Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2025 7:45:06 PM First name: Elizabeth Last name: Erpelding-Garratt Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex stands as one of the flagship Wilderness areas in the National Wilderness Preservation System-the 3% of land in the Lower 48 where vulnerable native wildlife can still find refuge from the pressures of ever-expanding human civilization. For the sake of the Wilderness and its wildlife, limitations on current uses should be considered, and an analysis of impacts should expand beyond the river to include the entire corridor a quarter-mile on both sides of the river. While we commend the Forest Service for taking steps toward limiting impacts and gathering data regarding recreation overuse, if it is truly interested in preserving the health of the Flathead River system, the agency should take this opportunity to research the impacts recreation is already having on Wilderness and wildlife, and act quickly to address the problems. Whether it is boats, planes, pack stock, or hikers, excessive recreation use will inevitably harm habitat and displace animals that rely on Wilderness in a world growing increasingly claustrophobic.