

Julia Nordlund
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November 19, 2024

Via email

Chief Justice
Montana Supreme Court
215 N. Sanders Street
Helena, MT 59601

Re: Application for Associate Water Judge, Montana Water Court

Honorable Chief Justice:

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for the position of Associate Water Judge of the Montana Water Court. Please accept this letter and enclosed resume as my application.

Growing up immersed in farming and ranching in Montana, I developed an appreciation for the land and the vital role of water in this state. This personal connection, combined with my professional expertise, makes me deeply committed to the Water Court's work of completing the adjudication process and delivering final decrees across our state.

For the past eight years, I have served as a Water Master at the Montana Water Court, where I have adjudicated thousands of water right claims in hydrological basins from both populated and sparse regions of the state. During this effort, I have handled complex dockets while ensuring equitable and accurate water rights decisions. Beyond my adjudication duties, I have mediated dozens of water disputes, helping parties reach mutually beneficial resolutions. I have also overseen the distribution of enforcement tabulations and collaborated closely with district court judges, clerks, and water commissioners to ensure the seamless execution of water-related processes. These responsibilities have given me invaluable insight into both the legal and operational challenges that arise in water rights management, preparing me to excel as an Associate Water Judge.

I am also positioned to step into the role of Associate Water Judge because of my existing relationships and proven ability to work effectively with the dedicated team at the Water Court. Over the years, I have had the privilege of learning from three Water Court Judges: Judge McElyea, Judge Ritter, and Judge Brown, whose guidance has been invaluable in honing my judicial approach. My strong working relationship with our Court Administrator, Sara Calkins, proves I am poised to collaborate seamlessly with court administration. I respect and am well-acquainted with each member of the Court's workforce. I am confident that this established rapport would allow me to "hit the ground running" and continue building on the Court's legacy.

My professional experience bridges private practice and public service, offering me a well-rounded perspective essential for this role. In private practice, I honed my skills in interpreting

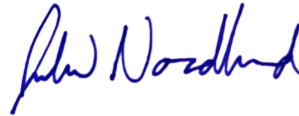
complex legal issues, advocating for clients with diverse needs, and finding resolutions. These experiences have complemented my time at the Montana Water Court. This blend of experiences has allowed me to advance just and effective outcomes in water rights cases.

I am particularly inspired by the opportunity to contribute to the Court's historic mission of finalizing the adjudication process. Completing this monumental task will provide stability and security to Montana's water users for generations to come. My background has shaped my understanding of the challenge of balancing agricultural and recreational needs, along with community growth, and the conservation of fish and wildlife. The decisions made at the Court today not only resolve existing disputes but also shape and define this critical balance, ensuring sustainable water management across the state.

As Associate Water Judge, I will bring a practical legal expertise, a personal connection to Montana's water users, and an unrelenting dedication to the Court's mission. I am eager to continue fostering collaboration, delivering thoughtful decisions, and contributing to the vital work of securing Montana's water future in a timely and efficient manner.

I respectfully ask for appointment to the position of Associate Water Judge. Thank you for considering my application and for the opportunity to serve the people of Montana. I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss how my background and vision align with the goals of the Montana Water Court.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Julia Nordlund". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "N".

Julia Nordlund