



January 30, 2005

Dear Flathead County Commissioners:

The Flathead Audubon Society supports the tax reduction applied for by the F.H. Stoltze Company to make it more feasible to remodel their mill. The mill upgrade would allow them to handle smaller diameter logs, be more competitive, and participate more easily in the thinning and "defensible space" projects in the wildland-urban interface. Such projects have been identified as a high priority for forest management in the Flathead Valley.

F.H. Stoltze Company has a reputation for practicing responsible stewardship on their own lands as well as careful logging on other private and public lands. Stoltze Company also allows public recreational uses on their property which is a benefit to Flathead Valley residents.

F.H. Stoltze Company has been in business in the Flathead Valley for many, many years. As a long established business, they deserve any potential tax break as much as, or probably even more so, than new businesses wanting to get started.

Linda deKort, President
Lewis Young, Conservation Committee Chair
Flathead Audubon Society