



Lewis & Clark
C O U N T Y



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Michael A. Murray

Anita L. Varone

Ed Tinsley

City County Building 316 North Park P.O. Box 1724 Helena, Montana 59624 406.447.8304 Fax: 406.447.8370

June 23, 2006

Gail Kimbell, Regional Forester
Northern Region - USFS
200 E. Broadway
P.O. Box 7669
Missoula, MT 59807

Dear Ms. Kimbell:

We have been following with great interest the progress being made by a coalition of timber companies and conservation groups (the Partnership) relative to the forest planning efforts on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.

While Lewis & Clark County is not located within the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, some of these lands are within an hour's drive of Helena and are greatly utilized by residents of our county. The fishing and hunting traditions of Lewis & Clark County families will most certainly be affected by decisions made on this neighboring forest.

It is with this in mind that we wish to express our full support for the Partnership Proposal. This proposal offers a common-sense landscape agreement with the best timber lands (over 700,000 acres) being designated as "suitable" for logging and lands with the highest wilderness (over 500,000 acres), habitat and outdoor recreation values managed to retain those values for future generations. We think this proposal represents a balanced approach to land-use management while being fair to the varied and diverse users of the Forest. We urge your support for this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Kindest regards,

Anita L. Varone
Anita Varone, Chair

Michael A. Murray
Michael A. Murray, Vice-Chair

Ed Tinsley
Ed Tinsley, Member