

Hannah Lansverk

Montana Wildfire Prevention and Safety Association

I represent the Montana Wildfire Prevention and Safety Association (MWPSA). This organization supports the Guidelines For Development Within The Wildland-Urban Interface. Wildland-urban interface refers to the zone of transition between unoccupied land and human development. The Guidelines for Development within the Wildland-Urban Interface aims to reduce the risk that wildfires pose to urban areas and the lives and property they contain by requiring that buildings within the interface have certain building codes, defensible space, and a vegetation management plan.

The MWPSA supports the passing of these guidelines as law because we believe that this is very important to the state of Montana. Although Montana's population is only 974,989, according to the July 2009 census by U.S. Census Bureau (Population Division), Montana has the fifth largest are, of the western states, of forested land where homes have been built bordering fire-prone public lands. Because Montana has so much potential wildfire related harm. According to Natural Resources Conservation Service, the state of Montana is currently at 68% of its average snow pack. Being that Montana has a history of drought conditions, the average is already low, so only 68% of that is very worrying in the context of how dry summer is and the potential increase in wildfire potential across the state. Also, because of the damage caused by the Mountain Pine Beetle, Montana's forests, and thus Montanans' property, is at a much greater risk from forest fires because of the increasing amount of dead trees.

I believe that the Guidelines for Development within the Wildland-Urban Interface is very important to adopt into law for this reason. I urge you to support this measure as well, as it will benefit Montanans greatly by protecting property and lives.

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