

SENATE BILL NO. 15

INTRODUCED BY J. COHENOUR

BY REQUEST OF THE EDUCATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT INTERIM COMMITTEE

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION'S COLLECTION OF FULL MARKET VALUE WHEN ISSUING A HISTORIC RIGHT-OF-WAY DEED; AND AMENDING SECTION 77-1-130, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 77-1-130, MCA, is amended to read:

"77-1-130. (Temporary) Recognition of historic right-of-way -- criteria for right-of-way deed -- conditions -- fees. (1) A person or a county may apply to the department for a historic right-of-way deed to provide access to the applicant's private property, to provide continuation of a county road, or to provide for authorization of existing utilities by filing an application with the department by October 1, 2021, on a form prescribed by the department. An application must be accompanied by:

(a) an application fee of \$50;

(b) a notarized affidavit:

(i) demonstrating that the applicant or the applicant's predecessor in interest used the right-of-way applied for before 1997 and that the use has continued to the present;

(ii) describing the purpose for which the right-of-way was used before 1997; and

(iii) demonstrating that the historic right-of-way applied for is the right-of-way demonstrated in the evidence provided in subsection (1)(c); and

(c) (i) aerial photographs or images taken by an agency of the United States demonstrating use of the right-of-way applied for; or

(ii) other evidence of the use of the right-of-way applied for.

(2) The department shall review an application and other evidence submitted pursuant to subsection (1) and shall issue a historic right-of-way deed in the name of the applicant if:

(a) the applicant pays the application fee provided in subsection (1)(a) and the ~~fair~~ full market value of the historic right-of-way as provided in subsection (4);

1 (b) the applicant has shown by substantial evidence the matters required in subsections (1)(b) and
2 (1)(c)(i) or (1)(c)(ii);

3 (c) the department has, if necessary, made a field inspection of the right-of-way applied for; and

4 (d) the deed is approved by the board.

5 (3) A historic right-of-way deed issued in the name of the applicant must contain the description of the
6 property of the applicant to which it is appurtenant as provided in the application, and the right-of-way must
7 thereafter be considered appurtenant to that dominant estate. A deed may be assigned by the applicant to the
8 applicant's successor in interest with the approval of the department. The department may not withhold approval
9 for any reason other than that the use of the historic right-of-way is contrary to subsection (5).

10 (4) (a) At the time of issuing the historic right-of-way deed, the department shall collect from the applicant
11 the full market value of the ~~acreage of~~ estate or interest disposed of for the historic right-of-way.

12 (b) The amount collected pursuant to subsection (4)(a) must be deposited in the appropriate trust fund
13 established for receipt of income from the land over which a historic right-of-way is granted.

14 (5) If application is made in accordance with this section, a historic right-of-way deed must be issued by
15 the department, subject to the approval of the board, on the following terms:

16 (a) the right-of-way is only for the minimum width necessary, as negotiated by the department and the
17 applicant; and

18 (b) the right-of-way is only for the physical condition of the road or utility facilities existing on the date the
19 historic right-of-way deed is issued by the department.

20 (6) Issuance of a historic right-of-way deed pursuant to this section is exempt from the requirements of
21 Title 22, chapter 3, part 4, and Title 75, chapter 1, parts 1 and 2.

22 (7) The survey requirements of 77-2-102 may be waived by the department for the issuance of a historic
23 right-of-way deed if the department determines that there is sufficient information available to define the
24 boundaries of the right-of-way for the purposes of recording the easement.

25 (8) The department may attach conditions to a historic right-of-way deed necessary to ensure
26 compliance with this chapter.

27 (9) For the purposes of this section, "historic right-of-way deed" means a document issued by the
28 department granting to the applicant a nonexclusive easement over state land. (Terminates October 1,
29 2031--secs. 2 through 7, Ch. 325, L. 2015.)"

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