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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello, I am a 36 year old resident of Flathead County. I am writing to express my concern over the impact of recreational use on the 3 forks of the Flathead River.

The massive increase in river traffic over the past 10 years is astounding. I am proud that most of my fellow river travelers have done an acceptable job of following leave no trace principles during their day floats.

My concerns revolve around overnight usage inside of the Wild and Scenic River Corridor. In particular the lack of proper human waste management. 2 years ago me and a group of friends stopped where Red Meadow Creek enters the North Fork and were disgusted to see hundred of piles of unburied fecal matter scattered across the forest only 50 feet from the river's high water mark. I believe more needs to be done to ensure that overnight visitors to the river are complying with human waste requirements. I spend a lot of time on the river and I truly believe that less than 25% of overnight river users travel with a means of containing human waste.

I would love to see the Forest Service find a way to police this more. One idea is to require a permit for overnight travel. There does not need to be a limited number of permits, it could just be a process where you stop by a forest service office and go through an educational talk with a ranger. Similar to what they do in Glacier National Park except I think the Forest Service should continue to offer unlimited numbers of permits. The Forest Service could charge \$5-\$10 per person per night to help offset the cost of having an employee available.

Increased river patrols would also be good to catch those that are violating the rules. Again I think it is reasonable to ask users of the river to pay a small fee to help fund this need.

Thank you for all you do to protect our local rivers.