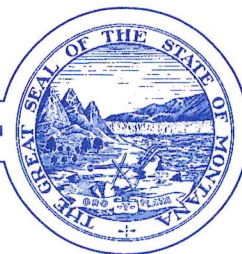


DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL
RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

NORTHEASTERN LAND OFFICE



STATE OF MONTANA

(406) 538-7789 Telephone
(406) 538-7780 FAX

613 NE MAIN
PO BOX 1021
LEWISTOWN, MONTANA 59457-1021

January 10, 2024

To: All Interested Parties,

The 2003 State Legislature passed statutes (77-2-361 through 367 MCA) authorizing the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) the ability to sell state school trust land and utilize those funds to purchase replacement lands for the school trust through a process called Land Banking.

The intent of Land Banking is for the state to sell scattered tracts of land that generally lack legal access, generate little revenue or are small and difficult to manage and to purchase property that is blocked or contiguous to state land, has legal access, has potential for increased revenue and is more efficient to manage.

The DNRC is considering the sale of 640 acres in Fergus County more particularly described as all of Section 36, Township 19N, Range 26E. This parcel is legally inaccessible and is comprised of native rangeland. It is expected existing land uses would continue after sale.

This tract has been nominated for sale by the Lessee and meets the criteria for sale under Land Banking due to low-income production, lack of legal access or low recreational use value.

We are currently conducting an analysis under the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), of the impacts that may occur as a result of the proposed land sale. The analysis will be completed for all of the tracts under consideration prior to presenting a list to the Land Board for preliminary approval. If approval is received from the Land Board, DNRC will then conduct appraisals to estimate value and recommend a minimum bid price for each tract proposed for sale. The list will then be brought back before the Land Board to establish a minimum acceptable bid for each tract and approval to proceed with the sale process. The property would then be advertised and sold at auction.

With this letter, DNRC is seeking comments under MEPA regarding the possible sale of these tracts. Additional information on the Land Banking process is available on the DNRC website at: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/trust/real-estate/land-banking>.

Comments will be considered if received no later than **February 21, 2024**. If you have further questions call me at (406) 538-7789 or e-mail jhedrick@mt.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jocee Hedrick".

JOCEE HEDRICK, Unit Manager
Lewistown Unit, Northeastern Land Office, Montana DNRC