



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

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January 13, 2016

Dan Vermillion, Chairman
Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission
1420 East Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Dear Chairman Vermillion:

I write on behalf of the Environmental Quality Council, which agreed on a 10 to 5 vote today to send this letter, respectfully asking the Fish and Wildlife Commission to enact a 3-year moratorium on proposals to transplant or translocate sage grouse from Montana to locations outside our borders.

The EQC understands that the Commission will consider a proposal at its January 14 meeting to translocate up to 40 adult female sage-grouse from north central Montana this spring with an additional 40 grouse requested biennially for a total of up to 120 birds over the next 5 years.

The EQC urges you not to move forward with this proposal. The EQC believes it is imprudent to do so until more is known about the implementation of Montana's Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program, its efficacy, and its impact on Montana's sage-grouse population trends.

Chairman Vermillion, thank you for consideration. Please let me know if I, the EQC, or our staff can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Gene Vuckovich, Chairman

cc: FWP Director Jeff Hagener
Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team
Governor Steve Bullock