

Stakeholder Support on Daines' Pilot Arbitration Bill

Julia Altemus, Executive Director, Montana Wood Products Association: *"There are 28 timber sales (totaling 236.4mmbf) currently affected by litigation in Region One. Unfortunately, our region continues to be ground-zero for litigation in the west. Therefore, we support Senator Daines' work to find collaborative solutions that could bring quicker resolution to objections and relief to the courts. We applaud his efforts."*

Kyle Weaver, President & CEO, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation: *"Litigation against forest management proposals in Forest Service Region One and Wyoming—including collaborative projects—has impeded the agency's ability to enhance wildlife habitat, mitigate hazardous fuels and address significant insect and disease issues. RMEF fully supports Sen. Daines' efforts to provide an alternative to litigation to protect the investments stakeholders make in collaborative forest projects on behalf of forest health, public safety, local economies, wildlife and recreation. Implementing a pilot project in Region One and Wyoming and limiting it to no more than two collaborative projects per year across these jurisdictions is certainly a careful, measured approach to determine the feasibility of this alternative to litigation."*

Pamela J. Holmquist, Flathead County Commissioner: *"We have seen firsthand how the lack of management in our forests contribute to unhealthy air quality during fire season in Flathead County. Not to mention the wildlife habitat and water quality issues that arise after a fire. Litigation is directly affecting how we manage our forests. Lawsuits have impacted jobs and our forest product mills. I support Senator Daines in his effort to address these issues. We need to do everything we can to stay out of the court room and get to work in our forests."*

Jim Caswell, Chairman, National Association of Forest Service Retirees: *"Assuming that a project has been proposed in a collaborative effort, we at NAFSR strongly support this pilot proposal as an alternative to litigation. We commend the Senator for searching for different methods of resolving conflicts but doing so in a more timely manner. We owe this to future generations for efficiently treating the conditions of our National Forests. The National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) represents a large contingent of experience from U.S. Forest Service retirees across the Nation."*

Greg Chilcott, Chairman, Montana Coalition of Forested Counties: *"I truly appreciate Senator Daines leadership in offering reasonable solutions to overcome some of the barriers to efficient and effective forest management. Litigation too often impedes common-sense projects developed through a collaborative process that would decrease the threats to local public health safety from catastrophic wildfire and put loggers back to work. The binding arbitration in this pilot program will provide a viable alternative to the lengthy and costly litigation plaguing Region 1."*

Roman Zylawy, Chairman, Mineral County Commissioners: *"Senator Daines bill will help enhance forest health. It will reduce litigation time in court and save cost and money to*

taxpayers. Additionally, it will expedite the harvesting of dying trees and utilizing them before they rot and become non-merchantable. The word 'conservation' means to 'not waste'. This bill will help reduce waste and improve efficient management in our forests."

Tony Schoonen, Chief of Staff, Boone & Crockett Club: *"The Boone and Crockett Club appreciates Senator Daines' hard work to advance forest health projects that will reduce the risk of wildfire in our National Forests, and ultimately improve habitat for elk, mule deer and other wildlife that depend on healthy, productive forests. It will also benefit many of us that recreate on public lands, from hikers to hunters to anglers."*

David Sheets, President, Montana Logging Association: *"The Montana Logging Association fully supports Senator Daines' bill proposal Protect Collaboration for Healthier Forests Act. For far too long obstructionists have used the courts as a tool to stop active forest management. Pilot arbitration will help the United States Forest Service increase the pace and scale of treating acres that are far too overstocked and give collaboratives a voice. This would give the USFS another tool to not only treat acres but improve both fisheries and wildlife habitat and reduce the threat of wildfires."*

Joe Unterreiner, Executive Director, Kalispell Chamber of Commerce: *"Healthy forests are vital to the economic and recreational future of Northwest Montana. A pilot arbitration program in Region 1 is a common sense step to swifter resolution of disputed projects that will reduce the risk of wildfire and improve the management of our forest lands."*

Mark Peck, Commissioner, Lincoln County: *"I want to thank Senator Daines for his persistence and laser focus on forest management reformation. The program that will be established is a common-sense management tool that is measured yet provides flexibility. While not the complete fix, it provides another valuable tool, and we look forward to the experiment. Thank you again Senator Daines, keep up the good work, it doesn't go unnoticed or unappreciated in Lincoln County Montana!"*

Letter from Boone and Crockett Club, Mule Deer Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Ruffed Grouse Society: *"The undersigned organizations represent several hundred thousand hunter-conservationists from all over America who understand the value of well-managed forests and rangelands to wildlife and western communities... Sen. Daines' legislation aims to find a better way to resolve land management disputes than costly, time-consuming litigation. We believe arbitration may help the agency and stakeholders execute management projects that better serve public interests and forest and rangeland health."*