

May 15, 2006

Environmental Quality Council
Study Subcommittee
State Capitol, Room 137

Mr. Co-Chair and subcommittee:

In February I was contacted by a constituent who was concerned with the lack of accountability for revenues and expenses of individual trust land accounts under the management of DNRC. I then queried legislative staff about the history and practice of these and other lands managed by the state.

I learned that the last Performance Audit dealing with maximizing income to the state lands trust was in 1983. It became apparent that audit results were marginalized by inadequate reporting data, which seems in direct conflict with the "strict accountability" provision of the Montana Constitution, implemented by the Legislative Audit Act for state agencies.

Therefore, I forward a request that EQC consider drafting legislation that would (1) consolidate some of the trusts by use; (2) establish the accounting transparency needed to meaningful legislative oversight.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sen. Bob Hawks
District 33