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## Montana Outfitters and Guides Association (1)

Max S. Baucus

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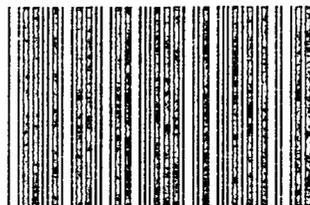
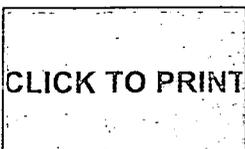
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(2) Subject\* **Montana Outfitters and Guides Association**

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BAUCUS

**SPEECH TO MONTANA OUTFITTERS  
AND GUIDES ASSOCIATION**

**April 15, 1989**

In recent weeks, we've heard a lot about an organization called the Montana Ambassadors. As you probably know, this group was formed a few years back to promote Montana as a place to vacation and do business. But today, I feel as if I'm addressing another group of Montana ambassadors.

As outfitters and guides, you're also aggressive promoters of our state. Back in Washington, I'm always impressed by the number of people -- often perfect strangers -- who go out of their way to remind me of our state's natural beauty.

More often than not, they punctuate their stories with an honorable mention of a good-natured outfitter or guide who shared his knowledge and love of the land with a visitor from back East.

And if there's one thing that brings us together as Montanans, it's the land. Russell painted it. McLean wrote about it. And my family has ranched on it for years. The land is what ties us together as Montanans.

For this reason, nothing ruffles more feathers, gets more goats, or stirs more emotions in Montanans than trying to decide the future of our public lands.

But, like the people I meet in Washington, those who come to our state as your clients do not leave untouched. Years ago, after a trip to Montana, John Steinbeck wrote:

"It seems to me that Montana is a great splash of grandeur. The scale is huge but not overpowering. The land is rich with grass and color, and the mountains are the kind I would create if mountains were ever put on my agenda . . . Montana has a spell on me . . . Of all the states, it is my favorite and my love."

While our state's natural beauty is there for everyone to see, people from places like Washington just can't comprehend what we Montanans take for granted. Back there, the land is something you cover with asphalt and drive on. Here, the land means survival -- our source of food, water, and recreation.

Our views about how to manage our public lands are as wide and diverse as the terrain itself. But whether a rancher or a sportsman, a logger or a guide, we Montanans

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want to keep the best of what we have.

That's why the current debate over the future of our roadless lands will help to shape Montana's destiny. Now more than ever, we must work together to resolve this issue.

The wilderness issue has hung over our heads for too many years. But I guarantee you this is not the time to give up in frustration. We've come too far and been through too much. I'm ready to give this issue a fresh look, and I believe the rest of Montana is too.

But we need solid data to continue this work. That's why I've asked the Congressional Research Service to study the economic impact of wilderness in Montana. CRS is the non-partisan, unbiased research arm of the Library of Congress.

In order to narrow the field, I've asked CRS researchers to contain their study to three different wilderness proposals -- the bill that was vetoed last year, the U.S. Forest Service proposal, and Alternative W.

Specifically, this study will examine the effect of wilderness on local economies throughout Montana.

cornerstones of your businesses will be considered as part of this study.

After CRS has finished its work, I'll make the study available to all Montanans. No doubt it will prove the source of lively debate. I also plan to hold hearings on the study by sometime late this spring.

I've invited Conrad Burns, Ron Marlenee, and Pat Williams to take part as well. And I'm looking forward to hearing from all Montanans who are concerned about this subject. Solid information will lead to sound decisions -- and a better Montana.

Following these hearings, I'll call the delegation together again. We must set politics aside and draft a bill based solely upon what's best for Montana, its land and its people. As Montanans working together, we can achieve this goal.

I'm looking forward to your insights and participation as this process continues.

Finally, I want to add a few words about a concern which may seem even more immediate to many of you. In recent months, I know that many Montana outfitters have been in conflict with the Forest Service over the issue of

day-use policy.

A few months back, I had the opportunity to meet with some of your membership to talk about this problem. I believe the Forest Service must strive for a day-use policy which protects the rights of established, reputable outfitters.

I've encouraged the Forest Service to engage in good faith negotiations with your association. While the pace may seem frustrating at times, I believe this problem can be solved by direct and honest negotiation. I'll do everything possible to help this process along.

I know many of you are already preparing to return to your camps for the start of another season. If you've spent a summer in Washington, you can understand why I envy your lifestyle. There's a lot to be said for Montana summers.

However, I also know that -- even in your line of work -- you can't escape the hassles of government bureaucracy and paperwork. So when you encounter these problems, always feel free to let me know. I'll do what I can to help straighten things out.

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Thanks for your time. It's good to be here with you today. I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.