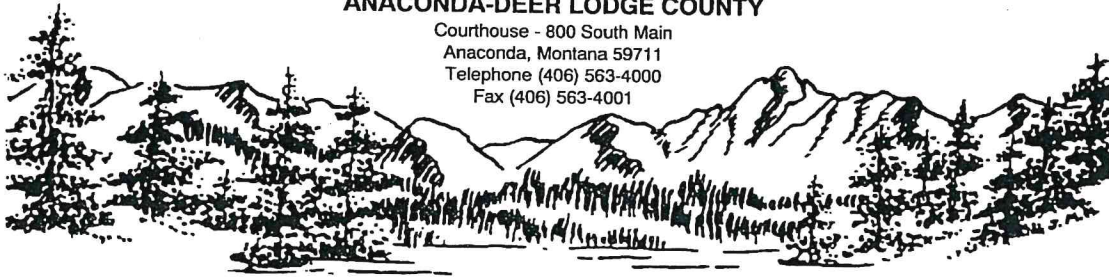


ANACONDA-DEER LODGE COUNTY

Courthouse - 800 South Main
Anaconda, Montana 59711
Telephone (406) 563-4000
Fax (406) 563-4001



October 18, 2017

Dear Fellow Montana County Commissioners:

On October 3, 2017, the Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Board of Commission unanimously adopted Resolution No. 17-34 (attached), a Resolution Publicly Stating the Value of Public Lands to Anaconda-Deer Lodge County's Economy, Recreation, Heritage, and Quality of Life; and Opposing Any Effort to Claim, Take Over, Litigate For, Sell, or Transfer Ownership of Federal Public Lands to the State or Local Governments within Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, Montana and Supporting Continued Federal Ownership of Federal Public Lands.

A little over two years ago, public lands across the West, including in Montana, fell under threat. In 2015, a total of 37 individual bills were proposed in 11 Western states, all of which were aimed at taking away federal public lands and turning them over to the states where they would likely be sold off to private entities. Communities across the West, including those in Montana, made their voices heard and in 2017, pro-transfer bills were defeated at the local level. Although land transfer legislation has largely been defeated at the local level, special interests and lobbyists are pushing their agenda in Washington D.C. by convincing Eastern lawmakers from states that have few public lands that counties in Western states support the idea of transferring ownership of public lands to state and private ownership.

State trust lands are constitutionally mandated to be managed for maximum profit. If federal public lands are transferred to individual states, the lands will be managed strictly for revenue generation. Local communities throughout Montana will bear the brunt of the cost of management and fire suppression, and lose millions of dollars in federal Payments in Lieu of Tax (PILT) dollars. The public lands that Montanan's enjoy year-round for camping, fishing, hunting, and recreation will be sold off. Montana's public lands provide fish and wildlife habitat and opportunities for outdoor recreation, hunting, fishing, hiking, and camping. These activities drive tourism and bring revenue into communities and create jobs.

The idea of land transfer is short-sighted and ill-conceived and distracts from the constructive work of addressing how Montanan's should properly manage its natural resources.

As fellow Commissioners, we encourage your Commission to pass a similar Resolution supporting federal land management of local public lands and honor the dedicated federal employees who manage the public lands and wildlife in your county.

Should you have any questions, please contact our Clerk of Commission, Julie Pooley, at (406) 563-4002 or jpooley@adlc.us.

Sincerely,



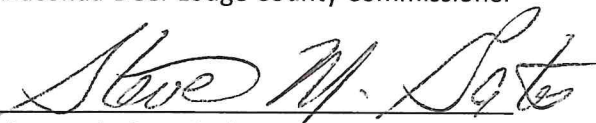
Terry Vermeire, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Commission Chairman



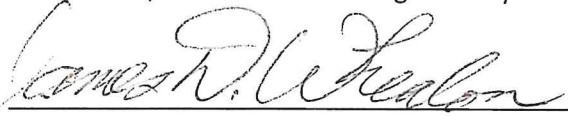
Paul Smith, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Commission Vice-Chairman



Kevin Hart, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Commissioner



Steve Gates, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Commissioner



Jim Whealon, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Commissioner