

Hon. Chief Justice Cory Swanson
Montana Supreme Court
c/o/ Robert Bird, Office of the Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620

Via e-mail only to: rbird@mt.gov

Re: Appointment of Senior Water Master Julia J. Nordlund as Associate Water Judge

Dear Justice Swanson;

I respectfully submit this letter of recommendation in support of Julia J. Nordlund's appointment as Associate Water Judge of the Montana Water Court. Julie has all the qualities that make an excellent water judge and serve the people of Montana in the adjudication of existing water rights.

I am the newest water master at the Water Court. As a newcomer, I have had the privilege to assist Judge McElyea, Judge Brown, and nearly every other water master on the Water Court's staff in their caseloads. It has granted me the opportunity to observe and learn from each person's demeanor, knowledge, organization, and judicial philosophy. I have observed that Julie stands out among her peers; she has a practicality and understanding of water law that is unique, efficient, and thoughtful to water users.

Julie's unique perspective stems from her upbringing – she grew up on a farming and ranching operation in a water-contentious area of Montana. As a result, her knowledge of water law spans far beyond the letter of the law. She understands firsthand how water law works on the ground, the burden the adjudication has placed on water users, and the magnitude of each decision made by the Water Court.

I first had the pleasure of meeting Julie as a summer intern at the Water Court a few years ago. The water judges and court administrator had asked Julie to mentor me and oversee my workload because she is so outstanding. I am very thankful for that decision; I flourished under Julie's guidance and earned enough respect to be re-hired as a water master after law school. I credit her with establishing my career in water law and respect her immensely. There are many recent interns of the Water Court that share my sentiments regarding Julie.

Julie is a good-hearted, caring, level-headed, and considerate person. She knows firsthand the burdens the adjudication places on each water user. She will treat all parties fairly and respectfully. She will ensure that the adjudication remains practical, efficient, and fair for all water users. The people of Montana will benefit greatly from her guidance as judge.

While I greatly respect and admire every other applicant who has applied for this position, I wholeheartedly recommend that Julia Nordlund be appointed Associate Water Judge of the Montana Water Court.

Sincerely,

Brooke Reynolds
Water Master, Montana Water Court