

From: "cindy.bertek@cfc.umt.edu%inter2" <cindy.bertek@cfc.umt.edu>
Subject: Farm Bill 2007 Official Comments - 11/09/2005 02:41 PM CST
Date Sent: 11/09/2005 02:41:43 CST
Date Received: 11/09/2005 02:42:14 CST

Email: cindy.bertek@cfc.umt.edu
FirstName: Cindy
LastName: Bertek
Address1: 32 Campus Drive MS 0606
Address2:
City: Missoula
State: Montana
zipcode: 59812-0606

Question1:
Question2:
Question3:
Question4: Cindy Bertek, MSU Extension Forestry, Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator
This statement is also strongly supported by the Montana Forest Land Owners Association.

I presented the following statement at the Farm Bill Forum on November 4, 2005 in Bozeman, MT.

There are 22.4 M acres of forested land in MT. 3.8 M acres are family forests. 50K families own between 5 and 15 acres. 15,000 own 15 acres or more. Since 1991 MSU Extension Forestry has offered 106 planning workshops, with over 2,500 participants, representing over 1,600 ownerships, and about 950K acres, 25% of the total Family Forestland in MT.

There is a rising number of small acreage family forests as private industrial and non-industrial forest land is subdivided and sold. With this rise in numbers comes an increased need to provide forest management education. After attending the Forest Stewardship Planning, Riparian, Roads, and other related workshops, participants show increased confidence and knowledge to sustainably manage their forests.
Quote:

..."When my husband and I completed the Forest program, we were no longer completely overwhelmed with the forest land that we have on our property"

Over the past 10 years Non-Industrial Family Owned Forests in Montana have provided 30% of the annual wood harvested. This is an amazing number since these lands only represent 16% of the forested land base in Montana. In addition to providing needed wood fiber, private lands also provide clean water, often critical wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, aesthetic viewsheds, and perhaps most importantly, buffers between the often uncontrollable wildfires that have been occurring on federal lands and the communities they surround. All of these benefits are provided at the cost, both monetarily and through sweat equity, of landowners. This is why it is critical that the Farm Bill continues to fund programs that help family forest land owners through educational and cost-share programs that have a proven track record of success.

Through education, we can have 80,000 well informed land managers in Montana that own Family Forests. With a functional cost-share program we can help these managers complete projects that benefit everyone at a

fraction of the cost of similar projects on public lands.

I urge you to increase funding in the new farm bill for Non-Industrial Private Forest Landowners and the programs that help them.

Question5:

Question6: