EXHIBIT 2
DATE 2-17-09
HB 585

House Bill 585
February 17, 2009
Presented by Paul Sihler
House Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Paul Sihler, Field Services Division Administrator of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

I rise in support of HB 585.

The Private Land/Public Wildlife Council worked hard over the past eighteen months to develop recommendations which might help improve landowner/hunter relations, improve access for Montana resident hunters, provide more benefits to landowners who allow public access, and keep Montana families hunting together.

The proposal contained in House Bill 585 is part of that effort, and represents considerable effort by members of the Council to balance the needs of different constituents. After circulating a draft recommendation for public comment, the Private Land/Public Wildlife Council made adjustments and adopted this final proposal through consensus of all members. FWP supports them in their efforts and the results: HB 585 will help maintain Montana's tradition of families hunting together.

If enacted, this legislation will sunset in four years. During the pilot period for this program, FWP will work with the PL/PW Council to gather data necessary for an annual report to determine if the goals of the program are being met in terms of improved resident hunter opportunity, and report the results to the Governor and the Legislature.

We urge you to pass HB 585.