

September 16, 2013

Dear Ravalli County Commissioners:

I am writing in regard to the KBK River Property Conservation Easement. Undeveloped, Bitterroot Riverfront acreage is rare and therefore important to conserve whenever possible. The Bitterroot River is an important driver behind the tourism in our community. Many of the visitors that choose the Bitterroot Valley as their destination do so for the excellent fishing and beautiful open spaces. In placing a conservation easement on the KBK River Property, both open space along the Bitterroot River will be conserved and this land will continue to contribute to high water quality and healthy fish habitat for the Bitterroot Valley's future.

In addition to the economic component of this project, this is also critically important wildlife habitat. The diversity of habitat on the property, which includes riparian, wetlands, open meadows, and forest allows for many species to make use of it. It is winter range for both mule deer and elk, as well as frequently visited by many other species including bear, moose, whitetail deer, fox, coyote, amongst others, and a numerous diversity of bird species. I have been a flyfishing guide for over 10 years in the Bitterroot Valley and everyone on my boat comments on the beauty and wildlife along the river corridor.

I am a long time resident of Ravalli County. I was raised here and been a part of this community. I am serving my second term on the Hamilton City Council. I voted for the Open Lands Bond to see properties such as the KBK River Property conserved. With the assistance of the Open Lands Bond, this property will be conserved and wildlife habitat, important water resources, and agricultural uses will be conserved for future generations to enjoy.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jenny West

621 N. 4th

Hamilton, MT 59840

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SEP 23 2013

Ravalli County Commissioners

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