SENATE FISH AND GAME
EXHIBIT NO. 3
DATE March 3, 2009
BILL NO. HB 296

House Bill 296
March 3, 2009
Presented by Jim Kropp
Senate Fish and Game Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Jim Kropp, Chief of Law Enforcement of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

I am here to offer FWP's support for HB 296, which would include Tribal Fish and Game wardens as Ex officio Montana Game Wardens when a cooperative management agreement exists between the state and a tribe. For those of you who are not aware, Ex Officio means "in the course of duty." Most law enforcement officers in Montana serve in that capacity, assisting Montana Wardens as well as writing citations under certain circumstances.

We have witnessed the high level of success of the agreement between the state and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. This agreement has provided for a wide range of cooperation in many areas, not the least in resource law enforcement. I am pleased and proud of the relationship we have with Confederated Fish and Game Wardens. They have helped us on numerous occasions and have exemplified a high level of professionalism and dedication to protecting resources that belong to all Montanans. The five Confederated Tribal wardens who serve as Ex Officios are all post-certified officers as set out in the cooperative agreement with the tribes.

We hope in the future to develop and put in place additional coop agreements with other tribes across Montana. This legislation would aid in those efforts. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks endorses this legislation and urges your support. Thank you.