

July 25, 2013

The Honorable _____, Chair
_____ County Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box _____
Any Town, MT Zip

RE: SJ 15 - SURVEY OF MONTANA COUNTY COMMISSIONS

Dear Chairman _____,

The State Legislature is asking Montana Counties to help identify risks and concerns associated with federal land management within each County. This official state survey is being conducted as a result of the legislature's passage of SJ-15: Study of Federal Land Management. A copy of SJ-15 is enclosed for your information.

Over 29% of the land within Montana, or 27.4 million acres, is managed by federal agencies. Much of Montana's natural resources occur on these federally managed lands (timber, grazing, forage, minerals, coal, oil and gas, water, & wildlife). Management of these lands can greatly affect local economies, tax base, employment opportunities, public safety, our surrounding environment, and recreational opportunities.

Your County Commission's official response will be helpful as the legislature proceeds to identify the greatest risks and concerns in each county and explores all possible solutions to correct significant problems. Please help us by having your Board of County Commissioners complete this survey and return it postmarked by August 24, 2013. Attach any supplemental explanations, comments, suggestions, or information your board finds pertinent.

If you have any questions or would like further information please contact Joe Kolman with the Legislative Environmental Quality Office at 406 444-3747 or Senator Jennifer Fielder, sponsor of SJ-15, at 406 210-5944 or by email at Sen.JFielder@legmt.gov

The Montana State Legislature very much values your assistance with this high priority project.

Sincerely,

Senator John Brenden, Chairman
Montana Environmental Quality Council