EXHIBIT 2
DATE 1.25.05
HB 79

Testimony in Support of HB 79
Jacquelyn Corday

- I am currently the OS Program Manager for the City of Msla

- I am here to voice strong support for re-authorization of Habitat MT

- My reasons for supporting this come from several different angles.

- As a former rural planner for Missoula's Office of P&G, I am keenly aware of how much critical wildlife habitat exists on private property. I would always encourage property owners to design their subdivisions to preserve the most valuable habitat, but once a ranch is divided up for housing, the protections govt can impose through subdivision conditions are fairly minimal – the habitat is either lost completely or greatly reduced in value to many species.

- Thus, this program is incredibly important in that it provides a voluntary tool to preserve ranches and other land holdings that contain critical wildlife habitat.

- As the chairperson for the Bitterroot Valley Wildlife and Wetlands Focus Group – a citizen group that works with MDOT to incorporate wildlife mitigation measures into the design for expanding Hwy 93 from 2 to 4 lanes, I also support re-authorization. The focus group has worked to get permanent wildlife crossings throughout the valley to provide safe passage for wildlife and drivers alike. We've met w/ MDOT, FS, & FWP staff to determine where these structures should be placed, which is usually in areas with larger landholdings on each side. If the land is developed, use of the crossings by many species will be substantially reduced. Again, Habitat MT has already provided protection of 7,500 acres on 3 ranches in the Bitterroot Valley and it is my hope that this program will continue to protect more ranches, including ones where these wildlife crossings are located.

- Finally, as the O.S. Program Mgr, I am always looking for partners in the effort to protect O.S. In 1996, 120 acres was purchased north of the Mt. Jumbo Saddle with $ from the Habitat MT program in order to protect critical elk winter range.