



Lewis & Clark C O U N T Y



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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The Honorable Max Baucus
United States Senate
155 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510-2602

September 14, 2010

Dear Senator Baucus:

We write to respectfully express our support for legislation to reauthorize the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA) (S. 1787) and to reinstate FLTFA's Federal Land Disposal Account (S.3762).

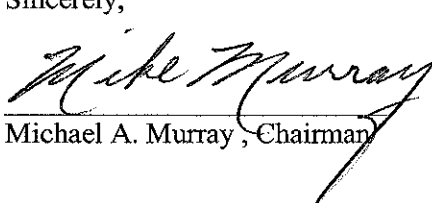
FLTFA's "land for land" concept provides a balanced approach for land conservation. The program benefits ranchers and farmers who would like to acquire nearby federal lands for private ownership, while also working as a dedicated funding source for federal agencies to acquire critically important tracts of land from private willing sellers for fish and wildlife conservation, cultural and historic preservation and outdoor recreation in Montana and the western states.


FLTFA has been an important conservation funding tool in Lewis and Clark County. Through FLTFA, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recently purchased a 38-acre priority inholding (Brown's Gulch) from a willing seller at Chain of Lakes Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) and the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (NHT), which complemented other conservation projects in the area and allowed a Helena couple to sell their land. By acquiring the Brown's Gulch tract, the BLM is able to preserve a scenic bluff along the Missouri River while also helping to protect the adjacent Helena National Forest on one side and BLM lands on the remaining sides. The Chain of Lakes SRMA has the distinction of being the highest recreation use area in Montana and the property's proximity to Helena provides recreational opportunities for visitors and local residents.

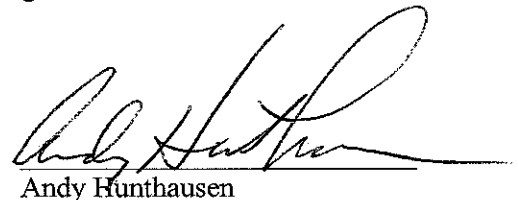
FLTFA has been a highly successful program, generating over \$113 million in revenue toward high-priority-acres since enactment. By reauthorizing FLTFA (S. 1787), this program will continue to serve as an important management tool for Lewis and Clark County and Montana's public lands. We also support bipartisan legislation (S. 3762) to reinstate FLTFA's Federal Land Disposal Account, which will fund future FLTFA projects and the administrative account that funds the FLTFA sales program.

We appreciate your leadership on this important legislation for land management in the West.

Sincerely,


Michael A. Murray, Chairman


Derek Brown


Andy Hunthausen