Exhibit Z
Date 3/19/09
SB 204

MONTANA CENTENNIAL FARM AND RANCH PROGRAM

The Montana Centennial Farm and Ranch Program seeks to celebrate the agricultural traditions of our state by preserving the histories that represent the perseverance and stewardship of Montana families on their farms and ranches. The Montana Farmer's Union currently recognizes its members with hundred-year-old family farms and ranches. This new state Centennial Farm and Ranch Program seeks to further that honor, and to assist Montana's farmers and ranchers in collecting the stories of those families in order to keep this history alive.

Our state's agricultural producers have withstood development pressures and economic hardships in order to retain their rural heritage. Through this program, the state's Montana Historical Society will join the Montana Preservation Alliance, the Montana Farmer's Union and other agricultural producers to acknowledge the strength and determination of agricultural families and help to preserve their traditions.

Many states across the nation honor the Centennial Farms and Ranches in their jurisdiction, and this is Montana's opportunity to do likewise. The year 2009 marks the 100th anniversary of the 1909 Enlarged Homestead Act – this anniversary is the perfect time to commemorate the homesteading families who arrived in Montana a century ago.

The Montana Preservation Alliance is a leading heritage partner in this effort. Having spent the past seven years researching and photographing Montana's historic barns for an upcoming book with the MHS Press, MPA is committed to helping to research and collect the family histories of Montana's Centennial Farms and Ranches. We intend to raise funds to expand the program into the future, to share the stories through publications, web pages or other means. Through the Centennial Farm and Ranch Program, Montanans can extend our appreciation to rural families for their contributions to our State's heritage and to its economy.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Criteria will be established for the program, and applicants will fill out a brief application form to document the location, size, history, and familial associations with the farm/ranch. They will also be invited to share histories of their families that they would like to have kept for future generations and scholars. Applicants return the completed forms, required documentation and an application fee (to be determined by the partner groups.) Each successful applicant will receive a certificate in recognition of their longevity in the State of Montana.

AFFILIATIONS

The new Montana Centennial Farm & Ranch Program will partner with the various groups to recognize Montana's Centennial Farms & Ranches, to help ensure that many farms and ranches can be honored and their histories collected. MPA and MHS will work closely with the Montana Farmer's Union, Montana Stockgrowers or other groups to seek grants and sponsorships to conduct documentation, oral history, survey, or other projects related to the agricultural history of Montana and our Centennial Farms and Ranches.

MPA
MONTANA PRESERVATION ALLIANCE