

AFW-5 Comments
Recommendation 43
Preserve open space and working lands: forests and agriculture

The economic impacts of any legislation must be determined and be a part of the decision.
ARE you kidding. MT is over 50% State and Federal lands. How much do you want to control. We must remain a FREE country.

I feel strongly that we need to preserve agricultural lands--with population growth so high, food production will become critical at some point in the not-so-distant future!

Nice idea....Where does the money come from?

These practices are simply being pushed by those who advocate no-growth. Property owners should be able to develop their land if they so desire.

MT is already over 50% State and Federal owned and controled. NO MORE GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP.

Less urban sprawl.

The state already has enough to do. Leave this efforts to the private sector and local goverment.

Is there already a program that could be expanded to include this option instead of creating or duplicating efforts?

Link to enhanced access for biofuel programs?

One of the crisis world-wide is the rate of de-forestation. Developed nations must lead in returning lands to natural states to keep the air, water and soils in a productive state.

way too many resources are unreasonably tied up even though efficient and clean means are available to use those resources

Preserving "open space" is just another way of weeding-out the poor so liberal elites can finally transform Montana into the playground they desire.

What are the financial implications to highest and best use practices?

No new taxes. Remove the subsidies that encourage bad behavior. Make people and corporations that fail to conserve working lands because they currently are subsidized have to make their decisions based on them bearing the full costs of their decisions.

Once farmland and forest are gone---it's gone for good. I hear people in Billings remark all the time that they're building homes on the best topsoil in the valley. Utilities and citys don't want the sprawl to go in less desirable lands for homes because it cheaper for them to just spread on existing boundaries.

No more bureaucracy.

Do everything possible to encourage locally produced food stocks. Transport carbon costs of moving food are tremendous.

Start in 2010? 2015 is a lot of land gone!

This is a GREAT idea!

Many other problems are solved and expenses avoided if we can achieve this goal. (Collateral benefits)

Don't mess with private property rights.

Individuals can only do so much with this issue, we need strong and numerous government action of many forms and formats...

"Mitigation fund" How much and where will that money come from?

This is called zoning. Counties must step up to the plate.

Look to the UN-intended consequences. Let the market do its job. Like most government involvement in an issue, it is well intentioned, but will ultimately make the situation more cumbersome and expensive. This will once again price a class of working families OUT of the housing market.

Yes!

.... or there won't be any left.

Again, critical to reduce rate of transfer from natural cover to developed, encouraging both maintenance of carbon sinks in forests and compact growth to reduce VMT.

Aren't these diametrically opposed?
who's going to pay the land owners.

These open spaces are so important to Carbon Sequestering.

This makes sense. Even now, forests are being razed so that ethanol production can be expanded. Maybe this section's provisions will help prevent the destruction of Montana's economy which the wholesale swallowing of the "global warming" [due to evil CO₂] will cause.

Good luck with this. Let's see--buy up all of Plum Creeks holdings and preserve for open space and wildlife habitat. 2020 will be too late to do anything about the state's largest private land holder. Mitigation fund? Gack--just give the counties as much money as you can to buy and preserve open space. Now!

Absolutely! 1) Residential sprawl adds tremendous amounts of CO₂ to the atmosphere and makes transportation planning a headache. 2) Food has to travel much further distances when ag land is lost. Fifty years from now, no one will be wondering whether or not we should have sold off our most fertile soils. We'll be wondering why we didn't protect more.

Fewer homes in the WUI

The US Forest Service owns nearly 230,000,000 acres of land the BLM owns 264,000,000 of land and the Park service owns 120,000,000 acres of land. In fact between the states and federal governments they own 30 percent of the nation's land. How is that for open space.

Only if this excludes the timber and mining industry. We need metals, minerals and wood products. We do not need more subdivisions.

this also preserves the outdoors that so many of us live in Montana to enjoy.

Such a program should also include preservation of wetlands.

Certainly allow no buildings within some prescribed distance (such as 200') of any trees or brush, perhaps allowing a very limited number of ornamentals

it is ALWAYS wise to preserve the land. that is a no-brainer.

While we're at it, let's put some SERIOUS effort into helping small/family scale agriculturalists stay in the business. And, if they're no longer interested, let's look into programs like the Livingston, MT-based

Way to go! The reversion of farm land to its original and natural state will have to be mandatory, despite the need to increase production of farm products

The more we can do to discourage sprawl and save open lands, the better.

Hmm, conservation easements? Might work, but does it reduce GHG or just "move" them?

I AM TOTALLY IN FAVOR OF PRESERVING OPEN SPACE AND WORKING LANDS. Blacktop and cement do not remove any CO2 and are very lousy habitat.

absolutely yes

This program is a land domination program by our government. Private land owners should be able to sell, harvest, farm or elect not to on their own land.

Lawrence Livermore Laboratory has done an excellent study showing that increase TREE PLANTING is actually contributing to global warming in the northern areas due to the "Albedo" effect. Available on their website.

Where will you get the \$\$ for this? How will you prioritize funds against, say, education or health or roads?

huh?

Incentive only. No mandate.

This is an infringement on private property rights. What will the cost of this be?

SUSPECT THIS WOULD BECOME MANDATORY NON-DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN VOLUNTARY

Forests need to be managed for ecosystem health -- not timber profiting. State Land Board should understand that it is more economical to have healthy forests, rather than burning, overgrown, or clear-cut forests.

This recommendation still allows for a very significant amount of conversion. The goal is too modest.

Controlled growth has to happen.

Vital to do this; our forests provide much biological service to all.

A great way to preserve working lands is to expand local markets for food and to increase value-added processing capabilities in the state. Smart growth planning will keep our valuable open lands open.

NO NO NO

Urban in-fill should be encouraged, and will decrease the potential of urban sprawl. Keep Montana wild and open to all!

The suggested reduction rate seems small.
That's scary! We've already lost so much.

More law to stop Montana from putting the men back to work

More Gov't NO, NO, NO!

How about by 2009? 2020 will be too late but that is typical for government. Government typically closes the barn door after all the horses have gotten out. For once get on the "cutting edge" here. I laugh when I say cutting edge as government is already behind the eight ball by oh about 20 years at least. But you showed up to the game so let's let you play ball.

Yes, we must conserve and preserve our wild and undeveloped spaces.

Who funds this??

Reducing/removing eminent domain application would be more effective at achieving this goal. If developers were forced to pay going market rates (Asking price) for land and not steal it through eminent domain then less development would occur and more land would be conserved.

That is a tad extreme.

Who is going to meet the demand for the bio fuels and food for the masses

Don't try to tell people what to do with their land. Buy it if you want to control it. And not eminent domain either.

open space, hell yes!

Preserve access (motorized and otherwise) to these open spaces.

We have millions of acres of forest land. Why do we need so much (rather than the principal of it) and why are we not allowed to use it?

This is so very wrong! Do your homework!!!

this is ridiculous, Montana is the fourth largest state with very small population. Open space will mean nothing more than a whole lot of fires and smoke. Another government program. Some day the money will run out.

This Action Plan was not a Montana grassroots Plan. It was the same plan written for California and other states.

A local decision that needs to be dealt with though zoning and planning with some way to compensate landowners for lost land value.

<http://www.righttalk.com/asx/ggws.aspx>

Smart Growth? See AFW-4

this is not consistent with the need to increase crop productions for ethanol.

Infringement on private property rights.

Preserve agricultural lands here by offering incentives to people who wish to become farmers of ORGANIC FOODS here in Montana. Allow farmers to grow low THC hemp and other multi-use crops that will assist in soil retention.

Private lands are private lands. Conversion of ag and forest lands will continue as long as people want to live outside of towns. The State cannot have a "program" for everything on the planet. Some things simply need to be left alone to develop as they will.

Private property is protected (or suppose to be)by the Constitution, Gov is suppose to won little land see constituion.

Avoidance of diminishing private property rights is a must and that includes rights that were granted by previous acts of Congress on public land (ie; grazing allotments, etc.)

makes no sense to me that the government should be involved in the conservation of working lands nor to fund impacts????

No opinion

Agriculture already preserves open space. If you implement many of these recommendations you will increase costs without increasing the ability to pay. You will do just the opposite of what you are trying to do. Farmers and ranchers that have that option will subdivide.

Yes mandate that growth focus inwards on Urban areas; no more sprawl.

I hope you don't really think I am going to support you taking my land from me? Managing my land for me? Deciding for me how I am going to use my land? You want to buy it from me, ok? At the REAL asking price, not what YOU decide it's worth.... Give me a call.

Let's require responsible development rather than setting an arbitrary reduction rate.

Great goal, if we can do it.

Our forest need management, just like your lawn or garden. Do not leave them to themsleves. A forest fire releases much more CO@ and PM2.5 than a power plant

Already being done by private groups.

Good idea.

Keep Montana the last best place, or it will have no attraction other than being a source of dirty colonial jobs.

If there were a "10" on this scale I would pick 10. I think this needs to be instituted faster than 2015. How can we keep Plum Creek from selling all their land for subdivisions? They received this land for a purpose that they can no longer us it for. They received this land with minimal expense to them. Do they have the legal right to make all this money and have Montana lose so much of it's precious forest land?! THIS IS A BIG ISSUE.

Replant forests.

"Create a state-level program to conserve working lands with a possible mitigation fund that could be used to offset impacts." This is a very beautiful dream to work towards.

Lets just cripple the rest of Montana's economy. Oh wait, we are turning our state into California's zoo. Never mind, tourism will provide us all with seasonal minimum wage jobs.

loss of private property rights

Not the roll of government.

Thank you. We need to stop loosing ag lands to development!

Plant more trees - not mono-cultures, however.

Regulate private property; it is a communally justified entity.

I semi support this if it'll keep Bozeangeles and San Missoula from turning into overpriced yuppie enclaves of the beautiful people.

Do not harm the local governance with their ability to effectively zone.

Do we get credit for the dark cycle? and to encourage it through responsible growth and harvest?

Yes, we must conserve our open space.

This policy works the opposite of the above policy. "Working lands" does not define CRP. The funding of such a program would not be feasible.

A good approach.

This is a private property issue.

Haven't figured out how you're going to do this other than paying millions to developers to not build or land owners to not sell to them. Another CRP type program.

YES. Plant more trees especially in towns, cut down less in areas that already suffer from severe devestation. It would be of great benefit if logging could slow down in places like the arid west where trees take so long to mature. These are all big issues though.

As long as we have an allowance for growth.

Montana needs State Zoning laws!!!!

Should allow private groups to purchase land for conservation. Should understand ultimate cost to taxpayers and business development.

Thin the forest, don't let it burn, that would be a good start.

This recommendation could lead to increased costs to consumers and should be analyzed to determine total cost to consumers.

What we need to conserve are our forests. Every year we lose many 1000's of acres to fires, because of the poor forest management. Why are we not selectively logging and allowing people into some state forest lands to remove the downed trees. The pollution from the smoke is horrible. We want to conserve working lands, but we need to get the fires under control and managed much better first.

Given an increasing trend toward catastrophic wildfires in the west, it is likely that Montana and other Western states will soon become net carbon emitters solely from the forests that are supposed to be carbon sinks. However, as indicated above, no-till agriculture is one of the prime effective mechanisms for carbon sequestration. Moreover, the production of open space is one of the most important things we can do for human health, environmental health, and quality of life.

We need urban infill before expansion. There should be a carbon-minded disincentive for development that is far away from already developed areas based on the excess amount of fuel, resources, and energy said area will consume for the life of the development. Sustainable growth, not sprawl.

good idea. Another way to tax the people for another government operated program!

sure, but don't sneak in a cap and trade.

We have lots of "Federal Forest" lands in Montana that most people can not go on, why try for more. What good is this land that people can not use? Just another waste of tax money.

is Plum Creek on board?

YES!! we don't need more parking lots! Education on the impacts of change of land use also needs to be increased

All of these are 'feel good' expensive bulls**t legislation. Global warming is NOT a fact (cold records set last winter in the southern hemisphere) so it might be Northern hemisphere warming, but not global. Secondly, latest studies of the sun spots (that control global temperatures more than humans) indicate that within 20 years we will be back in a 'mini-ice age'. Not politically correct, but MUCH more accurate.

You cannot FORCE FARMERS TO FARM if it is non-economic.

Possible mitigation fund? MAYBE the government will pay for stealing land???

THIS IS A LAND GRAB AT THE VERY MOST.

WHO PAYS FOR THIS

Who funds the Mitigation Fund? Who decides on the ultimate use of land?

this should be another high priority goal. wildlife environments are being eaten up by human development at any alarming rate. Why not approach human population control with the same urgency we apply to animals?

Does this mean statewide zoning?

We do not need to over-develop our open spaces. We do need good planning for any developments of any lands, public or private.

Stop the conversion.

good idea? maybe it would work?

We desperately need to protect our forest and agricultural land from being developed into large home sites.

This could conflict with adding to the edges of towns and instead cause greater commuting distances if intervening lands are conserved.

OH, at last...leaders and representatives making serious proposals to prevent the trashing of our few remaining open space lands and forests. THANK YOU!! Please set this up so that citizens are motivated to participate and help!!

Go to Ingomar and lets talk about over-development.

unconstitutional land grab!

No mitigation for crooked lawyers.

Where does the money come from to set up a mitigation fund? Conserving working lands is an advantage for whom?

Another new program is not needed. Let private property owners and existing state and federal agencies address. Who would fund the mitigation.

Just gonna cause taxes to soar.

I strongly agree to more rapid change - by 2012, reduce the rate that forest and agricultural lands are converted to developed use by 75% from current levels achieving the first 50% by 2010.

We need wood products. That's what Montana is

We definitely need to focus on preventing good agricultural land from being developed!

Excellent. Consolidate existing state lands so that they can be managed as Open Space and/or forested lands. Reforest existing state lands where trees have been cut.

This recommendation could lead to increased costs to consumers and should be analyzed to determine total cost to consumers.

Nyet, Kamerads. Hell, if the economy tanks because of all this other crap, this won't be an issue, will it?

Profitable Ag & Forest land management will continue as long as there is a profitable operation and raw materials - sawlogs- are available. When Ag. and sawmills can not be profitable they must have options to convert their lands to other uses that are economical and return a profit to the owners.

Ag and forest lands are disappearing too fast. That said, the state shouldn't dictate who can sell what to whom and for what purpose.

Strongly opposed. This appears to be a futile effort to limit growth -- has no impact on GHG. Doesn't even belong in this survey. Have you people lost your minds?

Great idea!

I do not believe in establishing such a fund.

This is simply a proposal for government to take control of private land.

perhaps if it is state or federal land

Conserve lands from private development but also retain access for public use / recreation.

Good idea, AS LONG AS PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED.

Seems like the state wants too much control over private land.

Noble goal, but short of nuking the human population, Governments are unlikely to come up with an effective policy. The day will come when all the suburban lawns will have to be used for food production.

Take state lands out of production for this first. Remember though where the revenues for the schools comes from.

Absolutely

Our economy in MT could be robust were it not for anti growth policies like these.

Again, it's taxes that will provide these incentives-- these funds. And who pays these taxes? We must preserve our lands. But these incentives are only achieved through raising our taxes. There are other ways. The people want to preserve their lands-- they don't need governmental programs to do this.

this would have many additional benefits

ITS CALLED "KILLING THE GOOSE THAT LAIN THE GOLDEN EGG" MORE WILDERNESS!!!!

huge impact on costs if implemented

Yes!

Support open space concept - be careful with implementation.

One way to accomplish this goal would be to severely discourage immigration to Montana from other states, including sub-divisions for vacation homes.

Yes!

No more government programs.

More government workers doing the nanny state work.

Concept good WITHOUT new state program.
Again, where will the dollars come from?

restricting growth for montana

Greatly needed!!!

Not a well thought out forestry policy. Instead we should be logging the forests instead of burning them. Why doesn't Al Gore complain about that? You'd think all that soot and co2 getting generated from a forest fire would cause some alarm among the CO2 alarmists. But they won't support logging because that would mean some logger would get decent job. The lack of concern from the alarmists over forest fires makes me question the sincerity of the whole process.

Three gold stars here.

Only if private funds are used, no tax payer dollars.

Plum Creek supports incentives for landowners to preserve open spaces and maintain working forests. We think state-level funding of conservation incentive programs would be helpful to augment other existing federal and local efforts.

Need to retain agricultural lands for growing food.