EXHIBIT 3
DATE 2.13.07
HB 424

February 15, 2005

Dear Montana House Member:

As you vote on HB 269 today, it is our hope that you will consider the possible ramifications that would follow with the passage of this bill. One of the biggest concerns will be that HB 269 will unnecessarily create landowner/sportsmen conflicts. Both entities have worked very hard to find reasonable compromises and keep the line of communication open to continued discussions. It is our duty as legislators to build on this and not pass legislation to erode these efforts. Another point to consider is that counties may have real reasons to abandon a county road. A county does not take abandonment of a road lightly. Facts are gathered that would allow the county to make decision on the status of a road. If that decision warrants abandonment, HB 269 would prevent counties from using those legitimate reasons to make their decision. As amended, this bill will likely lead to more litigation on whether a road or right of way provides "legal access." With the current caseloads facing our court system, we need to finds ways to lessen these burdens and not increase them. Lastly, the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks already has a river access program. As access issues arise, we should put our efforts toward supporting and improving a program that has been successful and not place the burden on landowners and counties.

Because of the concerns listed above, HB 269 has the potential to cause more harm than good. Please join us in voting a DO NOT PASS on HB 269.

Sincerely,

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Representative Debby Barrett

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