

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK
GOVERNOR



ANGELA McLEAN
LT. GOVERNOR

RECEIVED

DEC 30 2014

Ravalli County Commissioners

"postmarked
12/22"

December 4, 2014

Ravalli County Commissioners
215 S. 4th St.
Hamilton, MT 59840

Dear County Commissioners:

Thank you for contacting me about the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) defining "Waters of the United States" for purposes of the federal Clean Water Act.

The EPA and USACE have stated that the purpose of the proposed rule is to provide increased "clarity regarding the CWA regulatory definition" and "make the process of identifying 'waters of the United States' less complicated and more efficient." Unfortunately, the proposed rules have caused confusion and ultimately lack clarity and as a result, I believe the rules as proposed are unacceptable.

Montanans have long treasured their waters, and for good reason. In addition to providing clean water for our communities and bringing visitors from around the world to recreate, Montana's waters support key sectors of our economy like energy development and agriculture. The economic value to Montana is incalculable. Accordingly, Montana's Constitution provides strong protection for our waters and mandates a comprehensive state regulatory program to protect these natural assets for generations to come.

Montanans supports clean water and efforts to protect those waters for future generations but we have sought answers to questions about the application of the proposed rule and have been unable to get the answers we need. Montana objects to federal intrusion into matters that the state is fully capable of addressing on its own terms. I have strongly urged the EPA and USACE to work with not only the State of Montana, but also with Montana's producers and other stakeholders to address the very valid concerns that have been raised before a rule is adopted.

Thanks for contacting me and I look forward to continue working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "S. Bullock".

STEVE BULLOCK
Governor