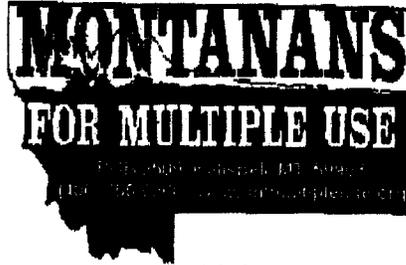


EXHIBIT 10
DATE 3/25/09
SB SJ21www.mtmultipleuse.org

March 25, 2009

[Redacted] and Members of the House Natural Resource Committee

RE: Pass SJ 21

As the last sawmill in Lincoln County is permanently closed at Fortine, MT. well over 100 good paying jobs to support and run the mill are gone for good as well as the infrastructure and equipment tax base necessary to support those wealth producing industrial jobs. Montana already competes with South Dakota and Mississippi as having the lowest average annual wage per job in the nation (73% of the national average).

When a sawmill is closed, the standing timber within a 25-30 mile radius is instantly devalued by the cost of hauling to the next nearest market. The lack of local timber markets devalues State Trust Land timber, reduces long term revenues to schools that must be made up by taxpayers. It is well known that the lack of timber sales from Federal land is a major factor in these mill closures as well as the skyrocketing cost of catastrophic Federal fires fueled by unbroken expanses of dead and dying timber.

The Galton project is bordered on the east by the Flathead National Forest that has already closed all the USFS land in the North Fork Flathead River to snowmobiling except for a few groomed trails on roads. Every trail into the Whitefish range on the Flathead side is closed to any motorized use. All except a few main roads in valley bottoms have been closed to motorized use or "decommissioned" so that not even a 4x4 fire truck can have access. These policies have contributed to more than half the Federal land in the North Fork Flathead being burned in the last 10 years.

The Fortine Ranger District has already implemented many road and trail closures similar to the Flathead and has amended its "roadless inventory" to include previously logged areas. It is obvious to anyone who has followed the incremental shutdown of Federal forests that the Galton Project is planned to further reduce access and management of the forest to expand wilderness recommendations and "roadless management" that dooms the area to more catastrophic fires to threaten health safety and property.

USFS monitoring reports that, even with all the motorized access reductions, existing wilderness visits accounts for less than 2% of total forest recreation visits. Montana and especially Lincoln County does not need any more wilderness.

Please support SJ 21 to send a message to the US Forest Service land managers that Montana and Lincoln County needs proper management of multiple use forests not more wilderness.

Respectfully,

Fred D. Hodgeboom, President
Montanans For Multiple Use
406.837-1363