

Bob Walker
60 Pine Ridge Circle
Clancy, MT
406-933-5326 (H)
406-431-0523 (C)

HB 370

My name is Bob Walker and I am a volunteer for *Our Montana*, a non-profit dedicated to the conservation and improvement of Montana's Parks, Recreation, Rivers, Historic Sites and Trails! I also have the pleasure of working as a volunteer with seven specific state park friends' organizations and several trails organizations.

Our Montana supports HB 370 for the following reasons.

This bill would raise the optional vehicle registration fee to improve operations and maintenance at state parks and at Virginia and Nevada Cities. A December 2009 report to the Legislative Finance Committee discussed compounding issues facing state parks including stagnant fiscal resources, diverse properties and public expectations!

Stagnant fiscal resources: State Parks camping fees have not changed since 2003. A report dated May 26, 2010 by the Legislative Fiscal Division titled *State Parks Update* listed as a key solution an increase in the vehicle registration fee!

Diverse Properties: Bannack, our first territorial capitol
Pictograph Cave, National Historic Landmark
Travelers Rest, documented encampment of the Lewis & Clark Expedition
Chief Plenty Coup, Home of a great Native American leader
Lewis & Clark Caverns, 1st State Park and cavern management
Makoshika, badlands formations, fossil remains

Public expectations: A survey from the 90's showed 88 percent of Montanans visited a state park no less than every two years. There has been a 78% increase in resident use since 2002.

A study by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research dated January, 2011 showed that 75% of those who visited a state park last year support an increase in the optional vehicle registration fee while 56% of those who did not visit a state park last year also support an increase!

I am a member of the public who uses and enjoys our Montana State Parks. I not only support but would welcome an increase in my vehicle registration fee going to state parks. Please help us to keep those parks well maintained and improved for Montanans and visitors by passing HB 370!