VEALE SUBDIVISION SUFFICIENCY REVIEW

COMMENTS OF THE FIVE VALLEYS AUDUBON SOCIETY

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed Veale two-lot minor subdivision. As you may know, the Five Valleys Audubon Society has had a long-standing interest in land development activity that may impact areas having valued avian habitat. Riparian lands are of particular interest since they contain habitat that is critical to a number of bird species having high conservation priority. We are also interested in protecting grasslands and attendant brushy draws such as those found west of Missoula. These areas also contain valuable habitat that is important to many neotropic bird species and has particular significance to a variety of raptors.

The grassland setting of the prospective Veale development and its distance from the Bitterroot River development preclude any direct impact to riparian habitat. It is likely that, at one time, land encompassed by the proposed Veale Subdivision had value as grassland wildlife habitat. However, the human activity that has taken place on the land and the extant development on adjoining properties have reduced the importance of any such habitat. Accordingly, lacking the environment critical to species that our organization believes is important to maintain in the Missoula Valley, we do not see where this proposed subdivision would be in conflict with our resource protection objectives.

We again wish to thank you for providing us the opportunity to comment at this early stage of plan review. If you should wish any further information or clarification regarding our comments, please feel free to contact either Jim Brown or me.

Gerhard Knudsen

Five Valleys Audubon Society