

EXHIBIT 7
DATE 3-10-05
SB 98

Senate Bill 98
March 10, 2005
Presented by Chris Smith
House State Administration Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Chris Smith, Chief of Staff for Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

Fish, Wildlife & Parks has been involved in the development, use and funding of geographic information systems (GIS) in Montana for nearly 2 decades. FWP maintains over 90 different GIS layers, which we share with other users through both our website and the Natural Resource Information System in the State Library. On behalf of FWP, I have served on the Montana Geographic Information Council since 1998.

FWP supports passage of Senate Bill 98. The Montana Land Information Act would provide a stable source of funding for layers in the Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI). The MSDI represents the most critical GIS layers that have the broadest application to the most users. To date, development and maintenance of the MSDI has been hampered by lack of adequate and reliable funding. SB 98 would remedy this problem in a way that spreads the cost fairly across everyone that benefits from GIS technology.

FWP recommends favorable action on SB 98.