

Wyoming Rodeo Capital of the World

Overview of the Gateway East & Gateway West Destination Entertainment Resort Vision

This document outlines an ambitious and achievable plan to establish Wyoming as the “Rodeo Capital of the World” through the development of two large Destination Entertainment Resorts, with working project names Gateway East and Gateway West (legal entity: Frontier Rodeo & Racing LLC).

STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

The evolution of Wyoming’s rodeo wagering laws demonstrates a consistent legislative and regulatory willingness to recognize rodeo as a viable pari-mutuel wagering product. This established legal precedent provides a strong foundation for future destination entertainment developments centered around year-round professional rodeo competition, pari-mutuel wagering, and international simulcast distribution.

KEY POINTS

Strategic Locations

Gateway East (265 acres) near Cheyenne at the Colorado state line and Gateway West (154 acres) in Evanston near the Utah state line. Both locations are strategically positioned to attract massive tourism from Colorado (Denver, Fort Collins) and Utah (Salt Lake City, Park City).

Expanded Rodeo Vision

The goal is to elevate Wyoming’s rodeo heritage beyond events such as Cheyenne Frontier Days through year-round rodeos in climate-controlled facilities, the creation of Wyoming Pro Rodeo Associations, and pari-mutuel wagering and global simulcasting of events.

Wagering & Simulcasting

Frontier Pro Rodeo & Racing LLC is structured to offer wagering and simulcasting of professional rodeo events within the guidelines of the Wyoming Gaming Commission, aiming to generate the most attractive prize purses in the industry.

Benefits for Wyoming

The project promises significant new tax revenue for cities, counties, and the state; job creation in hospitality and tourism; expansion of the rodeo and agricultural industries; and preservation of Wyoming’s Western lifestyle legacy.

Comprehensive Facilities

The entertainment centers are envisioned to include indoor climate-controlled arenas (seating 5,000+), additional outdoor arenas, hotels, restaurants, flexible convention and concert spaces, a Western Heritage and Native American museum / cultural center, luxury RV sites, and other entertainment facilities.

BRINGING IN OUT-OF-STATE REVENUE

Gateway East – Colorado Proximity & Demographics

The Colorado primary market population within a one-hour drive exceeds 2 million, including Fort Collins and portions of metropolitan Denver. The greater Denver metro population of 3.4 million is within approximately a 90-minute drive. Gateway East is located within the 20,000-acre historic Terry Bison Ranch at the first operating exit near the state line on I-25.

Gateway West – Utah Proximity & Demographics

The greater Salt Lake City metropolitan population of approximately 2.5 million is located within 80 miles and just over an hour's drive to the Evanston site. Park City is approximately 60 miles and 45 minutes from the site; over 10,000 hotel rooms in Park City serve an affluent tourist base seeking authentic western experiences. The site is located on I-80 at the first Wyoming exit from Utah, en route to Wyoming's national parks, which receive 3.5 million visitors annually.

MARKET PROJECTIONS

An estimated 500,000 visitors annually are projected. The core returning customer base will be regional visitors within a two-hour drive from Salt Lake City, Park City, Fort Collins, and Denver. National and international visitors seeking premier Western experiences are also anticipated, with rodeo participants expected from within an eight-hour drive – and premium purses attracting participants nationally.

LEGISLATION

Advancement of the proposed destination entertainment resorts, indoor rodeo arenas, and related pari-mutuel wagering opportunities will require legislative and regulatory approvals. Key milestones include:

- Approval of updated rodeo definitions and associated regulations during the 2027 Wyoming Legislative Session
- Issuance of necessary licenses by the Wyoming Gaming Commission, contingent upon compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements
- Finalization of rodeo partnership agreements and operating structures
- Evaluation of potential partnerships with experienced rodeo stadium developers, operators, and industry organizations
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HISTORY OF PARI-MUTUEL WAGERING ON RODEO EVENTS IN WYOMING

Wyoming has a unique and longstanding history of pari-mutuel wagering on rodeo-related events, reflecting the state's deep connection to western heritage and rodeo culture. Over the past five decades, Wyoming has gradually expanded wagering opportunities from steer roping contests to a broader range of professional rodeo disciplines.

1985 – House Bill 155

Signed into law under Governor Ed Herschler, authorizing pari-mutuel wagering on steer roping events – formally expanding Wyoming's wagering framework beyond traditional horse racing.

2019 – Senate File 50

The first modern legislative effort to broaden Wyoming's pari-mutuel wagering authority to include additional rodeo events, laying the foundation for future expansion.

2020 – House Bill 230

Signed by Governor Mark Gordon on March 24, 2020. Significantly expanded the Wyoming Pari-Mutuel Commission's authority by authorizing pari-mutuel wagering on bull riding, bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, team roping, steer wrestling, tie-down roping, and barrel racing. This created the statutory framework for broader rodeo wagering opportunities.

HISTORICAL RODEO WAGERING EVENTS IN WYOMING

Hyde Merritt Memorial Steer Roping (approx. 2022)

The Hyde Merritt Committee organized this event with pari-mutuel wagering. Hyde Merritt was widely recognized as a key advocate for expanding pari-mutuel wagering opportunities on rodeo events in Wyoming.

Eric Nelson (Wyoming Downs)

Sponsored and did the parimutual wagering with united tote.