EXHIBIT 9
DATE 1-19-05
HB 187

Testimony on HB187
House State Administration Committee
January 19, 2005

Testimony presented by
Arnold Olsen, Director
Montana Historical Society

The Montana Historical Society has recognized the historic importance of the Old Forts Trail by supporting the initial bill in 1989 that recognized the eastern section of the Old Forts Trail. The Society subsequently partnered with Parks Canada and supplied interpretive signage placed at Forts Walsh and Battleford in Saskatchewan and Forts Assinniboine and Benton in Montana. HB187 would extend this important international link to include a second, western branch from Fort Benton up to Fort McLeod and Calgary, Alberta. The bill would further recognize Fort Benton's importance as the key and first link along the historic military supply routes into Canada. Passage of this bill would foster further partnerships with Parks Canada and allow placement of interpretive signage at Fort McLeod and Calgary in Alberta and at the site of Fort Conrad in Montana. Since Calgary is Canada's international travel hub, extension of the Trail would bring potential economic development opportunities to Great Falls, international visitors to the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, and increase tourism to Fort Benton.

I urge your support to HB187.