



MONTANA FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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March 7, 2019

Honorable Kerry White, Chairman
Natural Resources Committee
House of Representatives
Montana State Capitol
1301 E 6th Ave
Helena MT 59601

Regarding: Opposition to House Bill 627

Dear Chairman White and Committee Members:

The Montana Forest Owners Association¹ opposes House Bill 627. The members of the Montana Forest Owners Association manage their private non-industrial forests and wish the State Trust Lands to be similarly managed.

Past failures to manage forests have resulted in catastrophic mega fires that caused loss of property, valuable timber, and lives. Failure to manage forests also resulted in proliferation of beetles and budworms causing loss of timber, resulting in even worse fires. There is a groundswell today in support of active forest management. Montana's Governor Steve Bullock launched the Forests in Focus initiative with the main purpose of supporting treatment of forest lands. The federal government has passed the Good Neighbor Authority to allow the states to treat national forest lands. The people in-the-know understand that forests need management. Please keep our forests healthy to support the schools. Neither people nor trees flourish under crowded conditions.

There is no place for timber conservation license in lieu of sales. The Montana Forest Owners Association urges you to oppose HB627.

Sincerely,

Mike Christianson
Volunteer President

¹ The Montana Property Owners Association, has been a Montana non-profit corporation since 1995. The MFOA's sole purpose is to protect and serve the interests of non-industrial private forest landowners. There are more than 29,000 non-industrial private forest owners that individually own forested parcels of 10 acres or more and cumulatively own in excess of four million forested acres in Montana. For more information, google MFOA or go to www.MontanaForestOwners.org.