

## **Ravalli County Commissioners**

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**From:** Robert Prince <robertwaprince@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 7, 2013 12:01 PM  
**To:** Ravalli County Commissioners  
**Subject:** Concerns about Transfer of Public Lands to the States

Dear Commissioners,

I have found the interest by the commission in taking control of our public lands to be very disappointing. I hope that this letter is one of many that will come in support of federal control of our public lands. The 1.6+ million acres of public lands in Ravalli County is a treasure, enjoyed by thousands annually.

The management of these lands is the responsibility of highly trained and skilled biologists and lands managers who have years of study and experience in how to best manage public land. If the State were to take over these lands who is going to pay for a staff of trained biologists and land managers?

According to most reputable literature I have read, a State takeover of our lands would likely be unconstitutional, illegal and ill-fated. The idea that having State control over public lands being a financial boon to the country I believe is misguided. Our public lands in their current state already generate millions of dollars of income through guiding and outfitting, lodging and tourism.

Does the State or County have the funds to properly manage our millions of acres of lands? The federal government spends hundreds of millions annually managing our lands. The State of Montana simply does not have these resources.

If the State and County were to ever takeover our public what would happen then? Would it be sold off to private interests? What kind of legacy would that leave for our children? It scares me to think that my children would not have the opportunity to enjoy the millions of acres of beautiful and wild public lands.

It is my hope that you will come to understand that the takeover of public land is not supported by the majority of citizens in our Country, State, or Nation. I think it is important to consider all the consequences of this sort of action. It is my hope that you will listen to the citizens of your county and not to the out-of-state special interest groups that support public lands takeover.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Robert Prince  
Stevensville, MT