Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/16/2024 11:05:33 PM
First name: Polly
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: Regarding Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex Outfitter and Guide Permit Reauthorization Permit # 65359: I am 100% opposed to using categorical exclusions to reauthorize outfitters' Bob Marshall permits. Having backpacked throughout the Bob several times, I know firsthand that outfitters' horses and mules cause almost 100% of the trail damage there, as their livestock stomp the trails into deep trenches that erode even further in wet seasons. They also stomp down vegetation in their campsites and leave muddy, manure-y, mule-pissy messes behind. These, and all other impacts of outfitting/guiding in OUR wilderness areas, which are many, need to be thoroughly examined PRIOR to any permit reauthorizations. Not only has the Forest Service failed to adequately monitor outfitters' wilderness impacts, it has failed to require outfitters' compliance with the wilderness 'untrammeled by man' or 'leave no trace' letter or spirit of the Wilderness Act.

The Forest Service has utterly failed to provide us, the public OWNERS of the Bob Marshall, with enough information to even be able to comment on this reauthorizaton, specifically: the number of outfitters and/or the number of their clients contemplated for permit reauthorization, where they will or won't be allowed to camp or travel, what rules they will or won't be required to follow re: weed introduction and/or mitigation, whether or not they'll be allowed to leave equipment and/or gear in the wilderness when they leave, the extent (or not) of their 'leave no trace' requirements, and many other aspects of their permit reauthorizations that have not been revealed to the public OWNERS of the Bob.

Categorical Exclusion is meant for things like painting outhouses, NOT for evaluating (or NOT evaluating, in this case) the widespread negative impacts that outfitters and guides always have on wilderness areas. The FS MUST NOT reauthorize their permits using this deliberate exclusion of the PUBLIC OWNERS of Wilderness. We, the public, are very angry that you, the FS, is systematically working to exclude us from 1) knowing exactly what activities, impacts, etc., you would reauthorize here, 2) allowing such reauthorizations without adequately monitoring or evaluating outfitters' activities and impacts in the first place. What's up with that, anyhow??? Who the hell do you think you work for????

NO, NO a thousand time NO to reauthorizing outfitters' Bob Marshall permits without providing us, the OWNERS of the Bob, specific information, including maps and comprehensive information as to where, when, what activities would be reauthorized, and to whom, as well as detailed information regarding each outfitters' record of compliance with the Wilderness Act and reasons why or why not each such outfitter's permit should or should not be reauthorized.

STOP NOW. START OVER. Provide the public with the information we need to adequately comment, and UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES reauthorize these permits excluding the public with your bogus 'categorical exclusion'. Just do the work you were hired to do, and keep our Bob wild and 'untrammeled by outfitters', in the spirit of the Wilderness Act.