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Organization:

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Comments: District Ranger Munoz,

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

It sounds like you are using a Categorical Exclusion (CE) to renew existing permits in the Bob. With a CE there will be no more chances to comment, so all information should be readily available to the public. But it is not.

There is no listing of what permits are up for renewal, what they include, what activities will be conducted, and what violations or complaints have been generated for the life of the permits. You mention that we can ask questions of specific permits, but we don't know what those permits are to ask specific questions.

This scoping letter shows a lack of transparency by not sharing the permits that will be renewed and outfitter performance.

I would also question why a changing climate would not be an extraordinary circumstance as well as the recent whitebark pine and wolverine listings under the Endangered Species Act. Have you analyzed the effects of renewing these permits on whitebark pine, wolverine, and climate change? You must also consider grizzly bears and increased public use of the areas in question. None of these things are mentioned in the scoping letter.

Have you done an analysis of all current permits and their effects on endangered species and climate? What is the current use by public as well as outfitters? Has the carrying capacity been analyzed considering these changes? The current population of the Flathead has increased greatly in the past 5 years and this will put more stress on our natural resources. It is the perfect time to rethink the outfitter permits that set up base camps in some of the best areas of the forest. How will this effect the public that own these lands?

These renewals must be analyzed under an EIS. A CE is not adequate.

Thanks for considering my comments.