

## Sen. Barrasso addresses outdoors issues at SF&W convention

By Anthony McConnell



Sen. John Barrasso was the keynote speaker during the Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife State Convention banquet Saturday night at the Riley Arena.

When Sen. John Barrasso took office last June he made a promise to Wyoming people.

"I said I would live in Wyoming and only work in Washington," Barrasso told about 800 outdoor enthusiasts Saturday night at the Riley Arena. "I'm proud to say that during my 10 months in the Senate, I have been home every weekend and not missed a single vote."

Barrasso was the keynote speaker during a banquet at Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife's state convention in Cody.

"Working in the Senate is like fly fishing or hunting. You can either outthink them or outwork them," said Barrasso, who recently came under fire for opposing a bill that would have put all water rights under the federal government's control. Current law gives the federal government control only over navigable waterways.

"This bill will harm Wyoming," Barrasso said. "It's a direct infringement on the rights of state and local authorities.

"And they're not going to do that on my watch," he said to the cheers of those in attendance.

He also touted his work on an amendment to a budget bill that, if passed, will provide \$50 million to farmers and ranchers impacted by regulations related to the Endangered Species Act.

Barrasso promised to continue his fight against what he called Washington's "one size fits all" approach to managing states.

"They clearly don't understand us in Washington," he said. "It doesn't work for us, and Sen. Mike Enzi and I are going to continue to fight it."

Barrasso commended those who have been working to keep the East Entrance of Yellowstone open despite overwhelming opposition from people he called "outsiders."

More than 70 senators, none of which live in the Mountain time zone, support closing the east gate during winter, he said.

"Washington is wrong and Wyoming is right," Barrasso said, receiving a standing ovation. "I am going to fight every day in the U.S. Senate for you and for Wyoming."