Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2024 3:01:36 PM
First name: Sharon
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: I understand you are proposing to renew existing outfitter permits for the three wildernesses that comprise the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex without disclosing which permits, their locations, or any associated information, making it impossible to provide meaningful public input.

The Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex has a long history of outfitting and guiding, and many outfitters there have been great supporters of protecting these Wildernesses. But, outfitting and camps have impacts which are often glossed over or overlooked, including Wilderness trails so heavily used by pack animals that they more resemble roads than foot or horse trails, and outfitter campsites in Wilderness that are allowed to have structures like tent frames, corrals, and hitching posts. All of these outfitter impacts are exacerbated by the extraordinarily large people and pack stock party sizes allowed in the Wildernesses.

Given the many impacts outfitting has on the Wilderness, the Forest Service must not use a Categorical Exclusion (CE) to renew any outfitter permits. An Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement with accompanying public input is called for to properly protect this fabled Wilderness Complex.

I urge you to protect wilderness character in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex as it considers outfitter permits. Thank you for considering my deep concerns.