

MISSOURI RIVER OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

October 28, 2018

TO: Anyone interested in the Fox Farm state lands

We, the Missouri River Open Space Preservation oppose any development, sale or lease of the approximately 84 acres of State Lands along Fox Farm Road just outside of Great Falls. We are currently in communication with Montana Department of Natural Resource and Conservation (DNRC) staff on how we can establish a permanent easement as open space for our grandchildren to enjoy.

We have spoken to many of our neighbors in the Fox Farm area and they all support keeping this land as open space. While this area is considered “out of town” it is actually on the border of the city limits. To have this land developed in any way will take away from the benefits it allows for so many families. Currently, many families use this property daily for walking, jogging, training dogs, riding bikes, watching wildlife, throwing rocks into the river, watching birds, and just enjoying the beauty of Montana without having to travel out of town. There are very few places left like this in the Great Falls area – natural and undisturbed. Once it is gone, it is gone forever. This newly formed group will work very hard with local, state and federal officials to find an acceptable solution to have this land left as open space.

It is our understanding that many pieces of state lands held in trust by DNRC are currently being converted through sale and/or lease to maximize income to the school trust. This makes sense for many other tracts of lands that are compatible to commercial or housing development but it does not make sense for this property that will disrupt our natural resources and lives of many families who have lived in this area for so many years. Recent development in the Fox Farm area has already overloaded the local streets, school system, fire department, police patrols, and general quiet neighborhoods. Why should this property be permanently disturbed for growth when there are so many other pieces of property in the immediate area that are privately owned preventing Great Falls citizens from freely utilizing like this property allows. Bottom line, you simply cannot put a value on these undisturbed natural places or the peace of mind we currently experience, especially in a community where the land is being used to benefit so many people.

We are respectfully requesting your assistance to consider the bigger, long-term picture to leave this land designated as open space. Again, we oppose the sale and/or lease of any or all of this property that will diminish the opportunity we and future generations will enjoy if this land is not left as open space. We, the Missouri River Open Space Preservation that live here, will be impacted forever by any change of this pristine lands.

We appreciate your time reading this letter and hope you will assist the Missouri River Open Space Preservation keep this land as open space for us and future generations to enjoy.

Respectfully,

Local landowners of Great Falls

Missouri River Open Space Preservation