

**From:** [Hunter](#)  
**To:** [Bird, Rob](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Support letter for William Fanning, Water Court  
**Date:** Thursday, January 9, 2025 1:10:44 PM

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Hunter Michelbrink  
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Gardiner, MT 59030  
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RE: William C. Fanning  
Support for Associate Water Court Judge

To: Chief Justice Cory Swanson  
Montana Supreme Court  
215 North Sanders St.  
Helena, MT 59634

I hired William C. Fanning (Bill) in October of 2022 as my attorney for adjudicating my numerous water rights in the Upper Yellowstone Basin (43B). I interviewed four separate attorneys prior to hiring Bill. Through this process and the adjudication of my water rights I became familiar with two of the other applicants for this judgeship. I am extremely satisfied with my selection of Bill having gone through the adjudication process with him I am assured he would be an excellent choice for Associate Water Court Judge.

My water rights adjudication took approximately 1 1/2 years from start to judgement from trial. Bill stayed “on point” the entire time, even with his numerous other clients and trials. From my point of view my rights were under much scrutiny from the federal government and others because of their number, their use and location, some encroaching into federal wilderness and others on the Yellowstone. Bill was understanding and supportive of my needs and receptive of my input in the process. I am extremely satisfied with his advocacy and the outcome of my adjudication.

Please feel free to contact me regarding William C. Fanning’s appointment as Associate Water Court Judge.

Respectfully Submitted,

Hunter Michelbrink

Sent from my iPad