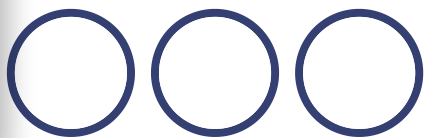




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TOURING

AEG Hosting Summer Concerts in Wyoming With Fewer Pandemic Restrictions

By Dylan Owens

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Dana Goss

The promoter has confirmed four events at Chinook at Terry Bison Ranch in Wyoming, a state with no restrictions on outdoor gatherings.

As live music looks to mount a post-pandemic comeback, AEG Presents has announced it will book a new outdoor music venue this spring.

Chinook at Terry Bison Ranch is a 5,000 capacity venue set on a dude ranch on the outskirts of Cheyenne, Wyoming.

"We liked it a lot because we saw it as a place in the short and long term opportunity," said **Don Strasburg**, co-president of AEG presents Rocky Mountains and Pacific Northwest. "We're looking for cool new ways to present music, and places like the Terry Bison Ranch are a good template moving forward. I think it's going to resonate with audiences."

Hollywood Bowl and The Ford Will Reopen in May With Limited Capacities

About 110 miles north of Red Rocks, the Cheyenne space will pad out AEG's booking options in the Rocky Mountain region, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to restrict indoor show capacities.

AEG contacted Wyoming's Blue Pig Presents, who'd booked socially distanced drive-in concerts at the venue last year, to make the arrangement.

"It's our job to try to be prepared for all the options. We don't have a ton of opportunities indoors this summer, and we have limited outdoor opportunities because there's only so

many spaces," Strasburg said. "Based upon COVID and the law, Cheyenne was a place where we could have extremely stringent rules and still have a good environment."

Despite a trickle of 2021 concert announcements, state-mandated capacity restrictions could still make it difficult for promoters to justify the cost of putting on larger shows.

Everything You Need to Know About How -- And When -- Concerts Will Return

But mandates differ drastically from state to state. Much of Colorado, including Denver and Red Rocks' Jefferson county, is currently subject to restrictions on outdoor gatherings. But Wyoming, Colorado's neighbor to the north, [removed all restrictions](#) on outdoor gatherings on March 16. The order lifted many other COVID restrictions in Wyoming that are standard elsewhere in the country, including its mask mandate and relaxed indoor capacity, currently set at 500 people or 50% of venue capacity.

The rate of COVID cases in Wyoming has leveled off since early March. According to the CDC, Wyoming has registered a six-day average of about 60 new cases since then. Cheyenne's Laramie County, the most populous county in Wyoming, has registered an average of 14 new cases per 100,000 people in the last two weeks, characterized as "very high risk" by *The New York Times'* standardized COVID-19 exposure calculator.

As of April 11, about 23% of Wyoming's population has been vaccinated, according CDC figures.

Though AEG will only use a portion of it, [Terry Bison Ranch](#) is a sprawling 27,500-acre property abutting the Colorado-Wyoming border. It bills itself as half dude ranch and half

resort, sporting a restaurant, on-property train rides and plenty of space for camping. "It's a unique offering" for live music, Strasburg said, comparing it to [Horning's Hideout](#) in Portland, Ore.



Dana Gage

So far, AEG has confirmed four events at the space, each an artist-curated two-night run. It'll launch its first show on May 7 and 8 with the Monster Energy Outbreak Tour, a two-night event hosted and curated by Philadelphia dubstep producer [Subtronics](#). The gathering will feature about a half-dozen acts and other festival amenities.

Chinook at Terry Bison Ranch will host three similar mini-festival events through June: CharlestheFirst on May 28 and 29; The California Honeydrops' Honeydrops Round Up on June 11 and 12; and VOYAGE!, an event curated and hosted by French DJ CloZee (June 18

and 19).

"I think people in the music scene have been craving to escape for a full weekend and feel this family festival vibe, to regenerate and be inspired again," CloZee said in an email. "We

are extremely stoked to have this amazing lineup of artists and to finally being able to share a special, real moment with the fans. It's going to be beautiful."

Reopening Still 'Unfeasible' for Most California Venues Even as the State Loosens Restrictions

Not all events will be overnights, Strasburg said, noting there are hotels in Cheyenne and Fort Collins, which is "closer to Terry Bison Ranch than Red Rocks."

Terry Bison Ranch caught AEG's eye last summer, when the property began hosting concerts to tide live music fans over during the pandemic. They also hosted a drive-in bull rodeo — the first of its kind, according to ranch and resort general manager **Brian "Buck-It" Thompson**.

"AEG worked out a mutual agreement with Blue Pig because a lot of their venues were still shut down," said Thompson. "Our restrictions were lifted up here, so they figured they could put on some good shows with us."

"We liked it a lot because we saw it as an opportunity in the short and long term," Strasburg said. "It's huge, which is great for people getting comfortable with returning to gatherings, but we also see it as a space to spread out and do fun things in the future."