

## WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

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### General Manager's Newsletter | May 2025

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What a spectacular response! Close to 1,000 donors responded during spring fund drive with renewals, one-time gifts, and upgrades to their sustainer programs. At times, our phone volunteers were overwhelmed. WPM is proud to welcome 166 new members – a record for one fund drive! We heard a common thread echoed over and over again – don't mess with my public radio! The entire staff, advisory council members, and volunteers are voicing a resounding thanks to all who came through with support and well-wishing. It was truly overwhelming. We are motivated and not sitting on our laurels. There's danger ahead, and we are trekking on to ensure that we are reaching out to all Wyomingites to support and preserve Wyoming's public radio and media!

President Trump issued an Executive Order late Thursday directing the CPB to "cease federal funding for NPR and PBS on the grounds of ideological bias." Here is the official CPB response: "CPB is not a federal executive agency subject to the President's authority. Congress directly authorized and funded CPB to be a private nonprofit corporation wholly independent of the federal government. In creating CPB, Congress expressly forbade 'any department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over educational television or radio broadcasting, or over [CPB] or any of its grantees or contractors...' 47 U.S.C. § 398(c)." This issue is a fast moving target with many parts. Updates are now posted on a newly created GM Update tab.

Several days prior to the EO, the administration fired 3 CPB board members. CPB sought a restraining order. U.S. District Judge Randolph Moss directed the government to file its opposition to the restraining order by May 9. (Corporation for Public Broadcasting sues Trump after he tries to fire board members)

NPR's CEO Katherine Maher provided several public chats and presentations. The first is her interview on ATC (NPR CEO Katherine Maher addresses future of federal funding for public media). The second is an appearance on The Daily Show.

How much does public radio and television rely on federal funding, and the implications of losing this funding was explained in a recent article: Here's how much public media relies on federal funding, and what could happen next. Another interesting article notes similar media defunding/elimination issues in other countries. (Cuts to PBS, NPR Part of Authoritarian Playbook).

The funeral for Pope Francis was a global event held in the wee hours of Saturday, April 26th MT. WPM was honored to provide a live stream courtesy of NPR and CPB. This is yet another example of public service that WPM is able to bring to Wyoming through upgrades in technology and delivery systems. Not everyone has a television!

A heads up about summer, which is just around the corner. WPM will again broadcast portions of *Wyoming*

Sounds live from Frontier Days in Cheyenne. We'll also have a presence at some of the many Wyoming music festivals that are coming up including the 20th Anniversary of What Fest in Saratoga July 26th & 27th and Festival of the Bighorns in Sheridan August 23rd. Stay tuned.

Wyoming culture is as integral part of the West. Looking over the stories WPM generated addressing funding loss, our [Arts and Culture web page](#) reveals a vital part of our history that we may take for granted— our museums. In April alone, stories tell the plight of museums in Buffalo, Jackson, Powell, and Meeteetse. And this may be just the beginning. ([Arts alliance shares data about the arts and culture economy in Wyoming](#))

Our Laramie/Cheyenne signal is still operating on reduced power, awaiting replacement parts scheduled to arrive in May and installed in June. Casper is on low power awaiting an antenna. Cody/Powell 90.1 was incapacitated due to weather and has been fixed. This is all to say that we're living in Wyoming, land of high mountains, high winds, high snows, and high probability of equipment failure. If you're listening near a computer, check out our livestreams at [wyomingpublicmedia.org](#). Instructions on how to listen are on the [WPM How to Listen page](#). Thanks to our intrepid engineers, the other 43 transmitter/translator sites are humming along – keep your fingers crossed and thanks for your patience. If you find signal loss or deterioration be sure to check the [Transmission/Streaming Disruptions link on our website](#). We post updates as soon as possible.

Turning to something cool – check out the [NPR Tiny Desk Concert by the Sandbox Percussion](#). It will make you appreciate those old kitchen utensils and wine glasses! While you're online, go to [Classicalwyoming.org](#) and check out similar stories as well as the livestream of relaxing classical music.

Thank you for your support, loyalty, and enthusiasm. It's good to know that we're not alone in this strange time of defundings and disruptions. Many Wyoming entities and individuals are in this predicament, and we try to report on as many as we can in our news stories and mention as many as possible in our public service announcements. We appreciate the support Wyomingites have given to all organizations that build a stronger Wyoming.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments at [ckuzmych@uwyo.edu](mailto:ckuzmych@uwyo.edu). As noted, late-breaking developments related to public broadcasting and defundings will be posted on [Wyoming Public Media General Manager Blog](#) in addition to this monthly newsletter.

Christina Kuzmych,  
WPM General Manager



#### [Wyoming Public Media Won Five SPJ Top of the Rockies Awards](#)

The **1st Place Podcast** was awarded to "Chasing the Dragon" (by Hanna Merzbach, Tyler Pratt, Emily Cohen, Sophia Boyd-Fliegel, Melodie Edwards, [High Altitude Tales on the Modern West](#)). Other winners by WPM reporters included: Caitlin Tan, **2nd Place Health Feature**, Chris Clements, **3rd Place Politics Feature**, Caitlin Tan, **3rd Place Solutions Journalism**, Caitlin Tan, **3rd Place Sports Feature**, and Hannah Habermann, **3rd Place Education Feature** for "Our tool bag." [Video](#) April 5, 2025.



#### [Wyoming Historical Society Shares Archives on the Air in Wyo History News](#)

From the [WHS Newsletter](#), "Leslie and Robert have been devoted participants in Wyoming Historical Society treks since 2002, rarely missing an opportunity to explore the state's historical landscapes with fellow history enthusiasts. ... Professionally, Leslie has had the privilege of editing the Discover History blog and

coordinating ["Archives on the Air"](#) at the AHC. This program is aired on Wyoming Public Radio. *April 11, 2025.*



### **Wyoming Singer-songwriter Mason McTell on Wyoming Sounds**

Mason McTell, from just north of Cheyenne, played during a studio session with Grady Kirkpatrick. He chatted with Grady about his debut full-length album, *Drunks and Thieves*, which is out now. [Listen to the broadcast.](#)



## **SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS**



### **Wyoming Public Media Staff Gathered for Spring Drive and News Retreat**

All hands were on deck the third week in April during this spring's membership drive. A big shout out to our listeners and the loyal pets out there who called in.

[View a glimpse behind the scenes in "Keep up with the news" video.](#) *April 16, 2025.*



## **BEYOND WYOMING**



### **Wyoming lawmakers meet to decide on which subjects interim committees should focus**

A story by Chris Clements about the Wyoming Legislature Select Committee on Tribal Relations investigations into missing and murdered Indigenous people aired on *National Native News*. [Listen to the story.](#) *April 4, 2025.*

### **Wyoming's cloud seeding program loses funding**

A feature by Caitlin Tan about Wyoming's cloud seeding funding aired on *Here & Now*. [Listen to the story.](#) *April 14, 2025.*

### **Native fish rebound after massive conservation project**

WPM intern Jesse Morris' story about a project to restore native fish in the Big Sandy Water Basin was shared by an organization covering water in California, [Aquafromia - Water Education Foundation](#). [View the story.](#) *April 15, 2025.*

### **A new federal effort aims to end homelessness among people released from prisons**

Hanna Merzbach's story about programs geared to reduce homelessness among those recently released from prisons aired on *National Native News*. [Listen to the story.](#) *April 15, 2025.*

### **Natrona County court temporarily blocks two Wyoming abortion laws**

Chris Clements' spot about abortion legislation aired on NPR's *All Things Considered*. [View the story.](#) *April 21, 2025.*

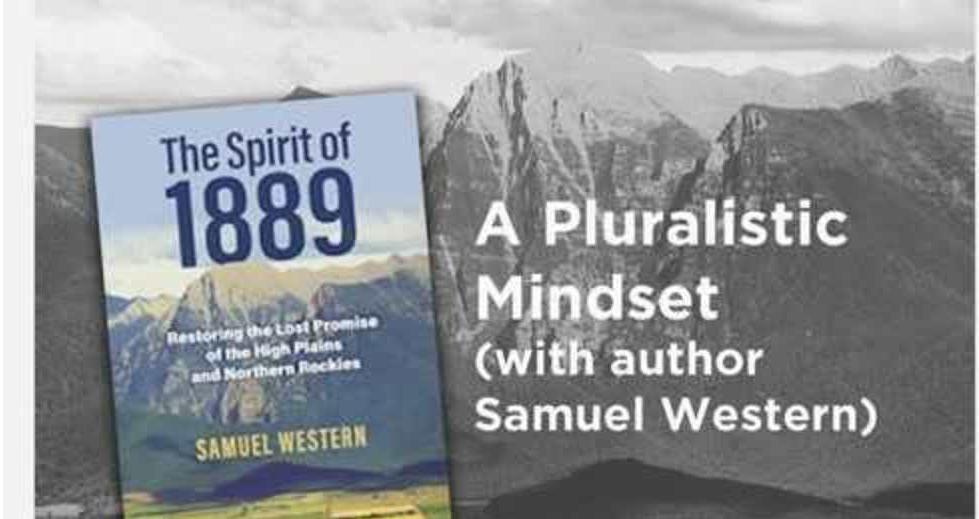
### **As black lung increases in Wyoming, some worry federal cuts will hinder detection**

Chris Clements' spot about black lung disease aired on NPR's *Morning Edition*. [View the story.](#) *April 23, 2025.*



## **MUST LISTEN**





Wyoming Public Radio's award-winning podcast, The Modern West, has launched a new season!

In the first episode of "The Gray in Between" season, host Melodie Edwards interviews Wyoming economist Samuel Western, a master at tracing back the beginnings of issues in the American West. He's an economist with a deep fascination for history and culture that get at "the gray in between" in truly revelatory ways. He talks with Melodie about his new book *The Spirit of 1889*. [Listen to the podcast.](#)

## PHOTO OF THE MONTH

**Thomas David Kehoe - Wyoming's Nature Turret and Sunbeam, Wind River Range**

*2024 WPM Photo Contest Entry*



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