

Department of Environmental Quality
Testimony in Support
HB203

Mr Chairman – I am Sandi Olsen, Remediation Division Administrator from the Department of Environmental Quality. My Division is responsible for administering laws requiring the cleanup of contamination from past activities to ensure human health and the environment are appropriately protected.

The department supports HB203 for a number of reasons.

1. Controlled Ground Water Areas have proven to be a useful tool for protecting the public from the effects of drinking contaminated groundwater. We have used these statutes to designate CGWAs at several contaminated sites including:
 - a. Somers – Wood Treating Chemicals
 - a. Bozeman – Solvents at one site; Wood treating chemicals at another
 - b. Bitterroot Valley – Landfill Leachates
 - c. Rocker – Wood Treating Chemicals
 - d. Butte – Metals leaching from Mining Waste

These chemicals are often carcinogenic and/or have other negative impacts on human growth and development or human health.

2. HB203 streamlines the process for designating controlled groundwater areas – with the rulemaking required under this bill the department will be able to have a contractor prepare a petition when necessary with a minimum amount of effort and cost.
3. In addition, rulemaking will establish the technical details necessary to support a streamlined process. This has been lacking in the past.
4. With a streamlined process, decisions would be available to the affected public in a more timely fashion.
5. The department also supports process changes that encourage public participation. We believe the proposed changes meet this goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I encourage your support of this bill.