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Comments: Hello,

First I want to give appreciation that the draft Flathead Comprehensive River Management Plan proposes a number of good actions, including prohibiting parking and car camping on gravel bars; requiring containment of human waste within 200 feet of the river's edge; prohibiting drones; requiring a fire pan or blanket for campfires within or above the high water mark; and noise level and group size limits.

In addition to these good actions I am requesting that the Forest Service agency take further steps to ensure that the 87 miles of the 219-mile Flathead Wild and Scenic River System, one of America's most celebrated Wilderness areas, remains intact Wilderness as it was so designated.

The plan as it stands fails to provide information on impacts to Wilderness due to current recreation use, including the displacement of wildlife and waterfowl caused by increasing overuse by such sources as the intense stream of outfitting and guide services profiting from tours through the river corridor, and low-flying aircraft overhead.

To this end I would ask that the agency 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. For example, immediate action is needed both to bring the impacts along the South Fork of the Flathead into compliance with the area's Wilderness Management Plan and to address wildlife displacement in Wilderness caused by current recreation numbers. Data collection and analysis needs to include the entirety of the Flathead River corridor, one-quarter mile to either side of the river. The vast majority of use on the wild rivers should be allocated to public use, and commercial outfitting and guiding should be limited to only the level that is "necessary and "proper" as required by the Wilderness Act.

There is but just 3% of total land in the Lower 48 where native wildlife can still find refuge from the pressures of ever-expanding human civilization. For the sake of the Wilderness and its wildlife, the Forest Service Agency can collect more rigorous scientific data informing user capacity numbers with analysis of the impacts those numbers bring.

Habitat protection on the Flathead River is not something that can wait, and the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex deserves immediate action in order to preserve the wild.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.