



BCC 2013-135
August 22, 2013

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**LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE**

Mr. Joe Kolman
Environmental Quality Council
Room 171B, Capitol Building
P.O. Box 201704
Helena, MT 59620-1704

Dear Mr. Kolman:

Thank you for contacting us about the SJ15 Survey administered by the Environmental Quality Council (EQC). Given the extensive nature of the survey, we have initiated significant research into the issues raised by the document. We will provide you with a full response to the survey prior to the November 1, 2013 deadline.

Missoula County will collect and submit information regarding the "risks and concerns associated with federal land management" in Missoula County. However, federally managed lands are integral to our County's economy in many ways. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management resources supply us with forest products, grazing, abundant wildlife, significant fisheries, clean water and motorized/non-motorized recreational opportunities. Research during 2011 and 2012 shows that tourists spent approximately \$258M in Missoula County. We are very aware that those tourists come to Missoula County in large part due to the vast recreation resources found across our urban and rural landscape.

We have serious concerns about wildfire, litigation over sound forest management practices, and adverse air quality impacts from activities in and outside of the state of Montana. We have other concerns regarding issues mentioned in the survey. We are also concerned that the survey may not provide you with a complete picture of the impacts of federal (and state) land management, especially in those counties that have an abundance of federal lands within their boundaries. To help address this problem, we will provide the EQC with information illuminating the risks, concerns and outstanding values of federal lands to our economy, culture and citizens. We trust that the information will be included in any analysis of the survey itself. Please note that we are very comfortable with the exceptionally positive working relationship we have built with our state and federal partners. We are not interested in seeing that relationship negatively altered by future legislative actions resulting from the SJ15 interim study.

Thank you for undertaking this important project. If you have any questions, please contact us, or our Chief Planning Officer, Patrick O'Herren (406-258-4981), at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

NOT AVAILABLE FOR SIGNATURE

Michele Landquist, Chair



Bill Carey, Commissioner



Jean Curtiss, Commissioner

BCC/ppr
cc: Pat O'Herren, Chief Planning Officer