

EXHIBIT 2
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Testimony to 2005 Legislature, House Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee

RE: Senate Bill 77

My name is Larry Copenhaver from Helena; I am the Conservation Director for Montana Wildlife Federation, (MWF) Montana's oldest and largest state-wide organization of conservation minded hunters, anglers and recreationists. MWF's 6500 members and 23 affiliated sportsmen's club offer their total support for the Block management Program and ask you to pass Senate Bill 77.

Montana's Block Management Program is the envy of the nation as a successful hunting access program and is being used as a model for other states' hunting access programs. As hunting opportunities rapidly disappears on private lands in Montana, the Block Management Program becomes increasingly important to the every day Montana hunter. Twenty years of this developing program has shown us that it fills a significant niche in our hunting opportunities and should be perpetuated.

It isn't often that state programs are a win-win situation; however Block Management has proven to be one of those programs. It has taken long strides in improving landowner-sportsmen's relations, maintaining public hunting access to private and isolated public lands and helps offset impacts from public hunting activities like noxious weed control, road maintenance and increased law enforcement.

Both landowners and sportsmen alike have expressed positive marks and have benefited from the program. 80,000 hunters had the option to hunt 8.8 million acres of land that may not have been possible without Block Management arrangements. \$3.9 million helped Montana ranchers blunt a bleak economic picture. In excess of ninety per cent of enrolled landowners expressed satisfaction and over 85% of sportsmen were happy in their response to surveys about the Program.

You have an opportunity to perpetuate a very popular and important hunter access program without a sunset date. Montana's hunters and anglers urge you to keep these gates open and give SB 77 a do-pass recommendation.

I'd like to thank the Chairman and the Committee for allowing Montana hunters and anglers to testify on Senate Bill 77 and Montana's premier access program, today.