

FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2009

PREAMBLE:

With only a week to go, polls showed State Sen. Jon Tester and State Auditor John Morrison at a dead heat in the June 6, 2006, Democratic primary race for U.S. Senate. Tester operative Missoula attorney Pat Smith directly contacted former state Rep. Paul Richards, who was running third of five candidates in the race, concerning Richards' possible endorsement of Tester.

Richards agreed to meet with Tester on Tuesday, May 30, 2006, to see if terms could be worked out for this endorsement. These two meetings were witnessed by Dr. Belle C. Richards, Charlotte Trolinger, Shar Tester, and Shon Tester.

State Sen. Tester agreed to six terms stipulated by former state Rep. Richards, concerning the Iraq War, protection of Montana's remaining roadless wildlands, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, settling outstanding Native American claims, and establishing public financing for all federal elections. Specific details are available at: www.Richards2006.us.

In exchange for these mutually-agreed-upon-with-witnesses terms, Paul Richards agreed to withdraw from the race for U.S. Senate and publicly ask his supporters to vote for Jon Tester.

News of Richards' endorsement appeared on front pages of most Montana daily newspapers and was prominent in other media the final week before the election. The endorsement helped carry Tester to a surprisingly large victory over Morrison. Tester and Richards celebrated the win jointly at a June 6, 2006, election night party in Missoula, MT.

STATEMENT OF PAUL RICHARDS, FORMER CANDIDATE FOR U.S. SENATE, CONCERNING THE TESTER LOGGING BILL

I have seen a draft of the Tester Logging Bill, to be publicly announced at the RY Sawmill in Townsend on Friday, July 17, 2009. The Tester Logging Bill is in direct contradiction to a specific May 30, 2006, campaign promise made by then-State Sen. Jon Tester to secure the votes of my supporters in the June 6, 2006, Democratic primary race for U.S. Senate.

On May 30, 2006, Jon Tester promised, in the presence of his wife, son, and two other witnesses, that: "If elected, Jon Tester will work to protect all of Montana's remaining roadless areas."

Not only does the Tester Logging Bill fail to honor that commitment, it does the exact opposite. The Tester Logging Bill is a well-orchestrated and well-funded assault upon Montana's roadless public wildlands.

The Tester Logging Bill was conceived and executed in very dark, dank, secret corners, by people with extremely limited tolerance for public involvement in public land stewardship.

In the Tester Logging Bill, we are witnessing the worst of hardball politics. The Tester Logging Bill ignores economic, scientific, and environmental reality. It circumvents the public and environmental laws designed to serve the public good,

such as the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, National Forest Management Act, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

Perhaps worst of all, the Tester Logging Bill is a full-scale pillaging of the legacy of Montana's greatest conservationist and one of my dearest mentors, U.S. Senator Lee Metcalf. In 1977, Metcalf, only a year before he died, worked tirelessly to pass Senate Bill 393, the Montana Wilderness Study Act. Metcalf's magnificent legacy protected nine roadless wildland areas, while they were studied for official designation as wilderness under the Wilderness Act of 1964, a bill which Metcalf had earlier personally shepherded through Congress.

The Tester Logging Bill removes the Sapphire Wilderness Study Area and the West Pioneers Wilderness Study Area from the Congressional protection of Metcalf's Senate Bill 393 and opens them to logging. Only high-elevation "rocks and ice" non-timber producing tracts would be designated wilderness. Of the 94,000 acres of public roadless wildlands currently in the Sapphire Wilderness Study Area, only 54,000 acres would be protected from development. Of the 151,000 acres of public roadless wildlands currently in the West Pioneers Wilderness Study Area, only 34,000 acres would be protected from development.

The Tester Logging Bill "undesignates" the Axolotl Lakes Wilderness Study Area, Bell/Limekiln Canyons Wilderness Study Area, East Fork Blacktail Wilderness Study Area, Henneberry Ridge Wilderness Study Area, and Hidden Pasture Wilderness Study Area. All of these roadless wildlands would be subjected to "logging without laws," as the Tester Logging Bill specifically excludes them from the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The Tester Logging Bill also mandates a cut of 3,000 acres a year of core grizzly bear habitat in the Yaak.

The Tester Logging Bill designates small "rocks and ice" wilderness areas throughout the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, leaving approximately 200,000 acres of currently roadless public wildlands open for development. In fact, the Tester Logging Bill mandates that 7,000 acres of previously undisturbed lands be logged every year for 10 years, for a total of at least 70,000 acres.

As a lifetime resident of the area, I can attest to the fact that the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest is not productive sustainable commercial timberland. Much of the forest is east of the Continental Divide, receives little precipitation, and has an extremely short growing season. Due to these limiting factors, it costs the public at least \$1400 per acre to log in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. Mandating logging of 7,000 acres will cost the public \$9,800,000 a year.

Mandating this level of cutting for 10 years, as Tester proposes, will cost taxpayers at least \$98 million dollars. In fact, the cost of this timber industry pork will be considerably higher, as these economic figures date from the housing boom, three years ago. Now, that we are in economic depression, there is no housing

construction and hardly anyone is buying timber. In today's depressed market for timber, the "hard money" subsidies for loggers that the Tester Logging Bill mandates will likely reach into the hundreds of millions of dollars over the next 10 years.

If Tester would have involved those of us who live near the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, we could have helped him avoid this colossal mistake. It wasn't for lack of effort. I am a member of the National Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited, and Montana Wilderness Association. I served on the board of the Montana Wilderness Association and have received the organization's "Brass Lantern" Award.

Years ago, when these three conservation groups and the timber industry first formed the "Beaverhead-Deerlodge Partnership," I approached the players. As one who had been involved at the grassroots level with the Deerlodge National Forest for over 27 years, and as an official member of the Deerlodge National Forest Technical Advisory Committee, I thought my presence might be an asset during negotiations. I had been involved with the successful appeal and resultant "Settlement Agreement" of the Deerlodge Forest Plan, which had been heralded region-wide as a model for citizen participation.

Over a two-year period, I sent numerous e-mails and made numerous phone calls, trying to get into the negotiations or at least monitor them. All my attempts were rebuffed, as were all attempts by many other members of the public. We, as members of the National Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited, and Montana Wilderness Association, were kept in the dark as our organizations' staff compromised away our public wildlands.

Why would they do this? As a reporter, I was taught to "follow the money." The Montana Wilderness Association (MWA), National Wildlife Federation, and Trout Unlimited all receive considerable funding from the Pew Charitable Trusts. The Pew Charitable Trusts are an independent nonprofit organization--the sole beneficiary of seven individual charitable funds, with assets of \$5.2 billion at the end of June 2008, established by two sons and two daughters of Sun Oil Company founder, Joseph N. Pew, and his wife, Mary Anderson Pew.

According to research by former MWA President Elaine Snyder and former MWA Board Member Ross Titus, "material supporters of Pew include Weyerhaeuser, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, International Paper, ITT Rayonier, Dow Chemical, DuPont, Phelps-Dodge, General Electric, Raytheon, Caterpillar, Chevron, Exxon, Mobil, and Texaco."

Snyder and Titus contend that MWA's reliance on Pew money serves to "confine wilderness legislation to rocks-and-ice regions by co-opting gullible or calculating people in the wilderness movement." Snyder and Titus continue, "Organizations that have gained access to Pew money are expected to show short-term gains in wilderness protection regardless of the cost to other public resources and political efforts. MWA received \$37,000 from the Campaign for America's Wilderness. What

conditions, "advice" or other strings were attached to this grant? All MWA members should have received this information long ago."

(http://www.newwest.net/main/article/memo_to_mwa_return_to_our_roots/)

Trout Unlimited and the National Wildlife Federation have each received millions of dollars from the Pew Charitable Trusts. National Wildlife Federation staffers are even housed at Pew's Washington, D.C. headquarters.

Pew tipped its hand concerning the Tester Logging Bill with a preemptive Thursday, July 9, 2009, e-mail "Alert" entitled "Sen. Tester Leads on Wilderness" from Mike Matz, executive director of the Pew-funded "Campaign for America's Wilderness" (formerly known as the "Pew Wilderness Center").

"We need to THANK Senator Tester for showing positive leadership to protect the best of Montana's pristine national forests," Matz wrote. "His bill would add the first new wilderness in Montana in more than a quarter of a century," Matz continued. "Sen. Tester needs to hear that Montanans want to protect their special places as wilderness, for Montana families, clean water and wildlife. Please take a moment to call Senator Tester today and make a difference for Montana's wilderness. Dial the nearest local office now and tell them you appreciate Sen. Tester's leadership on wilderness," Matz concluded. Matz then listed the telephone number for each of Tester's eight Montana field offices.

Matz was asking well-intentioned wilderness advocates, who don't know the funding sources of the "Campaign for America's Wilderness," to sign a blank check; to praise Tester for a bill that Tester had not yet allowed the public to see! Forget what the bill actually does -- getting the cut out of our national forests through federal pork barrel logging subsidies.

On the same afternoon, the Wilderness Society, which also receives millions of dollars from the Pew Charitable Trusts, sent out its own "Wild Alert," under the name of Kathy Kilmer. "Montana's Sen. Jon Tester is considering legislation that would give Montana its first new wilderness designations in decades," Kilmer wrote. "Sen. Tester needs to hear that Montanans want to protect their special places as wilderness, for Montana families, clean water and wildlife. Please call Sen. Tester and thank him for showing positive leadership to protect the best of Montana's pristine national forests," Kilmer concluded. The Wilderness Society used the exact same non-alphabetical listing of Tester's eight Montana field offices as Matz.

Besides the eeriness of identical non-alphabetical listings and the same language ("Sen. Tester needs to hear that Montanans want to protect their special places as wilderness, for Montana families, clean water and wildlife."), the incredible thing about the preemptive Pew-funded e-mail campaigns of July 9, 2009, was that no one anywhere had actually seen the Tester Logging Bill, other than the timber industry and its collaborationists! We were apparently supposed to compliment Tester for purposefully keeping us in the dark!

Yet, somehow, both Pew-funded organizations were able to twist Tester's shameful refusal to allow any public participation into a virtue, with both groups using identical language to praise Tester for "showing positive leadership to protect the best of Montana's pristine national forests."

Where is Montana's Rep. Denny Rehberg with his acute paranoia about "top-down meddling" forced upon us locals by "outsiders" when we really need him?

The Pew-funded conservation collaborationists (National Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited, and Montana Wilderness Association) were required to sign "confidentiality" agreements that they would not share any details of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Partnership with us, their members, or the general public.

The result? The public has been entirely shut out of the decision process concerning the future of our own public lands. Everything has already been decided. There is no avenue for public concerns. Legitimate forest planning processes, conducted with full public information and participation, are a relic of the past.

Tester is trying to usher in a new age of privatization of public resources. A mere five companies [Pyramid Mountain Lumber, Inc.](#) (Seeley Lake), [Roseburg Lumber Products](#) (Missoula), [RY Timber, Inc.](#) (Townsend and Livingston), [Smurfit-Stone Container](#) (Missoula), and [Sun Mountain Lumber](#) (Deerlodge) will receive over \$100 million in taxpayer subsidies, courtesy of the kind Senator.

By mandating timber cuts, Tester is negligently ignoring the fact that there is no current demand for timber. Even worse, in the draft of the Tester Logging Bill that I reviewed, Tester is promoting "logging without laws," attempting to statutorily exempt his timber cutting from the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, National Forest Management Act, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

What does the public gain? Nothing. If Tester has his way, we'll lose the proud wildlands inheritance we received from Sen. Lee Metcalf. We'll lose the protection of the new Obama Roadless Initiative. We'll lose hundreds of thousands of acres of pristine public wildlands. We'll lose our last opportunity to protect different elevation habitats and their dependent species, with core areas, buffer zones and connecting biological corridors. As habitat is increasingly fragmented by the Tester Timber Bill, we'll lose the Northern Rockies Ecosystem, the ONLY functioning ecosystem in the lower 48 states where all native species still reside.

What's in it for the National Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited, and Montana Wilderness Association? If the Tester Logging Bill actually passes, God forbid, they'll actually boast about "creating" a handful of nonproductive high-altitude limited-habitat "rocks and ice" wilderness areas for the pleasure of backpacking yuppies that will likely have no clue as to the real costs of their enjoyment.

How can I describe my sadness that Jon Tester, a man I helped put into office, is now officially promoting this madness? Completely excluding the public from public land decisions, throwing away untold millions of dollars of pork for taxpayer-subsidized timber sales and lavish new sawmill equipment, exempting public wildlands from the protection of a new earnest President, “undesignating” the legacy of Montana’s greatest conservationist, and destroying an irretrievable portion of Montana’s priceless roadless wildlands heritage – Are these the actions of a leader who “values integrity, common sense, (and) transparency in government?” (<http://tester.senate.gov/Jon/index.cfm>)

How far have we come since that fair day in May of 2006, when a much more promising State Sen. Jon Tester sincerely pledged, in the presence of his loving wife and beaming son, that: “If elected, Jon Tester will work to protect all of Montana’s remaining roadless areas”!

So much for campaign promises. So much for representing the public. So much for being a far-sighted steward of public lands. So much for a man of integrity honoring his word.

The Tester Logging Bill makes it clear: If you are an inside player, you get the pork (and the “rocks and ice”). If you’re not an insider, you can go straight to hell.

Now we all know how long it takes for an honest farmer from Big Sandy, Montana, to transform into a Machiavellian and dishonest Washington DC politician.

Paul Richards a Boulder, Montana area businessman and former member of the Montana House of Representatives, ran for the U.S. Senate in 2006. Founder of the Deerlodge Forest Defense Fund, he served for many years as an official member of the Deerlodge National Forest Technical Advisory Committee.
