

LOLO RESTORATION COMMITTEE

May 10, 2010

Ms. Leslie Weldon, Regional Forester
USDA – Forest Service, Northern Region One
PO Box 7669
Missoula, MT 59807-7669

RE: Southwestern Crown of the Continent Collaborative Proposed Project

Dear Regional Forester Weldon:

The Lolo Restoration Committee (LRC), a sub-committee of the Montana Forest Restoration Committee (MFRC), expresses strong support for the Southwestern Crown of the Continent Project submitted to your office for consideration under the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). Members of the LRC helped craft the proposal and support the inclusive, collaborative process rooted in science that involved all stakeholders.

The Southwestern Crown proposal will ensure that collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration continues to be a high priority. The proposal's emphasis on treating 80% of all high risk acres, as identified in the area's three Community Wildfire Protection Plans, is viewed as a significant aid that increases the safety of those communities from wildfire. The participation of multi-stakeholder and multi-jurisdictional interests served to facilitate ongoing collaboration pertaining to fuel reduction and forest restoration efforts envisioned in the proposed project.

The proposal proposes to protect and restore clean water, improve aquatic and wildlife habitat and treat a large landscape prone to terrestrial and aquatic invasive species. The restoration work encourages a more natural process to play a greater role in ecosystem diversity and sustainability, while providing and retaining forest-related jobs.

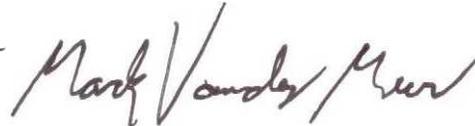
The LRC believes this project embodies the MFRC's guiding principles to restore ecosystem biodiversity and enhancing forest resiliency on federal forestlands, while providing economic opportunity to rural Montana communities and retaining our essential forest products partners.

Thank-you for giving the Southwestern Crown proposal the strongest possible support as it moves forward through the selection process.

Sincerely,



Scott Brennan
LRC Co-Chair



Mark Vandermeer
LRC Co-Chair

Cc: The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture
The Honorable Tom Tidwell, Chief of the Forest Service
Mr. William Timko, Deputy Director of Forest Management Staff
LRC members, MFRC Steering Committee