

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL
RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION



BRIAN SCHWEITZER, GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

Telephone: (406) 542-4200
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SOUTHWESTERN LAND OFFICE
1401 27th Avenue
Missoula, Montana 59804-3199

March 10, 2008

Dear Interested Party:

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is beginning an Environmental Assessment (EA) on Trust land located near Seeley Lake, MT adjacent to the Double Arrow subdivision, within Missoula County. This parcel has been nominated for sale by the Department through the Land Banking program (MCA 77-2-361 through 77-2-367 passed by the 2003 State Legislature). The general intent of the Land Banking program is for the state to dispose of scattered parcels of land that do not have legal access, generate substantially less income for the trust than their relative value or are difficult for DNRC to manage. Proceeds from land sales are then used to acquire new land that provides a greater rate of return to the Trust, as well as meeting other statutory and administrative rule guidelines. The land banking statutes allow DNRC to sell up to 100,000 acres of Trust land prior to an evaluation of the merits of the program by the Legislature in 2009. The program also requires that DNRC acquire new property before it sells more than 20,000 acres.

The parcel of land is described as the SE1/4 of Section 12, Township 16 North – Range 15 West, containing 160 acres. This parcel is primarily forested land and surrounded by the Double Arrow Subdivision. The Double Arrow private road crosses the parcel and does not provide legal access to the parcel; however, there is legal access from the south.

We are currently conducting an analysis under the Montana Environmental Policy Act of the impacts that may occur as a result of the proposed land sale. This analysis is to be completed prior to presenting the proposal to the Board of Land Commissioners (Board) for preliminary approval. If approval is received from the Board, the Department will then conduct an appraisal to determine an estimated value and recommended minimum bid price for sale. The proposal will then be brought back before the Board to establish the minimum acceptable bid for the parcel and approval to proceed with the sale process.

DNRC is contacting you as a part of the public scoping process for the Environmental Assessment, and would appreciate any comments you may have regarding the proposed sale of this parcel. Comments **will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 10, 2008** and should be sent to:

Liz Mullins, Land Use Planner
DNRC Southwestern Land Office
1401 27th Avenue
Missoula, MT 59804
lmullins@mt.gov

Additional information on the land banking program can also be found at http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/trust/land_banking/default.asp#about. Please feel free to contact me at (406) 542-4345 or lmullins@mt.gov with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liz Mullins".

Liz Mullins, DNRC
Land Use Planner

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POLICY OFFICE