

Oklahoma's Grand National Quail Hunt is about hunting, quail and economics. At Wednesday's coat-and-tie social event at Enid's Oakwood Country Club, Gov. Mary Fallin, Lt. Gov. Todd Lamb and Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead each gave a nod to the hunting tradition and similarities between the Western states, but they also brought a message to a crowd of several hundred hunters and their spouses that Oklahoma is a good place to live and work. Fallin noted that she has been to the Grand National several times in the past, when she was lieutenant governor, and that she, too, is a hunter. She also dropped a strong hint to Mead that she has not yet been invited to Wyoming for that state's One-Shot Antelope Hunt, the event after which that the Grand was modeled. In her pitch to out-of-state guests she noted Oklahoma has a strong economy with relatively low unemployment and a strong energy, agriculture and manufacturing presence. "This is one of the most pro-business states in the nation and we're very proud of that," she said. "If any of you might have an opportunity to move a company and want to come to a state that is financially sound and doing very, very well, we'd like to talk to you."

Fallin later said events like the Grand National are important for economic development, noting she had her own Lieutenant Governor's Turkey Hunt for many years and last year held her own deer hunting event. Lt. Gov. Lamb, born and raised in Enid, said, "Hunting, outdoors, that is part of Wyoming tradition, Oklahoma tradition and, more importantly, we want it to continue to be a part of American tradition. ... It is historic, it is important, it is to me the connection with a way to continue our American way of life and so I support it in every way I can." Kelly Bostian 918-581-8357