

C A M P A I G N F O R

ACCOUNTABILITY

August 31, 2018

By Email: commissioners@rc.mt.gov

Ravalli County Commissioners
215 S 4th Street
Suite A
Hamilton, MT 59840

RECEIVED

AUG 31 2018

Ravalli County Commissioners

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Re: Montana Records Request

Reg. # 1

Dear County Commissioners:

Campaign for Accountability ("CfA") makes this request for records pursuant to MT Code Ann. § 2-6-1006. This request includes records of any kind, regardless of format, including paper records, electronic records, e-mails, text messages, audiotapes, videotapes, calendars, letters, faxes, attachments, and/or photographs.

Specifically, CfA requests access to and copies of all communications to, from, or between any Ravalli County Commissioner(s) regarding Wilderness Study Areas and/or the Our Land Our Legacy (OLOL) coalition. This request *excludes* communications that have already been posted on the Commissioners Correspondence page of the county's website.¹ This request *includes* any communications to, from, or regarding any of the following organizations and individuals as well as any communications that mention any of the organizations or individuals. This request is for records from September 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018.

Organizations

- American Lands Council
- Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
- Berman & Co.
- Center for Organizational Research and Education
- Green Decoys
- Montana Conservation Voters
- Montana Department of Justice
- Montana Environmental Information Center
- Montana Outdoors Coalition
- Montana Wilderness Association
- Montana Wildlife Federation
- Montana Mountain Mamas
- Office of the Governor
- United Property Owners of Montana

¹ See <https://ravalli.us/425/Commissioners-Correspondence>.

Individuals

Terry Anderson
Rob Arnaud
Richard Berman
Karen Budd-Falen
Steve Bullock
Will Coggin
Shelby DeMars
Chuck Denowh
Jennifer Fielder
Tim Fox
Keith Kubista
Theresa Manzella
Ed Melcher
Dave Skinner
Fred Thomas
Chas Vincent

By way of background, on September 15, 2017, Ravalli County Commissioners voted to send a letter to Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) supporting his efforts to end wilderness protections for two wilderness study areas (WSA) in Ravalli County.² The commissioners later endorsed a bill introduced by Sen. Daines, the Protect Public Use of Public Lands Act, which would remove wilderness protections for several WSAs in Montana.³ In response to the proposed rollback of WSAs, on February 5, 2018, several Montana organizations launched a campaign to protect WSAs, called the Our Land Our Legacy (“OLOL”) coalition.⁴ Following growing support for the coalition’s campaign, the County Commissioners sent two letters to state officials calling for an investigation into members of the OLOL coalition and other Montana conservation groups.⁵

CfA is a non-profit organization and seeks the requested information to inform and educate the public about how County Commissioners used public resources to respond to grassroots efforts to protect WSAs. Accordingly, because releasing the records would primarily

² Letter from Ravalli County Commissioners to U.S. Sen. Steve Daines, September 15, 2017, *available at* <https://ravalli.us/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/5459>; Eve Byron, *Ravalli County Commission to Hold Second Hearing Regarding Wilderness Letter to Daines Ravalli Republic*, January 31, 2018, *available at* https://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article_d2629e75-bdd2-54e0-a63c-2f01f32a3926.html.

³ Protect Public Use of Public Lands Act, S.2206 , 115th Congress, December 7, 2017, *available at* <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2206/>; Rob Chaney, *Daines Bill Would Release Wilderness Study Areas for Other Uses*, *Missoulian*, December 8, 2017, *available at* https://missoulian.com/news/national/govt-and-politics/daines-bill-would-release-wilderness-study-areas-for-other-uses/article_8db30111-c9a1-5061-ac18-efc52322b8ed.html.

⁴ *Campaign Launched for Montana Wilderness Study Areas*, *Associated Press*, February 5, 2018, *available at* <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/montana/articles/2018-02-05/campaign-launched-for-montana-wilderness-study-areas>.

⁵ Letter from Ravalli County Commissioners to Montana Attorney General Tim Fox, August 1, 2018, *available at* <https://ravalli.us/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/5971>. Perry Backus, *Ravalli County Commission Asks Governor to Investigate Donations to Conservation Groups*, *Ravalli Republic*, August 29, 2018, *available at* https://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article_fef9fa67-f091-5c68-bd9a-745bb4a51faf.html.

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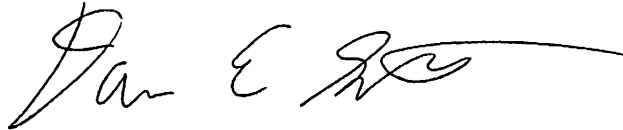
benefit the public, and agencies are not required to charge fees, CfA requests the records be provided without charge. *See* MT Code Ann. § 2-6-1006(3). If you decline our request for a fee waiver, please provide a fee estimate pursuant to MT Code Ann. § 2-6-1006(2)(b), and I will submit payment promptly.

If possible, CfA would prefer to receive this information electronically via e-mail at dstevens@campaignforaccountability.org. If the documents are to be mailed, please send them to Daniel Stevens, Campaign for Accountability, 611 Pennsylvania Ave SE, #337, Washington D.C. 20003.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact me at 202-780-5750 or by email at the address listed above. If CfA's request is denied in whole or part, please justify all withholdings by reference to specific exemptions of the Act.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan E Stevens", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Daniel E. Stevens
Executive Director

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August 31, 2018

By Email: commissioners@rc.mt.gov

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Ravalli County Commissioners

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Re: Montana Records Request

Req #2

Dear County Commissioners:

Campaign for Accountability ("CfA") makes this request for records pursuant to MT Code Ann. § 2-6-1006. This request includes records of any kind, regardless of format, including paper records, electronic records, e-mails, text messages, audiotapes, videotapes, calendars, letters, faxes, attachments, and/or photographs.

Specifically, CfA requests access to and copies of all communications to, from, or between any Ravalli County Commissioner(s) regarding commissioners' efforts to cajole state officials into investigating Montana conservation organizations. This request *excludes* communications that have already been posted on the Commissioners Correspondence page of the county's website.¹ This request *includes* any communications to, from, or regarding any of the following organizations and individuals as well as any communications that mention any of the organizations or individuals. This request is for records from July 1, 2018 to the date the search is conducted.

Organizations

American Lands Council
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Berman & Co.
Center for Organizational Research and Education
Green Decoys
Montana Conservation Voters
Montana Department of Justice
Montana Environmental Information Center
Montana Outdoors Coalition
Montana Wilderness Association
Montana Wildlife Federation
Montana Mountain Mamas
Office of the Governor

¹ See <https://ravalli.us/425/Commissioners-Correspondence>.

United Property Owners of Montana

Individuals

Terry Anderson
Rob Arnaud
Richard Berman
Karen Budd-Falen
Steve Bullock
Will Coggin
Shelby DeMars
Chuck Denowh
Jennifer Fielder
Tim Fox
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Theresa Manzella
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By way of background, on September 15, 2017, Ravalli County Commissioners voted to send a letter to Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) supporting his efforts to end wilderness protections for two wilderness study areas (WSA) in Ravalli County.² The commissioners later endorsed a bill introduced by Sen. Daines, the Protect Public Use of Public Lands Act, which would remove wilderness protections for several WSAs in Montana.³ In response to the proposed rollback of WSAs, on February 5, 2018, several Montana organizations launched a campaign to protect WSAs, called the Our Land Our Legacy (“OLOL”) coalition.⁴ Following growing support for the coalition’s campaign, on August 1, 2018, County Commissioners sent a letter to Attorney General Tim Fox requesting he open an investigation into seven Montana conservation groups.⁵ On August 27, 2018, County Commissioners sent a another letter aimed at the conservation to

² Letter from Ravalli County Commissioners to U.S. Sen. Steve Daines, September 15, 2017, *available at* <https://ravalli.us/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/5459>; Eve Byron, *Ravalli County Commission to Hold Second Hearing Regarding Wilderness Letter to Daines Ravalli Republic*, January 31, 2018, *available at* https://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article_d2629e75-bdd2-54e0-a63c-2f01f32a3926.html.

³ Protect Public Use of Public Lands Act, S.2206 , 115th Congress, December 7, 2017, *available at* <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2206/>; Rob Chaney, *Daines Bill Would Release Wilderness Study Ares for Other Uses, Missoulian*, December 8, 2017, *available at* https://missoulian.com/news/national/govt-and-politics/daines-bill-would-release-wilderness-study-areas-for-other-uses/article_8db30111-c9a1-5061-ac18-efc52322b8ed.html.

⁴ *Campaign Launched for Montana Wilderness Study Areas, Associated Press*, February 5, 2018, *available at* <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/montana/articles/2018-02-05/campaign-launched-for-montana-wilderness-study-areas>.

⁵ Letter from Ravalli County Commissioners to Montana Attorney General Tim Fox, August 1, 2018, *available at* <https://ravalli.us/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/5971>.

groups to Gov. Steve Bullock requesting that he “require all organizations doing business with the State of Montana to disclose dark money spending.”⁶

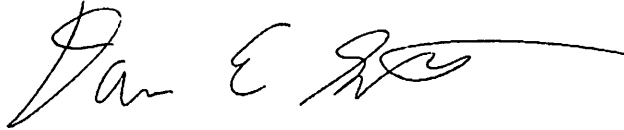
CfA is a non-profit organization and seeks the requested information to inform and educate the public about how County Commissioners have used public resources to respond to a grassroots effort to protect WSAs. Accordingly, because releasing the records would primarily benefit the public, and agencies are not required to charge fees, CfA requests the records be provided without charge. *See* MT Code Ann. § 2-6-1006(3). If you decline our request for a fee waiver, please provide a fee estimate pursuant to MT Code Ann. § 2-6-1006(2)(b), and I will submit payment promptly.

If possible, CfA would prefer to receive this information electronically via e-mail at dstevens@campaignforaccountability.org. If the documents are to be mailed, please send them to Daniel Stevens, Campaign for Accountability, 611 Pennsylvania Ave SE, #337, Washington D.C. 20003.

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Sincerely,

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Daniel E. Stevens
Executive Director

⁶ Perry Backus, [Ravalli County Commission Asks Governor to Investigate Donations to Conservation Groups](https://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article_fef9fa67-f091-5c68-bd9a-745bb4a51faf.html), *Ravalli Republic*, August 29, 2018, available at https://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article_fef9fa67-f091-5c68-bd9a-745bb4a51faf.html.