

From: [Lisa C. Kunz](#)
To: [Bob Kelly](#); [Mary Sheehy Moe](#); [Owen Robinson](#); [Rick Tryon](#); [Tracy Houck](#)
Cc: [Greg Doyon](#); [Charles Anderson](#); [Krista Artis](#)
Subject: FW: Agenda Item 1. Public comment in opposition to the Big Sky Country National Heritage Area
Date: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 8:23:39 AM

Good Morning - see comments below for your consideration.

Lisa Kunz
City Clerk/Records Manager
406.455.8451

-----Original Message-----

From: Lisa C. Kunz
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 8:22 AM
To: 'J L Knox' <breeog@peoplepc.com>
Subject: RE: Agenda Item 1. Public comment in opposition to the Big Sky Country National Heritage Area

Good Morning Linda - thank you for your comments, which will be shared with the members of the Commission for consideration and noted for Agenda Item 1.

Best regards,

Lisa Kunz
City Clerk/Records Manager
City of Great Falls
P.O. Box 5021
Great Falls, MT 59403
406.455.8451

-----Original Message-----

From: J L Knox <breeog@peoplepc.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 5:01 AM
To: commission <commission@greatfallsmt.net>
Subject: Agenda Item 1. Public comment in opposition to the Big Sky Country National Heritage Area

My name is Linda Knox
I reside at 4 Wagon Lane outside city limits within Cascade County

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the proposed Big Sky Country National Heritage Area.

I was raised on a working cattle and sheep ranch and witnessed, first hand, incredible dedication to care for and steward the land which provided our family a living. This commitment required long working hours, many dollars, much sweat and sometimes even tears.

I now know that a private, self-appointed group seeks to have all of Cascade County designated a National Heritage Area with specific interest in a "corridor" for the purpose of preservation and tourism, however, this is being carried forward without the consent of Cascade County landowners and citizens.

I have read the Congressional Research Service report dated August 20, 2020 covering the requirements for implementing a National Heritage Area along with the various costs involved and the problems of long-term sustainability of such areas. The creation of such an area here would require landowners to open up privately held and personally paid for property when deemed a "heritage" site, it would cause our county to be liable for matching Federal funds received under this project on a dollar-for-dollar basis and would bring in the National Park Service as overseer at a time when the Federal government is already encroaching on so many areas of our lives.

Please, take a moment to consider that most jobs brought in by tourism are service level jobs, some of the lowest paid and highest turnover types of work with no upward mobility. When there is an economic downturn or CoVid type of disruption, there are no tourists to serve so jobs disappear, but we who permanently live here must still eat.

I realize a certain percentage of the American population doesn't understand that without farms and ranches there can be no grocery stores, restaurants or fast food outlets therefore we must do all we can to support our farmers and ranchers as they work so hard at what they do best without burdening them under land designation changes that only interfere. I encourage Cascade County and the City of Great Falls along with private entities desiring to find new ways to grow our economy to use foresight and wisdom when seeking to attract steady, long-term industries including farms and ranches which produce what is required for our basic daily needs and not rely on the fickle vacationing habits of the American people to sustain us. I would submit that Montana already has a great many national, state and local tourist attractions within it's borders and that this one being proposed will not achieve the hoped for results but instead will cause much in the way of hard feelings between the landowning people of Cascade County and those who seek authority over that land.

Thank you for your consideration and I respectfully ask that this Commission oppose the Big Sky Country National Heritage Area.