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Comments: To Whom It May Concern-

Having spent time on all branches of the Flathead River system, I have seen how use has increased significantly in recent years. It is imperative that we find a balance between recreation and preservation in order to maintain the integrity of this incredible resource.

Though I do fear the introduction of permitting and daily use limits, I understand that some level of regulation and control will be necessary to minimize the environmental impact of human traffic. Personally, I am particularly concerned with the South Fork head waters flowing out of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. Both guided rafting and self guided pack rafting has increased in recent years and is likely to continue to do so. Pack rafts, in particular, make this area far more accessible to the average outdoorsman resulting in increased impact from campsites, fires, and improper waste management.

Permits that would indicate intended areas of travel, travel dates, and members of the party seem reasonable so as to begin collecting data on use and to monitor the effects on the rivers system. A fee for this seems reasonable as well but should not be used as an exclusionary tactic but rather a "tax" to fund further research and possibly maintenance. That data can then be analyzed to better determine whether and how use restrictions need to be implemented.

The reality is that this area has been "discovered" and will change. Every effort needs to be made preserve the natural beauty while providing access to those who want to experience its remoteness.

Promoting responsible stewardship by those who use these areas needs to be promoted, regulated, and enforced.