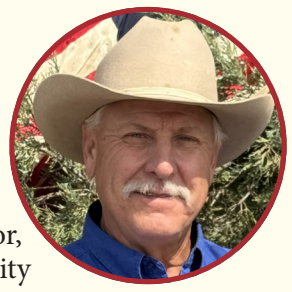
Jeff Pattison Enters Primary Race for Montana PSC District 1

"Reliable Leadership. Affordable Energy. A Stronger Future."

WRITTEN BY
Staff Writer


Jeff Pattison

HELENA, MT — Third-generation farmer, former legislator, and longtime community leader **Jeff Pattison** is officially seeking the Republican nomination for **Public Service Commissioner in District 1**, bringing deep agricultural roots, policy experience, and a bold energy vision to the campaign trail. With Montana's energy future at a crossroads, Pattison says he's ready to lead with common sense, rural perspective, and constitutional accountability.

"It's not just an honor to run," Pattison says. "It's a responsibility to stand up for the men and women who keep Montana's lights on and our economy running."

Pattison will face a primary challenger in the **Republican primary election on June 2, 2026**, ahead of the **general election on November 3, 2026**. PSC District 1 covers a vast swath of northeast and central Montana, where energy issues and rural infrastructure are front and center for voters.

A Lifetime of Experience in Energy, Agriculture, and Oversight

Raised on his grandfather's homestead near Ophiem, Pattison has spent his life balancing budgets through droughts, blizzards, and the ever-rising cost of utilities. His experience spans from operating a working ranch to co-owning the Glasgow Stockyards.

Beyond agriculture, Pattison has earned a reputation as a principled and effective public servant. Elected to the Montana House of Representatives in 2000, he served in key roles:

- Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Natural Resources
- Chair of the Legislative Audit Committee
- Chief of Staff to the House Speaker
- Member of the Environmental Quality Council

He has also served on the boards of the Montana Stockgrowers Association, CHS Cooperatives, the Milk River Watershed Alliance, and numerous local councils and co-ops.

Platform Built on Energy Reliability, Affordability, and Innovation

Pattison's campaign is focused on protecting consumers—especially rural and fixed-income households—while ensuring Montana leads in energy resilience and modernization. His priorities for the Public Service Commission include:

Defending Your Wallet

Pattison pledges to fight unnecessary rate hikes and ensure seniors, veterans, and working families aren't priced out of reliable energy service.

Expanding Natural Gas Access

He supports extending pipelines and infrastructure so more homes and businesses in rural Montana can access affordable energy options.

Modernizing the Grid and Broadband

Pattison plans to champion joint grid and broadband upgrades by leveraging pole attachments and rights-of-way to improve internet access and electrical reliability.

Supporting Energy Diversity and Innovation

His "all-of-the-above" strategy promotes clean coal, natural gas, hydro, renewables, and emerging technologies like hydrogen, energy storage, and advanced nuclear.

Strengthening Rural Infrastructure

He advocates for last-mile transmission improvements so farms and ranches aren't the first to experience blackouts or brownouts.

Reducing Wildfire Risk in Montana

Especially, in fire-prone regions of the state, Pattison calls for utilities to invest in safer, more resilient infrastructure—including **underground transmission lines** or **carbon core technology**, which has a proven track record of reducing wildfire risk.

Carbon core conductors are engineered with a lightweight composite core that improves performance and safety. They offer several wildfire mitigation benefits:

- Reduced line sag, which minimizes the risk of contact with trees or vegetation that can spark fires
- Greater wind resistance and tensile strength, helping prevent damage during high wind events
- Lower risk of breakage and electrical arcing, both of which are common ignition sources
- Quicker restoration times, ensuring faster emergency response and grid reliability during fire season

Pattison stresses that **Montana's Public Service Commission has an imperative role in reducing deadly wildfires**. By requiring the adoption of advanced technologies in high-risk corridors, the PSC can help prevent utility-caused fires that endanger lives, destroy property, and devastate rural economies.

"We cannot afford to wait until after tragedy strikes," Pattison says. "The PSC must be proactive in requiring the right technologies in the right places—because every fire we prevent protects a Montana family, a town, or a livelihood."

Fair Cost Allocation

He will push for rate-case reform to ensure urban and rural customers pay their fair share without cross-subsidizing.

Transparency and Accountability

Pattison believes ratepayers deserve clear, easy-to-understand billing, open PSC hearings, and honest reporting from the Commission.

Workforce Development

He wants to partner with trade schools, tribal colleges, and apprenticeships to build a local workforce in energy and broadband infrastructure.

Distributed Generation and Storage Incentives

Pattison supports low-cost financing and fair interconnection standards for barn-top solar, battery storage, and emergency backup systems.

Support for Volunteer Emergency Services

He will advocate for rate relief and backup power for rural fire departments, EMTs, and co-op water systems that serve communities during outages.

Smart Transmission Upgrades

Pattison promotes carbon-core transmission lines and other efficient technologies that improve safety, capacity, and long-term reliability using existing infrastructure.

Montana's Energy Future: Adapt, Don't Abandon

Pattison rejects the idea that Montana must choose between traditional and emerging energy sources. He argues that a smart integration of coal, gas, hydro, and renewables—supported by innovation and investment—will strengthen Montana's grid and economy.

"Coal, gas, and hydro built this state. Clean coal, advanced gas, modern hydro, and smarter integration will rebuild it," Pattison said. "This isn't nostalgia—it's leadership."

How to Get Involved

Voters can learn more about Jeff Pattison's platform at www.JeffPattisonPSC.com or contact the campaign directly to volunteer or ask questions.

Volunteers can call or email: 406-263-5000 and/or Pattison4PSC@gmail.com

"A seat on the Public Service Commission is just a seat—until someone is willing to stand up for those who can't," said Pattison. "I'm ready to stand for rural Montana and for you."

Election Dates
Primary Election: Tuesday, June 2, 2026
General Election: Tuesday, November 3, 2026

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