EXHIBIT 2
DATE 3.3.05
SB 76

Senate Bill 76
March 3, 2005
Presented by Doug Monger
House Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Doug Monger, Administrator of the Parks Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

In 1993 the Montana Legislature passed the Primitive Parks Act, which statutorily limited future development and improvements at 15 state parks. The Primitive Parks Act also prohibits FWP charging any fees for use of those 15 parks.

Lost Creek State Park near Anaconda is one of the 15 primitive parks. The park provides 25 campsites and its setting makes it ideal for sightseeing and picnicking. With scenic cliff walls and its close proximity to Anaconda, Butte and I-90, Lost Creek State Park hosts about 14, 0000 visitors annually. Unfortunately, FWP gets regular complaints from park users about the lack of staff on site, frequency of vandalism, lack of on-site information for visitors and guests overstaying the camp limits and degrading the site.

Many of these problems can be solved at minimal cost by having a volunteer campground host on site. Our efforts to recruit and retain volunteer hosts at Lost Creek have been hampered by the lack of facilities for the host. Under current conditions, a host must be totally self-contained. As it is today, if FWP can attract a host to the site, after about their third trip to town to fill up with water, dump their holding tank and recharge their batteries they continue on down the road.

If SB 76 is passed and approved, FWP would establish a host pad with electricity, phone, water and sewer. By adding those amenities, FWP would be able to recruit and retain volunteers to serve as host throughout the summer.

No other improvements to the park would be authorized, and this bill would not remove the Primitive Park status at Lost Creek.

SB 76 would improve the quality of recreational experiences at Lost Creek State Park and protect the valuable public resources there at minimal cost.

FWP requests your favorable action on SB 76.