

**Ruby River Decead Water User Association
Ruby Valley Conservation District**

January 31, 2005

Mr. Chairman & Members of the
Senate Natural Resources Committee:

Thank You for the chance to testify before you today.

My name is **Steve Granzow**. I am representing both the Ruby River Decead Water Users Association and Ruby Valley Conservation District.

I am testifying before you today in Support of S.B. 269 As Amended.

We strongly support S.B. 269 as amended as a vital step in protecting the groundwater reserves and more importantly to protect the quality of Montana's surface waters and the established rights of those who depend on them for their livelihoods.

Ruby Valley Conservation District has been conducting a ground water study in the lower Ruby River Valley since 2002 to determine the connection between ground water and surface water. The District has a concern for the potential impact of concentrated new housing developments, all with individual wells and septic systems. The District fears the cumulative effects that dozens, if not hundreds of new wells and septic systems may have on the groundwater aquifer and ultimately upon the surface water in the Ruby Valley.

The Ruby River Decead Water Users Association is the voice for the Adjudicated Irrigation Water Right holders in the Valley who share the concern for the impact that ground water development both residential and high-volume irrigation wells may have on their existing surface water rights.

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