way of life of Park County and Montana.”

The *Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act* blocks new gold mining on specific public lands in Emigrant Gulch and Crevice Mountain. The bill does not impact management of the public lands, meaning these areas will still be public land, open for outdoor recreation. The bill will also have no impact on private land, or on the valid existing rights of claim holders on public lands.

According to the business coalition, it’s refreshing to see elected officials from both sides of the aisle doing their homework, and responding to Montana businesses.

“We’re lucky in Montana to have this kind of representation – people who will do the research and make up their own minds in a nonpartisan way,” said Bryan Wells, owner of Emigrant Creek Cabins. “It’s incredible and unheard of. We should be proud of the representation we have: Tester, Daines, and (Rep. Greg) Gianforte, Ryan Zinke, Alan Redfield, Laurie Bishop, Marty Malone, and our county commissioners. They took the time to look at this issue and they have come to the only conclusion that makes sense. The gateway to Yellowstone is more valuable than gold.”

Local elected officials also support the bill.

“Protecting federal lands near Emigrant Gulch and Crevice Mountain from mining will go a long way toward sustaining the diversity of our local economy while protecting resources critical to the health of that economy,” said Park County Commission chair Steve Caldwell. “Passage of the legislation also helps maintain the long-term viability of local public finance revenues while respecting the integrity of property rights.”

###