



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

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September 22, 1999

Mr. Larry E. Hamilton
Director, Montana State Office
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 36800
Billings, MT 59107-6800

DRAFT

Dear Mr. Hamilton:

We are members of the Water Policy Subcommittee of the Montana Environmental Quality Council (EQC). The EQC is a seventeen member bipartisan interim committee of the Montana Legislature.

During the 1999-2000 interim between legislative sessions we will be investigating concerns about the potential impact of increased recreational use of rivers on water quality. One specific issue that we are interested in is the potential effect of increased recreational use of Montana's rivers due to the bicentennial celebration of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

We would like to know about the Bureau of Land Management's plans and strategies for mitigating the impacts of increased river recreation on water quality and riparian areas. We are interested in your plans for the Wild and Scenic Missouri River as well as any other BLM managed rivers that are likely to be affected by increased recreational use related to the bicentennial celebration of the Lewis and Clark expedition. We are particularly concerned that Montanans have an opportunity to play a meaningful role in developing strategies to manage river recreation in order to protect the quality of our state's waters and riparian areas. Therefore, we would like to know how you intend to involve Montanans in your decision making process.

We look forward to hearing from you. Please feel free to contact Mary Vandenbosch of our staff if you have any questions. She can be reached at (406) 444-5367.

DRAFT

Sincerely,

Senator Bea McCarthy

Representative Bill Tash

Senator Jon Tester
Members, EQC Water Policy Subcommittee