

March 10, 2016

Mr. Joe Kolman
Director, Legislative Environmental Policy Office
Rm 171B, State Capitol Building
Helena, MT 59620-1706

RE: DNRC Trust Land Management Division, Forest Management Program Evaluation

Dear Mr. Kolman,

Thank you for this opportunity to offer comment regarding the timber program under the DNRC Forest Management Bureau, Trust Lands Management Division.

The Montana Wood Products Association is comprised of primary and secondary wood manufacturers, value-added companies and other businesses that would be severely impacted if the timber manufacturing industry was forced to shutter their facilities.

Montana's wood products industry is dependent upon and sincerely grateful for the state's timber program. As you may be aware, 2015 was a very depressed year for the industry due to the cost of raw fiber and extremely low lumber prices. The challenge continues this year as well. While the industry waits for the U.S./Canadian Softwood Lumber Agreement to be renegotiated and ratified by both countries, and for lumber market prices to pick up, we look to our state and federal partners for timber supply and programs to help stabilize the industry.

We recognize it has been a challenging year for programs under the management of the Trust Lands Division with the Habitat Conservation Program in federal litigation and the uncertainty of how a negotiated settlement would affect the state's sustained yield or annual timber program.

Even though the outcome of the negotiated settlement was of concern for some of the MWPA members, we are pleased that this problem is behind us and feel confident that in an arena of the federal court system, the end result was the best solution for all. A negotiated settlement meant the state does not have a long protracted threat of litigation clouding the future.

We look forward to working the Division in 2016 and certainly appreciate all the state does on behalf of the many men and women that work in Montana's forest products industry.

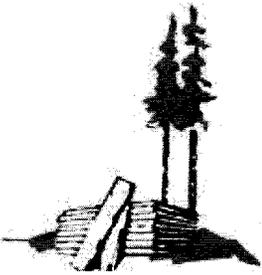
Sincerely,

Julia Altemus

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
COUNCIL. 2015-16

March 10, 2016

Exhibit 6



F.H. STOLTZE LAND & LUMBER COMPANY

Lumber Manufacturers

Box 1429 Columbia Falls, MT 59912
Phone (406) 892-7005 Fax (406) 892-1612
www.stoltzelumber.com

February 26, 2016

Mr. Joe Kolman
Director, Legislative Environmental Policy Office
Rm 171B, State Capitol Building
P.O. Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706



Good for you. Good for our forests.
www.sfi.org
SFI 00360

RE: DNRC Trust Land Management Division, Forest Management Program Evaluation

Dear Mr. Kolman,

Please accept the following comments regarding the Program Evaluation of the Forest Management Bureau of DNRC Trust Lands division on behalf of F.H. Stoltze Land & Lumber Co. Please share these comments with the members of the Environmental Quality Council as well.



Member Since 1966

Stoltze would like to wholeheartedly endorse the job the DNRC Trust Lands Forest Management Bureau does in managing the forested Trust Lands of the State of Montana. As in all partnerships, on occasion we may disagree with particular actions or policies of the Department, but on whole the program is well run and meets the demands of the Trust Beneficiaries to the best of its ability. For Stoltze, the Trust Lands timber sale program is essential to our business operations.

Within our fiber sourcing area, Trust Land timber harvest accounts for between 20% and 30% of the entire annual timber harvest. Subsequently, that volume is a large part of the fiber supply for our sawmill. The consistent program offered by the State is highly valuable to our industry. Year after year, the industry can trust that the DNRC timber program will be offered for sale. This predictability has great value to the purchasers and that value is clearly reflected in the bid premiums secured by the DNRC timber sale program. The State program helps moderate the highly variable timber harvest activity that occurs on private and Federal lands within our sourcing areas.

With the addition of 67,000 acres of highly productive land to the Trust Land portfolio Stoltze was disappointed to see a sustained yield calculation released in 2015 that was significantly below our expectations. We fully participated in the public comment process and shared information and critiques of the process used to generate the sustained yield figure. To see that number further reduced as a result of the negotiated settlement of the litigation on the HCP was doubly difficult. However, we feel the Department did consider our suggestions, specifically with regard to securing additional site specific data on inventory and growth and yield. We understand it takes time to build these databases. Therefore, we fully support the Department's desire to



Charter Member

reexamine the sustained yield calculation on a timeline shorter than the statutory maximum 10 year period and encourage the legislature to fully consider that request.

Section 1 of the enabling legislation authorizing the Contract Harvesting program clearly cites the ability to increase financial return to the Trusts and the ability to have more control of land management in environmentally sensitive areas as the goals of the program. To date, the contract timber harvesting program has fallen short of both of these goals. As the DNRC's own internal review showed, the increased revenue has not been realized. Similarly, at least in our experience with the program, the implementation has not focused on areas with significant environmental sensitivities requiring the great control potentially afforded by this tool. It would be our suggestion that the DNRC show that Contract Harvesting will meet at least one of the two goals, economic or environmental, to a greater extent than would be possible thorough normal timber sale contracts before choosing Contract Harvesting the contract tool of choice.

To reiterate our opening comments, the DNRC Trust Land Forest Management program is essential to the continued success of the Forest Products Industry and the communities it supports. While there is always room for improvement in any operation, on the whole the DNRC program is well run and meets the goals and objectives in supporting Trust interests while ensuring a healthy environment in a sustainable manner. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul R. McKenzie', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul R. McKenzie
Lands & Resource Manager