Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/6/2024 6:36:19 PM
First name: Kurt
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Comments: As a Forest Supervisor Aldo Leopold wrote in 1913 (paraphrasing here)
Rangers are confronted, surrounded, sometimes swamped with problems, policies, ideas, decisions, precedents and details, grappling with difficulties in a maze of routine… And the routine results in striving for uniformity. Then uniformity is meant to be a guide not to confine the mind. There is a necessity for clear, untrammeled and independent thinking on the part of the Rangers to determine the effect on the Forest, on the Wilderness, of each separate action taken.

The 62 special use outfitter permits up for renewal should be examined separately, not uniformly in bulk. Each permit should be considered as a case by case evaluation. And value should be given to the timeless vitality and beauty within the Wilderness itself, not only to the economic value. The Wilderness is more than CampLand, more than a marketplace and there is more to being human than making money.

The Forest Service's responsibility is to preserve the wilderness character of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex, not to promote any particular use, such as outfitting/guiding.

The Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex Outfitter and Guide Permit Reauthorization lacks site-specific information, despite requesting site-specific comments. Accordingly, the Forest Service must make the following information available for public review on its website and must also extend the public comment period for another 45 days after information is published on the website:

permitted service days versus actual use for each permit

annual inspections performance evaluations or public complaints related to each campsite or operator

any NEPA documents and related decisions dealing with outfitting service levels or allocation in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex

the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex Character Narrative

2017 needs assessment and extent necessary documentation

Campsite Management Plans for each outfitter camp

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.