

LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment

From: donotreply@mt.gov
Sent: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 2:20 PM
To: LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment
Subject: Public Comment for WPIC

Public Comments for the Water Policy Interim Committee

Date: 5th April 2022 14:20

First Name:

Lara

Last Name:

Birkes

Email Address:

lbirkes@gmail.com

Subject:

Support for I-191

Comment:

Dear Water Policy Interim Committee: As a Park County resident I write to support the I-191 ballot initiative. Montana rivers and fisheries are under increasing stress and we must do all we can to preserve these natural resources for all Montanans, and the local businesses which rely upon them. People come from all over the world to fish and boat the Madison and Gallatin Rivers. I-191 will ensure these rivers are clean for all to enjoy, and for local businesses to rely upon for work. I-191 also supports farmers and ranchers who are dependent on irrigation. I-191 does not change irrigation rights and only ensures irrigators have clean water available in the future. I urge the commission to support the I-191 ballot initiative. Kind regards, Lara Birkes Paradise Valley / Livingston, MT

Sent via leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/wpic/public-comments-wpic/

LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment

From: donotreply@mt.gov
Sent: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 9:05 AM
To: LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment
Subject: Public Comment for WPIC

Public Comments for the Water Policy Interim Committee

Date: 5th April 2022 09:04

First Name:

Jon

Last Name:

Steele

Email Address:

flyfishr13@gmail.com

Subject:

Please vote in favor of support of I-191

Comment:

The Madison and Gallatin Rivers that originate in Yellowstone National Park, the crown jewel of "America's Best Idea" are treasures that are enjoyed and utilized by thousands of residents of and visitors to Montana every year. These iconic rivers are under siege from warming air and water temperatures, reduced snowpack, dam failures, invasive species, algae blooms, fish die-offs and increasing human population and development. All of these issues and more will have to be addressed if we stand a chance to save these rivers for future generations. Why would add additional sources of pollution under any circumstances to this list of stresses on these systems. Please vote to support I-191 and it's attempt to designate the Madison and Gallatin Rivers as outstanding resource waters. Thank you.

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LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment

From: donotreply@mt.gov
Sent: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 1:44 AM
To: LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment
Subject: Public Comment for WPIC

Public Comments for the Water Policy Interim Committee

Date: 5th April 2022 01:44

First Name:
Michael

Last Name:
Murphy

Email Address:
mwra_h2o@msn.com

Subject:
Initiative 191

Comment:

Montana Water Resources Association P.O. Box 4927 • Helena, Montana 59604 • (406) 235-4555 Email: mwra_h2o@msn.com April 3, 2022 TO: Water Policy Interim Committee REGARDING: Committee Consideration of Initiative I-191 Dear Water Policy Interim Committee Members: The following comments regarding Initiative I-191 (Expanding Outstanding Resource Water Designations) are provided on behalf of Montana Water Resources Association (MWRA). MWRA strongly opposes I-191. I-191 would circumvent the legislative process and well defined procedure to determine citizen support as well as economic, social, and environmental impacts associated with an Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) designation. Economic, social and environmental concerns were considered within the extensive legislative hearings and floor debate process that resulted in a determination that provided an ORW designation intended to apply to waters within the boundaries of wilderness areas and national parks. I-191 would set a very serious precedent that would encourage future similar actions that would continue to expand significant negative impacts including, for example: Jeopardizing water and other private property rights. Substantial negative economic impacts and legal costs. Financial losses for individual Montana agricultural producers and other citizens. Effectively prevent new development or necessary rehabilitation of existing infrastructure. Adding the proposed language and term “temporary” to ORW restrictions would further exaggerate negative implications of I-191. This language would effectively prevent any action that could even temporarily impact water quality, no matter how insignificant, including critical irrigation diversion/headgate maintenance and other agricultural activities such as watering livestock. Again, MWRA strongly opposes I-191. Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. Sincerely, Michael Murphy Michael E. Murphy Executive Director “Montana’s Voice for Montana’s Water”

Sent via leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/wpic/public-comments-wpic/

LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment

From: donotreply@mt.gov
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 5:22 PM
To: LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment
Subject: Public Comment for WPIC

Public Comments for the Water Policy Interim Committee

Date: 4th April 2022 17:21

First Name:
Kristin

Last Name:
Gardner

Email Address:
kristin@gallatinrivertaskforce.org

Subject:
I-191

Comment:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on I-191. The Gallatin River Task Force is a nonprofit watershed group that has been working to protect and preserve the Upper Gallatin River for over twenty years. We do this work through a watershed approach that considers stakeholder involvement, community collaboration, and a platform of science-based information to prioritize projects around conservation and restoration. We have recently completed a restoration strategy with the Forest Service to restore and manage river access sites along the mainstream Gallatin between Yellowstone National Park and the Gallatin Valley. This section of river is very easily accessed for recreation and historically has not been managed to address user related degradation. With the increasing growth and visitation in the area, recreation pressure on the Upper Gallatin River is one of the largest threats to river health. Many of the projects that we have outlined to repair user related damage to the river will require a permit for a temporary turbidity discharge. Although we agree that the Gallatin River is in need of protection, it is also in need of restoration that this ballot initiative would not allow. Furthermore, we are concerned that the I-191 circumvents the development of an environmental impact study (EIS) that appropriately evaluates the environmental, social and economic impacts of an ORW and the subsequent opportunities for public comment based on the EIS. We do not believe this is a good precedent to set for future projects or designations. We believe these decisions should be based on data and evaluated by experts rather than the general public. For these reason, we are opposed to I-191. Thank you for your consideration.

Sent via leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/wpic/public-comments-wpic/

LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment

From: donotreply@mt.gov
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 3:15 PM
To: LEG Cmte-WPIC Comment
Subject: Public Comment for WPIC

Public Comments for the Water Policy Interim Committee

Date: 4th April 2022 15:14

First Name:
Abigail

Last Name:
St. Lawrence

Email Address:
abigail@stlawrencelawfirm.com

Subject:
Ballot Initiative 191--comments in opposition on behalf of MBIA

Comment:

As per the expressed preference for written comments in the announcement of the April 5, 2022 meeting, I offer the following brief comments in opposition to Ballot Initiative 191 on behalf of the over 1,500 members of the Montana Building Industry Association (MBIA) and nine local associations throughout Montana, who are the builders and affiliated small businesses constructing nearly 75 percent of new residential buildings in Montana. I further respectfully request the Water Policy Interim Committee exercise its authority under MCA 13-27-202(5)(c) and not support the placement of the proposed initiative text on the ballot. MBIA joins numerous other Montana-based membership associations in opposing Ballot Initiative 191 for a broad number of reasons. However, as the leading voice for residential construction in Montana, MBIA's opposition focuses particularly on the drastic impact Ballot Initiative 191 would have on much needed housing in the Gallatin Valley. As this committee is well aware, the Gallatin Valley is at the apex of a housing shortage and resulting rising prices that has been building for years, thanks in no small part to NIMBY (not in my backyard) opposition to any new housing development, no matter how environmentally responsible and compliant with community planning. Ballot Initiative 191 is the epitome of NIMBY policy and would undoubtedly drastically slow if not fully halt much needed new housing construction in the Gallatin Valley. Although Montanans are rightfully shocked by the lack of housing in Southwest Montana now to meet demand and the resulting rise in prices for the limited existing supply, such lack of supply and rise in cost would be dwarfed by the resulting impacts on the housing market should Ballot Initiative 191 become law. MBIA urges this committee to take into consideration the broad opposition to Ballot Initiative 191 and vote to not support the placement of the proposed initiative text on the ballot. Thank you for this opportunity to provide written public comment. I will be available online at the April 5th committee meeting to answer any questions.

Sent via leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/wpic/public-comments-wpic/

From: [C. Lee Seitz](#)
To: [Mohr, Jason](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Water Policy Interim Committee hearing on ballot initiative 191
Date: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 12:24:34 PM

What: Water Policy Interim Committee review of ballot initiative 191
When: April 5, 2022
Where: virtual Zoom meeting
Comments provided by: Carole Mackin, Helena, Montana
C._lee@mail.com

I wish the committee would have allowed time for the Initiative sponsor to respond to the concerns of the opponents and committee members. He could have cleared up many of the issues raised and addressed misconceptions.

I'd hoped to make the following statement as an **informational witness** in order to supplement an e-mail I sent with my sign up request for the hearing.

Article V. THE LEGISLATURE , MONTANA CONSTITUTION defines the power and structure of the Legislature and also sets limitations on legislative power.

"The legislative power is vested in a legislature consisting of a senate and a house of representatives. **The people reserve to themselves the powers of initiative and referendum."**

Carole Mackin
4703 Almosta Road
Helena, Montana 59602
406-227-5237