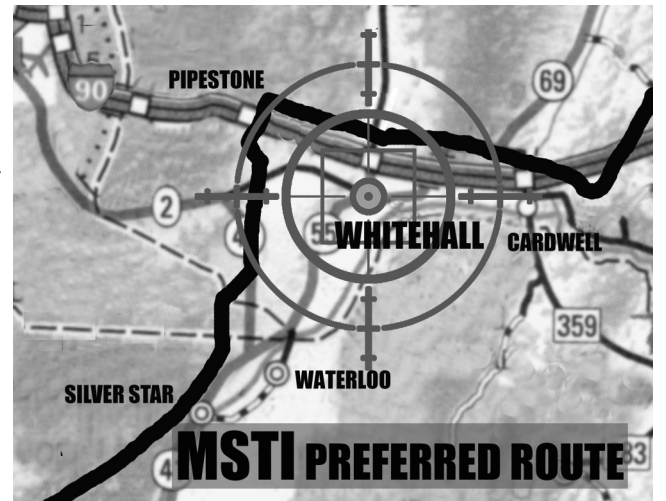


Update on NorthWestern Energy's Proposed Mountain States Transmission Intertie (MSTI)

The Good News

Major legal victory for Jefferson County - Through the courageous efforts of Jefferson County Commissioners Wortman, Lythgoe, and Kirsch, County Attorney Matt Johnson, and attorney Peter Scott, a substantial victory for local governments statewide was achieved through a favorable ruling in Montana's Fifth District Court. Now local governments have the right to consult with state agencies throughout the planning process of projects like MSTI. The litigants, Jefferson County and Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), have recently submitted arguments to the court about how to implement the ruling, and additional court hearings may be scheduled soon regarding implementation.



Concerned Citizens Montana formed – Organizations along the proposed MSTI routes have worked together to form a non-partisan, statewide watchdog organization to support citizen involvement in promoting responsible and innovative energy solutions. Concerned Citizens Montana (CCM) will coordinate continuing efforts of Save Scenic Jefferson Valley Coalition (greater Whitehall), MoveMSTI (greater Butte), Stop the Grid (Townsend area), Friends of Southwest Montana (Twin Bridges and Madison County), and Keep it Rural (Dillon area). The organization will serve as a clearinghouse for public information, and will unite citizen efforts and resources to ensure NorthWestern Energy Corporation, state/federal agencies, and elected officials are representing sound energy policies that are in the best interest of Montanans. CCM currently has approximately 3,000 supporters representing diverse concerns, including ranching, small business, tourism, education, natural resources, government, recreation, real estate, public health and safety, and energy policy.

Concerned Citizens Montana retains counsel – Concerned Citizens Montana has retained legal counsel of two prominent attorneys, Karen Budd-Falen and Peter Scott, to protect rural traditions, natural and historic lands, and property rights in Beaverhead, Broadwater, Jefferson, Madison, and Silver Bow counties. **Karen Budd-Falen** (Budd-Falen Law Offices, L.L.C., Cheyenne, WY) is nationally recognized for her expertise and successful litigation record defending private property rights and issues pertaining to the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other environmental statutes. Already well-known to local concerned citizens, **Peter Scott** (Gough, Shanahan, Johnson & Waterman, PLLP) has served with County Attorney Matt Johnson on Jefferson County's legal team in ongoing litigation in Montana state court.

Gaining state-wide support – *Northern Plains Resource Council* recently passed a resolution **opposing MSTI as proposed**, citing shortcomings in the federal and state siting and approval process, lack of substantiation for renewable energy claims about the project, and concerns about property rights. Northern Plains organizes Montanans to protect family farms and ranches and our unique quality of life, and thus meshes well with our goals. Please visit www.northernplains.org and consider joining this organization.

The Bad News

The fight is not over. The recent court victory may only delay government approval to NorthWestern Energy. Local input does not equal local control –

If local input is not heeded by state and federal government, our options reduce to the following:

- Win the support of our elected officials who ultimately approve the taxpayer subsidies underlying MSTI and grant NorthWestern Energy the power to condemn land for MSTI; and/or,
- Costly legal action.

No help yet from Senator Max Baucus, Senator Jon Tester, Representative Denny Rehberg, or Governor Brian Schweitzer – Several of these officials promote MSTI as providing “clean” energy and jobs for Montanans – even though MSTI would likely work against these goals more than for them. Higher power rates kill jobs. Taxing everyone to funnel huge and ineffective subsidies to very few kills jobs. Our representatives will not resist special interests until Montanans statewide are informed and concerned about the true costs in utility rates, jobs, and taxes of the flawed energy policy fueling MSTI.

Look forward to a community meeting January in Whitehall.

In the meantime, your contributions to Save Scenic Jefferson Valley Coalition, P.O. 977, Whitehall, MT 59759 keep community efforts going. Such contributions are *not* tax deductible.

Save Scenic Jefferson Valley Coalition