



TETRA TECH, INC.

Fred Gifford  
Tetra Tech Inc.  
537 South Rodney  
Helena, MT 59601  
August 4th, 2014

Dan Villa  
Budget Director  
Governor's Office of Budget and Program Planning  
PO Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Dear Director Villa:

On behalf of several private sector companies I wish to express our strong support for the Montana State Library's request that two geographic information staff members working on cadastral related data receive general fund authority rather than relying on state special revenues from the Montana Land Information Account. The citizens and private businesses in Montana rely so heavily on cadastral data that the on-line cadastral mapping application has become state government's fourth most popular state website. As I'm sure you are aware, the Department of Administration's 2009 report entitled "Montana's Cadastral Layer Business Impact" estimated the state's cadastral infrastructure has returned \$46,000,000 in the ten year period from 1999 to 2009, with the real benefit total probably far greater

Enhancing access to the data, several private sector firms, like Montana start-ups ONXMAPS and GCS leverage the data in value added applications that generate jobs here in Montana. GeoData Services, Inc. uses the data as they build solutions for clients as varied as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to local planning organizations. Tetra Tech used the data for analysis as we put together the state broadband map under contract with the Department of Administration. On a more global scale the data is harvested by firms like Garmin, First American Title and Google.

Removing risk and ensuring that Montana cadastral data is maintained, enhanced and available for the long term will enable the private sector to invest in even more applications for the telecom, realty, insurance and other similar sectors. The Montana Cadastral Database is good for business in Montana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fred Gifford".

Fred Gifford  
Tetra Tech Inc.  
p.p. Alex Philp, Ph.D., President, GCS  
p.p. Ken Wall, President, GeoData Services, Inc.  
p.p. Valerie Lovan, Garmin, Inc.

cc: Tim Baker, Policy Advisor for Natural Resources