

**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND CONSERVATION**  
Southwestern Land Office



STEVE BULLOCK, GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

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1401 27TH AVENUE  
MISSOULA, MT 59804

January 14, 2015

Dear Interested Party:

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is beginning an Environmental Assessment (EA) on the potential sale of a parcel of School Trust Land located approximately eight miles east of Stevensville, MT, within Ravalli County. This parcel has been nominated for sale by the Department through the Land Banking program (MCA 77-2-361 through 77-2-367 passed by the 2003 State Legislature). The general intent of the Land Banking program is for the State to dispose of scattered parcels of land that do not have legal access, generate substantially less income for the trust than their relative value or are difficult for DNRC to manage. The funds generated from sales are then used to purchase property that is blocked or contiguous to state land, has legal access and provides recreational opportunities, has potential for increased Trust revenue, and consequently is more efficient to manage. The statute placed limits on the amount of Trust Land that can be sold under the Land Banking process. DNRC can sell no more than 250,000 acres and 75% of those acres need to be isolated parcels.

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is considering the sale of the following parcel of land:

- A parcel of land located approximately eight miles east of Stevensville, MT., is described as Section 36, Township 9 North – Range 19 West, containing 635 acres. This parcel is primarily forested and does not have legal public access.

The MEPA analysis will be conducted, and presented to the Board of Land Commissioners (Board) for preliminary approval. If approval is received from the Board, the Department will then conduct appraisals to determine an estimated value and recommended minimum bid price for the parcel proposed for sale. The parcel will then be brought back before the Board to establish the minimum acceptable bid for each parcel and approval to proceed with the sale process.

By this letter, DNRC is requesting comments under the Montana Environmental Policy Act regarding the possible sale of the above described parcels in Ravalli County. Comments on the sale of the parcels will be considered if received no later than February 18, 2015 and may be sent to: Liz Mullins, Land Use Planner, DNRC Southwestern Land Office, 1401 27th Avenue, Missoula, MT., 59804 or [lmullins@mt.gov](mailto:lmullins@mt.gov).

Additional information on the land banking program can also be found at <http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/Trust/LandBanking/Default.asp>. Please feel free to contact me at (406) 542-4345 or [lmullins@mt.gov](mailto:lmullins@mt.gov) or Neil Simpson, Acting Hamilton Unit Manager at (406) 363-1585 or [nsimpson@mt.gov](mailto:nsimpson@mt.gov) with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Liz Mullins, DNRC  
Land Use Planner

cc: Emily Cooper, Lands Section Supervisor  
Neil Simpson, Acting Hamilton Unit Manager