

COMMISSIONERS APPROVAL

IMAN 

CHILCOTT 

FOSS 

KANENWISHER 

STOLTZ 

PLETTENBERG (Clerk & Recorder)

Members Present.....Commissioner J.R. Iman, Commissioner Greg Chilcott, Commissioner Suzy Foss, Commissioner Matt Kanenwisher and Commissioner Ron Stoltz

Date.....August 11, 2011

► Minutes: Beth Perkins

► The Board met for to appoint members to the Sula TV District Board of Trustees at 9:00 a.m. Present was Administrative Assistant Glenda Wiles. Commissioner Iman and Commissioner Kanenwisher were not present for this meeting due to another scheduled item.

Commissioner Stoltz made a motion to appoint Kenneth Noxell with term ending July 31, 2012; Martin Smith with term ending July 31, 2013; and Bob Wetzsteon with term ending July 31, 2014. Commissioner Foss seconded the motion and all voted "aye". (3-0)

► The Board met for the following administrative matters:

- Jeff Minckler Contract: Commissioner Foss made a motion to approve the Minckler Contract with term date of June 30, 2012. Commissioner Stoltz seconded the motion and all voted 'aye'. (3-0)
- Commissioner Kanenwisher joined the meeting at this time.
- DEQ Financial Agreement with Airport: Commissioner Stoltz made a motion to execute and pay the water discharge permit with DEQ for the Airport for \$1,800. Commissioner Foss seconded the motion and all voted "aye". (4-0)
- Specialty Excavating: Commissioner Stoltz made a motion to issue the notice to proceed for the Corvallis CTEP project. Commissioner Kanenwisher seconded the motion and all voted "aye". (4-0)
- West House Construction: Glenda discussed a letter of credit issued by Rocky Mountain Bank with the original missing. The bank requested a statement letter to release the letter of credit. The Board directed Glenda to draft a letter stating there isn't an original and will release the letter of credit when the original is received and obtain language from Civil Counsel.
- Commissioner Iman joined the meeting at this time.
- Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to approve the letter with Chair signature. Commissioner Foss seconded the motion and all voted "aye". (5-0)

- Commissioner Kanenwisher gave a report to the Board regarding yesterday's Board of Health motion regarding the Hayes Creek complaint.

► The Board met for a public hearing to adopt the amended Subdivision Regulations at 10:00 a.m. Present were Planning Director Terry Nelson, Planner Tristan Riddell, Jimmy Canton, William Menager, Penney Howe, Chip Pigman, Maggie Wright, Lee Tickell, Mary Barton, Bitterroot Star Reporter Michael Howell and several other citizens.

Commissioner Iman opened the public hearing and requested any conflicts of interest be disclosed. Hearing none, he then requested confirmation of publication. Tristan Riddell confirmed legal notice in paper of record on July 13<sup>th</sup>.

Tristan Riddell gave an update of the previous workshops to review the Subdivision Regulations chapter by chapter and incorporate the amendments to fit development seen in Ravalli County. There were a couple of sections with comment that need to be finalized for a completed draft to be reviewed by legal counsel. The Board concurred to review by chapter. Public comment will be available at the end of each chapter.

### **Chapter 1 – General Provisions**

**Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to change 1-10 (B) in Chapter 1 for the timeline adding “of the written preliminary plat decision”. Commissioner Stoltz seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (5-0)**

Commissioner Iman opened public comment for Chapter 1.

Penny Howe stated on the original regulations it states “or final subdivision plat” for 1-10 (B). She expressed her concern for an appeal only on a preliminary plat after denial. Commissioner Chilcott stated it does provide the mechanism for two decisions. Discussion followed regarding when a denial would happen after preliminary plat approval.

**Commissioner Chilcott made a motion to reconsider the previous motion made. Commissioner Iman seconded the motion. Discussion:** Commissioner Kanenwisher discussed final plats with multiple phases that could have multiple appeals. **Commissioner Chilcott, Commissioner Iman and Commissioner Foss voted “aye”. Commissioner Kanenwisher and Commissioner Stoltz voted “nay”. Motion carried. (3-2)**

Commissioner Iman closed public comment on Chapter 1.

### **Chapter 2 – All Subdivisions – Preliminary Application & Review Procedures**

**Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to add “working” after 30 days to Chapter 2 Section 2-4 (D). Commissioner Stoltz seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (5-0)**

Penney Howe questioned if this section is according to MCA or not. Tristan stated “30 working days” is in the MCA.

Commissioner Iman closed public comment on Chapter 2.

### **Chapter 3 – Major Subdivisions – Review Procedures**

Commissioner Kanenwisher discussed changing the first criterion to Agricultural Operations instead of Agriculture. Chapter 3 Section 7 Subsection (B) (5). Staff made the recommendation to keep it as Agriculture as written by law. Commissioner Kanenwisher discussed the developer needing to defend the loss of agricultural land with the Board. Commissioner Foss questioned the original intent and the need for it to be clarified. She supports the change. Commissioner Chilcott stated this has been an issue for years. This proposed language has been legally reviewed and has less room for challenge. Commissioner Iman stated the other side should be considered in agricultural operations. It should be both Agriculture and Agricultural Operations. Board discussion followed regarding the use of property and impacts. The Board concurred to not change the draft.

Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to replace the word “shall” with “may” in the last sentence and strike the rest in Chapter 3-16. Phasing Section A-2. Commissioner Foss seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (5-0)

Paul Forsting questioned the phasing process for subdivisions and stated other counties do not limited phasing to major subdivisions. **Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion change Chapter 3-16 Section A third sentence to strike the words “for major subdivisions only”. Commissioner Stoltz seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (5-0)**

Commissioner Iman closed public comment on Chapter 3.

► The Board recessed for five minutes at 10:55 a.m. The Board reconvened at 11:00 a.m.

### **Chapter 4 – Minor Subdivisions – Review Procedures**

Tristan will change all references to Criterion 1: Effects on Agriculture to Adjacent Agricultural Operations and add Section 3-16 language to replacing the term “major” with “minor” and add as Section 4-14.

Commissioner Iman opened public comment. Hearing none then closed public comment on Chapter 4.

### **Chapter 5 – Subdivisions for Lease or Rent**

Commissioner Kanenwisher stated there were multiple comments regarding this chapter and definitions. He discussed how the law prohibits building something and then leasing it without going through the subdivision process. The question is how someone can build a structure and comply with the law. Tristan replied there is a form/affidavit for multiple structure exception that the applicant can file. Commissioner Kanenwisher suggested changing the title of Chapter 5 Section 4 to “Multiple Structures”. Discussion followed regarding septic for multiple structures.

**Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to change Chapter 5-4 title of “Wastewater Exception” to “Multiple Structures Exception”; 5-4-A - Applicability: multiple structures will not be considered as subdivisions for lease or rent if no structure will be sold, rented,**

**leased or otherwise conveyed without full subdivision review. 5-4-B – Application: Applicants shall submit to the Planning Department, a completed and signed multiple structures exception application which is available from the Planning Department. A multiple structures agreement shall be filed with Clerk & Recorder in order to construct multiple structures; 5-4-C – Standards: replace “multiple structures” with “additional structures with sanitation facilities (septic)”. “There may be no more than two dwelling units located on the subject property.” Commissioner Foss seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (5-0)**

Commissioner Iman opened public comment for Chapter 5.

Penny Howe asked if she has a piece of property that she can't build a duplex or triplex. Commissioner Chilcott replied a dwelling unit with multiple units is accepted.

Jimmy Canton questioned with the two dwelling units, what if a married couple have two parents of each needing care. He suggested leaving the word “two” out.

Michael Howell stated this topic has been an issue for years. There are different intents of what the rules are really about. If someone fills out a form to build a unit and then things change, is there a provision provided to go through the subdivision process for sale. There wouldn't be impacts since someone is already living there. He questioned the septic portion as well. This is very confusing.

Lora Harris is currently looking at buying property with an existing house and shop with living quarters. The person who owned it did not go through the permit process. What would she have to do to make it legal for caretaker quarters for agricultural operations? Terry replied it is a matter of interpretation of the law after 2002 and a wastewater review should have taken place. 2004 is the key year.

Commissioner Iman closed public comment for Chapter 5.

### **Chapter 6 – Campgrounds, Mobile Home Parks, and RV Parks**

Commissioner Iman opened public comment for Chapter 6. Hearing none then closed public comment for Chapter 6.

### **Chapter 7 – Revocation of Agricultural Covenants**

Commissioner Iman opened public comment for Chapter 7. Hearing none then closed public comment for Chapter 7.

### **Chapter 8 – Condominiums and Townhomes**

Commissioner Iman opened public comment for Chapter 8. Hearing none then closed public comment for Chapter 8.

### **Chapter 9 – Community Amenity and Conservation Subdivisions**

This Chapter will be removed and the remaining chapters to be renumbered accordingly. Commissioner Iman opened public comment for Chapter 9. Hearing none then closed public comment for Chapter 9.

### **Chapter 10 – All Subdivisions – Amended Applications**

Commissioner Iman opened public comment for Chapter 10. Hearing none then closed public comment for Chapter 10.

### **Chapter 11 – All Subdivisions – Final Plat Application and Review Procedures**

Commissioner Iman opened public comment for Chapter 11. Hearing none then closed public comment for Chapter 11.

### **Chapter 12 – Divisions of Land Exempt from Subdivision Review**

**Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to strike 12-3-A last underlined sentence in last stand alone paragraph. Commissioner Stoltz seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (5-0)**

► **Commissioner Foss left the hearing at this time due to another scheduled matter.**

**Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to strike the first sentence of 12-5-B1. Commissioner Chilcott seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (4-0)**

**Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to strike 12-5-2 and 12-5-3 and the first sentence of 12-5-4. Commissioner Stoltz seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (4-0)**

**Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to amend 12-5-C 1.c. to change the number two paper copies to one paper copy. Commissioner Stoltz seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (4-0)**

Commissioner Iman opened public comment for Chapter 12.

Penny Howe questioned 12-5-B-1 being removed specifically allowing public comment. Commissioner Kanenwisher

Commissioner Iman closed public comment for Chapter 12.

**Commissioner Chilcott made a motion to continue until Monday August 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Stoltz seconded the motion and all voted “aye”. (4-0)**

► **The Board met to hear a presentation from Julie Foster regarding micro loan funds at 1:30 p.m.**

► **The Board met with Keith Kubista regarding wolves at 1:50 p.m. Present were Maggie Wright, Lee Tickell, Jimmy Canton, Gene Williams, Bitterroot Star Reporter Michael Howell, KECI Reporter Kevin Maki and numerous citizens.**

Keith presented the Board with written comment regarding the impact of wolves in Ravalli County. (See Attached)

Commissioner Iman opened public comment. All written comments will be attached to the minutes for record\*

Scott Belanger, an outfitter from Darby, discussed the impact of wolves on his life. He expressed his concern with his children on trails. He has five overnight camps spread out over 4 miles. FWP has put the West Fork on limit permits for bull elk. This eliminates the chances of his clients getting a permit and suffers a loss to his business because of the limited permitting. His industry is hurting. He read his written comment to the Board\*.

Judy Kline read her written comment to the Board\*. She expressed her concern with two whitetail deer kills in her front yard by wolves.

Tex Irwin read his written comment to the Board\*. He commented on how bad the hunting has become due to the wolves reducing the elk herds.

Jerry Dicken read his written comment to the Board.\*

Elijah Hansen, 4<sup>th</sup> generation Bitterrooter, has not been able to take his 13 year old son into the woods for elk hunting due to the wolves. That meat in the freezer is a supplement to his income and now it is not there. He requested the Board take into consideration the impact to the people if this valley.

Rod Knutson lives on the valley floor in Stevensville. This year he constructed a DOT (8 foot tall) fence for his hay production. His hay production is down to 941 bails. It shows how much livestock has feed off of his hay due to being pushed down from the mountains by wolves.

Carla McDonald lives on Ambrose Creek Road for 20 years. She didn't think much of the wolves until they were in her yard. When the elk came down, they were silent and no bugling. If you go into the Sapphires, it is silent. There is no game or birds. There are 18 wolves between her house and the highway. She discussed the reproduction rate of the wolves and expressed her concern with the massive reduction in wildlife/game due to the wolves.

Chet Lutz, RMEF, he hunts and fishes in the valley. RMEF has worked hard to bring the elk population back and would appreciate anything the Commissioners can do to help that effort. He encouraged the Board to manage the wolf population.

Ed Cummings lives 23 miles north of Stevensville on the west side. He had a pack of wolves that each year, denned just above his ranch in a road less area. While they denned, they lost between 12-20 calves. There have been some environmental changes such as the Kootenai Creek fire which burned the den out. A nearby ranch developed a sanctuary for wildlife. He has dumping on his property and due to the wolf's sense of smell being keen; he has to bury animals immediately. He is changing his fences from wildlife friendly to non-wildlife friendly to keep the elk off his property in order to keep the wolves off of his property. The government has killed wolves also but historically the way to control wolves is to use poison and he does not want to see that happen again. He requested the Board give rifle hunting for wolves a chance.

Mike Hansen, a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Bitterrooter, stated the government has given regulations for protection. They make people culpable for those regulations not being followed. He asked when a child gets killed by a wolf, who is going to be culpable – the government. He begged the Commissioners to do something before a child gets hurt or killed.

Paul Shirley, owner of Two Feathers, and counted 64 elk in his field. That is down from 150 in past years. His operation is to breed black angus cattle and they are in the same field as the elk. He lost one of his horses, Jack, on May 17<sup>th</sup> by wolves and was confirmed by FWP. Wolves kill indiscriminately and create damage including emotional damage. He hopes the Commissioners will do what they can to control the wolves.

Brian Davis read written comment to the Board.\*

Larry Trexler sits on the Wolf Depredation Board for the State. He explained the elk herds having calves in open fields and not higher up in the hills due to wolves. FWP took away extra flying funds for wildlife services to investigate the wolves. Any investigation has to be done by foot. He asked if the Board has any “push” for those funds to be returned and if so, to please do something. FWP needs to fix the problems they have created with the reintroduction of wolves. Please control the wolves.

Bill LaCroix, from Victor, came to this meeting expecting it to start at 2:00 p.m. and it started earlier. He read his written comment\*. He has seen wolf tracks and would like to see them hunted since they are so close to populated areas.

Dalton Christopherson’s family has been ranching for over 100 years. He has two wolf kills confirmed. He has lost a lot of cattle due to wolves. The calves have been consistently lighter in weight due to the wolves keeping them on the run. It is a huge economic hit for his ranch. The elk herd numbers are down.

Niki Sardot, owns land in Ravalli County, and raises long horn cattle. She had two wolves cornering her cattle and took a couple of shots at them. So far, no animals have been killed but they are being terrorized by the wolves.

Jeff Snavelly works on the CB Ranch in Darby and has lost a cattle dog and a calf to wolves confirmed. He has lost calves in the past but could not confirm them as wolf kills. The ranch paid \$4,100 to fly these wolves out of the county. These wolves are affecting everyone.

K.C. York majored in psychology and wildlife behavior. She does not understand the purpose of this meeting because the wolves are going to be hunted. She is not hearing that the elk population is up this year. She is aware of people putting out feed for deer and it attracts bear and wolves. There is going to be an impact. She discussed the movement of the wolves and elk. If the wolves are diminishing the elk then their population will reduce also. She discussed other reasons of why the elk calves are diminishing.

Mark Cooke urged the Commissioners to let FWP go about their hunt. He discussed hunting district 250 and how the elf population was to be studied. This encouraged overhunting in this district. FWP is using the wolf as a scapegoat. When the reintroduction of the wolf happened, the elk herds were reduced. He requested the Commissioners to hold off on doing anything.

Steve Wilson discussed outfitters and the harvesting of mountain lions compared to wolves. He stated 22 of 66 elk calves are already gone due to the lions, not including wolves. He requested changing the lion season to both quota and permits. It has an economic impact to businesses.

Carla McDonald added to her public comment and requested having this meeting at night for people who work. 95% of wolves will make harvesting of huckleberries difficult. She was told by FWP that young lions are starving due to the wolves.

Edie Kubista lives on South Kootenai Road and has wolves. She came here 12 years ago and likes to walk and let her dogs run. She cannot allow her dogs to run anymore due to the wolves. She is not afraid of bear, lion or wild turkeys but is afraid of the wolves. This is effecting private people who have never has to pick up a gun in their lives.

Dave Taylor owns a cabin in the West Fork, commented on the article in the Missoulian that sighted a study for elk calves. There was one case in the study for wolf kill. People want to target the wolf due to the reintroduction but you have to look at other predators such as mountain lion. His dog was shot at because it looked like a wolf missing him and his wife on their own land. He urged using caution.

Rod Knutson stated wildlife in Montana is big business and it is about time Montana manages its own business.

Gene Williams gave his observation of the different views given on this subject. Studies turn up for political purposes and is leery of studies that turn up confirming one side of an issue entirely. The ecosystem needs predators, people are predators and families are feed by hunters. Wolves are killers and have decimated elk herds.

Steve Wilson addressed FWP's three year study for elk and out of 66 calves, 22 calves were lost. This loss was due to bear, lion and wolves. This study can solve who does the eating and when.

Tex Marseille has heard from several people who both like wolves and don't. If 30 breeding pairs of wolves were reintroduced, there wouldn't be this problem. The environmentalist said this was not enough and increased the breeding pairs. If the number of 30 is kept, there would be a healthy elk population. It took a long time for RMEF to take a stand on the wolves. Wolves need to be managed.

Jack Fowle sets on the elk working group committee and is working on the hay loss from elk. He does not know how these people can stay in business with their feed and hay loss due to the elk coming down from the mountains. These elk would rather be bothered by humans than the wolves. The elk are now calving below the Big Ditch because they know they are not safe up there.

Leroy Berry stated this is matter of safety. If humans were stealing cattle and harassing others, they would be put in jail. We need to figure out a way to get out and take care of this issue.

Eli Hansen stated he is an animal lover but does not like the dissemination of elk. The Commissioners could give every person in the valley a gun to go shoot wolves and not all of the wolves would be shot. Wolves do not belong in people's yards.

**Commissioner Kanenwisher made a motion to close public comment. Commissioner Stoltz seconded the motion.** Discussion: Commissioner Iman stated at the County level there is not much that can be done for change but can be an advocate for change. Commissioner Foss stated there is opportunity for this Board to do research and if there is an opportunity for change, it will be looked into. Commissioner Kanenwisher doesn't know what can or cannot be done, but it will be investigated. He thanked the business owners and ranchers for showing up knowing this is their busy time of the year. Commissioner Chilcott is not sure what the Board is being asked to do. He discussed Resolution No. 2565 invoking the 10 (j) rule. This Board is willing to do the work to get something done regarding wolves and come up with some solutions. Commissioner Stoltz will do whatever he can do to resolve this issue. Commissioner Kanenwisher stated this agenda item is not scheduled for action. The next step is data gathering, and then the County would have to create some kind of policy for predator control. Commissioner Foss requested the research be done and more citizen input for a solution. Commissioner Iman requested factual accounts of wolf encounters and not emotion or hearsay. There have been many comments submitted based on facts.

Commissioner Iman requested any comments not otherwise on the agenda.

Kelsey Milner commented on the decision of the suspension of video streaming for the County. He asked if there has been some movement regarding the policy. Commissioner Chilcott replied the I.T. Director is currently out on maternity leave and once he returns, it can be discussed.

Steve Wilson asked if Palmer Road is a county road and if it is it needs to be fixed.

Commissioner Iman closed comments and adjourned the meeting.

SIGN IN SHEET - COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM

**\*\*PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME LEGIBLY\*\***

THANK YOU!

DATE: 8/11/11

MEETING: Wolves

Judy Kline

KEITH KUBISTA

Craig Mestimen

Lu Taylor

Leroy Barry

Gene Williams

Connie Barry

Leroy Barry

Niki SARDOT RED Quill  
RANCH

Steve Wilson

Toby BRIDGES

PAUL SHIRLEY

DALE SIMMONS

Vito Ciliberti

TEX IRWIN

Jerry Dicken

Carla McDonald

TEX MARSOLEK

ELI HANSEN

MARC COOKE

Patricia Carl

Penny Howe

Dalton Christopherson

Scott Boulanger

Gary Cargile

BRIAN DAVIS

SIGN IN SHEET – COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM

**\*\*PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME LEGIBLY\*\***

THANK YOU!

DATE: 8/11/11

MEETING: COMMISSIONERS TO MEET WITH TIM PEARSON  
REGARDING WOLVES"

BILL LA BROIX \_\_\_\_\_

Jourdonna's, Craig \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **BCC WOLF DISCUSSION 8-11-2011**

THE CITIZENS OF RAVALLI COUNTY NEED YOUR HELP. INDIVIDUAL AND LOCAL INTERESTS HAVE BEEN SACRIFICED TO THE WOLF INTRODUCTION.

THE GROWING AMOUNT OF WOLF CAUSED NEGATIVE EFFECTS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACTING THE COUNTY'S ECONOMIC STABILITY, CUSTOMS AND CULTURE, AND OUR HISTORIC USES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY.

FOR EXAMPLE, OUR HUNTING INDUSTRY, THE FAMILIES AND EMPLOYEES OF OUTFITTERS, GUIDES, TAXIDERMISTS, MEAT PROCESSORS, LODGING OWNERS, RESTURANTS, AND OTHER SECONDARY BUSINESSES RELIANT ON RESIDENT & NON-RESIDENT HUNTERS ARE BEING HIT THE HARDEST DUE TO EXCESSIVE WOLF PREDATION.

HERE IN THE BITTERROOT WE USED TO HAVE SOME OF THE BEST ELK HUNTING IN THE COUNTRY, HOWEVER DUE TO WOLVES THAT IS NO LONGER THE CASE.

THE FACTS CONTAINED IN THE FWP 10 J PROPOSAL CONFIRM THAT WOLF PREDATION IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE ELK HERD DECLINE.

THE DEER AND MOOSE HERDS HAVE SEEN SIMILAR DECLINES AND HUNTING OPPORTUNITY FOR THOSE SPECIES HAS ALSO BEEN SEVERELY LIMITED.

FAMILIES WHO RELY ON SUSTAINABLE HARVEST OF ELK, DEER, AND MOOSE TO HELP FEED THEIR FAMILIES ARE INCREASINGLY LOOSING THIS IMPORTANT RESOURCE.

WITH REGARD TO WOLVES AFFECTING LIVESTOCK AND AGRICULTURE, WE ARE SEEING SPIRALING DEPREDATION AND WILDLIFE BEHAVIOR CHANGES RESULTING IN UNACCEPTABLE CONSEQUENCES.

ELK IN PARTICULAR ARE DAMAGING CROPS, BREAKING FENCES, AND EATING HAYSTACKS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY IN PLACES WHERE THEY HAVE NEVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE.

EVEN MORE TROUBLING RANCHERS, FARMERS, AND LIVESTOCK OWNERS CONTINUE TO BEAR THE SUBSTANTIAL BURDEN OF FEEDING HUNGRY WOLVES WITH THE LIVES OF THEIR DOMESTIC STOCK AS THEY STRUGGLE TO PROTECT THEIR OWN ANIMALS, AND FEED THIS COUNTY, AND OUR COUNTRY.

2 COMMENTS BY FWP OFFICIALS SUPPORT THESE CONDITIONS:

“ELK WOULD RATHER TAKE THE STRESS AND INCONVENIENCE OF BEING AROUND PEOPLE OVER BEING IN A PLACE WHERE THEY ARE CHASED, HARASSED, OR EATEN.” AND “GIVEN THE NUMBER OF WOLVES ON THE LANDSCAPE, THERE ARE GOING TO BE SOME CONFLICTS. A GOOD SHARE OF THE CONFLICTS WE HAVE THIS YEAR ARE IN THE BITTERROOT.”

WE NEED MORE THAN THE HEAVILY RESTRICTED WOLF HUNT THAT HAS TEMPORARILY SURVIVED THE ENDLESS LITIGATION BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS.

IT IS CRUCIAL THAT YOU DEVELOP A POLICY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF LARGE PREDATORS OR ANOTHER MECHANISM TO PROTECT THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT INCLUDING THE TAX BASE, CUSTOMS, CULTURE, HISTORY, HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF THE CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTY.

**KEITH KUBISTA**

**STEVENSVILLE**



August 11, 2011

To The Ravalli County Commissioners

RE: Wolf impacts

The biggest impact the wolf has had on my life has been ECONOMIC as well as other impacts. i.e. grazing my stock, running my hounds, having my pets on the trail rides, anxiety for my wife and children when they recreate outdoors without me, etc.

I am an Outfitter on the Bitterroot National Forest. In 1998 I bought my business that is based out of the Piquett Creek drainage in the West Fork of the Bitterroots. 100% of my income was derived from Elk and Deer hunting in the West Fork. I would regularly service approx 50 clients a year. I have 5 overnight camps that are spread out over 40 square miles.

In the past 5 years there has been a decrease in the elk herd of close to 70% in my operating area. The Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks has put the West Fork hunting unit on a LIMITED PERMIT drawing for Bull elk. With only 25 permits, no more than 10% of those permits can go to Non-residents. The limited permits virtually eliminate my clients from getting a chance to hunt in unit 250. Because the Mule Deer population has fallen to 3 bucks per hundred does, they are also on a limited permit. You get the picture!

Besides losing the annual income from Deer and Elk hunting in unit 250 I am also suffering with the loss of the value of my Outfitting business. I have invested over \$200,000 hard earned dollars into my business and from no fault of my own that business is now worth virtually nothing more than the value of the livestock and equipment. Some of you may know that last month in Darby, there was a big Outfitter Auction. The auction

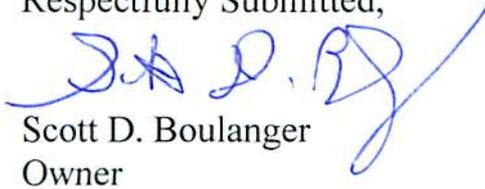
consisted of Livestock, equipment, and an Outfitting business, Indian Summer Outfitters. They are my neighboring Outfitter. When it came time to sell the business part of the auction, the auctioneer could not even get an opening bid of \$2,500.00. This is a business that sold 6 years ago for close to \$100,000. I feel mine business is in the exact same position.

When I bought my business in 1998 we didn't have any wolves in the West Fork. I knew there was the possibility that they would someday be part of the landscape. I did my due diligence and was assured by the Federal Government at the US Fish and Wildlife service as well as the Official Wolf EIS that wolves would never be allowed to have a negative effect on ungulate populations so I went ahead and bought my business. I guess the Government was either Lying to me or wrong because the wolves are having a terrible impact to the ungulate population. No Game equals NO clients equals NO INCOME.

The long term affects are going to linger for a long time even IF we ever do get the wolf populations under control. The national Hunting media, I.E. Outdoor Life, Field and Stream, Petersons Hunting, have labeled The Bitterroot Valley as "Ground Zero" for wolf populations and specifically labeled the West Fork as one of the worse "Predator Pits" in the United States. Beside the wolves, the lions and bears populations are thriving also.

Myself and my Industry are hurting and I hope you can help in fixing this terrible situation. What a shame to see the last 70 years of wildlife conservation end up in a pile of Wolf Scat. I appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Respectfully Submitted,



Scott D. Boulanger  
Owner

Tom Powers  
8/11/11

Dear Ravalli County Commisioners,

When you think about Grey Wolves, think about what (Ed Bangs) retired U.S.F.W.S (Wolf Coordinator) has said about them. "Wolves tend to create more problems than they solve." The top prime example is of course Yellowstone Park. Prior to the release of the grey wolf in the Park our Elk Herd was around 19,000 Elk. All other predators being present, Mt lions, Grizzly Bears, Black Bears, Coyotes. Now just fast forward from 1995 to 2011. This Elk herd has dropped to around 4,000 elk. This severe drop in numbers has caused all the late season hunts to be cancelled. Put most of the Outfitters out of business and the few that have survived are doing business on a much smaller scale during the regular hunting season. This has caused other problems for all the local business folks in the form of lost revenue that all the hunters have brought with them.

Fast forward to Ravalli County 2011. Our West Fork Elk herd has gone from nearly 2000 elk in 2005 to some 750 elk now. The bull to cow ratio is so low roughly 4 bulls per 100 cows that we had to go to a permit system with only 25 Elk tags for bulls being issued this year. With the 5-6 packs of wolves going unchecked in this unit and (NO DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK) present they have done the same thing that they did in Yellowstone Park. They are the primary responsibility for the destruction of this elk population and along with that, Moose and Deer both Mule Deer and Whitetail. Now for the first time since 1968 our family will not be hunting Elk in this area. We were unable to draw one of the 25 tags for a bull elk. This I'm sure was the same result for many, many other folks whom would normally hunt in area 250. So as hunters our trips will be made elsewhere in Mt this year. The money that we would normally spend from September to December will go to other areas of the state. If you multiply that times all the hunters who have moved to other units out of county the financial impact will be greatly felt. Just a few years ago nearly 11 million dollars flowed into Ravalli County from outdoor recreation on a yearly basis. Currently we are down to half of that amount and with the (LOSS) of hunting opportunities in area 250 we will feel the pinch even more. Next year it looks

like area 270 will be in the same spot having to cut elk hunting opportunities and further revenue losses.

Remember (Wolves tend to create more problems than they solve) Lets properly manage them and bring the wildlife back to 2005 levels in Ravalli County NOW.

  
Tom Powers

11 August 2011

My name is Judy Kline. I live on Kootenai Ck Rd., Stevensville. I have been a property owner and taxpayer in Ravalli County for 39 years. My property is just over 1/2 mile from the main transportation artery in the Bitterroot Valley, U. S. Highway 93.

To date there have been 2 whitetail deer killed in my front yard by wolves. The 1st wolf kill was almost 75 feet from my front room windows. The kill was made about 6:45 A.M. and I know that as I was outside in my carport area filling bird feeders when I heard what I thought might be 2 wolves and the resulting bone chilling deer bleat as it died. It is very intimidating to have wolf kills so close to my home.

The 2nd wolf kill was on Valentines Day sometime before daylight. And I do know both kills were made by wolves as I called Liz Bradley, Wolf Biologist in Missoula and she came to my home and gave me confirmation.

I feel a need to carry a weapon when walking from my garage to my house alone, after dark.

Also, I am an avid berry picker, mushroomer and hiker. I have to "pack"(I do possess a concealed weapon permit) in order to have any security when enjoying these hobbies. My daughter and I were howled off the mountain by wolves when hunting mushrooms in the Skalkaho Pass area.

And, in fact, I feel now that I need to be armed just to mow my lawn when home alone.

In all sincerity, I really feel my personal property rights are being violated due to the presence of the wolves.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Kline". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*The lodging in reference  
here is strictly Sept. Oct. & Nov. 3*

Thursday Aug. 11<sup>th</sup>.

Good afternoon, Tex Irwin with West Fork Lodge, you are asking what the reintroduction of wolves has done to our business. It would almost be simpler to say what positive influence they have made. That answer is zero.

The negative impact reaches far and wide. In our business I will only be talking about the lodging, as there is a factor of food and drinks that go along with lodging.

We're in our 7<sup>th</sup> year at the Lodge. It took from 2005 to 2006 to get the business up to speed. From 2009 to 2010 we experienced an 81% decrease in lodging. From 2006 to 2010 we had an 85% decrease. In 2010 Sept. it was a 73% drop from previous years. October 2010 we had no stays and in November 2010 we had 2 reservations. For this upcoming fall hunt the only reservation to date is for one night in November.

Due to the decrease in lodging from hunters our business has gone from a 7 month season to a 5 month season. A 29% drop in business. In 21009 hunters at our lodge were texting and calling their counter parts to report how bad the hunting was.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks statistics will tell you how much money the hunters brought into Ravalli County and if you figure in an economic multiplier, revenue to this County is way down.

## Wolf Encounter

On the second day of elk season last fall, 2010, I went up Tin Cup Trail head with my friend, Matt Goger. It was approximately two hours before daylight. We parked his vehicle in the parking area, and headed up the trail about 100 yards. We were both holding small flashlights, and had expected to walk for about two hours up the trail and get settled in a good spot. However, seeing six sets of glowing eyes in the flashlights, Matt said, "are those coyotes." I would estimate that the animals were 15 feet in front of us. I said, "hell no, those are wolves, start shooting." I pulled out over my SKS, which was slung over my shoulder and starting firing. Matt was firing his pistol. I said, "keep an eye out behind us." The two of us walked back-to-back toward the vehicle. They were circling us, and they stayed on us all the way back. They acted in a fearless manner from us or the gun fire. It felt like two miles of walking to get back to the pickup. I went through two 30-round clips.

Once we got back inside the vehicle safely, we rolled down the windows just a couple of inches. We could hear the wolves outside growling. We sat there for a about an hour and a half until daylight hit, and then the wolves disappeared with the dawn. We didn't go back to see if we hit anything. We figured all the game was gone, and so we went to a different area.

It's well known that the elk and deer populations are down. I believe this is a direct result of the increasing wolf population, which has significantly impacted my small business, the Mountain Spirit Inn in Darby. We have suffered an economic decline in business during our hunting season. In 2008, our November occupancy was 45%, in 2009 it was 31%, and last November it was only 23%. The impact on revenue is that from November 2008 to November 2010 it dropped that one month by \$5,992. There is a reason wolves were eradicated in the 30s.

Jerry Dicken  
Owner/Innkeeper  
Mountain Spirit Inn  
308 S Main Street  
Darby, MT 59829  
Tel: (406) 821-3405  
[jerrydicken@mountainspiritinn.com](mailto:jerrydicken@mountainspiritinn.com)

Matt Goger  
Police Officer for Miles City, MT  
2803 Batchelor Street, Apt. C1  
Miles City, MT 59301  
Tel: (406) 868-6505  
[Gog7230@aol.com](mailto:Gog7230@aol.com)

**8-11-2011**

**To the County Commissioners of Ravalli County**

**RE: Wolves**

**For several Generations my family has lived, worked, and hunted in the West Fork area of Ravalli county. In good times and in bad we have supplemented our diet and quality of life by harvesting deer and elk and other game animals.**

**My grandfathers taught my parents to hunt there and my father taught me to hunt there.**

**This year and last I have been unable to take my 13 year old son hunting in the canyons and ridges we know so well.**

**Due to the miss management of wolves, we are suffering a loss of food supply and diminished quality of life and also the loss of our traditional hunting areas.**

**In addition we have to be afraid for our livestock and pets as the wolves become more fearless each year due to our failure to manage their numbers.**

**We are thankful that the commissioners are considering this matter insomuch as Wolves are impacting our lives and our community.**

**We hope that the commissioners will take action that is consistent with their responsibilities to serve the needs of our community by taking the necessary actions to protect our community from Wolves.**

**Elijah Hansen**

**7230 West Fork Rd**

**Darby MT 59829**

**406 363 8796**

Here are three of many encounters, of my family, with wolves.

**#1** September 2005, my son is hunting elk up Rye Creek. It was getting late, only about twenty minutes of shooting light left. He called in a bull. He shot are five by five, it ran about sixty yards away when it stopped. He could hear the bull elk it was too thick to see him. After about two minutes he could hear the wolves coming. Their howls let you know there was blood in the air. Within five minutes the wolves had surrounded him and the elk. It was getting dark cover too thick to see, no gun for close quarters, rather than try to defend his prey. He felt it was safer to let the wolves have his elk. As he left he could hear the wolves and the elk in battle. The battle didn't last long, the elk was dead. He said he could hear several of the wolves moving in the brush around him.

**#2** Summer 1994, Four pups or cubs were born to Kurt King's female Rottweiler, Kurt lives on Fire Creek, up Nine Mile near Huson, Montana. Kurt's nearest neighbor is over two miles away. He hadn't had her breed. The pups or cubs appeared to be half Rott half Wolf. He then called Mike Jimenez the Federal Wolf Biologist, to have blood samples drawn. Jimenez said it would take a few weeks. After two months Kurt called two ask the results. He was told there were no results. He said, Kurt couldn't prove the cubs were half wolf. Three of the cubs died before maturity. Sampson the big male kept running away. At six months old he joined the Nine Mile Wolf pack. For nine years Sampson Half Rottweiler half Wolf was the Nine Mile Wolf Pack alpha male, half Rott half Wolf. Mike Jimenez new this was the case and did NOTHING. He said it was better for the public not to KNOW.

**#3** Late May 1988 or 1989, there were signs in all of the sport goods stores, if you see a wolf please report your sighting. My wife and son were antler hunting on the Rock Creek Divide. They came across a wolf den. There were four cubs and a she wolf. My son went through the den and was within forty yards of the cubs. Their mother was about sixty yards away. When they came home they were very excited. They had seen real Montana Timber Wolves in the wild.

I made the mistake and called Mike Jimenez to report the sighting. He was at our house the next day. First he called us trouble makers. Then he said my wife and didn't know the difference between wolves and coyotes. I explained my son had had a pet coyote and he had pet foxes in his pens. We had in the past all seen wolves. Then he went back to we were trouble makers. Finally I told him to leave and not come back.

A month and half later somebody else took video of the wolves in the area they had been. They took them to the TV station and it was played on the news. Next day Jimenez was back at our house demanding we take him to the den. I told him after the way he had treated us he could find them himself. I also told him to leave and never come back.

We didn't know the signs to report wolf sighting were part of the introduction of the Grey Wolf in the lower forty eight states, because, if we had wolves here already, Introduction wasn't to be allowed.

Brian Davis 457 Whisperidge Corvallis, Montana 59828 (406) 360-5543.

From: Bill LaCroix

822 Sweathouse Cr. Rd.

Victor, MT 59875

To: Ravalli Co. Commissioners

Sirs and Madam,

In regards to your stated agenda item:

**Thursday - August 11th**

**2:00 pm - Commissioners to meet with Jim Pearson regarding Wolves**

- What is the meaning of this agenda item? Is this part of your strategy to pursue your stated "government-to-government scheme termed "coordination" by your recently-hired consultant firm, American Stewards of Liberty?
- Why would you schedule our county's public time and money having a conversation with Mr. Pearson "regarding wolves". What is his special area of expertise on this issue? Do any of you know Mr. Pearson in some other context or work with Mr. Pearson in some other context other than wolves?
- Have any of you met with Mr. Pearson regarding wolves previous to this meeting? If so can you please make documents pertaining to those meetings available to the public at the close of this meeting?
- Finally, I urge the commission to cease and desist pursuing this pseudo-legal tenet you and ASL term "coordination" until you have provided the public with all minutes, notes, email, workbooks pertaining to the January 15 "coordination" meeting that Commissioner Foss put on and a quorum of commissioners attended, all minutes, notes, email or any other material from any meetings or discussions regarding the incorporation of "coordination" into the policy of the county: the date, time and location of these meetings or discussions as well as all minutes notes, emails or any other material from any meetings or discussions regarding entering into a contractual agreement with American Stewards of Liberty, which to date you have not done as per statutory as well as constitutional requirements.

Please note that we are aware of this commission's novel interpretations of Sunshine and Open Govt. laws and statutes, that we do not believe this commission is following either the letter or intent of those laws, and again sincerely urge the commission to cease and desist their pursuit of what we view as classic county-supremacy scheme, dubbed by the commission and their ASL consultants as "coordination" until they have taken all steps to be fully, legally open with the public on this matter.

Respectfully,



Bill LaCroix

My Name is Dalton Christopherson, My family has been *ranching* in the southern end of the bitterroot for close to 100 years. The wolves have impacted my life in various ways. I have had 2 wolf kills confirmed (by the fish and wildlife service's GOV. Trapper) on the ranch so far, one in 2009 and the other in 2008. During the winter and spring wolves frequent the ranch on average about 2-3 times a week. Because of this I have *allot of sleepless night* and miss out on spending time with my new family. This was not the case before the wolves were introduced. I also have a forest service grazing permit we have lost allot of cattle but the area is very large and we have not found a carcass in time to have it confirmed as a wolf kill. It is very hot that time of year and time is very limited, before it is too badly decayed and eaten. Also the calves coming off the grazing allotment in the fall have been consistently lighter than they used to be before wolves due the wolves keeping the cattle on the move all the time.

The wolves have also driven the elk out of the high county and onto our ranch. I have been keeping track of the elk numbers although there are not as many; the ones that are left are living on the ranch full time. It wasn't so bad in the last few years to feed a bunch of elk because we would harvest one for the freezer. Now that the elk numbers are so low in the 250 hunting district hunting is by permit only. So now 30 to 40 head of elk live on the ranch year round eating grass and hay that would be better served to my cattle and I can't shoot one because I Didn't draw the permit this year.

So as you can see the wolves have impacted my livelihood, financially and recreationally.

8/11/2011

DALE@FZPICT.COM

Dale Simmons

I moved to the Bitterroot primarily because of the abundant wildlife I saw while visiting friends here. In the ten years I have lived here I have watched elk sightings go from common place to a rare event and moose sightings go from a dozen times a year to once or never in a year.

My family used to come up to visit and elk hunt every fall, but with the dwindling elk populations and increasing wolf populations we now meet in the Bahamas and go fishing for our annual get together . I know it is only a few people but those reunions brought several thousand dollars to the area each year that are no longer being spent here and I suspect that we are not the only ones to move our annual get together out of state.

In spite of what FWP tells us, the reason our elk are in decline is because of the stress from wolves. Wolves will pressure a group of elk until one falls back from the herd and is caught and eaten, most frequently this is a pregnant cow. More importantly the stress causes other pregnant cows in the herd to abort or reabsorb their fetuses.

While FWP may think that wolf tag sales are a great new source of revenue, the reality is the economy of the Bitterroot is suffering from loss of hunting related revenues and unless the elk and wolf population trends are reversed soon we will probably have to learn to live without hunting revenues.

Ryan & Robin Conner

PO Box 221

Conner, MT 59827

406-821-4864

August 10, 2011

Ravalli County Commissioners,

The wolves in Ravalli County have impacted our family in a very emotional way.

We own 30 acres and live in Conner 1/2 mile from the Conner Cutoff Road. On several occasions we have seen wolves in our log yard 50 yards from where our employees were loading log trucks and within view of our home - they have no fear of the loud equipment or the men.

On one particular occasion I was going home at 2:00 in the afternoon and there was a huge red wolf at the end of my driveway, 20 feet from where my 4 year old son was playing only an hour prior IN OUR FRONT YARD! He was not startled by neither my vehicle nor me when I got out of the car and yelled at him - he casually walked into the adjoining field and slowly loped off into the woods. Later I went out to look at the tracks to determine the direction he'd come from and saw two sets of tracks...

I no longer take my dogs on my horse back riding and hiking trips and have purchased a hand gun that I make sure is with me always as we've seen numerous signs of wolves on the trails. I'm worried about my animals and my children both at home and while enjoying the Bitterroot Mountains.

The fear, anxiety, frustration and anger that the wolves have caused myself, my family, friends and neighbors is unacceptable and I ask you, Commissioners, to please take a stand on our behalf.

Please contact me if you have any further questions or need additional information.

Warm Regards,



Robin L Conner

From the Desk Of:

Lacy Orr

PO Box 787

Darby MT 59829

406-531-6777

*Dear County Commissioners,*

In regards to the wolf situation in Ravalli county I have been affected severely with my real estate values and the ability to use my recreational property.

Ten years ago I purchased property in the West Fork area to use as a hunting lodge for myself and my out of state friends and relatives. Game was plentiful and we enjoyed good times and good success.

Now that the Deer and Elk are on special permits we can no longer use the lodge for the purpose we bought it for. If we want to go hunting we have to drive over 40 miles out of the west fork to head to the East Fork. Not very practical.

I appreciate anything you can do to help the situation.

Sincerely,



Lacy Orr

# SIGN IN SHEET – COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM

**\*\*PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME LEGIBLY\*\***

**THANK YOU!**

DATE: 8-11-2011

MEETING: Subdivision

Lora Harris

Paul Forsting

~~Judy~~

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_