

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2025 8:57:56 PM

First name: Dana

Last name: Lowell

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Subject: Urgent Action Needed for Wilderness Protection in the Flathead River Corridor

Dear Reader,

I am writing to urge immediate action to protect the Flathead River corridor and the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. Habitat protection cannot wait, and it is critical that the Forest Service takes meaningful steps to preserve these wild places before irreversible impacts occur.

Scientific data must inform user capacity numbers to ensure responsible recreation management. The displacement of wildlife due to increasing recreational use in designated Wilderness areas is a growing concern, and immediate measures are needed to mitigate these effects. Additionally, flights in and out of Schafer Airstrip in the Great Bear Wilderness are causing significant impacts on the Middle Fork of the Flathead, necessitating urgent evaluation and regulation.

The vast majority of use on the Flathead's wild rivers should be allocated to the general public, with commercial outfitting and guiding restricted to only what is "necessary and proper," as outlined in the Wilderness Act. Furthermore, comprehensive data collection and analysis must extend across the entire Flathead River corridor, including a one-quarter-mile buffer on either side of the river.

Finally, immediate action is required to bring recreational impacts along the South Fork of the Flathead into full compliance with the area's Wilderness Management Plan. The integrity of these wild lands depends on strong, science-based management, and I urge the Forest Service to prioritize conservation efforts before further degradation occurs.

Thank you for your time and commitment to protecting our nation's Wilderness areas.

Sincerely,

Dana Lowell