



November 30, 2001

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Gentlemen:

We understand that progress has been made by MFWP and CSKT in developing draft criteria for achieving secure population levels for bull and westslope cutthroat trout in the Flathead Lake system, under the umbrella of the new Flathead Lake Co-management Plan. We would like to take this opportunity to restate our interest in facilitating the best possible scientific review of these criteria, in the interest of promoting sound fisheries science and biologically-based management principals. We also understand that the co-managers intend to circulate the secure criteria draft to several recognized experts in the field of bull trout and native fish conservation biology for critical review, and we applaud that process.

We have been considering how we might be able to provide an independent, objective review of the draft criteria by MCAFS members not directly involved in Flathead Basin fisheries management issues. We are currently approaching several MCAFS members who we believe may be able to provide such a review. These reviewers would forward their comments to our Executive Committee, which would provide you with a formal response. For our process to work, we would need to have at least 10 days advance notice of the release to allow ExCom and our reviewers to set up our timetable for review and response. And due to the dispersed nature of our organization, we also request a response period of 45 days, which obviously would apply to all reviewers, not just MCAFS.

Thank you for your consideration of our request, we look forward to participation in this process.

Sincerely,

Pat Clancey

## MCAFS President

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