

**RESOLUTION 2016 - 96**

**RESOLUTION APPROVING FUNDING OF THE OPEN LANDS PROGRAM  
GEHRING RANCH CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROJECT**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution 2008-97, in November 2008, voters in Lewis and Clark County, Montana, approved the Land, Water and Wildlife bond measure, a \$10 million general obligation bond measure for protecting drinking water sources and ground water quality; protecting water quality in and along rivers and streams; conserving working farm, ranch and forest lands; protecting wildlife areas; preserving open lands and natural areas; providing for recreation; and managing growth and development; and

WHEREAS, the primary purpose of the Open Lands Program is to conserve resources on private lands in Lewis and Clark County that fulfill the objectives of the bond measure; and

WHEREAS, funds generated by sales of these bonds are distributed through the County's Open Lands Program; and

WHEREAS, the County's Open Lands Program has received and processed an application for Open Lands funding from the Prickly Pear Land Trust, on behalf of the landowner/applicant, William Gehring; and

WHEREAS, in this project, referred to as the Gehring Ranch Conservation Easement, Prickly Pear Land Trust proposes to apply \$1,000,000.00 of County Open Lands bond funds price of a 2.888 acre conservation easement adjacent to Lincoln Road West, approximately 4 road miles west of Green Meadow Drive; and

WHEREAS, the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Open Lands (CAC) held a public meeting on this proposal on October 4, 2016, and unanimously voted 11-0 to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that the Gehring Ranch Conservation Easement Project receive full requested funding, conditioned upon County legal staff's review of the Level 2 application's compliance with the due diligence requirements of the Open Lands Program. The motion also included that the recommendation is based on a determination that the Level 2 application meets project evaluation criteria for: (1) conserving working farms and ranches, (2) protecting habitat for fish and wildlife; (3) protecting water resources and water quality, (4) preserving open lands and natural areas, and (5) managing growth and development; and

WHEREAS, the Commission held a public meeting on the proposal on October 13, 2016, at which a 30-day public comment period was opened;

WHEREAS, the Commission considered the recommendation of the CAC at a regularly scheduled public hearing on November 15, 2016, along with County Legal staff's due diligence report; and

WHEREAS, the Commission determined that this project meets multiple purposes of the bond, substantially complies with the legal requirements, and may not be achieved without the involvement of the County; and



NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners

- Accept the recommendation of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Open Lands; and
- Approve funding the Gehring Ranch Conservation Easement Project in the amount of \$1,000,000.00.

DATED this 08 day of December, 2016.

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Michael Murray  
Michael Murray, Chairman

ATTEST:

Paulette DeHart  
Paulette DeHart, Clerk of the Board

