

Professional Biographies of Panelists
Select Committee on Efficiency in Government
January 10, 2012

Richard Opper

Richard Opper was appointed as Director of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality in 2005. As Director of the Montana DEQ, Opper oversees his department's pursuit of its mission to protect, sustain, and improve a clean and healthful environment. DEQ works on superfund site cleanups, environmental enforcement, water quality planning, energy conservation, and environmental permitting. Opper received a Master's Degree in Environmental Science in 1979 from Montana State University, where his research focused on mined land reclamation. Before working for state government, Opper worked on natural resource issues for a variety of non-profits. Most recently, he served as Director for the Missouri River Basin Association, a coalition of the basin's states and tribes that addressed policy issues regarding the management and recovery of the Missouri River system.

Mary Sexton

Originally from Great Falls, Mary Sexton has degrees from Stanford University and the University of Montana. She taught high school in Hamilton and was administrator of The Nature Conservancy's Pine Butte Swamp Preserve, west of Choteau. She is involved with agriculture businesses, and Sexton has served on various land use planning, conservation, and federal advisory boards. Sexton was a Teton County Commissioner from 1999-2004, and she is currently Director of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC).

Tom Richmond

Tom Richmond is responsible for developing and managing programs and regulations to apply technical and environmental requirements, manage federal primacy delegation, and provide technical and procedural advice for the Board of Oil and Gas Conservation. He is a native of Montana, attending grade school and high school in Great Falls. He attended Montana Tech, graduating with a B.S. degree in Petroleum Engineering in 1971. Richmond worked for Phillips Petroleum Co., Great Falls Refining Division before taking a position at the U.S. Geological Survey's Conservation Division offshore operations office in Metairie, Louisiana. He moved with the USGS to offices in Tulsa and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and Thermopolis, Wyoming before moving back to Montana as the Billings District Engineer. He joined the Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation as Senior Petroleum Engineer in 1982 and was named Administrator in 1990. Richmond is Montana's Associate Official Representative to the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission and serves on the Board of Directors of the Ground Water Protection Council, an association of state groundwater program managers and oil and gas agency officials.

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Bud Clinch

Bud Clinch currently is the executive director of the Montana Coal Council, an industry trade association. In that capacity Clinch represents Montana's six operating coal mines and associated coal reserve holders in a variety of forums including the Montana Legislature, interim committees, and other public forums. Prior to joining the Montana Coal Council in 2005, Clinch served as the Director of Montana Department of Natural Resources. For 12 years he served Governor's Martz and Racicot; overseeing a staff of 400 that implements a multitude of programs pertaining to forestry, agriculture, water rights, fire fighting, mineral development, and land and water conservation activities on state and private lands. From 1983 to 1993 Clinch served in a variety of capacities for the Montana Logging Association, including co-authoring Montana's "Best Management Practices" handbook and initiating enactment of the Montana Streamside Management Act. He is a 1974 graduate of the University of Montana Forestry School.

Dave Galt

Dave Galt was born and raised in Lewistown, Montana, and graduated from Fergus County High School in 1976. He began working for the Montana Department of Highways in the spring of 1977 and has held various positions in the Department of Transportation's, Motor Carrier Services Division. Galt left MDT in 2000 for the position of Executive Vice President of the Montana Motor Carrier Association. When Judy Martz was elected Governor in the fall of 2000, she asked Galt return to the Department of Transportation as Director. He served in that position for the full term and retired state government in December of 2004. After the Martz Administration, Galt co-founded the West Yellowstone Group that offers government relations, business development and congressional advocacy. In October, 2005, Galt accepted an offer from the Montana Petroleum Association as their Executive Director. Galt is a graduate of Carroll College and resides in Helena.

Jeff Fox

Jeff Fox joined the Renewable Northwest Project in February of 2011 to further the organization's on-the-ground presence in Montana. Fox's background includes working as a wilderness ranger in Colorado and Wyoming, before moving to Washington, DC, to join The Wilderness Society. Missing the mountains, he returned home to assist in the Montana Legacy Project, a \$520 million dollar conservation purchase of 320,000 acres of private timber lands threatened by development and fragmentation. Most recently, Fox was an independent contractor working to organize business support for clean energy. He currently volunteers on the policy committee of the Montana Renewable Energy Association.

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Van Jamison

Van Jamison is Vice President of Strategic Operations for Gaelectric, an International Renewable Energy and Energy Storage Company. Immediately prior to his appointment to Gaelectric's management team, Jamison was the founder and President of POWAIR, Inc., a consulting company that develops wind project sites and offers environmental and energy expertise. Previously, Jamison was the Administrator of the Energy and the Planning, Prevention and Assistance Divisions within the Montana Departments of Natural Resources and Conservation and Environmental Quality, respectively. In those capacities, Jamison directed programs to research and develop renewable energy conversion technologies and expand energy production from renewable sources. Jamison was a founding member of the National Wind Coordinating Committee and chaired its Avian Subcommittee. Jamison also served on the board of Directors of the National Association of State Energy Officials and chaired its Electricity and Siting Committee.

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