



To: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission

Subject: Support for Renewal of Malteurop Great Falls Water Rights Lease

5/29/2026

Dear Commissioners,

We are writing to express strong support for the renewal of the water rights lease between Malteurop North America's Great Falls malting facility and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

For 20 years, Malteurop and FWP have maintained a successful and collaborative partnership that demonstrates how responsible industrial water use can coexist with—and actively support—the protection of Montana's aquatic resources. This long-standing agreement has consistently delivered balanced outcomes, preserving critical instream flows for fisheries and habitat while sustaining an important economic contributor to the region.

A key strength of this arrangement is its non-consumptive nature. The Malteurop malting process uses water to awaken the grain. And through a controlled germination, the natural biological systems within the kernel convert the barley into malt. 100% of the water from this lease is returned to the Missouri River, ensuring that the resource remains available to support downstream ecological functions and recreational use. This approach reflects a thoughtful and sustainable model of water use that aligns closely with Montana's conservation objectives.

The Great Falls malting plant is a long-term, strategic investment for Malteurop in North America. Ensuring the long-term stability of water supply for this facility is critical to the company's ability to operate reliably and to continue supporting its customers, growers, and employees. Renewal of this 10-year lease plays an essential role in maintaining that stability and reinforcing Malteurop's continued presence and investment in Montana.

The plant also plays a significant role in Montana's agricultural and local economy. Each year, Malteurop purchases approximately 260,000 metric tons of malting-quality barley from 250 to 300 family farms across the state, providing a stable and high-value market for Montana growers and supporting the long-term vitality of rural communities. In addition, the facility employs 48 individuals in Great Falls across barley procurement, operations, and quality functions, contributing skilled and stable jobs to the local economy.

Beyond these direct economic benefits, the lease delivers meaningful conservation value. The proceeds from the agreement contribute approximately \$500,000 annually to hatchery



operations, directly supporting fisheries management and enhancing aquatic resources throughout Montana. This reinvestment highlights the mutually beneficial nature of the partnership, where economic activity directly supports environmental stewardship.

The 20-year history of collaboration between Malteurop and FWP reflects a proven approach to water management—one that has demonstrated durability, accountability, and measurable benefit for both natural resources and the economy. Few agreements so clearly illustrate how public-private partnerships can create shared value for stakeholders across Montana.

Renewal of this lease will ensure the continuation of these benefits: sustained support for fisheries programs, long-term economic contributions to Montana agriculture and local communities, and the operational stability of a key strategic asset in the state.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Commission to approve the renewal of the Malteurop Great Falls water rights lease.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Darrin Peterson
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Malteurop North America

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