

April 10, 2009

Honorable Senator Max Baucus
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Senator Jon Tester
204 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Rep. Denny Rehberg
516 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baucus, Senator Tester, and Representative Rehberg:

On March 5, 2009, you received a letter from 14 distinguished Montanans requesting that you take action to establish new wilderness areas across Montana in order to protect our national heritage of Wilderness for future generations. We write you today in full support of that previous letter, its authors and the Montana wildlands they spoke for so clearly.

As co-signers of this letter we wish to speak with one voice in support of wildlands as yet unprotected that extend across northwest Montana. These include the Scotchman Peaks, the Great Burn, Cube Iron, La Beau, the Swan Crest and Swan Front, Ten Lakes, Whitefish Range, and additions to the Cabinet Mountain and Mission Mountain wildernesses. We also recognize that many other wildlands across Montana not mentioned here deserve wilderness protections.

Montana's Congressional delegation last passed wilderness legislation for Montana 26 years ago in 1983. Since that time, the remaining roadless public lands in the state that deserve wilderness protection have been variously protected, degraded or lost altogether. Montanans have consistently favored protection of roadless lands (as comments on the Roadless Rule so clearly show) and what better time to legislate these areas as Wilderness than now?

Establishing new wilderness areas under the National Wilderness Preservation System requires vision, decisive action and a willingness to recognize the inherent value of land in its natural state. It also requires that we, as the present stewards of the land, pass to future generations the ability to enjoy the 'American Heritage of Wilderness'. We ask that you support this – our vision – of wilderness.

Inevitably, the value of our wildlands grows more priceless – like any resource in short supply – with each passing year. We believe in a bright and prosperous future. We firmly believe that Montana's economic and cultural future requires that we protect our remaining wildlands.

Please commit yourself to finishing the business of protecting Montana's wilderness heritage.

Respectfully,

Edwin Fields
Building Contractor, Whitefish

Dr. Loren Kreck
Retired Dentist, Columbia Falls

George Darrow
Former State Senator, Bigfork

Dr. Ron Miller
MD, Whitefish

Doug Ferrell
Building Contractor, Trout Creek

Mike McGrew
Millworker, Condon

Prof. Lex Blood
Educator and Geologist, Kalispell

Dan Weinberg
Former MT State Senator, Whitefish

Mark L. Sheets
City Councilman, Thompson Falls

Carol Blake
Realtor, Eureka

Tom Esch
Attorney, Kalispell

Kris Kindberg
Medical Transcriptionist, Eureka

Wendy Ninteman
Conservation Executive, Missoula

Greg Tollefson
Free Lance Writer, Missoula

Tom Giles
Developer, Lindbergh Lake

Rev. Bradley Wirth
Episcopal Minister, Bigfork

Elaine Snyder
Buckskin Clothier, Kalispell

John Phelps
Attorney, Whitefish

Steven W. Running
Regents Professor of Ecology, Univ. Montana

Peter Leander
Attorney, Bigfork

Prof. Jack Stanford
Flathead Lake Biological Station, Yellow Bay

Terri N. Trieweiler
Attorney, Whitefish

Dana Christensen
Attorney, Kalispell