

From: [Lars Phillips](#)
To: [Bird, Rob](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Bina Peters Application for Associate Water Judge
Date: Friday, January 10, 2025 1:17:12 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of Bina Peters and her Application to serve as Associate Water Judge of the Montana Water Court.

I am an attorney in private practice in Bozeman. Prior to that, I worked for a year as a Water Master on the Montana Water Court. During my time with the Court, I grew to know Bina and she became a mentor to me as I navigated my way through the Court and into my role. So, I know from first hand experience that Bina is kind, patient, smart, and professional.

Bina has spent fifteen years steeped in Montana water law. Bina left the Water Court in 2015 to open her own law firm with her colleague, and former Water Master, Dana Pepper. Since then, she has focused on water rights and water related property issues and has represented a broad swath of water users in a whole host of different issues. From my perspective, Bina's experience in private practice is the single factor that makes her most qualified for the Associate Water Judge position. At the end of the day, the AWJ must be able to explain their decision to water users that, many times, are unrepresented by legal counsel or are people who do not have the luxury of spending the time necessary to develop a deep understanding of Montana water law. Bina has spent the last decade of her career doing exactly that: explaining complicated water law issues to water users. She knows precisely how to do the most critical piece of the Associate Water Judge role. Montana water law is complex and difficult to understand, even for lawyers. The jurisprudence has so many defined terms that I have heard many clients say they feel like working with the Water Court requires learning a second language. Respectfully, I firmly believe that we need an AWJ who understands the difficulties in communicating the important and complicated decisions made by the Water Court to Montana water users. Fundamentally, that ability to explain those issues—and most importantly the private practice experience to understand the knowledge base that many water users may be starting from—is critically important to maintaining the Water Court's standing in the water user community.

Bina has demonstrated a deep commitment to practicing Montana water law. It is not an easy field, and the task ahead for the Court—including completing the adjudication—is a difficult one. I believe Bina has the knowledge and experience necessary to finish the good work done by the judges on the Montana Water Court. I believe she will be an excellent Associate Water Judge. I recommend her without reservation.

Lars Phillips

LARS PHILLIPS
1915 South 19th Avenue
Bozeman, MT 59718

Main: 406.556.1430
Direct: 406.522.4509



WITH OFFICES IN MONTANA, NORTH DAKOTA, AND WYOMING:

[BILLINGS \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com) [BISMARCK \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com) [BOZEMAN \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com) [BUTTE \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com) [CASPER \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com)
[CHEYENNE \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com) [HELENA \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com) [KALISPELL \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com) [MISSOULA \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com)
[SHERIDAN \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com) [WILLISTON \[CROWLEYFLECK.COM\]](http://crowleyfleck.com)

NOTICE: This electronic mail transmission may constitute an Attorney-Client communication that is privileged at law. It is not intended for transmission to, or receipt by, any unauthorized persons. If you have received this electronic mail transmission in error, please delete it from your system without copying it, and notify the sender by reply e-mail or by calling Crowley Fleck PLLP, 406-252-3441, so that our address record can be corrected.

This email has been scanned for email related threats and delivered safely by Mimecast. For more information please visit <http://www.mimecast.com> [\[mimecast.com\]](http://www.mimecast.com)