

The Honorable Cory Swanson
Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court

Dear Judge:

I am writing in regards to the public comment opportunity for Ms. Bina Peters, Attorney at Law, for the appointment of Associate Water Judge at the Montana Water Court.

Reflecting on my Montana heritage, the Bitz and the Wagner families, both homesteaded in the Box Elder area of Northern Montana in the early 1900's. I am a 4th generation son of my Mother's family and 3rd generation of my Father's family. I returned to ranch and farm with my family after completing my education at Montana State University in 1971. During my 50 plus years in agriculture I filed many water rights to establish domestic, irrigation, and livestock use on the ranch. In 2007 I purchased my Gallatin Valley property which includes the Reynolds Creek and the Crail ditch drainage when it quickly became apparent that I needed to employ legal counsel to protect my water rights. My attorney in Havre strongly suggested I hire Bina Peters, whose practice is exclusively water rights.

Bina Peters has been representing our family ranch beginning shortly after our purchase in 2007 to better protect our water rights for both irrigation and livestock. My experience working with Ms. Peters was successful as she accomplished the water rights goals we needed to stabilize our operation. Bina specifically addressed water rights and it is apparent that is her only legal focus. I appreciated that she understands the practical side of water usage for landowners in ranching and farming. As you know, Montana water laws are complicated and historical, and needed researching to represent the landowners rights properly and Bina has been very capable and determined to do that.

I am very satisfied that Ms. Peters, who was my first choice, to represent our property's water rights. I found her to be very knowledgeable of the Montana Law and a common sense approach

I believe Bina Peters would be an excellent candidate for Associate Water Judge and would fulfill her duties with honor and integrity. She has made Montana water law her only legal profession. My client/lawyer relationship with Ms. Peters has been enjoyable as well as professional. She has gone the "extra mile" to assist us in satisfying our water legal issues.

Thank You for Consideration of Bina Peters to this appointment.

Sincerely,
Donald H Bitz
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