

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/7/2025 6:35:56 AM

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Comments: Dear Supervisor Botello:

I moved to the Flathead Valley in 1981 with my canoe(s) and we floated the Three Forks of the Flathead River in solitude for many years. About 15 years ago, the increased usage at put ins and take outs was noticeable. I have a visual of the Blankenship Bridge take out on a weekday summer afternoon with stacked up campers, pickups, barking dogs in the water, trash on the banks and those were the good days. There was an occasional black bear still to be seen along the shore as you paddled and floated south on the North Fork. And some fish in the eddies. The private parties were plentiful, but the commercial traffic on the Middle Fork is now "bumper to bumper". Lots of buses and trailers at the take outs, gouging out ruts and lots of folks. The solitude is gone. The concept of no trace camping has gone. There used to be a photographer quietly sitting on a ledge above the rapids taking trip photos. Now there are drones. The south Fork as part of the Wildeness River system is difficult to get to and to float. And yet, that too has bloomed with commercial float trips.

It is my understanding that the purpose of the Comprehensive River Management Plan is to "protect and enhance the value for which a river is was designated Wild and Scenic". What I am seeing in the Proposed Action is increasing the service days for commercial usage by 4 X. It seems to me that enhances the bottom line of the industry. And how is this to be monitored. Will there really be readily accessible free float permits for private parties? What will be the monitoring and management for wildlife along the river corridors? Will there be mandatory food storage? Many years ago, I left a clean wet towel on a picnic table in a campground in Denali and it was confiscated while I was on my bus tour and hike.

For the areas that continue to be degraded, what will be done for restoration? The fact that there are trash days on the water and on foot on the river banks should be a red light on how the rivers have been allowed to be treated. The diverse native plant communities are threatened as well. This is an area that has a rich cultural heritage. The Confederated Tribes of the Flathead Reservation claim the Flathead River headwaters as part of their aboriginal territories. Are they able to input to the CRMP?

Prohibiting motor vehicle camping on gravel bars , requiring metal fire pans and restricting noise levels is a good start. There is much more we can do together. I grew up near the Charles River in Massachusetts. Urbanization and associated degradatiopn of the Charles occurred over a four hundred year period. Since 1995, the EPA etal have been working to reverse that degradation. Gratefully, we don't have all of the elicit sewage pollution, yet. And we might not have an EPA in the future to correct our failures.

Thank you for your time,

Norma Linsky