

**City of Helena**

**Mayor Jim Smith**  
316 North Park Avenue  
Helena, MT 59623  
Telephone: 406/447-8410 Fax: 406/447-8434

July 8, 2009

Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell  
U S Forest Service  
201 14<sup>th</sup> Street S W  
Washington, D C 20250

Dear Chief Tidwell:

On behalf of the City Commission, I am pleased to submit the Ten Mile Watershed Collaborative Committee's consensus goals and recommendations. The commission formally accepted them July 6, 2009.

City Commission Resolution #19605 charged the committee to develop recommendations to address several interrelated issues in the watershed. These issues arise from the threat of uncontrolled wildfire to the city's water supply infrastructure, the water quality that sustains it, and multiple watershed values.

The Ten Mile Watershed is a landscape of unique importance to the city of Helena and surrounding communities. Its multiple values include exceptional water quality, wildlife habitat, and public recreation. As Helena's municipal watershed, management of the resources and reduction of wildfire risk is a high priority and must be addressed. To reduce some of that risk, the city will soon begin fire mitigation on private and city-owned lands along the flume that delivers water to the water treatment facility.

Along with the city's commitment to take proactive efforts to reduce fire risks and to sustain water quality and wildlife habitat, I encourage the United States Forest Service to do the

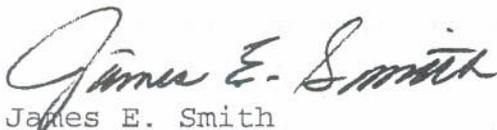
Forest Chief Tom Tidwell/2  
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same by securing funding and resources to conduct an environmental analysis (NEPA) that will address management goals and activities in the watershed. Understanding that the NEPA process can be time consuming, we encourage you to begin the process as soon as possible.

The commission endorsed these collaborative committee recommendations at the city commission meeting on July 6, 2009. We encourage you to incorporate the committee's goals and recommendations into your planning process. These recommendations represent broad and diverse community representation and consensus support. The use and incorporation of these recommendations will be key to the NEPA process and result in successful outcomes for the environmental analysis and future decisions. Please accept the city's commitment to stay involved in the process as needed and willingness to help facilitate future community engagement activities.

We appreciate your staff's commitment and involvement in the collaborative process. Active participation on the part of representatives from the Helena National Forest and Fire Science's Lab provided important advisory expertise to the committee's work. We appreciate your commitment to this process.

Sincerely,



James E. Smith  
Mayor