



Beartooth Alliance, P.O. Box 1141, Cooke City, Montana 59020

3 April 2008

The Honorable Max Baucus
511 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baucus,

The Beartooth Alliance is a Cooke City, MT based conservation organization with over 100 members from the Cooke City area and across the country. We are concerned with intelligent management and conservation of the natural resources in the Cooke City area. These resources are of national importance because they are adjacent to Yellowstone National Park, and they provide outstanding recreational opportunities for thousands of forest users annually and economic well being for our residents.

I want to thank you for your support in the past and request your support on a matter of great importance to the Beartooth Alliance and the people of Montana. As you are aware, the Beartooth Alliance has led the effort to assure that mining activities in the New World District adjacent to Cooke City do not degrade the ecological integrity and function of the region. The late Margaret Reeb owned a number of claims in the mining district that were not turned over to the U.S. Forest Service in the New World Consent Decree of 1996, in which the Federal Government purchased Noranda's rights for \$65 million. Recently, Margaret Reeb's heirs made the mining claims available for public acquisition with the intent of conserving the natural heritage of the Absarokee-Beartooth Wilderness Area and Yellowstone National Park. An appropriation of \$4 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in each of the FY09 and FY10 Interior appropriations bills will permit the Forest Service to acquire the approximately 1470 acres involved in the Reeb claims.

Senator Baucus, the U.S. Forest Service is nearing the completion of the \$22.5 million clean up of the mining pollution of the New World Mining District. The purchase of the Reeb property is an incredible opportunity to complete closure of the Consent Decree, preserve the primitive nature and scenic attributes of the area for all to enjoy, and assure that we do not have to spend \$65 million again to clean up this area. I strongly urge you to support the project and lead the effort to assure that funding is secured.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely yours,

John L. Oldemeyer, Chair
Board of Directors
406-838-2431 (summers)
970-229-1872 (winters)