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First name: Gayle

Last name: Joslin

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service,

I am commenting on the proposal to renew outfitting permits in the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, and Great Bear Wildernesses - however, there is inadequate information provided to submit substantive comment because: the permits being renewed or newly issued - are not disclosed, nor are the locations of the permitted areas in question, the time periods involved, the number of guests and livestock involved in each permit, or whether any of that information has been monitored over the years to determine past compliance with regulations.

I worked for an outfitter in the Bob Marshall complex some years ago, and saw firsthand that if corners could be cut - they were. And we left impacts in our wake to native forage, other vegetation, stream crossings, and we mindlessly expanded trails into braided trenches. We left semi-permanent campsites. We took in large parties of guests on herds of horses and mules that had to have been larger than what the areas could sustain.

While all this happened years ago, and hopefully most outfitters are now careful about impacts that can occur, I am less than confident that the Forest Service is fastidiously protecting the Wilderness character and values that we so cherish. Therefore, these outfitting permits must be scrupulously monitored, compliance and non-compliance documented, and limitations enforced.

Please provide information on each of the 62 permits that will be reauthorized, or newly issued, including: whether the lease being held has received any complaints, whether each site has had an annual evaluation by the Forest Service, the results of such evaluations, and the subsequent "report card" that each area received.

Before being asked to provide specific comment, the public must be fully informed about the status of these 62 sites and whether they are promoting an experience "untrammled by man," or whether any of these permits should be suspended due to noncompliance with regulations or are displaying unacceptable resource impacts. Once such information is provided, please extend the comment period by another 45 days, and then analyze the data and responses in an EIS or at the very least, an Environmental Assessment.

Our treasured Wilderness areas deserve no less than scrupulous agency oversight that assures that the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex is healthy and robustly fulfilling its ecosystem function not only for the services that this landscape provides to people, but also to natural life-cycle needs of our fellow travelers on planet Earth. We trust you to uphold the U.S. Forest Service's stewardship obligation, to keep our Wilderness Areas unimpaired for future use and enjoyment, and we thank you for doing so.

Sincerely,

Gayle Joslin