

**From:** [Kevin Twidwell](#)  
**To:** [Bird, Rob](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Letter of Support for Chief Water Court Judge Stephen Brown  
**Date:** Monday, March 10, 2025 9:32:58 AM

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Chief Justice Cory Swanson  
Montana Supreme Court  
c/o Rob Bird, Court Services Director  
P.O. Box 203005  
Helena, Montana 59620  
rbird@mt.gov

Re: Chief Water Court Judge Stephen R. Brown

Dear Chief Justice Swanson,

I am writing to support Judge Stephen Brown's reappointment as Chief Water Court Judge in Montana. I do not practice water law or in his court, but I have known Steve for more than two decades and worked with him as a colleague at Garlington, Lohn & Robinson for some 15 years. During our time together at GLR, Steve was a senior partner and then the managing partner of the largest law firm in Missoula. There, he successfully handled some of the firm's most important and complex cases, including many water rights and environmental cases. He became managing partner because the other partners trusted his judgment, his ability to be fair, and his adeptness in bringing together an often-contentious group of people. I know that attorneys at the firm were proud of Steve when he became a Water Court Judge, but his appointment was bittersweet because the firm lost an excellent and well-respected member of the law firm.

I know Steve to be an honest, ethical person and attorney, and I always looked up to him when we worked together and often sought his consult on sticky legal issues. On a personal level, I know that Steve takes great pride and satisfaction in his position as a Water Court Judge. He is fascinated with maps and Montana's history, especially as it applies to Montana's waterways. I have no doubt that Steve is fair to all parties who appear before him, and he has the calm, patient demeanor that makes him a good, decisive judge. I wholeheartedly support his reappointment as Chief Water Court Judge.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or if I can elaborate on this recommendation.

Kevin Twidwell

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