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Title:

Comments: Having carefully read the Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) there are several areas that concern me and am wondering if the proverbial cart is being placed before the horse.

The plan has several triggers that call for action that mitigate possible overuse, yet these triggers vary from parties ,people, water craft and launches per day. There is no mention of the difference between commercial and private parties, this inconsistency makes it difficult to determine the Outstanding River Values (ORV) that you desire to maintain.

The ORV for the North Fork Section from Canada to the Camas bridge suggests that the parameters be no more than three parties 60-80% of the time. This is unrealistic due to the drive to the river access. At the Camas Bridge the number jumps drastically. The North Fork corridor is regulated by both the Forest Service and the Park Service yet there is no mention who will manage the permit system if it is enacted. I foresee a court challenge being upheld if you try to restrict river access.

The Middle Fork ORV suggestion is concerning. Allowing only two launches a day from Schafer Meadow is overly restricting river access Again I see a court challenge that will be upheld.

The Middle Fork Unit One proposal would also restrict citizens their law given right to river access. There are numerous campsites along this stretch of river. I have stayed in many of them throughout the years and I have not seen much poor camping behavior. It is my opinion that the majority of river users are responsible and respect the river corridor. One complaint I have along this stretch is often an outfitter will send their gear boat out ahead of their clients in order to secure a preferred campsite. This is poor river etiquette and should not be allowed.

Perhaps the best course of action to take in order to preserve ORV is to be proactive and educate river users and improve infrastructure. Inform river users of the unique opportunities and challenges that wild and scenic rivers provide. I have been fortunate to have been able to use this unique river corridor for well over 25 years and feel, as previously stated, that the majority of users are responsible. However, I have noticed that in the last several years that with an increase in both population and a variety of affordable water craft available some users are ill prepared and are unaware of proper river etiquette. I have yet to see a ranger at an access point being proactive with river users. As far as infrastructure improvement more latrines should be considered along with access to a scat machine somewhere in the area so human waste can be properly dealt with. As of now many users use a wag bag system that is supposedly not allowed to be disposed of in Flathead County's Landfill.

I appreciate the opportunity to post my concerns regarding the CRMP. Please carefully consider the concerns that river users have regarding the CRMP and enact a plan that is well thought out, has a solid legal standing and is as least restrictive as possible.