

## Chris Taggart

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**From:** Jean Steele <jeanjorgensen123@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 28, 2022 8:55 PM  
**To:** Ravalli County Commissioners Office  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Open Lands Bond Program

Gentlemen:

We wish to express our support for the Open Lands Bond Program renewal. Now, more than ever, it is a valuable tool in determining this valley's future.

Who can blame people for wanting to move here? They treasure the same things we do: a close relationship with agriculture, spectacular open space, enjoyment of wildlife, and clean waters perfect for many kinds of recreation. Ravalli County's rapid growth is understandable, but we are concerned about its potential to grow at an exponential rate, thus wiping out the very reasons people choose to live here.

Many agricultural producers love the land they work; but faced with labor shortages, spiraling costs, and escalated prices, selling the land to developers is increasingly enticing. The Open Lands Bond has been a constructive and valuable resource for farmers and ranchers in making an independent and positive choice for their property: It allows them to be compensated for the profits they might gain in selling. It is a reward and a "thank you" from the rest of us, an acknowledgement to them for wanting to continue their legacy of working lands while also protecting our love of clean water and the gorgeous viewshed.

We hope you will choose to continue the program and vote for the next Open Lands Bond.

Allan and Jean Steele

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