



Statement of the
Kalispell Chamber of Commerce on
Flathead County Initiative 17-01
June 5, 2018 Ballot Issue

May 04, 2018

Summary: It is fundamentally unfair to split some a small area by county with popular vote, after a property owner has received their government approvals, for the sole purpose of preventing an otherwise allowed, legal use.

Business and individuals rely on the consistent application of zoning laws to make good investment decisions. Zoning laws inform the public about the uses a governmental jurisdiction will allow on a specific property. If citizens seek to prohibit a specific use, governing bodies have established procedures for amending zoning laws. It is fundamentally unfair to change zoning to prohibit a use after the necessary government approvals have been given.

Water bottling is a permitted use in much of the county. Even if this initiative is approved, water bottling production is still an allowed, legal land use in much of the rest of Flathead County.

Montana DNR issued a water permit, finding no significant impact to adjacent owners. The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, the governing body for water rights permitting, has held hearings and taken testimony and determined that the water permit requested for the subject property will have no significant impact on adjacent property owners. The property owner's use is subject to state and federal environmental protection regulations.

Conclusion. The Kalispell Chamber opposes Flathead County initiative 17-01 and urges voters to vote 'no' on this June 5, 2018 ballot issue.