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ENVELOPE NO. 3

DATE 1-31-05

Richard H. Opper

Experience

1990–Present: Missouri River Basin Association, Lewistown, MT
Executive Director

Work with board of directors comprised of Governor-appointed water policy/management personnel – generally state government department heads – from 8 states, and one tribal representative. Representatives from six federal agencies serve as advisors to the board of directors. Responsible for all aspects of the organization, including developing meeting agendas and keeping minutes, maintaining communications with the board, organizing basinwide stakeholder forums on topics of concern to the basin, maintaining communications with basin stakeholders and user groups, overseeing the organization's planning activities, speaking to groups and conferences about the work of the organization, and working with Congress on federal legislation related to the Missouri River Basin.

Primary Activities:

- **Lobbying:** Successfully lobbied Congress for programs that benefit the Missouri River.
- **Public Speaking:** Speak regularly to regional and national groups and conferences on Missouri River issues.
- **Press:** Worked with major newspapers throughout the basin on and often quoted in articles on the Missouri River. Have been quoted in national publications, including the New York Times and USA Today. Conducted numerous radio and several television interviews.
- **Meeting Organization:** Organize at least four Board meetings per year. Have organized seven stakeholder conferences on Missouri River issues that were attended by up to 150 participants.
- **Newsletter and Website:** Published a quarterly newsletter for the organization with a circulation of 1,200. Set up and maintain the organization's website (www.mrba-missouri-river.com).
- **Stakeholder Relations:** In addition to working with state, tribal and federal representatives, work closely with representatives of various upper and lower basin interests, including recreation, hydropower, fish and wildlife,

agriculture, water supply, navigation, and flood control.

- Negotiations: Organized and coordinated the negotiations of state and tribal leaders on a new river operating plan for the Missouri River.

Accomplishments:

- At the request of the federal agencies, the organization successfully negotiated an agreement among seven of the eight basin states on a new Master Water Control Plan (Master Manual) for the Missouri River. The plan was a delicate balance of fish and wildlife concerns and economic considerations, drought relief for the upper basin and reliability of flows for downstream states. The Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently agreed on a new Missouri River Master Manual, and the agreement was based on the plan negotiated by my organization. Also, our lobbying efforts brought millions of dollars into the Missouri River Basin for such things as habitat restoration and ecosystem recovery efforts.

1988–1990 Northern Lights Institute, Missoula, MT

Executive Director

Responsible for all aspects of running the non-profit organization, including fundraising and working with the Board of Directors. Oversaw all projects, including the publication of a literary magazine on resources issues in the Northern Rocky Mountain region, organizing constituents to better manage the Clark Fork River in Western Montana, and working with state, tribal, and federal personnel to better manage the Missouri River.

1986–1988: Southern Pueblos Governors Council,
Albuquerque, NM

Resource Specialist

Worked closely with tribal governments of eight Pueblos in New Mexico. Assisted with fundraising, oversaw several projects including natural resource planning activities for individual Pueblos.

1984–1986 Center for Holistic Resource Management,
Albuquerque, NM

Executive Vice-President

Worked closely with renowned ecologist Allan Savory to establish the

non-profit Center for Holistic Resource Management. Responsible for fundraising, budgeting, recruiting board members, organizing board meetings and setting agendas, keeping minutes, and developing new project ideas.

1982-1984 Billings Montana

Consultant

Worked on several projects, including one to convert the idle sugar beet refinery in Hardin, Montana into an ethanol fuel production plant.

Education

1977-1979: Montana State University, Bozeman, MT

- M.S., Soil Science.
- Graduated Dean's Honor Role

1974-1978: Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK

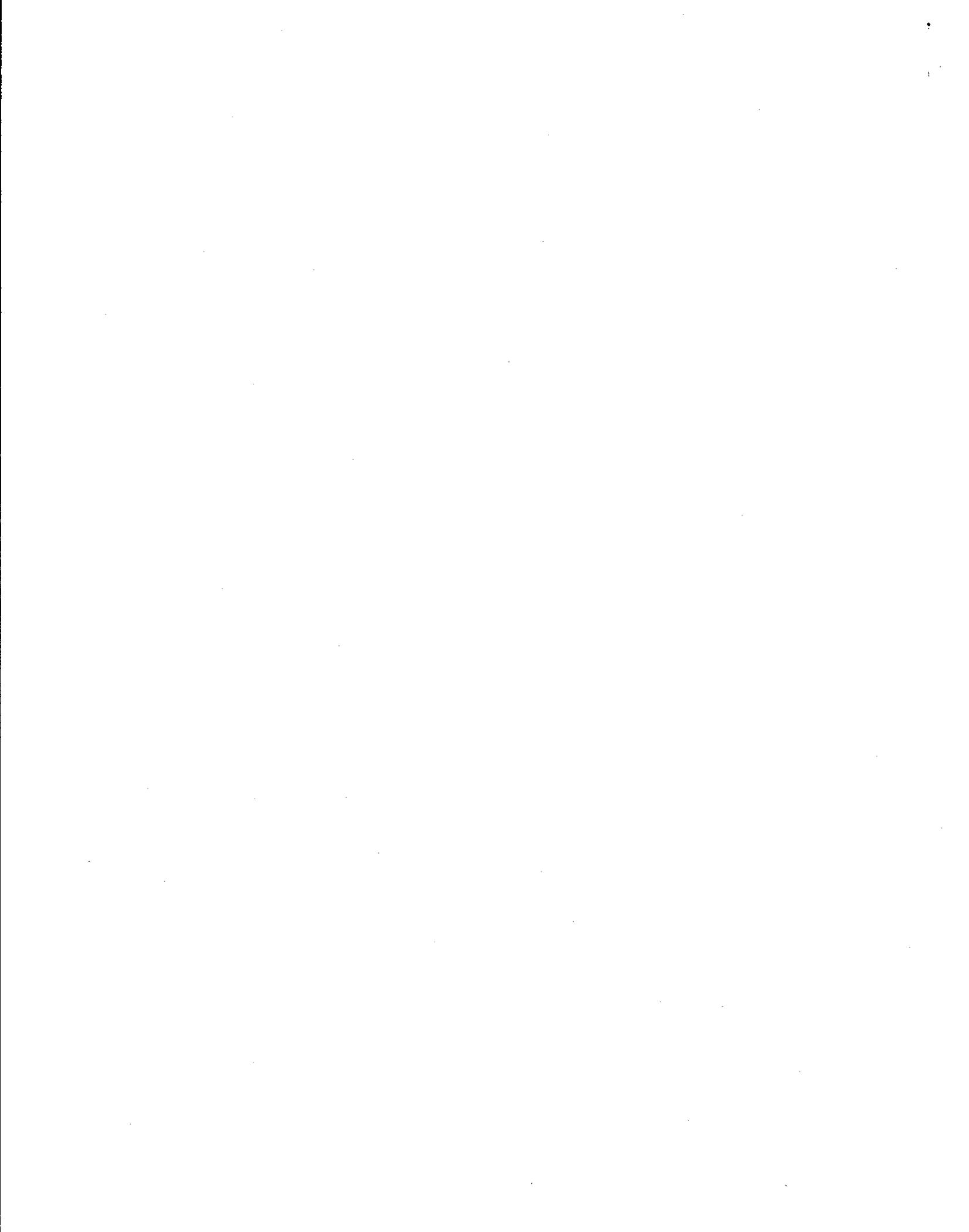
- B.S., Agricultural Sciences

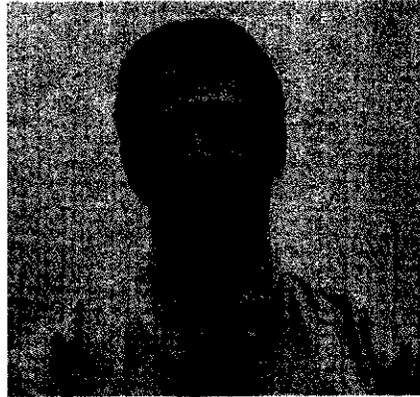
**Other
Professional
Activities:**

Published author of an environmental mystery, set on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in northeastern Montana (*Elemental Threat*, Oak Tree Press, Publisher, July 2002, ISBN 1-892343-22-3). Author of two other novels not yet published, one of which is an historical fiction book about the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

**Community
Service:**

Served on various boards, including Planned Parenthood of Missoula, Montana Community Shares, Educational Opportunities for Central Montana, and the local Rotary Club. Active member of the Big Spring Creek Watershed Partnership, a local group formed to improve management and clean up toxic wastes from the local river. Chairman of the Lewistown PCB Committee, organized to give community feedback to the Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks on its efforts to clean up PCB contamination in Big Spring Creek. Member of the Lewistown City/County Planning Board.





Richard Opper

Richard Opper, 52, was appointed as Director of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality by Governor Brian Schwietzer.

He has served the past 14 years as the Executive Director of the Missouri River Basin Association, a commission comprised of governor-appointed representatives of eight states and the Indian tribes in the Missouri River Basin. Prior to that he worked as the Executive Director for the Missoula-based Northern Lights Institute. He has also worked as a resource consultant for New Mexico-based Indian tribes, a consultant for a proposed ethanol fuel plant in Hardin, Montana, and he served as Executive Vice President for the Albuquerque-based Center for Holistic Resource Management.

Opper received his bachelor's degree in agricultural sciences from Oklahoma State University and his master's degree in soil science in 1979 from Montana State University. His research emphasis was in mined land reclamation. He is married to Sally Mueller; they have one son, Isaac.

In 2002, his mystery novel "Elemental Threat", set on Montana's Fort Peck Reservation, was published by Oak Tree Publishing.

He can be reached at (406) 444-6815 or at ropper@mt.gov.

