

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/27/2025 6:29:51 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am glad the USFS and NPS are revisiting the Flathead River Mgt plan. This is very much needed with the increase in recreational use.

I have lived in the area since 1988 and have owned property near Blankenship Bridge since 1996.

1. I am very concerned about the open free for all camping at Blankenship. Since Covid, I have counted well over 30 different camping groups on many nights of the summer. Fires are common regardless of fire restrictions. Human waste and toilet paper flowers is common here as the vault toilet is in an area out of the way. I would request a no overnight camping restriction at Blankenship due to cars driving and parking below the high water mark which poses risk of contamination to the river impacting the health of the river. I am also very concerned of fires getting out of control and burning my house down. There aren't enough USFS Law Enforcement officers to patrol this area for human waste or fires. Please close Blankenship to overnight camping. I have many photos of 30+ camper groups at Blankenship since 2019. Free Camping.org has promoted Blankenship as a free camping area near Glacier with no reservation or fees.

2. I support a required permit for use on the Flathead river system. The proposed limits seem very high and I would suggest limits that allow for a good experience for the user and limit impacts of waste. The permits should be available on-line and for early access for those of us that live in the area. I have always enjoyed an evening float from Glacier Rim to Blankenship to cool off on hot summer nights as I do not have ac in my house.

3. A detailed analysis of the health of the fishery on the Flathead is need to help guide fishing restrictions. Also, consider " hoot-owl " restrictions more often to help protect sensitive fisheries.

4. I support no dogs and no stoppping below Goat Lick on the Middle Fork.

As we know enforcement of these regulations will be a challenge. An increase in River Rangers will be needed and could come from the low fees of the permit system or from the commercial use companies which generate much profit from overnight and daily commercial trips.

I welcome the opportunity to be involved in these disussions to preserve the Flathead River System.