Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/6/2025 12:46:42 AM

First name: Taylor Last name: Hulslander

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thanks for taking the time to read the public's comments. I think we all knew that restrictions on the Flathead river system would eventually be a topic requiring discussion given the explosion in popularity of the valley. Unfortunately, the days of the flathead being a hidden gem are over, things do not stay the same forever. To that end, sacrifices may have to come in the future in order to maintain the wild character of the river. I think we can all agree, angler/outfitter/floater/camper, that this has to be at the forefront of our decision making. What, or a better question is who, shall be the one(s) to sacrifice in order to maintain this wild and scenic character? It is my opinion that before permits, before use restrictions and more red tape for the private residents of this valley and nation that first the for profit outfitting should be most heavily restricted. I understand that is their livelihood and how they make their money, but we all have to go to work and their success is certainly not a priority when it comes to conservation. I have close family members in the business of guiding on the Flathead, but let's first preserve our recreational opportunities for those who recreate and not those who make money making it easier for others to recreate. I concur that there are sections of river that lend themselves more towards a tourist base for rafting/fishing etc. such as the rapids by west glacier, but to be in the Bob Marshall on the South Fork and see nothing but outfitter rafts pass by you until the sun sets seems out of place. Similarly, the North Fork road has very little traffic past Polebridge, except daily trailers rattling down the road to bring rafters to the border. Why should those willing to put in the work to recreate on the river be limited by permits and regulations when those who simply pay a few hundred bucks and have someone else hook the trailer up for them in the morning be rewarded? Those from out of state who don't live here, pay an outfitter and get to enjoy the river while the private recreationists pay the price to maintain the wild and scenic value? Again it is my opinion that currently, the outfitter and commercial presence on most portions of the Flathead river system has exceeded tolerable levels and is approaching detrimental levels for the health of the river as it currently stands in its wild and scenic designation. I believe some portions of the river will need regulation on outfitter activities soon and individual/private recreational opportunities should be protected and maintained and only limited as a last resort to uphold our primary goal of a wild / scenic / healthy river system.