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Comments: I am a retired FWP fisheries biologist that had management responsibility for the South and Middle Forks of the Flathead for 25 years prior to retiring in 2007. To begin, I feel strongly that the Wild segments of the South and Middle Forks of the Flathead should be managed with a permit system. This should be instituted a year after a free permit system which would acclimate the public to the process.

On the South Fork, I feel it's necessary to begin a permit system because the current use on the Wild South Fork is out of standard for the current Wild and Scenic River Plan. This use level is presently degrading the ORV's for this wilderness section of river. The fishery is showing signs of stress in terms of hook scars, stress and angler pressure. Changing limits or methods will not protect the population when angler pressure continues to grow and further impact the fishery. Solitude and wilderness character related ORV's are also changing due to increased use levels. I recommend reducing party size to 10 and limit

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

ing watercraft per party to 8.

On the Middle Fork the current use levels and resource conditions follow suggested indicators and standards. I am also in favor of reducing party size to 10 and limiting watercraft per party to 8. A free limiting permit for the season should be started here also so when indicators and standards are exceeded in the future there would be a smooth transition to a mandatory permit system.

With a permit system in place on both wild forks, a method of scheduling and spacing float parties throughout the float seasons would greatly help floater distribution, minimize congestion, and increase ORV's.

My comments on the wild sections of the South and Middle Forks closely follow a document entitled "Recommendations for the Upper Spotted Bear District River Management" prepared by Spotted Bear District staff. I concur with the thoughts and recommendations in this document and request that it be included with my comments on the Flathead CRMP Project.

We desperately need to preserve the wilderness ORV's associated with the Flathead CRMP project. Regulating use therein is the only way to maintain this quality. I do not see a strong desire for permits for scenic and recreational sections whose quality will continue to degrade with crowding. I presently do not have suggestions for the scenic and recreational sections but would like to see some alternatives developed by interested parties that would help ease congestion and deal with issues.