

**From:** [Brant Oswald](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on Madison River proposed rule and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 10:35:01 PM

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October 30, 2020

Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission  
Re: Madison River Comments

Commissioners:

My name is Brant Oswald. I am a fishing outfitter based in Livingston. I have been a licensed Montana guide since 1988, and a licensed outfitter (License #1581) since 1992. I also hold an SRP permit for the Madison River (Permit #90).

I am submitting the following comments on the proposed administrative rules and environmental assessment regarding the recreation management on the Madison River. As a former member of the FOAM board of directors, I have continued to work with the FOAM board as a senior advisor during the Madison planning process. This has given me the opportunity to observe the work that Mike Bias, the FOAM Executive Director, Jason Fleury, FOAM's board president and the rest of the board have invested in the process of working toward a management plan for the Madison. I am writing to support the FOAM petition and the FOAM position:

I oppose proposed Rule I

Outfitters are the only user group that has taken on responsibility for part of the crowding issue and proposed a cap on commercial use. Allowing outfitters to choose 2019 or 2020 will not unfairly penalize new outfitters who began operating in 2020, before the proposed rules were presented.

I oppose proposed rule II

Rest and rotation is one of those ideas that sounds reasonable at first, but simply does not accomplish its goal of alleviating crowding. It is not clear to me after 20 years of rest and rotation regulations on the Beaverhead and Big Hole that they have accomplished anything. It would be even worse on the upper Madison because the length of the floatable section of the river is relatively short. Pushing all of the commercial traffic from a significant portion of the total onto the rest of the water will certainly make for a more crowded experience for our clients. And giving the unguided public one section without commercial traffic and pushing the fastest growing group of users onto a single section is supposed to give them a better experience? Rest and rotation does not work and should not become a de facto management tool, on the Madison or anywhere else.

I oppose proposed Rule III

Restricting boat access does not alleviate crowding and further restricts public access to large stretches of the upper and lower river.

I support the proposed rules VI-XVI, the rules that represent the FOAM petition to the

Commission.

I would emphasize a couple of things in the overall picture. I am proud to point out that the commercial users—the outfitting and guiding community—is the one user group who has proactively identified themselves as part of the issue at hand and is proposing a cap on their own use.

As an outfitter but also as one who appreciates access to public lands, I am acutely aware of my responsibility as one who makes his living on a public resource. I recognize that I and my clients are only a part of the picture in managing the Madison resource, but I act as conduit for many people to be introduced to the river’s resources and to enjoy them safely and responsibly. As commercial users, we understand the need to be licensed and permitted and regulated, but we hope those regulations will allow us to operate in a reasonable manner and allow our clients to continue to enjoy and appreciate the resource.

Thanks to all of the Commission and FWP staff who have developed the proposed rules and EA and to open them for public comment. Thanks for considering my own comments.

Respectfully,

Brant Oswald  
Brant Oswald Fly Fishing LLC  
MT Outfitter #1581  
117 S. 9th St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
406-223-2047 cell  
Web: [www.brantoswaldflyfishing.com](http://www.brantoswaldflyfishing.com) [[brantoswaldflyfishing.com](http://brantoswaldflyfishing.com)]  
Ambassador, [Guiding for the Future](http://Guiding for the Future) [[guidingforthefuture.org](http://guidingforthefuture.org)]  
Board member, [Invasive Species Action Network](http://Invasive Species Action Network) [[stopais.org](http://stopais.org)]  
[\[stopais.org\]](http://stopais.org)

**From:** [adintile@gmail.com](mailto:adintile@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 9:01:28 PM

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Name:

City:

I believe that the FOAM Madison River Petition recommendations would be the best alternative to the issues related to managing the congestion on the Madison.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Tony Reinhardt](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: public comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 5:34:32 PM

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I fully support FOAM's petition for a management plan on the Madison River. A comprehensive management plan is long overdue for the Madison, and is needed for many other rivers in Montana. If the Madison plan is to be used as a template for future management plans it is important to get this one right. George Grant TU's petition, specifically the concept of Rest and Rotation will do nothing to alleviate the "crowding" on the river, and will create unnecessary hardships for commercial users.

Rest and Rotation favors a small group of users over all others. It creates even more crowding on the "open" stretches and displaces commercial traffic to other rivers or unregulated stretches. Christine Oschell from Region 2 can provide examples of how the Upper Bitterroot/West Fork permit which includes Rest and Rotation has displaced traffic further down the Bitterroot to stretches that are currently unregulated. I operate in western Montana and I specifically schedule the majority of my West Fork Bitterroot days during the 3 days of the week when Rest and Rotation is not in effect. The 4 days when Rest and Rotation is active provides a subpar experience for my anglers with excessive crowding on the open stretches.

As an outfitter I have a limited set of tools with which to provide my anglers a quality day on the water. I can choose the river, the stretch of river, and the time of day that we start. Rest and Rotation takes away one of my most valuable tools (what stretch of river) and has a major impact on another tool (time of day). In the case of the West Fork, at times in the past two seasons the best approach has been to run short half days to avoid crowding on the "open" stretches and fish several hours behind the bulk of the traffic. The other option is to avoid the West Fork all together. Anglers don't spend lots of money to travel to Montana to fish half days, and if the alternative is to fish crowded full days that offer a low quality experience they may not travel to Montana at all.

The FOAM plan is a good one. It's not perfect, but it will better manage commercial users while allowing them to survive and continue to operate. The concept of Rest and Rotation is seriously flawed and will have huge negative effects if implemented on the Madison and then carried over to other management plans across the state.

The tsunami of private use is on the horizon and will need to be dealt with sooner rather than later. A quality commercial management plan for the Madison will allow for easier implementation on other rivers in Montana. A flawed management plan for the Madison will lead to adversarial negotiation in the future between FWP, commercial users, and private users.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tight Lines,

Tony Reinhardt  
Montana Trout Outfitters  
Wild on the Fly Adventure Travel  
6108 Raelene Ct.

Missoula, MT 59803

406-544-3516

[http://mttroutguides.com/ \[mttroutguides.com\]](http://mttroutguides.com/)

**From:** [Michael Bias](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Cc:** [fwpdistrict2@gmail.com](#); [Cartim8@gmail.com](#); [rstuker@itstriangle.com](#); [Shane Colton](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 2:28:43 PM  
**Attachments:** [FOAM public comment October 2020.pdf](#)

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Dear Commissioners:

Please find attached our statement of public comment regarding the Madison River recreation plan. Thank you for your hard work on this important issue.

Respectfully,

mike

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Michael A. Bias, Ph.D.  
Executive Director



**From:** [chris@stillwateranglers.com](mailto:chris@stillwateranglers.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 2:33:43 PM  
**Attachments:** [Madison River Plan.docx](#)

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*Chris Fleck*

Owner/Outfitter Stillwater Anglers Fly Shop and Outfitters

406.322.4977

406.321.0564

[chris@stillwateranglers.com](mailto:chris@stillwateranglers.com)

[www.stillwateranglers.com](http://www.stillwateranglers.com) [[stillwateranglers.com](http://stillwateranglers.com)]

**From:** [mark@headhuntersflyshop.com](mailto:mark@headhuntersflyshop.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 6:14:31 PM

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Name: Mark Raisler

City:

Dear Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks:

Mark Raisler MBO #9031 Owner Get the Drift Outfitters since 2000 /Owner Headhunters Fly Shop Craig MT since 2008

? I believe the public is a user group, and the public uses commercial entities, ie Outfit-ters.

? I believe the Commercial should be capped at the 2019 levels

? I believe Non-commercial users of the Madison should obtain a no-cost, no-limit user stamp to recreate on the Madison River

? I believe that limiting the smallest user group without tracking the largest user group is unfair.

? I believe rest and rotation will not cure the ultimate reason for the Rec Plan. It will put more pressure, not less pressure on specific reach(es). It will limit the smallest user group.

As Bozeman and the surrounding areas continue to grow at unprecedented rates, it is important to implement thoughtful plans that truly manage overall use and minimize conflicts to provide the best possible experience for all user groups. The commercial industry, represented by FOAM, is stepping up to the plate and proposing to regulate itself in the spirit of stewardship and good faith that other user groups will follow suit. Two management tools that will not work to alleviate crowding and over use on the Madison River, or any Montana river, are Rest and Rotation and restrictions on boat access.

Currently, commercial users account for 13.9% of use. If a management plan is adopted to cap commercial user days, that percentage will continue to drop as population centers continue to grow. Restricting one user group that cannot grow to only certain portions of the river, instead of spreading out the pressure over the 39 miles of float angling water, creates a bottleneck affect and furthers social conflict.

The restriction of boat access will affect all user groups. The Madison is a difficult river to wade fish and use of a boat enables all user groups to enjoy it, instead of only a small percentage. As stated above, population growth is increasing at historic levels. To absorb the increased pressure, it only makes sense to have more floatable river that disperses the pressure and alleviates over-crowding resulting in social conflict.

Thanks for your time. I know the FWC will do the right thing keeping in mind the smallest user group is the only group limited by this plan.



Sincerely,

Mark Raisler

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Mark Raisler](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rec Plan Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 2:50:41 PM  
**Attachments:** [Madison River FWC Letter.docx](#)

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Dear Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks:

Mark Raisler MBO #9031 Owner Get the Drift Outfitters since 2000 /Owner Headhunters Fly Shop Craig MT since 2008

- I believe the public is a user group, and the public uses commercial entities, ie Outfitters.
- I believe the Commercial should be capped at the 2019 levels
- I believe Non-commercial users of the Madison should obtain a no-cost, no-limit user stamp to recreate on the Madison River
- I believe that limiting the smallest user group without tracking the largest user group is unfair.
- I believe rest and rotation will not cure the ultimate reason for the Rec Plan. It will put more pressure, not less pressure on specific reach(es). It will limit the smallest user group.

As Bozeman and the surrounding areas continue to grow at unprecedented rates, it is important to implement thoughtful plans that truly manage overall use and minimize conflicts to provide the best possible experience for all user groups. The commercial industry, represented by FOAM, is stepping up to the plate and proposing to regulate itself in the spirit of stewardship and good faith that other user groups will follow suit. Two management tools that will not work to alleviate crowding and over use on the Madison River, or any Montana river, are Rest and Rotation and restrictions on boat access.

Currently, **commercial users account for 13.9% of use.** If a management plan is adopted to cap commercial user days, that percentage will continue to drop as population centers continue to grow. Restricting one user group that cannot grow to only certain portions of the river, instead of spreading out the pressure over the 39 miles of float angling water, creates a bottleneck affect and furthers social conflict.

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Thanks for your time. I know the FWC will do the right thing keeping in mind the smallest user group is the only group limited by this plan.

Sincerely,

Mark Raisler

**Mark Raisler**

Headhunters Fly Shop

[mark@headhuntersflyshop.com](mailto:mark@headhuntersflyshop.com)

406/235-3447

[blog \[headhuntersflyshop.com\]](http://blog.headhuntersflyshop.com) | [website \[headhuntersflyshop.com\]](http://website.headhuntersflyshop.com)

**From:** [Joe Aanes](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] River Rec. rules  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:57:16 AM

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I support the proposal put forward by FOAM

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [lockemontana@yahoo.com](mailto:lockemontana@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:52:05 AM

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Name: Matthew Locke

City: Livingston

If the Mtfwp restricts the use of guided fishing on the Madison they will just Go to another river and congest those waters. I would ask that things stay the way they are so the rest of us don?t have to work around the Madison guides.

I stand with FOAM on this matter

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [lockemontana@yahoo.com](mailto:lockemontana@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 6:26:39 PM

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Name: Matthew Locke

City: Livingston

If the Mtfwp restricts the use of guided fishing on the Madison they will just Go to another river and congest those waters. I would ask that things stay the way they are so the rest of us don?t have to work around the Madison guides.

I stand with FOAM on this matter

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Chris Bradley](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison Comments in Favor of FOAM Petition  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 5:38:56 PM

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Greetings,

I would just like to express my support for the FOAM petition. I am native Montanan raising a family in Butte. I have been involved with numerous stream access and commercial regulations in the past as a decade long board member of GGTU.

Not only is the rest and rotation portion short-sighted as a management tool, it simply does not work. I am a fly shop owner, a permit holder and have been guiding and outfitting on the Big Hole and Beaverhead rivers for the past 15 years.

I urge the commission to adopt the FOAM petition as the first step in a comprehensive management plan for the Madison River. It is one of Montana's true treasures and we need to protect the resource and the experience without taking away access. Thank you all for your time.

Best Regards,

Chris Bradley  
MT Outfitter 11680  
The StoneFly Fly Shop  
2205 Amherst Ave  
Butte, MT 59701  
(406)494-0707  
[https://urldefense.com/v3/\\_http://www.thestonefly.com\\_!!GaaboA!-0h2UmvXB9P\\_UvwTBVhomaz\\_wOjfXVmjgE3u7ubidSwcI89j6oSVi4gqip0K8ZwUHK4k\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://www.thestonefly.com_!!GaaboA!-0h2UmvXB9P_UvwTBVhomaz_wOjfXVmjgE3u7ubidSwcI89j6oSVi4gqip0K8ZwUHK4k$)

**From:** [Pieske, Shawna](#) on behalf of [FWP Commission](#)  
**To:** [Wedde, Kim](#); [Ryce, Eileen](#); [Skaar, Donald](#); [Pat Byorth \(fwpdistrict2@gmail.com\)](#); [Rich Stuker](#); [Shane Colton](#); [Tim Aldrich \(Cartim8@gmail.com\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan / Comments  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 7:23:21 AM

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**From:** joewaller@aol.com <joewaller@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 23, 2020 9:27 PM  
**To:** FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan / Comments

Hello,

I agree completely with the need to effectively manage the wonderful Madison River treasure. The explosive growth in the region simply requires it. (I'm a West Texas native and not a fan of regulations, but it's obvious, something must be done.)

I DO NOT SUPPORT the GGTU and Butte proposals. I believe they would not be helpful in reducing traffic and overall usage. The effect would seem to be to force more people into a smaller area while not decreasing total user numbers. At a minimum, there must be proof or corroborating studies/data suggesting that these proposals or parts of them would benefit the fishery and not create conflict. And I think the "rest and rotation" proposal makes no sense and would only cause problems, especially in the long-term. The real problems aren't well-addressed.

I DO SUPPORT the FOAM proposal regarding outfitter allocations and transferability of permits. I understand that commercial use represents only about 15% of total usage. If so, their proposals seem reasonable and certainly would contribute to the reduction in intensity of THEIR total usage. I also support the Outfitter proposals regarding the walk-wade stretches of the river and the non-commercial user stamp program. Focusing on the types of non-commercial usage which constitute the vast majority of Madison activity makes sense. (E.G, the "bikini hatch" group thing is probably ripe for ... something. And yes, I dislike "charging" for access/permits, but we all know that fees/money can be an effective deterrent.)

Generally speaking, I think listening carefully to the Outfitters is wise. They are not property owners, but they have the greatest direct vested interest in keeping the Madison River viable and thriving. It seems like they are the most aware of the issues...they're among the most effective and knowledgeable users and stewards of the Madison.



Best of luck balancing these positions and reaching effective solutions and agreements. And thank you!

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Waller,

PO Box 150689  
Fort Worth, TX 76108  
817-296-2918

If relevant for your data analysis:

Male

65+

Regular Ennis visitor and fly fisherman--normally every year

Patron of Hotels in Bozeman and Ennis

Travel via Airlines

User of Car Rentals

User of Outfitters/Guides.

Typical stay from 4-6 days.

Income \$150,000+

I may be contacted if that is helpful.

**From:** [joseyloney@gmail.com](mailto:joseyloney@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 11:06:00 AM

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Name:

City:

I agree with FOAMs plan and do not believe rest and rotation is a good plan.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [John Sampson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison Double R Owner John Sampson  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 9:45:42 AM

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Dear Madison River Recreational Commission,

My name is John Sampson and I own the Madison Double R Lodge on the banks of the Madison River just upstream of Varney Bridge. I have been an outfitter on the Madison River for over 26 years. I have an average of 40 employees on the bi weekly payroll, all but 2 of whom live in Ennis.

In spite of Covid challenges we were able to survive 2020

I support the Madison River Foam petition in general. The most important part of the petition to me and my employees is that either 2019, 2020, or 2021 is used for the historic use attached to an outfitters SRP permit. By allowing outfitters to use either 2019, 2020, or 2021 as their year of record, the commission will avoid unintended economic hardship on businesses and their families who rely on the outfitting industry in South West Montana. Please make sure that outfitters are allowed to choose between 2019, 2020, or 2021 for their year of record on the Madison.

Outfitters in general are willing to cap their use at current levels because we want is best for The Madison, but going back in time and picking a random year to establish max use is simply unfair and will cause significant economic damage.

Additionally, I strongly oppose "rest and rotation" and closing any section of the river to boat traffic. The goal is to reduce crowding and these suggestions by the George Grant Chapter and Madison River Foundation would have the opposite effect. I do support limiting the amount of launches per outfitter to 3 per launch site.

Thank You Very Much!

John Sampson

Owner Madison Double R

27 year Outfitter on the Madison River #5758

--

John Sampson

PO Box 457 Ennis, MT 59729

Office: (406) 682-5555

Cell: (406) 596-1305

Email: [john@madisonrr.com](mailto:john@madisonrr.com)

**From:** [joewaller@aol.com](mailto:joewaller@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan / Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 12:52:50 PM

---

Hello,

I agree completely with the need to effectively manage the wonderful Madison River treasure. The explosive growth in the region simply requires it. (I'm a West Texas native and not a fan of regulations, but it's obvious, something must be done.)

I DO NOT SUPPORT the GGTU and Butte proposals. I believe they would not be helpful in reducing traffic and overall usage. The effect would seem to be to force more people into a smaller area while not decreasing total user numbers. At a minimum, there must be proof or corroborating studies/data suggesting that these proposals or parts of them would benefit the fishery and not create conflict. And I think the "rest and rotation" proposal makes no sense and would only cause problems, especially in the long-term. The real problems aren't well-addressed.

I DO SUPPORT the FOAM proposal regarding outfitter allocations and transferability of permits. I understand that commercial use represents only about 15% of total usage. If so, their proposals seem reasonable and certainly would contribute to the reduction in intensity of THEIR total usage. I also support the Outfitter proposals regarding the walk-wade stretches of the river and the non-commercial user stamp program. Focusing on the types of non-commercial usage which constitute the vast majority of Madison activity makes sense. (E.G, the "bikini hatch" group thing is probably ripe for ... something. And yes, I dislike "charging" for access/permits, but we all know that fees/money can be an effective deterrent.)

Generally speaking, I think listening carefully to the Outfitters is wise. They are not property owners, but they have the greatest direct vested interest in keeping the Madison River viable and thriving. It seems like they are the most aware of the issues...they're among the most effective and knowledgeable users and stewards of the Madison.

Best of luck balancing these positions and reaching effective solutions and agreements. And thank you!

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Waller,

PO Box 150689  
Fort Worth, TX 76108  
817-296-2918

If relevant for your data analysis:

Male

65+

Regular Ennis visitor and fly fisherman--normally every year

Patron of Hotels in Bozeman and Ennis

Travel via Airlines

User of Car Rentals

User of Outfitters/Guides.

Typical stay from 4-6 days.

Income \$150,000+

I may be contacted if that is helpful.

**From:** [joseyloney@gmail.com](mailto:joseyloney@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 12:26:56 PM

---

Name:

City:

I agree with FOAMs plan and do not believe rest and rotation is a good plan.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [rollingn@yahoo.com](mailto:rollingn@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 11:58:09 AM

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Name: Steve Niebuhr

City:

I support the FOAM proposal. I do not support the George Grant proposal.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jake Schilling](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 5:20:28 AM

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Hello,

My name is Jake Schilling, I am writing today to share my strong feelings for **supporting** FOAM's petition and even stronger feelings **opposing** GGTU's Rest and Rotation petition for unfairly discriminating against anglers who chose to use the services of guides and outfitters.

If the state's survey found that guides are less than 11% of total traffic, it would be wrong in every sense to implement 100% of the new rules against them. Instead of closing off sections to guides, the state should strongly consider ending the walk-wade stretches to provide more floatable water for guides.

Keeping these sections closed to float-fishing only benefits the home and land owners with property in these stretches. Wade fishing is much more destructive to river health than floating, so I support allowing more areas on the Madison to fish from a boat. In my opinion, the stretch from the West Fork of the Madison (Hutchins Bridge) to Lyons Bridge is the least used in the whole valley. Opening this stretch, while only a mile long or so, would be a good start to spreading more folks out.

Also, why would we take GGTU's opinion seriously? We wouldn't listen to Great Falls or Missoula's opinion when it comes to the Madison, so why Butte's?

--

**Jake Schilling**  
PO Box 960  
West Yellowstone, MT



**From:** [fish@wildtroutoutfitters.com](mailto:fish@wildtroutoutfitters.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreational EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 9:05:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [Madison River Recreational EA.docx](#)

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Madison River Recreational EA

**From:** [Yrc\\_mt@yahoo.com](mailto:Yrc_mt@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 12:00:13 AM

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Name: Brit Barnes

City: Billings

I support FOAMs management plan. As an avid angler we need to keep access open. That means boats too.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [dave.corcoran1971@gmail.com](mailto:dave.corcoran1971@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 2:57:18 PM

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Name: Dave Corcoran

City: Bozeman

This mailing is to oppose the petition submitted by the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited for the Madison River Mgmt Plan. The Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana has worked with fellow sportsmen and the general public to craft a plan that is fair and equitable to all and this I do support.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Robert McGillicuddy](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 16, 2020 7:55:57 AM

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Hello,

My name is Robert McGillicuddy MT guide 23844. I work for a busy outfitter on the Madison for the majority of my working days. I support The Fishing outfitters association of Montanas proposal for the rules on the madison. I appose rest and rotation and privatizing or restricting public access. I do not support penalizing the commercial community and our clients for a problem that the greater recreational user group is responsible. I support boater pass and increases ranger presence on the lower madison to manage trash traffic and alcohol issues from recreational floaters.

Do not increase crowding by implementing rest and rotation and outlawing boats in certain sections of the Madison river.

Respectfully,

Robert McGillicuddy  
460 Lower Rainbow Road  
Bozeman MT 59718  
9287135222

**From:** [brugman1@gte.net](mailto:brugman1@gte.net)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 15, 2020 2:28:22 PM

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Name: Gary Brugman

City:

The proposed rules from FOAM Are reasonable and deserve to be adopted

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [DAVID SCULLY](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] No on Madison Rest and Rotation  
**Date:** Thursday, October 15, 2020 12:42:36 PM

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Dear Fish and Wildlife Commissioners

As a second generation Outfitter on the Upper Madison, I would like to inform you that I am **entirely against** the GGTU's petition for Rest and Rotation. The Madison is not the Big Hole and you will cause more problems by implementing this plan. It will create a crowding issue. Currently, the floating and fishing groups (private and commercial) can spread out from Lyons to Ennis and if you close any of those areas, you will force more traffic in a confined area. Plus, you will create a hazard by forcing people to float the Cameron Flats region during high wind days. Currently, people will float the Lyons or the Varney section to avoid wind and to travel more safely. The Cameron Flats in a high wind is dangerous even for those who row well. The low water and high winds lead to boat wrecks and injured people. I have seen it happen on multiple occasions.

I am much more in favor of the Foam proposal.

There is a very large perception that the wealthy land owners on the Sun Ranch are driving this need for restrictions. There has been very little, if any wade fishing done in the area that they would like to shut down. It is a very difficult area to wade! They just don't want the boats to float past their region. They speak of it devaluating their property, when it really is what gave their property value to begin with. I remember when it was the Shelton Ranch and it sold for a very tiny value of what it is worth today.

The Outfitters have always worked with FWP to help keep the river healthy. Since the clean-up days of the 1960's to today, we have always tried to help keep the resource in great shape and good health. I understand that you are looking to do the same, but the plan needs to be tailored to each individual river.

Thank you for your efforts!

David Scully

Outfitter #2505

**From:** [Matt Dodson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Proposal Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 14, 2020 4:29:41 PM

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Hello,

My name is Matt Dodson. I am a full-time guide and outfitter (SRP #294) on the Madison River. I live two blocks off of Main st. in Ennis with my wife and young daughter and I guide 100 days each year on the Madison River. Other than being a sentimental place for my family, THE reason I chose to raise my family in Ennis was the nature of the commercial outfitting business on the Madison. Sure, there are “big-box outfitters” like Montana Angler, Trout Stalkers, and Madison Valley Ranch, but the majority of permitted outfitters on the Madison River are small, independent outfitters like myself that run less than 100 days each season on our tags. See, the cool thing about Ennis is that all of the small independent outfitters hire each other. We keep each other busy so that we don’t have to go work for a fly shop or a lodge where the clients’ experience can be more like a “trip factory”. Independent outfitters are the soul of the Madison River. We take care of the fish here, we take care of the river, we take care of each other and the community we live in.

Here is the scenario that will play out if any of these regulations pass on the Madison River: I (just like the majority of SRP holders) will be capped at either 39 days or 70 days, depending on which year YOU decide to base the regs off of. I will have a choice to keep my days, fill them with clients, and “compete” with the big box brands with half the days I need to support my family. OR; sell my days to said big-box brand and go to work as an EMPLOYEE for a fly shop or lodge for the rest of my career. Sure I could buy user days from another independent outfitter, but we all know the only people with that kind of money are the top few percent of the SRP holders. We will be forced into employment by lesser paying, trip factory businesses not unlike what happened down in Idaho on the South Fork of the Snake.

The Montana FWP has not done an adequate comprehensive survey of the overall use on the Madison. Going after the guide community without addressing the public use is not only short sighted, it’s transparently obvious that these regulations are being pushed through by backdoor lobbyists represented by wealthy non-residents who purchased vacation property along the river. If these people don’t want guides and public to float past their hobby ranch, they should have bought property in Colorado where they can already own the river bottom.

The GGTU proposal is an assault on the Montana way of life. To think that a rest/rotation schedule will ease traffic, deflate heated conflict, and relieve pressure is asinine. Closing a section to commercial guiding each week will not only condense all the guide boats to a smaller section of river, it will entice the private fishing and boat traffic to the areas without guide boats. Traffic, pressure, and conflict will rise. FWP set a bad precedent years ago when they prohibited fishing from a boat above Lyons Bridge and below Ennis Bridge. More regulations in this fashion will snowball into more restrictive access across the great state of Montana. A state I would not want to live in. Open the river up, top to bottom, and RELIEVE the traffic, congestion, and conflict. Serve the Montanans!

The FOAM proposal is the lesser of two evils, and if I have to swallow one of them, I choose FOAM. However; my issue with FOAm is that the allocation and acquisition of user days is convoluted. If you limit the days I can operate, I better be able to sell them to whomever I want, and for as much as the market allows. Don’t limit the amount of SRP holders that an outfitter can purchase. Free the market if you’re not going to free the river. At least let me sell out and move my family elsewhere.

-Matt Dodson  
SRP 294

**From:** [jason@wolfcreekangler.com](mailto:jason@wolfcreekangler.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rest and Rotation  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 8:40:32 AM  
**Attachments:** [small.png](#)

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To whom it may concern;

I am writing to you this morning to voice my opposition to the prescriptions of the George Grant Trout Unlimited Madison River petition, specifically the call for Rest and Rotation.

Rest and Rotation wrongfully targets commercial use and will result in MORE congestion on the river, not less, as commercial trips are limited to specific stretches of water on specific days. Negative consequences including over-crowding and a diminishment in quality of the fishing experience for clients are precisely what I believe you are trying to address with the recreation plan.

I am in full support of the FOAM petition as the only viable solution for the Madison River Recreational Plan as it takes all users into consideration rather than singling out and adversely affecting commercial use.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my comment.

Best Regards



**Jason Orzechowski, Owner/Outfitter**  
**Wolf Creek Angler LLC**  
**(406)235-4350**  
**[www.wolfcreekangler.com](http://www.wolfcreekangler.com) [[wolfcreekangler.com](http://wolfcreekangler.com)]**



**From:** [Mel Glaser](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Petitions  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 6, 2020 9:25:47 PM

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I support moving forward with the FOAM petition. A lot of time and experience from many individuals has shaped the FOAM petition into a document that is workable for the majority of those using the river. No one plan is going to please every person but the FOAM plan allows for river restrictions to protect the health of the fishery while also allowing outfitters and guides to continue a managed use of the river.

I am **HIGHLY** against the proposed rule II for Rest and Rotation. I operate a scenic float business on the Madison River which has allowed tourists and locals an opportunity to float the river without having to fish or pay the higher prices for hiring fishing guides. The Varney to Ennis stretch is an important stretch in my business because it allows a greater opportunity for seeing wildlife especially moose and birds. Further, I allow an evening sunset cruise which is only a 1-2 hour float and operates in the Eight Mile Ford to Ennis Campground stretch. This would take away the opportunity for those wanting to go on Saturday evening sunset cruises. Many times, my clients call the day before they want to go out and it would be difficult to work around a restriction like this one. If the "problem" is truly commercial fishing and the commission decides to move forward with this rule, I propose that scenic tours be exempt from this restriction.

I am also highly against the proposed rule III for Rotation. The new Rule V proposed by FOAM is much easier to adapt and manage than the rule III proposed by George Grant. The rule III allows for much error by giving different days you can access with a boat or can not access with a boat. Further, in combination with rule II, it completely removes the opportunity for commercial fishing from a boat from Quake Lake all the way to Palisades on Sundays. That is an enormous stretch of the Madison River. Also, on Sundays, it only allows for commercial boat access from Lyons to Varney. How many commercial boats go out on Saturdays and Sundays? And they will all be forced into those small stretches? How will forcing so many boats in a smaller stretch of river alleviate any perceived problems with crowding? Also, with the increased crowding on Saturdays and Sundays, outfitters may elect to go to other rivers--- but other rivers in the area like the Big Hole and Beaverhead-- also have restrictions regarding commercial activity and non-residents on Saturdays and Sundays which further restricts where guides are able to go. The FOAM rule V regarding rotation is much more acceptable for river users.

After reading all the proposed rules submitted by FOAM, it is clear they have worked very hard to establish rules that are acceptable and effective. They have identified problems found on other rivers and worked to establish rules that mitigate those problems.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email. Best to all of you for making the right decisions for the community.

Melissa Glaser  
Magical Madison Scenic Tours  
406-641-0025

**From:** [Charlie Mills](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rest and Rotation Schedule for the Madison River  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 6, 2020 5:19:14 PM

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I strongly support the FOAM petition as the most thought through & viable solution for a Madison River recreational plan on a go forward basis - GGTU plan is not a realistic solution and will create a number of hardships for all commercial users on the River ( which apparently are a relatively small percentage of total use ) FOAM's plan clearly demonstrates greater effort & collaboration to reach a viable solution

I am not a Montana resident, but typically make 3 or 4 lengthy trips up each year ( and have for many years ) - needless to say that represents a significant sum of money spent in Montana - I have other options, but do not want to see the many friends and relationships I have developed over the years destroyed by the perhaps (?) well intended, but clearly narrowly focused approach GGTU is advocating

Please do not allow this group to prevail

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need any additional information

Regards,

Charlie Mills  
1836 E 27 St.  
Tulsa, OK 74114  
918-640-3645

**From:** [Satoshi Yamamoto](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Regarding Madison River EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 4, 2020 4:50:23 PM

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Dear FWP Committee on Madison River Rule Making,

I'm an outfitter from Livingston (#23140) and keep a Madison SRP (#266). I'm with FOAM as well so professionally and personally I do support FOAM proposals on Madison new rules, plus I do agree to some modifications and adjustments that your department might add.

I strongly oppose what George Grant TU and co suggest = rest and rotate. As the FOAM and most river users suggest that the rotation of sections will increase concentration on the open section for the day with guided trips. Also, what is the definition of "citizen's day" or "Montana resident day" = no commercial guided trips with out-of-state (or country) fishers but only Montana residents are allowed to fish. I really believe this is very derogatory and sounds very narrow-minded for people who come to enjoy what Montana has to offer. For our guide and fishing industry (stores and lodging), over 95% of clients and customers are from other states or countries. Montana is a part of The United States of America, isn't it? What is the definition of Montana citizen and resident then? Plus how about some out of state folks who own properties and partially live in Montana? Those people will hire guides so often and are they resident or out of state visitors? I'm sure those people are paying some incredible amounts of property taxes!! I would not be surprised some of those rich folks file lawsuits regarding Madison, Beaverhead, and Big Hole rules regarding this resident or non-resident things. Also, this rule is totally out of date in this time when race and ethnicity can be a hot topic. I'm actually a permanent resident of US originally from Japan. I bet I am most likely the only one Japanese or perhaps Asian in general who's making a living in Montana as a fishing guide. What if I'm floating the Madison with my black and hispanic Montana resident friends on my day off? I bet some self-proclaimed "river vigilante" will question us about our residency. Wouldn't it be a total racist act if that would really happen?

That being said, I strongly agree to limit the number of river use days per outfitter. What I want to say is slightly beyond the perspective of this Madison issue we've been debating but here it is. Most outfits are all about numbers of trips, i.e., money they can generate. They send out any guides available. There are lots of guides who are not trained enough in terms of boat rowing or general common senses and etiquette on the river and as guides. As an outfitter and guide, I have had more than enough negative experiences with this tendency of outfitters and uneducated guides. If river uses are limited for each outfit, they would use only good and well-qualified guides. Consequently quality of our guide industry will go up. I would not want some reputable shops, lodges, and outfitters on the Madison to suffer. But I bet they can increase their rate to compensate for their losses of trip numbers. Also this does not mean to limit the door to our industry for someone new and young to get into guide businesses. It just requires good attitude and hard work and oftentimes takes a long time to establish oneself. Again, this statement of mine is beyond FWP's rule making but in my view, Madison is the prime example of this situation.

Also, as we guide industry accept some regulations and new rules, PLEASE do make strong announcements to general river users, Montana locals or visitors, about their side of responsibilities. Most notorious issue is the boat ramp use. If they are shuttling their vehicles and trailers, DO make sure to leave their boats way out of the ramp. And DO NOT load and

unload their gears on the ramp. And those kinds of issues. I understand it would require lots of "man power" on your department but it would be great if your wardens can drive in and check the ramps right around the busiest time of the day, putting in and take out.

For my outfitting from Livingston, the Madison SRP is a part of options. During spring Lower Madison can be a good option. Then in summer months, I would use the Madison as I'm requested by clients, to diversify multi-day trips, and when Yellowstone River gets muddy. Current fee = \$105 = is affordable and worth having just to run a few trips a year. If the SRP application gets too complicated or too expensive, or if I would not be qualified, I would consider giving up on renewing.

Thank you for reading.

Faithfully Yours,  
Satoshi Yamamoto - Livingston, MT  
406-223-3225  
[www.leftyanglerandflies.com](http://www.leftyanglerandflies.com) [[leftyanglerandflies.com](http://leftyanglerandflies.com)]

**From:** [jason@montanatroutchasers.com](mailto:jason@montanatroutchasers.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 3, 2020 6:24:31 PM

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Name: Jason Fleury

City: Bozeman

Commission and FWP staff-

Thank you all for the time invested in this Madison Recreation Plan process, it has been quite the lengthy, difficult challenge.

I would like to encourage you to adopt the FOAM plan to serve as a commercial cap for outfitted use on the Madison. I am certainly biased towards the plan as I helped draft it, but so did so many others. The commercial cap plan we have submitted has been the culmination of not just the numerous meetings we have held with guides and outfitters, but also the immense amount of time meeting with many of you as commissioners, FWP staff, state legislative representatives, organizations such as GGTU, Madison River Foundation, chamber of commerce representatives and countless businesses and individuals from Dillon, Butte, West Yellowstone, Ennis, and Bozeman. It has the efforts of all of those mentioned as part of that plan, to say one person or group authored the plan is not quite true, it took the input of many to be presented to you as it is now.

For the first time in recent history, the outfitting community has united as a majority and is not just willing to accept restrictions put on our industry, but they want to help shape them so that they can support them for not just the Madison, but for other rivers as they become necessary as well. We want to be a proactive part of this process and have put forth a plan that helps the best way we feel possible.

The GGTU plan with Rest and Rotation and removing the ability to utilize boats for accessing stretches of the Madison 3 days per week from June 15 to Sept 30 serves will not reduce social conflict. You have seen the growth of Bozeman, and the massive influx of angling pressure throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. From March 21 through June 1 there was virtually zero commercial activity on the Madison, yet shuttle companies recorded their busiest months EVER. The general public will need Rest and Rotation from their own neighbors if this trend continues, not from commercial activity.

Both FOAM and GGTU agree on a boat stamp for the general public, and this is the first step in capturing true data so that limitations may be put in place as warranted for all users, please allow this to go forward.

The many businesses and families that depend on the Madison river will be devastated if a tool such as Rest and Rotation, or boat restrictions are put in as a Management tool. GGTU when asked multiple times throughout this process cannot show or explain how these tools will help in easing conflict for both today and in the future.

Thank you again for all of your hard work.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Greg Bricker](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020 8:29:37 AM

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Good morning, I am writing you today in support of the Madison River Recreation petition presented by the FOAM organization. Rest and rotation will not help alleviate crowding on the Madison River, and it unfairly discriminates against anglers that choose to utilize the services of fishing guides and outfitters.

The amount of available water to float anglers is not sufficient to remove substantial lengths of the Madison for two days each week. While a river like the Big Hole has more water available to absorb the angling pressure displaced by sectional closures, the Madison is too short for this type of management plan. This will drastically increase the pressure on the sections that remain open, perhaps creating a feeling the Madison is actually more crowded under the new management plan.

Respectfully  
Greg Bricker  
Outfitter, Freestone Fly Fishing

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Kelly Kimzey](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 8:21:46 PM

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I support FOAM petition going forward. Thanks Kelly Kimzey Wise River, MT



**From:** [John Chaffee](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 5:36:31 PM

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My name is John Chaffee and I am a lifelong resident of Montana. I am a special education teacher at an elementary school in Helena.

I support the FOAM petition going forward and want the Commission to deny GGTU's Rest and Rotation petition for unfairly discriminating against anglers who chose to use the services of guides and outfitters. As an avid river recreationist, the rivers are becoming over run by recreational floaters and DIY floaters along with guides and outfitters. The difference is guides and outfitters are paying fees to use the river and others are not. The other difference is the guides and outfitters are showing more respect to the river than recreational floaters, drunken intertubers sinking beer cans in the river for example.

Please be reasonable when making a decision that carries this much importance.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
John Chaffee  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Robert Boyce](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Support FOAM  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 2:57:21 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to support FOAM's plan for the Madison River.

I have been involved in the fly fishing business for over 25 years, one thing I know to be very true is that the plan the GGTU's plan doesn't work.

At this point in time I find it hard to believe that anyone thinks that outfitters are the problem - this notion is ridiculous.

Best,

Robert Boyce  
Montana Flyfishing Expeditions [www.montanaflyfishingx.com](http://www.montanaflyfishingx.com) [[montanaflyfishingx.com](mailto:montanaflyfishingx.com)]  
Flatwater Lodge [www.flatwaterlodge.com](http://www.flatwaterlodge.com) [[flatwaterlodge.com](mailto:flatwaterlodge.com)]  
Castafly Travel [www.castaflytravel.com](http://www.castaflytravel.com) [[castaflytravel.com](mailto:castaflytravel.com)]  
406.581.9577  
P.O. Box 11923  
Bozeman, MT 59719

**From:** [directorofentertainment@gmail.com](mailto:directorofentertainment@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RJ Cain... 40 years of Guiding on the Madison River... MY Comments...  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 11:55:51 PM

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MFWP Commissioners,

The Madison belongs to Montanans.

On some days there are TOO MANY NON-RESIDENT ANGLERS on the river.

A CARRYING CAPACITY for each section of river MUST be determined using HARD DATA.

To start with NON RESIDENTS should have to buy a daily Madison river fishing license in addition to their regular fishing license \$10 daily to start with... choosing either an upper or lower madison license...to determine their numbers on the river.

Residents should also have to buy a Madison river fishing license in addition to their regular license which would be a nominal \$5 for the season, one license for the upper, one license for the lower... both for \$10.

Resident and Non-resident ...Non fishing public using a floatation device of any sort on the Madison should also have to buy an annual license for use on either the upper or lower madison river. Nominal \$5 charge for each section.

Remember Big Sky charges about \$130 a day for skiing... Fishing is CHEAP RECREATION... & NEEEEEDS MONEY to IMPROVE the catch rate & fishable miles...

We need HARD DATA and Money for facility maintenance and improving the fisheries of the Missouri and headwater rivers.

Once carrying capacity is determined, Choose how many will be non-resident anglers for each section of river per day. Let them begin buying licenses beginning January 1st

Let the non-resident anglers determine if they want an outfitter .... Let the Free Market system determine who the Outfitters are and how much they charge.

Giving Outfitters guaranteed days they can sell is CRIMINAL... MONTANANS OWN THE MADISON... NOT OUTFITTERS !!!

GIVING some OUTFITTERS LICENSES worth MILLIONS of DOLLARS from a river owned by every Montanan would be a CRIMINAL ACT... in MY OPINION...

Many fly shops run up their days on the Madison river the past couple years knowing this day was coming and they WANT THE FREE MONEY OF HISTORICAL USE.

Outfitters have come and gone on the Madison for Decades... None of them got a licensed annuity worth MILLIONS handed to them by the State.

WHY WOULD WE START NOW... OH yea the LAME SYSTEM on the Bighole and Beaverhead...

NEVER TOO LATE TO TURN THAT HORSE AROUND...

Why should a few NON-RESIDENTS & RESIDENTS get LARGE SUMS OF FREE MONEY for EXPLOITING and RUNNING DOWN a river owned by ALL MONTANANS.

Being an Outfitter is a PRIVILEGE not a RIGHT ! An outfitter has one of the BEST OFFICES IN MONTANA... & its a PRIVILEGE !!

LET THEM GUIDE THE LIMITED NUMBER OF NON-RESIDENT ANGLERS WHO WANT TO HIRE THEM...

ITS A GRRREAT JOB... I SHOULD KNOW...

The FREE MARKET will allow ANY MONTANAN of legal age who wants to compete for an Outfitting job a chance...

Once the HISTORICAL USE MONEY LOTTERY is OVER... NO YOUNG MONTANANS WILL LIKELY GET A CHANCE AT OUTFITTING ON MONTANA'S FINEST TROUT STREAM...

UNLESS THEY RECENTLY MOVED HERE FROM OUT OF STATE AND BROUGHT A SEMI FULL OF CASH !!!

IN ADDITION, DENYING THE USE OF BOATS OR FLOATATION DEVICES FOR TRANSPORTATION IN THE WADE SECTIONS OF QUAKE TO LYONS AND ENNIS TO ENNIS LAKE IS RIDICULOUS AT BEST. THE LANDOWNERS BORDERING THESE SECTIONS

ARE NEARLY ALL NON-RESIDENTS... These sections would be out of reach and basically PRIVATIZED for non-residents and unaccessible for the average Montanan... Would be Grrreat for the non-resident college student from Bozeman who is 20 years old and in Grrreat athletic shape !

THE WORK OF SPECIAL INTERESTS OR MORONS... DUH...

AND NO... THESE SECTIONS SHOULD NOT BE OPENED TO FLOAT FISHING FROM A BOAT !

FOCUS ON DETERMINING CARRYING CAPACITY AND HOW MANY SHOULD BE NON-RESIDENTS... & HOW MANY RESIDENTS... NOT EASY BUT A GOAL ... BUT ONE THAT MUCH BE REACHED BEFORE GALLATIN VALLEY GROWS INTO THE MADISON VALLEY.

THAT IS IF YOU WANT A QUALITY EXPERIENCE... AND IN A FREE MARKET SYSTEM... FOR QUALITY YOU MUST PAY SOMETHING !!!

THROW OUT THOSE PETITIONS AND START OVER AGAIN...

THE LOW NUMBER OF FISH IN THE RIVER IS DUE TO MOTHER NATURE & POOR MANAGEMENT... NOT DUE TO THE NUMBER OF FISHERMEN... MORE ON THIS AT A LATER DATE...

GOOD LUCK & GIT-UR-DONE ! FOR ALL MONTANANS...

I'M OUT OF TIME BUT YOU HAVNT HEARD THE LAST FROM ME... ( '



**From:** [jasmueller21@yahoo.com](mailto:jasmueller21@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 10:48:55 PM

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Name: jean Mueller  
City: Cameron, MT  
10/30/2020

Madison River Committee:

I am disappointed to find myself writing over the same issues that were talked about before. More disappointing is that the solutions offered are basically the same bad solutions that were offered before.

A year ago, I found myself on a bus with like-minded Madison River people concerned about the fate of our river, the industry it supports in the Madison Valley, and concerns about the solutions that were being offered about the crowding issue on the Madison River. The solutions being offered seemingly weren't in the interest of the river. They are in the interest of some land owners, who have bought their piece of the pie and now want to be sure no one else gets any. They have managed to represent themselves through well-meaning sounding organizations, such as the Madison River Foundation, and similar others. If you look at who belongs to some of these "well-meaning" groups and look at where the majority of their officers and members live you will find a majority of them are neighbors in wealthier subdivisions. They are not interested in protecting Montana citizens rights to recreate on their rivers. You, as the board, are tasked with protecting the Montana citizens rights, while protecting the environment in which they wish to recreate. And against that you are tasked with looking closely at the nature of why certain groups have certain wishes.

When I spoke in front of the Board I offered a different perspective than most present. I informed you that my home is the first home downriver from the Three Dollar Bridge Access. This is one of the most renowned locations for fly fishing IN THE WORLD. My home is 100 feet above the river and I watch people walk the .7 miles downriver from the access or I watch them float to my home, and park the boat, and fish in front of our home daily. I do not have a TV. We watch the river. In addition to watching people fish we watch families float down the river to just enjoy a summer day's float "not fishing" but taking the kids out for a ride to look at the river and enjoy it. We watch people kayak and canoe (!) down the river for a great family experience. We watched a group paddle board (and took pictures!). We help out when things go wrong, like leaky rafts, torn Achilles tendons caused by getting a wading boot caught in the rocks, and overexertion. Watch. We watch. We notice how many people there are. The Madison River at Three Dollar Bridge provides people from all over the world a chance to recreate, catch world class fish, watch wildlife ford the river, and sometimes have a really bad day. We built the house in 1999 and live in it up to 7 months a year. I have seen Stonefly season annually since 2002. The number of people has not dramatically increased. It is not crowded downriver. And I fish it most nights with the others.

When I spoke to you about my home, I noted that I believed that most of you had probably fished in front of it. I was amazed when all of you admitted that you had never fished there, in fact you had never fished the Madison! I was rather surprised. You were tasked to decide about the regulations for this river and none of you had fished any section of it! When you gave the community more time to put together possible solutions I believed that at least one of you would then do your due diligence before the next set of new regulations was placed before the community and personally become familiar with the problem. Sadly, not one of you has decided to fish or walk at ANY access, at ANY time on the Madison since that meeting. And yet, you personally are now the "experts" to decide the policies to enact. It makes me question

how much our river matters to you. It makes me question what research you have been doing to arrive at the policies you are recommending.

Regarding Rest and Rotation. The fifty-mile riffle is just that. It is a finite amount of river. When you remove any of it from use for just one day it will impact the amount of stress put upon other sections of the river. When you effectively close to 18.6 miles of river two days a week the other parts of the river will suffer due to over-crowding. And the damages that are done to the open sections of river on the day of Rest and Rotation will probably be more than the healing that occurs on the one day of Rest. After the 12 weeks of this damage/rest cycle there may be more damage to the river than rest. If the river is already stressed at the level of use it is experiencing putting more people in a section one or two days a week is not going to improve the river ? it will probably cause a deterioration in the ecosystem and stress on the fish. I support a system that creates ?organic spreading? rather than a patchwork of extreme use to no use. (Proposed Rule 2-3)

It would be better to set limits based on past use. The protection of the river needs to be more important than cramming people on sections of it. If the river fails, then all of us lose: the community, the community?s economy, and future generations. (Proposed Rule 6)

There needs to be more real and well-rounded data, and it all needs to be carefully analyzed. The only survey was given to guided fishermen after a guided tour. Have you surveyed wade fishermen? Guides? Landowners? I read a report this afternoon by Brian McGeehan that addresses the growth of the Bozeman community and guided versus non-guided use and projects what the future holds. These kinds of studies will help create an informed policy that will work now and into the future. Feel free to put a web cam on my house to monitor the wade fishing versus the boat access. I don?t believe that it makes any difference as to how someone gets to my house to fish. All fishermen only fish with one rod ? and there is an inaccessible area during spring and early summer while walking between Three Dollar Bridge and Lyons Bridge (this is something I really wish that just one of you had come down to the Madison and tried to wade it). That said, I support that there should be a 1-year plan evaluation. (New Rule 13)

Last, I am appalled that your Board would consider banning recreational use and use for fishing only. I came to this state because of the passionate, righteous belief that the waters are for public use. Not just for fishing. They belong to all Montanan?s. I love watching the family rafts come by in the summer. They are building a joyous reverence for the rivers and nature of Montana in those children through their family adventure. You have no right to ban them. (Proposed New Rule 3)

I am disappointed that I am writing this letter, but I don?t feel that the solutions are offered are in the best interest of our river and the people who recreate on it. I don?t feel that the committee has done it?s due diligence to study the problem. If just one of you had personally driven down here to see it and experience it during the peak season I would trust your proposals more.

Jean S. Mueller  
22 Cliff Lake Rd.  
Cameron, MT. 59720

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jean Mueller](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Comments from a landowner on the Madison  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 10:42:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [2020.docx](#)

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Attached are my thoughts about this situation and the proposals that have been made regarding the Madison River.

Thank you for reading it

Jean S. Mueller  
22 Cliff Lake Rd.  
Cameron, MT 59720  
959 824-8916  
[jasmueller21@yahoo.com](mailto:jasmueller21@yahoo.com)

P.S. My phone is a Los Angeles number because I receive a 12% discount as part of my retirement from LAUSD.

I have been a Montana resident since 2015 and a landowner since 1992



**From:** [lwittorp@gmail.com](mailto:lwittorp@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 8:54:00 PM

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Name: Lauren Wittorp  
City: McAllister  
Commissioners:

My name is Lauren Wittorp and I am reluctantly sharing my comment on the proposed rule today, the last day of public comment hours before it ends. Because it was hard. I am reluctant because when I first stood in support of FWP's proposed rules to protect that Madison River in 2018, I started being threatened by those that did not want regulations. I continued to stand up and speak up for the health of the fishery and never could have imagined what it did to my life. My life was threatened, my house vandalized, my car broken into--ultimately resulting in legal fees to protect myself and having to quit my job because I no longer felt safe.

I chose to submit comment today because this isn't about me, it's about protecting my favorite place in the world-- the only place I can still go in the town I live in because people still treat me so terribly, all for trying to protect the health of a fishery. So to say I'm disappointed that you chose to listen to the petitions of FOAM and GGTU, rather than that of FWP scientists, is an understatement. I am disappointed that the first petition you received using this process that a young woman advocating for FWP's plans was thrown out, for no reason, just to accept one from an outfitting group that wasn't based on policy from FWP or scientists. It's hard to see that you are protecting the river and not just protecting the profits of outfitters. It seems young people and conservation groups were left behind in this process.

I encourage you to think of all of those who haven't commented because a lot of people don't feel like they can out of fear of what people that live in the small communities around the Madison will do to them. I hope you consider the next generation before you consider the profits of outfitters. I hope you are forwarding thing of the impacts to come from climate change. Most of all, I hope you always remember this is a public resource that is here for all, not just those who profit from it. I hope you remember that all deserve to use a public river in the way they want, not just those that profit from it. The public should be the priority.

My voice has never felt heard and I certainly doubt this will be the time the average person is listened to-- but I sure hope you will consider the opinions of those who just love the fishery and want to see it protected for future generations. I hope you chose to listen the way your staff at FWP have. Travis Horton, Mark Delaray, Cheryl Morris and Dave Mosier are intelligent, thoughtful, and exceptional people and I applaud them for always listening, teaching and engaging. I wish their opinions and intellect were valued more by those forming policy.

As for my comments on the specific rules. I don't believe they prioritize the fishery or the residents of Montana. I believe people should have the ability to use the resource as income but not at the cost of the fishery or public.

I think capping the river at levels past what FWP fisheries scientists recommend is irresponsible and will only cause damage. Listen to FWP scientists, not those profiting from the river. The scientists said were at a tipping point years ago, why choose years past that?

As for walk wade sections, a public resource should be managed to benefit all types of people trying to recreate. Dedicating sections of the river for walk in-wade only fishing is the fair thing to do. It lives up to the promise of those who advocated and funded the Three-Dollar Bridge Fishing Area, that was promised to be an area for walk-wade anglers forever.

I am not in favor of these rules and hope you chose to heavily change them before voting. I hope you look back at the original rule proposed by FWP in 2018. I hope you take recommendations from the staff at FWP that manage the river and know better than anyone else after all they are the only ones with the agenda of protecting the fishery and river.

I am always happy to further discuss my views and opinions. Feel free to contact me anytime, lwittorp@gmail.com, 406.624.9782.

Sincerely,

Lauren Wittorp

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [jwinsto@gmail.com](mailto:jwinsto@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 7:27:42 PM

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Name: Jeremy W.  
City: Ennis  
Hello,

I adamantly oppose the Madison River Rec Plan. Eliminating boat access to specific reaches of the river and micromanagement of people in time and space is NOT the answer.

The GGTU proposals significantly reduce access to large reaches of the river and there is ZERO scientific evidence or rationale to suggest that these proposals will reduce overall user numbers, eliminate conflict, or benefit the fishery. They do not actually 'rest' the river in any way. They only force people into less space, and more people in less space is not the answer. These are not effective long-term solutions to the real issue of growth.

Commercial use only represents less than 15% of overall annual use. I support FOAM's proposed cap on outfitted use with individual outfitter allocations based on historical use. This is a step in the right direction. We also support measures that ensure transferability of permits as well as allocated trips.

I strongly oppose the GGTU proposals for rest & rotation and restricting boat access. These rules will create confusion, complicate local lives, and do nothing to protect the resource or address the real issue at hand; GROWTH.

Additionally, two areas that have been inadequately addressed by either of the petitions and need much more work; the large and rapid growth of non-commercial use, and the 'Bikini Hatch' on the Lower Madison. Both of these are significant user groups that are growing faster than any other.

Thank you,

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Chris Gentry](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Regulations  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 7:23:03 PM

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Dear Commissioners and Director Williams

I would like to express my concern about the on-going Madison River Regulations proposed draft EA and ARM rules. I have been a spokesperson for most of the Ennis business community during this process. After reading the proposed EA, I see several flaws and things that give me great hesitation. I know that you have received a plethora of economic information from me and others in the past. Ennis has been built around the pillars of outdoor recreation and the tourism industry. Proposals in this EA even go against Governor Bullock's Outdoor Recreation and Tourism programs. The responsibility that has been placed in your laps is enormous and will have direct and indirect impacts on this community.

Capping only the commercial industry when it is only 15% of the use does not make any logical sense. You must have all factual information and data to make an educated and informed decision. You need the other 85% of the data and just not estimates.

Rest and rotation will not solve any issues on the Madison river due to its length. This information has been broken down for you from two credible sources; Scott Vollmer and Brian McGeehan. FOAM, MOGA and public commentary has also been opposed to this option.

Your Angler Satisfaction surveys show that there is a problem at the fishing access points and not on the river. I would very much like to see implementation of the Ambassador Program that was introduced by MOGA. It provides a low cost mechanism to ease crowding and to gather data. Your own rules dictate to start with the least restrictive.

I do not support reducing any access in the current walk wade areas. Not allowing boats to gain access to fishing is a reduction of public access. When the language of a petition's rule-making alternatives is misconstrued or misinterpreted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission to the extent that it alters the intent of the petitioner, it compromises the entire basis of the Rulemaking process. In sum, when the public is asked to consider and comment on an alternative and that alternative has been mis-interpreted and, therefore, presented incorrectly to the Public by the Commission, the value of the public's comments on that alternative is of questionable import, at best.

In their petition (henceforth refers to as GGTU), the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Skyline Association and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association, put forth a straightforward proposal for the following:

- Seasonal walk/wade, June 15 to September 30
  - Friday to Sunday: Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge FAS and Ennis FAS to Ennis Reservoir: no watercraft or floatation device can be used to access fishing.

This relatively simple language proposed by GGTU was aimed at offering "protections for the wading angler" which were the "overwhelmingly favored alternatives" by respondents in the FWP survey conducted in 2019.

Unfortunately, the Commission interpreted the GGTU language as:

-Friday to Sunday in the Quake Lake-Lyons Bridge FAS and Ennis FAS to Ennis Lake reaches from June 15-September 30, allows for float fishing in these sections but “boats cannot stop to let the occupants wade fish.”

This interpretation is such a departure from the GGTU petition’s intent that it is almost beyond belief. And, remarkably, the mis-interpretation was not even realized by GGTU until October 28, 2020, two days prior to the closing of the public comment period.

Another glaring mistake of the Fish and Wildlife handling of the presentation of the GGTU petition is that the fact that it calls for the repeal of all the current wade fishing protections outside of the June 15 to September 30. This massive change barely gets a mention in the EA.

It’s recently become abundantly clear that in their haste to get a Madison Recreation Plan approved by the end of the year, the Fish and Game Commission has shirked their responsibilities and presented to the public an EA that is not only not representative of the petitioners intent but it also downplays massive changes that are at odds with the public’s stated desire. We ask that the Fish and Game Commission adhere to what the Fish and Game Commissioner Tim Aldrich poignantly said about the process, “it’s not our job to just get a plan done, it’s our job to get the plan done right.”

I have further question; is this also interpreted in FOAM’s petition for Rule V?

This creates substantial change in the interpretation and the general public hasn’t been able to comment. Thus it would force this back out to public comment. It gives me ZERO FAITH with the petitioners and FWP that anyone is doing their due diligence to a project that has far reaching ramifications to this community.

I do not support capping commercial use and will not comment on any of the particulars. There is legislative action that needs to happen prior to commercial use. Again, this needs to be done right. Do not put the cart before the horse just to get something done. This will cause unnecessary problems in the future.

This summer we saw a large influx of people into SW Montana and being a neighbor to the largest growing area in Montana; Gallatin county, we are feeling those pressures. Of utmost concern is our protection of the Madison River and protection of our way of life in Madison County.

I do not want to discount the progress that has been made. This is an extremely complex project. Let the progress continue but the legal procedure of this process needs to be opposed in its entirety. This just goes to show the mistakes that are being made in the rush to push this through before a new commission could be coming in. Stakeholders and the public have been battling two inferno’s this past year. The regulations and Covid. Mistakes are being made due to mental and physical exhaustion. You have said that this will be used as a template for other rivers in MT. If you don’t owe it to this community, owe it to the state of MT.

Chris Gentry

Madison Foods  
Madison Smokehouse  
4939 US HWY 287 N  
Ennis, MT 59729  
406 682 4306  
406 682 4146 fax  
[afsfoods@3rivers.net](mailto:afsfoods@3rivers.net)

**From:** [chrisgentry09@gmail.com](mailto:chrisgentry09@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 7:21:33 PM

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Name: Chris Gentry

City: Ennis

Dear Commissioners and Director Williams

I would like to express my concern about the on-going Madison River Regulations proposed draft EA and ARM rules. I have been a spokesperson for most of the Ennis business community during this process. After reading the proposed EA, I see several flaws and things that give me great hesitation.

I know that you have received a plethora of economic information from me and others in the past. Ennis has been built around the pillars of outdoor recreation and the tourism industry. Proposals in this EA even go against Governor Bullock's Outdoor Recreation and Tourism programs. The responsibility that has been placed in your laps is enormous and will have direct and indirect impacts on this community.

Capping only the commercial industry when it is only 15% of the use does not make any logical sense. You must have all factual information and data to make an educated and informed decision. You need the other 85% of the data and just not estimates.

Rest and rotation will not solve any issues on the Madison river due to its length. This information has been broken down for you from two credible sources; Scott Vollmer and Brian McGeehan. FOAM, MOGA and public commentary has also been opposed to this option.

Your Angler Satisfaction surveys show that there is a problem at the fishing access points and not on the river. I would very much like to see implementation of the Ambassador Program that was introduced by MOGA. It provides a low cost mechanism to ease crowding and to gather data. Your own rules dictate to start with the least restrictive.

I do not support reducing any access in the current walk wade areas. Not allowing boats to gain access to fishing is a reduction of public access. When the language of a petition's rule-making alternatives is misconstrued or misinterpreted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission to the extent that it alters the intent of the petitioner, it compromises the entire basis of the Rulemaking process. In sum, when the public is asked to consider and comment on an alternative and that alternative has been mis-interpreted and, therefore, presented incorrectly to the Public by the Commission, the value of the public's comments on that alternative is of questionable import, at best.

In their petition (henceforth refers to as GGTU), the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Skyline Association and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association, put forth a straightforward proposal for the following:

- Seasonal walk/wade, June 15 to September 30
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This relatively simple language proposed by GGTU was aimed at offering "protections for the wading angler" which were the "overwhelmingly favored alternatives" by respondents in the

FWP survey conducted in 2019.

Unfortunately, the Commission interpreted the GGTU language as:

-Friday to Sunday in the Quake Lake-Lyons Bridge FAS and Ennis FAS to Ennis Lake reaches from June 15-September 30, allows for float fishing in these sections but ?boats cannot stop to let the occupants wade fish.?

This interpretation is such a departure from the GGTU petition?s intent that it is almost beyond belief. And, remarkably, the mis-interpretation was not even realized by GGTU until October 28, 2020, two days prior to the closing of the public comment period.

Another glaring mistake of the Fish and Wildlife handling of the presentation of the GGTU petition is that the fact that it calls for the repeal of all the current wade fishing protections outside of the June 15 to September 30. This massive change barely gets a mention in the EA.

It?s recently become abundantly clear that in their haste to get a Madison Recreation Plan approved by the end of the year, the Fish and Game Commission has shirked their responsibilities and presented to the public an EA that is not only not representative of the petitioners intent but it also downplays massive changes that are at odds with the public?s stated desire. We ask that the Fish and Game Commission adhere to what the Fish and Game Commissioner Tim Aldrich poignantly said about the process, ?it?s not our job to just get a plan done, it?s our job to get the plan done right.?

I have further question; is this also interpreted in FOAM?s petition for Rule V?

This creates substantial change in the interpretation and the general public hasn?t been able to comment. Thus it would force this back out to public comment. It gives me ZERO FAITH with the petitioners and FWP that anyone is doing their due diligence to a project that has far reaching ramifications to this community.

I do not support capping commercial use and will not comment on any of the particulars. There is legislative action that needs to happen prior to commercial use. Again, this needs to be done right. Do not put the cart before the horse just to get something done. This will cause unnecessary problems in the future.

This summer we saw a large influx of people into SW Montana and being a neighbor to the largest growing area in Montana; Gallatin county, we are feeling those pressures. Of utmost concern is our protection of the Madison River and protection of our way of life in Madison County.

I do not want to discount the progress that has been made. This is an extremely complex project. Let the progress continue but the legal procedure of this process needs to be opposed in its entirety. This just goes to show the mistakes that are being made in the rush to push this through before a new commission could be coming in. Stakeholders and the public have been battling two inferno?s this past year. The regulations and Covid. Mistakes are being made due to mental and physical exhaustion. You have said that this will be used as a template for other rivers in MT. If you don?t owe it to this community, owe it to the state of MT.

Chris Gentry  
Madison Foods  
Madison Smokehouse



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Ennis, MT 59729  
406 682 4306  
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afsfoods@3rivers.net

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Danielbragg11@gmail.com](mailto:Danielbragg11@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 3:50:37 PM

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Name: Daniel bragg  
City: Cameron  
Hello,

My name is Daniel Bragg and I spend over 100 days on the Madison River annually.

I am writing you today to express my concern over the proposed rule changes to the regulations on the Madison.

The proposed change to make floating in the walk/wade sections illegal is completely special interest based in my opinion. Much of this regulated water is completely inaccessible (legally under the water access laws) unless there is use of a watercraft. It is odd that many of the main proponents of this change happen to own land in these sections. This change would absolutely make these sections of river totally private and non accessible to the public regardless of what you think or have heard from people pushing this rule. That being said I am completely opposed to this change and the fact that this rule is proposed is insulting.

The proposed rule change to make designated sections of the river illegal to commercial use on certain days of the week is an idiotic solution to your ?problem? of over crowding. This will not solve, or even help, the crowding on the river, but will in fact worsen the experience on the river as a whole. This will cause the current users of the river to be concentrated in fewer miles, thus inherently making your perceived problem worse.

The proposal to cap the number of outfitters on the river is also very interest based. I see this as a way for current outfitters to monetize their outfitters license and charge astronomical amounts to purchase these license. This would make it extremely difficult for young outfitters to get into the business.

The way I see this rule committee acting and performing is ridiculous, angering and insulting. They should all be fired and relieved of their duties. They are not on the river everyday like I am and they have no clue as to the real situation out there. Be weary of the ones pushing these new rules and look at their property ownership because it is probably linked. You should not be trying to hurt the guides and outfitters like these rules will do. The guides are the BEST stewards of the river and care THE MOST about it. Why don?t you do something that makes sense and ask the guides to propose a rule if there needs to be one made. They know the river and the problems on the river. You never ask the guides, just rich landowners and burned out outfitters looking to cash in. It?s sad.

Contact me if you would like to know rules that will truly enhance the river for everyone, not just the wealthy landowners.

Thank you,  
Daniel Bragg

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [mikea406@gmail.com](mailto:mikea406@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 3:06:44 PM

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Name: Mike Actkinson

City: Ennis

I oppose the proposed New Rule II because it will not help relieve any crowding issues. Most non-resident and visitor anglers are here for a limited time and can't adjust their schedule, and many resident fishermen can only get out on weekend days. Therefore, the restricted area will be crowded with residents and non-commercial anglers, and the rest of the river will be even more crowded with all the outfitted trips.

I oppose the proposed New Rule III because it will take more opportunity away from wade fishermen. One goal of the process is to diversify angling opportunity, but this rule would do the opposite if fishing from a boat is permitted. Allowing people to fish from a boat is the same as using a boat to access fishing. Wade fishermen do not want to see people fishing from a boat in the wade-fishing areas ? that is the opposite of what these areas represent to the angling public. It would be impossible to regulate or police this rule (if boats can float fish but not stop to wade fish), and would certainly make things more confusing. FWP stated that fishing regulations were too confusing when they removed seasonal closures on the Madison, so this rule certainly does nothing to reduce confusion.

The proposed new rules will do very little to reduce crowding on the river. The popularity and close proximity to a growing Bozeman will ensure more visitors every year. This process is seemingly being done in haste, and the limited data does not prove the case for these changes. I recommend that the Commission vote to suspend any decisions at this time because of the widespread distrust in this process.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Maura Davenport](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River EA Comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 1:13:28 PM

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I think it would be inadvisable to impose rules that would limit commercial use on the Madison River. This would create an adverse effect on the small communities in the area. In addition the river system is healthy and these rules would not be a benefit environmentally. There are several important aspects that have not been adequately explored and taken into consideration when making your decision.

Kenneth A. Davenport

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [gcwhite00@gmail.com](mailto:gcwhite00@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 12:44:14 PM

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Name: Eugene White  
City: Cameron  
Eugene C. White, Esq.  
Outfitter, All Valley Anglers  
Attorney, Montana Water Court  
129 FX Ranch Road  
Cameron, MT 59720  
Direct Cell: (406) 581-6862  
Email: [gcwhite00@gmail.com](mailto:gcwhite00@gmail.com)

October 30, 2020

Re: Madison River Proposed Rule Public Comment

All Concerned,

My name is Eugene White, I am a life-long resident of the Madison Valley, an outfitter on the upper Madison River, and a water rights attorney. I strongly oppose the FWP proceeding with any substantive decision on the proposed rules regarding potentially regulating the Madison River at this time. Fly fishing tourism is the lifeblood of the economy in the Madison Valley and given the occurrence of the global pandemic people are struggling to maintain their businesses making them unequipped to adequately address these proposals at this unprecedented time. Many of the proposed regulations are against public policy in that they fly in the face of the Montana's cherished heritage of access to public lands. Many of the proposed regulations will have a disproportionate affect on elderly and disabled users, commercial clients, and new outfitting businesses. What our community needs right now is the compassion necessary to allow people to rebound from the global pandemic, not an increase in economic burden on the entire community. I hope FWP can find that compassion in these unprecedented and desperate times.

The global pandemic has changed everyday life across America and throughout the entire world. Meetings have gone virtual, deadlines have been pushed back, court systems have slowed, all in order to address the most unprecedented event in our living memory. As a result, millions of Americans are currently unemployed and desperately in need of financial assistance and relief. As a non-essential expense, tourism (specifically fly fishing tourism) was largely affected by the economic crisis created. As stated above, the fly fishing tourism industry is the single largest economic driver in the Madison Valley. I feel that making decisions of this magnitude, in the face of the most extreme social disturbance anyone has seen, would show a callous disregard for the rural families that need relief at this time. Many aspects of our daily lives have been put on hold to address the fallout from the pandemic and that fallout is ongoing with no clear end in sight.

The pandemic has also caused changes to this rule making process. For example, meetings that

would normally, and should, be held in person were held via Zoom. This creates unseen hurdles for many people living in the rural Madison Valley to attend and ensure that their voices are adequately heard. Lack of technical knowledge, access to reliable internet, and knowledge of the meeting times have undoubtedly caused many community members to effectively be cut out of the process. These barriers to the procedural process are unacceptable as this process will have lasting effects and detriments that reverberate throughout the entire community.

On their face, multiple ideas proposed to address crowding on the Madison are against public policy. Montana has a rich history of promoting access to public lands. In fact, our stream access law is held in high esteem by legal scholars and sportsmen nationwide as a sterling example of policy promoting equal access to the wondrous outdoors. This heritage is something that sets our state apart from other destinations.

Proposing a closure to float access in either or both wade sections contradicts that heritage and is repugnant to the public trust doctrine upon which this heritage is founded. A closure of this nature will disproportionately affect elderly and disabled river users effectively cutting them off from miles of the upper Madison at a time in favor of more able-bodied anglers who, based on the circumstances, are already at an advantage with regard to recreational usage given the nature and physicality of wade angling. Many of the proposed regulations will have a negative impact on overcrowding. Rest and rotation is a terrible idea for the Madison River. Not only will this force a large amount of boats (commercial users) into a certain section of the river, but it will unfairly prejudice commercial clients (many of whom fall into the aforementioned category of elderly or disabled). In many instances, choosing a guided experience as a client is derived as much from necessity as it is personal choice. This sentiment is especially true with regard to the proposals choosing to regulate only commercial users which, according to FWPs own data, account for only 15% of the annual river usage. Regulating only a small minority of users, especially by forcing those users into small sections of river, will only create greater crowding pressures that will negatively affect the river experience for all involved. All river users deserve to access the entirety of the river regardless of the method they choose to access the river itself. Creating an undue burden against commercial users, many of whom support our community economically through all aspects of tourism, is not only unfair, but dangerous to any business relying on fly fishing tourism to continue to survive.

These proposals also put undue prejudice and pressure on newer outfitting businesses, such as my own and many of my friends in the community. Our businesses will effectively be ruined if a commercial cap based on historical days is created. Such an unfair application of the regulation will have unforeseen consequences on the community as a whole. Ennis is a vibrant, up-and-coming community. As such, many sportsmen and women plan to make their home and raise their families in the Madison Valley to pursue a future in outdoor recreation. If the ability to transition from part-time guide to full-time outfitter is stripped from the younger generation simply on the basis of these proposals, our community stands to lose many younger families that are valuable to the growth of our community as a whole.

For example, some of the proposed regulations mirror those put in place on the Big Hole and Beaverhead Rivers. Unfortunately for those communities, their ability to grow and foster younger families and business has been stunted as guides come and go but no new outfitters are allowed to function without purchasing days. The dream of opening a small, independent outfitting business will become a fruitless proposition for any young business person who will not be able to out bid larger, established outfitters. The result is clear when looking at towns

like Melrose on the Big Hole or Lima near the Beaverhead. Both towns equal Ennis in having almost unparalleled proximity and access to outdoor recreation. However, with no prospect of establishing new businesses and a stagnate outfitting population, younger families continue to pass on starting a life and raising a family in these otherwise ideal locations. As a life-long resident of the Madison Valley, I shudder to think of the long term impacts these unfair proposals may have on the development of the community and people I hold dear.

In conclusion, I hope and request that FWP will find the necessary compassion to allow people in the Madison Valley to rebound from the disastrous effects of the pandemic before making a decision that will have far-reaching, long-standing, and irreparable effects on our local economy. Furthermore, I believe unfairly prejudicing elderly and disabled users, commercial users, and new outfitting businesses is against public policy for the aforementioned reasons. I sincerely hope the FWP can and will recognize this in time to protect all river users and our public access heritage in Montana.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Willy Richardson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] No rest rotation  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 4:57:53 AM

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I've lived in Ennis my entire life great grand father settled in this valley in 1918 I also have been a fishing guide for about 8 years. All of this has been sold for protection of the Madison River. Take two seconds and look what it's done to the big hole and beaverhead. Far far from helped the community from a financial standpoint and while having a heavily regulating a river with rest rotations for the protection of the fishery yet a brown trout die off and rebound on the big hole has absolutely nothing to do with fishing pressure or guided fishing by any means. If FWP really wants to be out for protecting rivers and regulating maybe it's time to look at the bigger picture and start focusing on water flows and the bigger question of how we can all get along together in a busier world which in turn means more people fishing weather it be commercially or privately. You guys are about to fuck up another community while ultimately not saving the fish fishery or environment and ultimately putting the operational licenses into the hands of a few. I sincerely hope you step back for a second quit rushing something for the sake of having names on it and figure out a better plan to keep all our fisheries clean with water flowing and positive public relations.

Willy Richardson  
Fishing guide and 3rd generation in the Madison valley.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [meatmarketflieskd@gmail.com](mailto:meatmarketflieskd@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:27:38 PM

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Name: Kelcey Derrick

City: Orland

Leave the river as it is now! You are truly limiting people's lively hood, for special interests of a few. Don't let the Madison become another California.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [madflyco@gmail.com](mailto:madflyco@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:26:21 PM

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Name: Mason Derrick  
City:  
Leave it alone

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [joshua.mills5@me.com](mailto:joshua.mills5@me.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 12:05:08 PM

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Name:

City:

I am an avid angler here in Montana, and I DO NOT agree with the petition submitted by the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited, the Skyline Sportsmen Association, and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association on capping the amount of commercial traffic on the upper reaches of the Madison. Putting a cap on the amount of commercial use is a terrible idea, it would over crown surrounding drainages if this law was to pass and then we would be in the same scenario except on a different watershed. The guiding community or commercial users are by no means the problem. It's the over sold MT licenses to the visiting recreationalist or very part time resident. The quote from the proposal stating "The petition states the goal of the proposed rule language is to manage recreational use of the Madison River in a manner that ensures long-term health and sustainability of the fisheries, diversifies angling opportunity while reducing conflicts, and sustains the ecological and economic benefits of the river." As a steward of the Madison river I think that the commercial impact on the Madison river is far less than your everyday recreationalist. Limiting the amount two two days a week days is not an affective alternative. nor is a rest and rotation a good alternative either.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [gofish6766@charter.net](mailto:gofish6766@charter.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 11:39:43 AM

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Name: Terry Schreiber  
City: Rhinelander WI  
I oppose the new rules

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Steve White](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River regulations  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 10:49:27 AM

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I would like to express my disagreement with the proposed new regulations for the Madison River. I agree that the issue of overcrowding should be addressed. However, I do not agree with the burden being placed on commercial guides. If I desire to hire a guide to help me enjoy the river, why does that put me in a different category than someone who has their own boat and goes without a guide. The burden of mitigating crowding should be shared by all users and not disproportionately affect one group.

While there is a definite economic impact to the guides and local community from the proposed changes, I am not attempting to address that here, even though I feel it is, again, unfair to one group.

Thank you

--

Steve White  
612/819-5392  
[stevewhite.sve@gmail.com](mailto:stevewhite.sve@gmail.com)

**From:** [Patrick Goresch](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Proposals  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 5:52:43 AM

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To Whom it May Concern. I am writing to express my concerns and opposition to the proposed restrictions and plans for the Madison River. I am an avid fly fisherman and frequent the Madison River often to fish. My use of the River is both walk wade and by floating (with a guide.) As a non resident of Montana I have been fishing the Madison for better than 25 years and have witnessed the increased use of the River. While I am in agreement that management of the resource is important, the proposals currently under consideration are a reach too far. Restriction of the commercial use only hurts the individual fly fisherman and the commercial guide service. Closing another stretch of the River is not the answer. It will only lead to more misuse. I urge you to reconsider the proposals under consideration and not punish the **Montana** licensed resident commercial guide services.

**From:** [mail4minz@gmail.com](mailto:mail4minz@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 11:08:07 PM

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Name: Mindy Morris  
City: West Yellowstone  
To whom it may concern:

I am writing in concern of the proposed regulations on the Madison River. As tourism- especially outdoor tourism- increases, I understand the necessity to start the process of minimizing impact to this wonderful fishery. However, I feel that you are trying to regulate the wrong group of people. Limiting guided trips and regulating how/when they can fish certain stretches is going to have a long term negative effect on the use of the river.

I have been a snowmobile guide in Yellowstone for 18 years, and have seen the long term effects of federal regulations imposed on our business. Limiting winter access to guided groups only received a huge amount of pushback during the first several years. Looking back, it has created one of the most unique and amazing experiences that is a bucket list item for many of our customers. So how is snowmobiling in Yellowstone related to the current proposals on the Madison? Simply put, guides are your ally! The guides are your best stewards of the river, it is literally their lifeblood! They want to protect the fishery and keep it healthy for generations to come. They are teaching clients how to properly land and release a fish safely and ethically. They are teaching clients about Montana's stream access laws so that when those clients are not with a guide, they know the difference between right and wrong. Guides are also your best policemen. They are the ones who can call out other anglers for improperly handling fish, dragging their anchor down long stretches of river (disturbing the underwater ecosystem), and violating stream access laws. They are your eyes and ears on the river.

With the proposed limitations on the Madison, the biggest flaw is limiting the days that guides can be in certain stretches of the river. That opens that stretch of river to abuse of non-guided recreationalists. It has the potential of becoming the chosen day that non-guided anglers flock to that stretch and overcrowding and over pressuring the fish in that stretch. This would create the opposite effect of the proposed "rest and rotation". It then pushes all guide trips to the now limited float areas that do not crossover the "rested" section adding additional pressure to fish.

Another issue is with eliminating boats in the walk wade section. Floating through the wade section allows anglers to spread out and reduce crowding. There are certain ages and abilities that can only safely cross the river using a boat. For example, my father is 73 years old and I have elementary age nephews. When we fish as a family we use a boat on the wade section to safely get all ages and abilities across the river. Water levels can be too high to safely cross in many areas, but by using a boat, everyone gets to fish. Wade fishing is the better way to learn how to fish, but wade fisherman need to be able to spread out along the river. Being able to get all of our family members safely across the river and down the river, and not have to wade upriver to get back to the car is a major part of our day. By wade fishing, we are able to teach the next generation in our family how to fish much better than fishing from a boat.

There are also a lot of areas of the wade section that are not accessible on foot without wading over a mile in the river. This essentially is privatizing those sections of the river. Even if you do wade up the river, landowners have become very aggressive in telling you to get out! I feel



that eliminating boats in the wade section is really a plot of the landowners to privatize public lands. This is absolutely unacceptable!!!

In conclusion, I do believe that a system needs to be put in place in order to protect the Madison. However, I think that the outfitters and guides should be used as allies, not the only users you try to regulate. They are stewards of the river! They all have their Madison stickers on their boats, those should be highly valued and a badge of honor. If you have poor stewardship, you lose your badge! But don't punish those that honor and preserve the fishery. PLEASE do not allow the landowners to start to close the door on public use of the Madison. PUBLIC LANDS SHOULD STAY IN PUBLIC HANDS!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Nicholasschierle@gmail.com](mailto:Nicholasschierle@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 8:49:54 PM

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Name: Nicholas Schierle

City:

I have fish the Madison in peak guiding season and had a blast catching tons of fish! There?s about 60miles of public water on the Madison! I think there does not need to be any more added rules to regulate the fishing. Let?s let everyone fish!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [austin25057@gmail.com](mailto:austin25057@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 8:05:43 PM

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Name:

City:

I am a 4th year fishing guide working under a local outfitter in Ennis. As I am trying to grow my business, it appears the new proposed rules, will just push me out and off the Madison River, with no hopes of someday becoming an outfitter and having "days". It will eventually put all the guide days in the hands of the Big, Wealthy Outfitters, crushing the little guys. I'm not even an outfitter yet and I can see how these rules will make it nearly impossible. In terms of changing the walk/wade area from Ennis Bridge to the lake, why would it even consider changing the rules in that area? It is barely used by vessels but the people that do use that section in a vessel enjoy it very much. I believe it is places like the Channels Ranch that just don't want anyone else in that area because the snooty, millionaire members want that section to themselves. It is disappointing that our own Fish, Wildlife and Parks even entertain the idea of taking away more access to a public river just to play into the hands of rich, out-of-staters. (Who are horrible at fishing anyway)

Don't cut out the little guy, don't take away more access, don't wreck my dreams of being a new outfitter on the Madison River someday! Have you heard of what the recent asking market price of Big Hole guide days are? It's insane! Don't make the Madison the same way!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [RRCowboy49@gmail.com](mailto:RRCowboy49@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 8:04:27 PM

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Name: Patrick Mulholland

City: Ennis MT

I will add words to a quote by H.L. Mencken. The URGE TO SAVE (THE MADISON IS  
ALMOST ALWAYS ONLY A FALSE-FACE FOR THE URGE TO RULE IT

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules  
and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Flores.joshua31@gmail.com](mailto:Flores.joshua31@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 7:12:14 PM

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Name: Josh

City:

As a frequent fisher, I believe the Madison's popularity has brought more money and taxes through licenses, guided trips, and equipment to the state. The Madison is a heavily sought after place to fish to anglers around the world, and strict limits will install a barrier to this ever-growing sanction of tourism. I do not believe the river sections are overfished, as majority of fishermen and guides understand the importance of conservation and how to properly handle trout. The wading access to the river is also limited, but I do not think boats interfere with waders either. There are plenty of places for wade fisherman to access, opposed to the limited spots boats have access to. I do not think extra restrictions are necessary because it will prohibit new anglers and tourists from enjoying a fishing trip while in Montana. It is much easier for a newbie to learn with a guide in a boat, than it is to wade and not cover much ground to enhance their opportunity.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [rollingstone2518@gmail.com](mailto:rollingstone2518@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 6:27:52 PM

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Name: Mark Blackstone

City:

This proposal is a horrible idea that will do nothing but harm the river. It unfairly targets outfitters who are a small portion of people using the river. It panders to rich landowners and does nothing to address pressure due to recreational use. Start using tax payer money wisely and address the real problem of noncommercial overuse.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Spencer Mack](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment on GGTU Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 4:13:22 PM

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To whom it may concern,

Please do not punish the guiding community by enstating rest and rotation on the Madison River. Plan's such as the one GGTU have come up with unfairly impact those of us who rely on guiding to make a living. It punishes anglers who choose to use guiding services around the country. I would strongly recommend the commission choose to not adopt this plan. Creating a plan of rest and rotation is not going to fix any of the issues it is intended for, it will only serve to create busier sections of the river on days when guides are unable to spread out across its entirety. The adoption of this plan will have a negative impact on a great number of households in Madison and Gallatin Counties. We may need a plan for the Madison, but this is not it.

Kind Regards,

Spencer Mack  
Guide # 37168

**From:** [CHARLES HASEMANN](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Cc:** [xtalman38@aol.com](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed ARM 12.11.501 Amendment/new rules  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 11:41:30 AM

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To whom it may concern at the Fish and Wildlife Commission and/or Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks:

With respect to the proposed changes to the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 12.11.501 - I write to share several opinions, as a person and as part of a family that has wade fished the Madison river between Ennis and the Ennis reservoir for over 30 years.

The existing restrictions on fishing from a boat within the Madison River, Ennis to Ennis Reservoir, should remain in place, for two major reasons:

- 1) Any change to this restriction will increase fishing pressure on that stretch of the river, to the detriment of the overall Madison River ecosystem.
- 2) Because this stretch of river is characterized by many narrow channels, it will create a clear danger of injury to wade fishermen, to have to share these narrow channels with drift boats.

For these reasons, and others, I am adamantly opposed to the proposed Rule III.

As a fisherman that occasionally uses a guide service, I am sympathetic to their profession, and would advocate against the adoption of excessive bureaucracy that will overcomplicate the profession. I feel it is appropriate and necessary to regulate the volume of commercial guide traffic on the river, but it should be done in a way that respects the profession. Over-regulation could have a negative consequence of the regional economy, particularly for Ennis.

The proposed "Madison River Use Stamp" of proposed new rule XVI is an overly burdensome solution to an otherwise solvable problem. In the 21st century, there are many technological/digital solutions to estimating the volume of recreational use on the river. Establishing the need for a stamp, puts honest anglers in the position of potentially violating a rule or law, because it will be largely unknown due to its arcane nature and unique application to just this one river. Please seek another more practical solution that this frankly outdated solution.

Sincerely,  
Charles Hasemann



**From:** [Trevorjuth@hotmail.com](mailto:Trevorjuth@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 9:27:37 AM

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Name: Trevor

City: Bozeman

Bad idea to limit use unless there is hard science to suggest that the fishery is suffering. I have seen no such science. The Madison is a big river, there is room for the recreation on it currently.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [stephen.knight828@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.knight828@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 8:11:02 AM

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Name: Stephen Knight

City: Dillon

I am not in favor of the June 15 date to have an outfitters license as i dont think this is fair and would hurt our outfitting business that we have invested an incredible amount of time and effort.

The rest and rotation does not make sense on the Madison river like it does on the Beaverhead river because the area most people fish is a small stretch. You are trying to prevent crowding in areas but this would cause double the amount of guides in the areas that are not being rested. Imagine all the guides from Lyons to Ruby having to move to a lower section of the river. It would be a New York traffic lane at rush our.

I will say one good change that I saw was that it it looks like you are looking to allow fishing from the boat from Renolds pass which would be advantageous to outfitters for clients that aren't able to wade fish due to their age and health.

Thanks,  
Stephen

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [rhfunky@gmail.com](mailto:rhfunky@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 7:42:44 PM

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Name: Robert Funk

City: GLENMOORE

As a Fishing Guide in the state of Montana who utilizes the bounty of Montanas Stream Access opportunity, I feel this proposal has potential to devastate the vibrant fishing community in the state. As a guide on the Madison, I have felt and seen firsthand the "pressure" that is describes in the proposed changes. I oppose these changes in regulation on the Madison River. As uncertainty looms throughout the world, we can not stand to jeopardize the potential loss to the tourism, which Montanans rely upon in great numbers.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Rich1searle@yahoo.com](mailto:Rich1searle@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 2:56:41 PM

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Name: Rich SEARLE

City:

I disagree with all proposed changes. It was shown that commercial trips were a very small percentage of daily use and not the cause of over crowding as described. If proposals are implemented as stated above, you will cause a huge over crowding problem in certain sections. These changes will negatively effect outfitters and guides who support themselves, families and contribute to the local economies and don?t deserve to be singled out.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Emily Davis](#)  
**To:** [FWP Commission](#); [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment on Madison River Rec. Use Plan  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 8:31:45 PM

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Dear commissioners,

Please do NOT implement rest and rotation on the Madison river. Your plan is not sound, not based on science, and not for the people. Montana is devoted to the outdoors. All of its citizens want to see healthy rivers. Your current plan is not the way to get there. It simply enables rich land owners to have private access to the River and hurts the thousands of private citizens who's license purchases do much to help maintain Montana. The plan proposed is terrible.

Start over. Do better.

Sincerely,

Emily Davis

**From:** [Tom Riggs](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed new regulations for the Madison River  
**Date:** Sunday, October 25, 2020 4:11:14 PM

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I have spent the time to read and read again the proposed new regulations. I simply cannot support any of the ideas at this time. Where would the funding come from to establish a police force to enforce it all. Sorry, crowded and not working, but these ideas are not the answer. The guides do fine, leave them alone.

Tom Riggs  
Ennis

**From:** [pulsandrew@gmail.com](mailto:pulsandrew@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 7:58:02 AM

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Name: Andrew Puls

City: Billings

While I completely disagree with the client day allocation, flex day strategy, and client day transfer methods outlined by the FOAM plan, perhaps the most unfair and unwarranted portion is the seemingly arbitrary June 15th 2020 cutoff date for outfitter permit eligibility. There is only a very small number of outfitters who received a permit after this date in 2020 and they also deserve a permit. They invested time, significant financial resources, and considerable effort to become an outfitter and get the permit. To block them from a permit in the future simply because of an arbitrary date seems very unfair. Furthermore, the small number of outfitters who received a permit after June 15, 2020 and the limited number of days they used would add an inconsequential number of days to the overall total number of days. Any outfitter who held a permit in 2020 and reported use should be granted a permit moving forward.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [holt.howard@comcast.net](mailto:holt.howard@comcast.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 8:58:06 AM

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Name: Howard Holt

City: HARTWELL

The proposed 'rule' changes are well meaning BUT NOT a feasible solution or any solution to the problem... It will cause worse crowding on all of the rest of the resource, inconvenience visitors spending much needed \$\$\$ in Montana and just be another Government regulation creating confusion and distain...

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [justinledge@gmail.com](mailto:justinledge@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 8:24:10 AM

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Name: Justin Edge

City: Ennis

What we observed at the FWP hearing on October 20th, regarding two petitions submitted addressing recreation management on the upper Madison, was a new chapter of a fundamentally flawed process. Confusion on rules supported by conjecture was on full display with the presentation of the EA and supporters of GGTU suggesting combat style fishing on the upper Madison, obviously with no evidence to support such claims. Others followed with reminders that evidence, observation, and facts were largely neglected in the writing of that EA, and that hyperbole on the behalf of those seeking self-interested rules against commercial outfitters was out of control.

Rulemaking within the Department by petition is an uncommonly used application, especially on such topics as broad and with such wide-ranging impacts to local economies and businesses. And for good reason. It is rushed, sloppy, and based solely on the requests and emotions of the petitioning party, not on those curiously missing elements of data, fact, and evidence. The petitioning process circumvents regular policy making procedures such as working with local stakeholders and designing studies to gather the right information needed to make such important decisions as the future of recreation management on the upper Madison, a world-famous trout stream upon which entire communities stake their economies. For them, the health of the fishery and an overall positive experience on the upper Madison is in their best interest. These normal procedures are important because they are meant to tease out flaws and hone effectiveness of policies. Instead, petitions for rulemaking need only to win the votes of a majority of commissioners to pass self-interested regulations. The petitioning party uses social media and their own resources to drum up support from places like Anaconda and Butte, to pressure the Department. Meanwhile, support for these petitions and rule proposals locally, in the most impacted communities of these petitions, is overwhelmingly weak because they kill business, are unnecessary, ineffective, unsupported by fact, and deny public access to the upper Madison.

We saw how the proposed rules being petitioned were fraught with significant vague and equivocal inferences. For example, FWP has been proceeding with the interpretation that shuttle business is included under the phrase "no commercial use" within the rest and rotation proposals. Meanwhile, GGTU apparently never intended it this way. And yet, we're only 10 days out from the conclusion of the shortest possible length of a public commenting period allowed before this is known, I suspect is at least in part due to impending elections. What other misinterpretations exist that we won't have time to discover? This is the result of a speedy and sloppy petitioning process attempting to merge two opposing petitions, which to my knowledge is unprecedented within the Department.

We saw how little understanding a locally irrelevant special interest group from the other side of the continental divide as the upper Madison submitting petition for rules may not be the most reliable source for how things ought to be managed in the Madison Valley (e.g., obvious logistical complications with the rule proposal of "rest and rotation" on a short river like the upper Madison). What is GGTU's standing or relevance to the upper Madison? It's egregious and insulting to have my future determined by a rogue TU Chapter from a town 2 hours away

on the other side of the Divide. Let that sink in.

It was admitted that "conflict" is defined by FWP to be the mere interaction of boats and wading anglers, apparently conflating feelings of disappointment with actual conflicts. FWP conceded that there is no record keeping or database of calls or emails regarding alleged "conflict" on the upper Madison. No records of investigation of incidents or how alleged conflicts were resolved even exist. This is something so basic that I assumed was being tracked, given the pronounced reliance upon claims of conflict as a reason for management action. I and many others, believe that actual conflict is an exaggeration that has gotten so far out of control, and allowed to run rampant by FWP, that we find ourselves proposing rules to address a mythical problem. As further proof of this imaginary "conflict," a fly shop owner in the upper walk wade section explained how he has rarely seen in his 25 years, any actual "conflict" on the upper Madison. If anyone would know, maybe it would be him and not some special interest group from Butte. None of this would hold water in a court of law, so why should we base rulemaking upon this speculation?

It was explained by many how a sizeable chunk of public lands would be privatized three days a week with a boat ban between Quake and Lyons. FWP provided no other alternative way to reach this public land during the periods of a boat ban, a clear diminishment of public land and water access in Montana. Is such a rule even legal in the eyes of stream access law?

FWP explained how their stated goal of "diversity of angling opportunity" means an equal opportunity for all angler groups, and yet float anglers (fishing FROM a boat) and guided anglers are consistently discriminated against with threats of a boat ban while even existing regulations give them 35% LESS river miles of opportunity than wade anglers, obviously showing a prioritization of wading anglers over all others, in clear opposition of the phrase "diversity of angling opportunity." Guided anglers (those beginners, youth, and elderly) described how they feel discriminated against with the threat of rest and rotation and a cap on commercial use. Again, to the benefit of the wading angler. Where is their "diversity of angling opportunity"? It was obvious that the strategy FWP maintains of segregating sub user groups and managing for "happiness" is foolish management policy at best, and the idea that taking opportunity away from one user (float fishing anglers) and giving more to another (wade anglers) is misguided and bad policy, especially in the absence of actual documentation of conflicts.

On the topic of available evidence, there was still none provided to show actual crowding occurring on the upper Madison (not the parking lots), despite this being the overarching concern driving this process of rulemaking. It was clearly obvious (and perhaps simultaneously surprising), that those in GGTU and FWP staff have very little experience with floating the entire upper Madison River with any regularity to be considered a knowledgeable source of information about current conditions. If they had such experience, they would be able to relate with all of us who do, in understanding that the river is not crowded. There are no bumper boat scenes on the upper Madison. Think about that for a moment. When people complain about the lower Madison and the boat hatch and tube hatch down there, there is plenty of available photographs and documentation to support those claims of crowding - but for the upper Madison? I've never seen one single photograph showing me a crowded upper Madison River. Have you? If so, please provide this evidence. Where are the photos? Show me numbers all you'd like, but the characteristic speed of the upper Madison prevents against crowding, and that's why there are no available photos to prove crowding. It simply is a lie and an extreme exaggeration and actually physically impossible on such a fast moving river

like the upper Madison.

We have also heard FWP upper Madison River manager Travis Horton openly admit during the NRC process that he had actually never "stepped foot in the upper section" near the Big Bend during the NRC process. Instead, hyperbole driven by social media and frequently flawed online surveys with carefully crafted questions leading participants to answer certain ways have pre-determined the upper Madison to be "crowded" without any supporting evidence to actually PROVE it (e.g., What is crowding, technically speaking, for the upper Madison? What is the carrying capacity? Where is crowding occurring ON THE RIVER?).

It was also acknowledged that while commercial use represents 15% of annual use on the upper Madison, they are solely targeted for 100% of the regulations proposed and that realistically, no significant impact on decreasing use can be expected from capping commercial use alone. Are we really willing to impose such burdensome restrictions with such far reaching economic implications that we KNOW are not going to have any measurable reduction in overall use? Victims of this potential rule are all the young outfitters in our communities and their families who don't stand a chance surviving these potential rules, competing in a closed system with the large outfitters who control the majority of days on the upper Madison and stand to receive a major financial windfall with these rules. And these large outfitters were strangely absent on the topic, showing us exactly where they stand on supporting the young outfitter. They don't. They support a cap for the financial windfall it would give them and the competition killing result that would leave them atop the heap of outfitters on the upper Madison. Several young outfitters called to say how their business would be doomed, potentially uprooting families, some of which are multi-generational Montana families, while FWP gave no discussion to the potential economic impact of this in the EA. And for what purpose would this cap on commercial use serve? No reasonable observer would expect any meaningful reduction in overall use, when outfitters make up 15% of use. On that point, it was revealed that despite the claims of increasing use, preliminary numbers of recreation in 2017 suggest a significant decline of nearly 16% in overall use from 2017 (209,000 user days) to 2019 (173,000)!

All of this is to say, that there exists no biological crisis or sign of imminent demise of natural resources needed to justify these sorts of major regulatory measures being taken. There exists no direct evidence of widespread conflict. There exists no evidence of crowding on the river (upper Madison "not the parking sites, and not the lower Madison which seems to escape this debate). Despite FWP's mining of data from satisfaction surveys, available survey results show the vast majority of respondents indicate satisfaction with their upper Madison River experience. These are the facts. The rest is emotion. Which do we want to inform policy and impact real people's lives? All of these rules should be denied.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Guideitin2@hotmail.com](mailto:Guideitin2@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 9:20:24 AM

---

Name:

City:

Do not do this. This is a slippery slope.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [richard.sprinklejr@gmail.com](mailto:richard.sprinklejr@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 8:28:01 AM

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Name: Richard Sprinkle

City: Ennis

How can a small group of people that have bought property on the river dictate the rules on the Madison River to suit them? It doesn't make sense to restrict boat traffic on a section of the river if your objective is to relieve boat pressure on the river! Also how come a Trout Unlimited chapter from Anaconda have so much input on the Madison River? I have seen TU in the past make decisions that benefit them and not the community. I guess the old saying "the road to hell is paved in good intentions" is still a road to hell in this instance. What purpose is the stamp? I don't go fishing to fill out paperwork to tell FWP how many times I went fishing. In closing, the changes you are proposing is not helping the river, it's benefiting a few up the river.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [JAMES MULROONEY](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 5:09:02 PM

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The ggtu proposal was absurd. Personally I don't think people in Anaconda and Butte should have any say on what goes on in our valley. Their proposals are in fact, a tacit admission of their ignorance of our beloved River's needs

**From:** [Guideitin2@hotmail.com](mailto:Guideitin2@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 4:58:50 PM

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Name:  
City:  
Do not do this. This is a slippery slope.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Pieske, Shawna](#) on behalf of [FWP Commission](#)  
**To:** [Ryce, Eileen](#); [Skaar, Donald](#); [Wedde, Kim](#); [Pat Byorth \(fwpdistrict2@gmail.com\)](mailto:Pat.Byorth(fwpdistrict2@gmail.com)); [Rich Stuker](#); [Shane Colton](#); [Tim Aldrich \(Cartim8@gmail.com\)](mailto:Tim.Aldrich(Cartim8@gmail.com))  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Madison River changes  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 7:47:56 AM

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-----Original Message-----

From: [bw.bars@gmail.com](mailto:bw.bars@gmail.com) <[bw.bars@gmail.com](mailto:bw.bars@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 4:53 PM  
To: FWP Commission <[FWComm@mt.gov](mailto:FWComm@mt.gov)>; FWP Madison River COM <[madisonrivercom@mt.gov](mailto:madisonrivercom@mt.gov)>  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Madison River changes

Dear committee members,

I am strongly in opposition of the plan that you're proposing, Especially the Valley garden section. I have fish the river for nearly 30 years, the Valley Garden fishing access it's really the only area that residence in Ennis can escape the commercial fishing.

I have reviewed the number of guide trips that have use the valley garden ramp, the number seems low with mostly guides taking out and not putting in. Please do not change this section for the residence of Ennis. As far as the rest of the proposal it just seems like it's concentrating more pressure in smaller sections. It is my hope that this commission will continue exploring more options and not make a hasty decision before this committee sunsets in January.

Barsdale  
213 3rd st  
Ennis MT.  
Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [madisonangler@gmail.com](mailto:madisonangler@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 8:18:46 PM

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Name:

City:

As I try to connect, I realize how incompetent this is.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [flannery291@gmail.com](mailto:flannery291@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 7:57:50 PM

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Name: Dan

City:

Some things on this planet need to be left alone, no!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [madisonangler@gmail.com](mailto:madisonangler@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 6:39:06 PM

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Name:

City:

Yep, look at the environmental impact wade fishing has had on the Quake lake to Lyons. Look at the extreme degradation the float for fun people have created on the lower from warm springs to three forks. Floated for fun grey cliff to three forks a week ago, do you know how many whiskey and liquor bottles we picked up? Flip flops? Plastic? Yea, the outfitters are causing this? Not on the upper!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Mrtlldk@gmail.com](mailto:Mrtlldk@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 6:38:52 PM

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Name:

City:

It is imperative that you listen to the voices who will be most affected by your decisions instead of the money up river who could care less about Ennis.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [madisonangler@gmail.com](mailto:madisonangler@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 6:34:15 PM

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Name:

City:

Why does George Grant Tu and the anaconda sportsman?s have any say in my livelihood? I am raising two children in Ennis, I am a single boat outfitter, this is not only a fleecing of what I have done for decades, but also a misuse of government dollars. Shame on you! Totally bogus, I cannot get this livestream on my laptop, Ridiculous, seems like FWP wants to sink my business

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [craig.v.egg@montana.gov](mailto:craig.v.egg@montana.gov)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison river rulemaking proposals  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 6:12:07 PM

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Commissioners:

The Butte Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Skyline Sportsmen Association and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association proposes to limit summertime commercial access of the river on Saturdays from Lyons Bridge FAS to Palisades Day Use Area. Much of the commercial use in this area of the Madison River is from West Yellowstone shops, followed by shops from the Ennis Montana area. The petition, if adopted, will CREATE additional use issues and crowding on the river on Saturdays because when implemented, it essentially shortens the available water for commercial access.

There are very few public walk wade activities in this section of the Madison which is bordered by private property, so one must pose the question of whom is really benefitting from this proposal? If adopted our commissioners will be back at the table fielding complaints that traffic on the river has increased exponentially when indeed, accessible river miles would be reduced by the proposal from Skyline TU and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association.

Similarly, the Skyline TU/Anaconda Sportsmen Association petition proposes to eliminate commercial activity on Summer Sundays from Varney Bridge FAS to Ennis FAS. This section of the river is often navigated by Ennis guide shops and outfitters. Having coursed this water on multiple occasions, I can attest to the fact there is very little public walk wade access.

Further the channels in this section here have a very strong current and require experienced boat handlers to navigate. Again, I don't know what the proposal from Skyline TU and Anaconda Sportsmen Association accomplishes, other than reducing accessible river miles, resulting in more commercial use above Varney on said closure days. Again, if this is adopted our commissioners will be back at the table, fielding complaints regarding river traffic as a result of a proposal, that reduces the accessible river miles available to outfitters.

Both proposals, if adopted, WILL negatively impact issues that relate to river access and river experience by locals and tourists alike.

The Madison river, described as the 100 mile riffle, is long enough with a variety of access points to allow everyone to have a satisfying day on the river. Savvy commercial users and privateers have a wide variety of put in and take out places on the river, enabling them to spread out over the summer daylight hours, limiting conflicts. As soon as you begin shortening the available river space you risk manufacturing a crisis that did not exist previously. That is precisely what these proposals do.

I support the continued enablement of float access (no fishing from watercraft....) from Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge FAS and Ennis FAS to Ennis Reservoir. This is the only way that our older citizens, or those that may have limited use of their knees, etc., can access this water.

As a resident of Ennis, a life member of Trout Unlimited I am astounded by the ignorance reflected in these proposals from Skyline TU. I cannot believe a TU chapter based in Butte Montana would have more knowledge of the Madison River or should carry precedent over our local TU Madison/Gallatin chapter in these advisory matters. It has been suggested that the proposals from Skyline TU are more about limiting access to the Madison River, turning it into the personal playground of residents whose homes and properties adjoin and abut the Madison river. I sincerely hope this is not the real agenda here.

Finally, the FOAM proposal suggests a use stamp for non-commercial use of the Madison by float fishermen. The suggestion is these would be employed to gather better data regarding noncommercial use on the Madison River. FOAM suggests these use stamps would likely need to have quantity limits established in the future and has suggested in the past these use stamps may be distributed via local (or out of town) shops. As a full time resident of Montana, and the owner of a

drift boat, the suggestion that I may be forbidden drift boat access to the river during a certain year, and even walk-wade access, because I failed to secure a non-commercial stamp on time; or a shop owner may have distributed their limited selection of coupons to a group of “friends” is contrary to Montana values of public access to state and federal resources.

If implemented these proposals will only create conflict and erode public support and trust in its commissioners and their rulemaking efforts. I urge the commissioners to set aside these proposals

Craig V Eggers

340 Montana Way

Ennis Montana

59729

[craigvincent2020@gmail.com](mailto:craigvincent2020@gmail.com)

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:Mail[go.microsoft.com]) for Windows 10

**From:** [k\\_nagel@ymail.com](mailto:k_nagel@ymail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 6:07:35 PM

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Name:  
City:  
No!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [katiekpeot@gmail.com](mailto:katiekpeot@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 5:26:07 PM

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Name:

City: Missoula

Many of the communities and families in Ennis who relay on guiding river trips as there livelihood will be drastically and negatively affected with the new regulations proposed. I urge you to take into account this large group

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [bw.bars@gmail.com](mailto:bw.bars@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP Commission](#); [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River changes  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 4:52:53 PM

---

Dear committee members,

I am strongly in opposition of the plan that you're proposing, Especially the Valley garden section. I have fish the river for nearly 30 years, the Valley Garden fishing access it's really the only area that residence in Ennis can escape the commercial fishing.

I have reviewed the number of guide trips that have use the valley garden ramp, the number seems low with mostly guides taking out and not putting in. Please do not change this section for the residence of Ennis. As far as the rest of the proposal it just seems like it's concentrating more pressure in smaller sections. It is my hope that this commission will continue exploring more options and not make a hasty decision before this committee sunsets in January.

Barsdale  
213 3rd st  
Ennis MT.  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Julie@shopthinksafe.com](mailto:Julie@shopthinksafe.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 2:45:42 PM

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Name:  
City:  
No!!!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [steve\\_shore@me.com](mailto:steve_shore@me.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 12:27:51 PM

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Name: Steve Shore

City: Ennis

This is a very bad idea that will effectively eliminate a large portion of the Madison to the general public, making it a private river for the wealthy landowners in that stretch. We in Montana have fought far to hard over the years to keep that from happening on other rivers. It would be a crime to let it happen on our crown jewel.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Dylan.panama@gmail.com](mailto:Dylan.panama@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 11:37:17 AM

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Name: Dylan

City: Bozeman

Plases do not go through with the new proposed regulations. The way I see it this is largely benefiting private land owners so they can have these sections of river to themselves on the weekend. Montana has ample options for places to fish for those who decide the river is too busy. Keep the river accessible to the public. Many of whom can only recreate on weekends.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [jcleveland31@gmail.com](mailto:jcleveland31@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 11:07:00 AM

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Name: James Cleveland  
City:  
No

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Shaylee.c.taylor@gmail.com](mailto:Shaylee.c.taylor@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 10:38:59 AM

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Name:  
City:  
Vote no!

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [integritybuildersmt@gmail.com](mailto:integritybuildersmt@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 9:22:27 AM

---

Name: Michael Mcgee  
City: Bozeman and McAllister  
Please NO to restrictions

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Abigail Dennis](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 9:22:03 AM

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Commission,

Again, the proposals before you to regulate the Madison River have missed the point. As it has been, the issue of “conflict/crowding” is the impetus behind regulating the river. Never mind that overcrowding is a subjective, opinion-based issue. What is crowded to one person is likely not to another.

However, if the true goal is to decrease the number of angler days on the river, the proposals before you will not do that. Instead, they aim to regulate a small portion of river users – outfitters – without addressing the public. If crowding is the social issue FWP wants to address, the data on non-guided fishing pressure needs to be collected prior to implementing arbitrary regulations on guides and outfitters.

There are a few specific points I would like to address:

- A cap on commercial use at 2019 levels.
  - o I strongly oppose this rule considering guided trips only make up 15% of annual use on the Upper Madison. In addition, businesses are already booking for 2021, so using 2019 levels would be detrimental to the Madison Valley economy.
- Two-day rest and rotation.
  - o This makes no sense if the perceived issue at hand is conflict/crowding. If FWP is using overcrowding as a reason to regulate the river, a rule limiting access two days a week would have the opposite effect.
- Walk/wade sections.
  - o I strongly, strongly opposing banning boat access in the walk/wade sections of the Madison River. This proposed rule is a thinly veiled attempt to limit access to a public resource.

I believe an honest conversation about river use and fishery health for the Madison River is valuable. I 100 percent believe we need to be proactive in addressing the future of this resource. However, I also believe the process so far has been hijacked by special interest groups. Those special interest groups have purposefully drawn a line to pit people against each other, often making any commercial users the boogeyman. At the end of the day, we all want a healthy, productive fishery for generations to come.

I would like to add I think now is not the time to have this discussion. Bringing this up now feels incredibly insensitive to what most communities are suffering through. The town of Ennis and the surrounding Madison Valley is already reeling from the impacts of COVID-19 and trying to regroup, just to figure out a way to stay alive. Making the community fight this fight (AGAIN) in the midst of this pandemic is simply kicking us when we're down. It is especially reckless to schedule this for discussion at a meeting that must be held virtually.

Thank you,  
Abby Dennis  
PO Box 371  
Ennis, MT

--

Abigail Dennis  
[abigail.dennis13@gmail.com](mailto:abigail.dennis13@gmail.com)

**From:** [Burksdoug@hotmail.com](mailto:Burksdoug@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 8:26:59 AM

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Name: Doug Burks

City: Twin Falls Idaho

It would be a tragedy for the public and Montana in general to lock this public resource up, for the personnel enjoyment of a few home owners that live there on a limited basis.

The Science cited to justify this move is sketchy at best and definitely unsupportable in the long term.

There many options available besides the Draconian proposals being put forward.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Kyle@detroitkiteboarding.com](mailto:Kyle@detroitkiteboarding.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 8:21:15 AM

---

Name: Kyle krawiec  
City: Big sky  
No, please no

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Danica509@gmail.com](mailto:Danica509@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 8:06:29 AM

---

Name: Danica Lewis

City: Ennis

Over the last almost 2 years of back and forth bickering, little has been accomplished. Although proactive minds understand that a 'no action' plan isn't likely, for the time being, NO ACTION should be taken! Please take the proper time and fully investigate the issues (which seem to all be social or etiquette related) and implement planning that makes sense. Restricting boats from sections where wade fishing is impossible does nothing but compound the problems already being seen. Thank you commissioners, for your time and consideration on this matter!

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [D2510leo@gmail.com](mailto:D2510leo@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 7:58:29 AM

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Name:

City:

This cannot happen. No one can own the river systems. If they want their own private water, they can dig a pond. Public lands are already becoming scarce for access due to private land locks allowing gates to be put up denying access to those public parcels, basically making them private. Do not force our waterways to be the same. Otherwise, the federal government will have to install more put in and pull out stations at each border where the river is privatized and public again. How can someone lay ownership to something that is never the same? The water is always moving so it's never the same! If air can't be owned, neither can natural waterways.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Scott@montanafishingcompany.com](mailto:Scott@montanafishingcompany.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 6:51:10 AM

---

Name:  
City:  
No this is not acceptable

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [pri4543@aol.com](mailto:pri4543@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 6:05:56 AM

---

Name: Paul Loehlein  
City: Green Bay  
No way

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Bryan Abbott](#)  
**To:** [madisonriver.com@mt.gov](mailto:madisonriver.com@mt.gov)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Oppose new Madison River Regulations  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 4:16:08 AM

---

I am writing to share how much I oppose the new proposed regulations on the Madison River. Please do not pass regulations that shut down sections of the river to boaters or that allocate days to outfitters.

Thank you,  
Bryan



**From:** [alis0nadams@icloud.com](mailto:alis0nadams@icloud.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 3:57:54 AM

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Name:  
City:  
No to this!

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Anthony.streams@yahoo.com](mailto:Anthony.streams@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 11:31:22 PM

---

Name: Tony

City: Ennis

I believe banning access is a bad idea. I say no to this proposal.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [nick.efta@gmail.com](mailto:nick.efta@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 11:19:08 PM

---

Name: Nick Efta

City: Ennis

Limiting fishing out of the boat is one thing, but limiting boat access is unacceptable. Please don't close the river to recreational floats.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Margot.diffendaffer@gmail.com](mailto:Margot.diffendaffer@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 11:16:05 PM

---

Name:  
City:  
No

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [mtnailtech@hotmail.com](mailto:mtnailtech@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 11:04:01 PM

---

Name: Debbie

City:

New Rule I:

I'm opposed to capping outfitter trips. How do you justify taking away an individuals right to make a living by deciding how many days they can fish the river. Is America not based on free enterprise, where if you choose to start a business and work hard to make a living you should not be regulated by a board who thinks it should limit the industry to only a certain number? How will anyone else have the opportunity to be an outfitter if that is what they choose to do in life.

New Rule II:

Rest and Rotation does not make sense for what you say is the problem. If overcrowding is a problem on the river and you take out 2 sections, all you will do is OVERCROWD the other sections of the river on those days, which will in turn cause extreme problems with an over abundance of boats in sections not resting. This will cause conflict among ALL those fishing, as well as be extremely difficult on the fish! You will therefore be CAUSING the exact problem you say you are trying to prevent! Overcrowding and stress on the fish! I am also opposed to this rest and rotation being limited to the commercial users only! First of all, how will you police this? Second, if the river NEEDS to be rested then it needs to be rested by ALL users not just singling out commercial users, non-commercial and public fisherman are just as plentiful and just as hard on the river as the commercial users. What data do you have to support this rule change that shows the fish are in trouble, therefore requiring this change? You have to show data to back up this change! If you have the data to show that overuse is causing a massive reduction in the health of the fish then: 1. start with reducing the out of state licenses issued-for example all the Idaho outfitters who bring their out of state clients and use the river. 2. Reduce in state licenses and then if the river is still needing regulation reduce the commercial use. Again, taking away the commercial outfitters ability to make a living is wrong, especially without taking away the out of staters first! Drive up to Lyons Bridge access on any given day of summer and count the Idaho plates, it's astounding how many of them are making a living on the Montana river!

Rule III:

I strongly oppose banning boats on any part of the river! You are taking away my right to access public water! Montana has public land and water laws and you are trying to put yourselves above the law and take away my rights! The only thing this rule will do is privatize the river! The river is public water for all, not just the rich land owners who own land on this portion of the river. If you ban boats you take away my right to access public water. Are you also going to require the land owners on this section of the river to allow me to cross their property so that I can access my right to public water? This rule does absolutley nothing to help with conflict of the river, it just allows the rich to have their own private river against Montana law which allows me access to that public water!!

Rule IV:

Why are you trying to restrict vessel and float tube access from Greycliff down? Would it be because of, again, rich land owners? This makes no sense to put restrictions on this section of the lower river and yet, somehow, there has been no mention of restricting the river from Warm Springs to Blacksford which is an absolute disgusting overuse of the river! Talk about overcrowding and stress on the fish, if there is even any fish still left in that section of the

river! Why is there no desire to put restrictions on this section if you are truly worried about overcrowding, fisherman conflict, and health of the fish? Is it because there is no rich land owners in this section of the river who want you to privatize the river for them? Or is it because there is very little commercial use in this section and the commercial users are the only ones you seem to be worried about restricting on the Madison? You say these restrictions are about the health of the river, I cannot even imagine the amount of litter and human waste in this section of the river! Talk about a section of the river that desperately needs to be rested in the summer! If you truly felt the Madison NEEDS to be restricted because of the health of the river and fish, there is no way possible you could leave out this section of gross overuse!! It's hard to believe you truly have the health of the river at interest, instead it appears you are more worried about the interest of the wealthy land owners who want to privatize the Madison River and take away my right to public water!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [ycarecroy@icloud.com](mailto:ycarecroy@icloud.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 10:05:30 PM

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Name: Carey Croy  
City: Ennis  
NO

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [mloehlein1960](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] I oppose the regulations on the Madison river to boaters  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 9:25:39 PM

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Sent via the Samsung Galaxy, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone



**From:** [rdfarnes2@gmail.com](mailto:rdfarnes2@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 7:15:59 PM

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Name: Reid Farnes

City: Missoula

No. I am embarrassed that this somehow makes sense to anyone.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Gustinzk@icloud.com](mailto:Gustinzk@icloud.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 7:06:32 PM

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Name: Gustin

City: Ennis

I disagree with the boat ban privatizing part of the Madison River.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jamesligon94@gmail.com](mailto:Jamesligon94@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 7:04:45 PM

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Name: James

City: Ennis

As a resident of Ennis I am not in support of the proposed rules for the Madison.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Langstonrodgers@gmail.com](mailto:Langstonrodgers@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:59:20 PM

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Name: Langston

City: Ennis

Listen to the guides and outfitter, as a first year guide I will and can see the dramatic effect on the community. I know the community and town of ennis will suffer deeply. This isn't helping the solution its going to crowd the river for the first true time.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Philip Magart](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River regulations  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:54:23 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to oppose certain regulations that would hurt public access to the river and others that would hurt smaller outfitter that are vital to the Ennis community.

New Rule 1- I oppose this restriction as it would limit business growth while doing nothing to address 85% of the rivers use.

New Rule 2 - I oppose this restriction as it will only create more crowding by limiting commercial use areas.

New Rule 3 - I oppose this restriction because it clearly limits public access to the river.

New Rule 6 - I oppose this rule as it will force out smaller outfitters and have a negative economic impact on Ennis.

The only crowding I've experienced fishing on the Madison River is at the boat launch sites. I think that before we implement rules that will have a profound impact on the people of Ennis and visitors who enjoy fishing the Madison, we should be sure that the rules work as intended. Special interest groups and homeowners on the Madison shouldn't be able to take away the rights of the public.

Thank you for your consideration,

Philip G. Magart

**From:** [helen.magart@gmail.com](mailto:helen.magart@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:53:37 PM

---

Name: Helen Denruyter

City: ENNIS

Dear Montana Fish Wildlife Commission and Montana Dept of Fish Wildlife and Parks, My name is Bill Denruyter. I am a new (2020 season) outfitter and have been a guide on Montana Rivers since 2007. I am writing on behalf of myself and my wife, who is a lifelong resident of Montana (fifth generation) and an RN at Madison Valley Medical Center in Ennis. We strongly oppose almost all of the proposed rules on the Madison. Justin Edge has laid out exactly why this entire rule making process has been asinine from the beginning. We find his comments well thought out, well laid out, well written, and aligned with our own.

Rest/Rotation does nothing to ease pressure on fish, and without addressing public use will do nothing to ease angler interactions with one another.

Boat restrictions do nothing but appease wealthy landowners need to have rivers all to themselves and force anglers into even smaller stretches of water. It's anti public access and anti Montana values.

A free stamp is a hassle that people will not bother with unless strictly enforced and seems like a waste of money trying to get exact data. None of these proposed rules are really backed in unbiased data anyway. Coding interaction as conflict in and of itself is a flag that these rules are coming from someplace other than environmental protection anyway.

Outfitter allocation will drive small outfitters out of business. I have already been specifically told by one large outfitter in the area that he will no longer hire me as a guide, though I have worked for him for years. As a large outfitter, there is no impetus to throw small outfitters work. They no longer have a way of growing their business either. This ramps up competition while tipping business viability even further towards big outfitters. We have been shushed saying that this experiment has worked over on the Big Hole, Beaverhead rivers and this consolidation of outfitters hasn't happened. But the Big Hole and Beaverhead are not the Madison River and the going rate to buy into those rivers is already in the \$50000-80000 range.

Precedent, we know that the Blackfoot is being scoped for the same reason. We don't want this to become the norm on Montana Rivers. Tourism is one way we can make money in this state. We strongly support regulations protecting the environment, unfortunately these current proposals aren't based in science and will do little to protect fish or the health of the river.

We support limiting development of access sites on the grey cliff sections, we support the continued collection of data, monitoring of fish, reds, water temperature and other scientific data that indicates the health of the river. We support setting of time limits and adjustment periods to assess what is working and what isn't. We even support limiting the growth of outfitting on the river as long as the measures taken reign in the construction of millionaire-based outfitter monopolies. We support measures that account for time spent working as a guide on Montana waters.

We hope that you see this rule making as a chance to do good for Montana rivers and the Madison and not a politically charged rush to do something, even if that something is wrong. Thank you for your time in considering our comments.

Bill and Helen Denruyter

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Bill Denruyter](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Official Comments on the proposed madison river rules  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:53:14 PM

---

Dear Montana Fish Wildlife Commission and Montana Dept of Fish Wildlife and Parks,

My name is Bill Denruyter. I am a new (2020 season) outfitter and have been a guide on Montana Rivers since 2007. I am writing on behalf of myself and my wife, who is a lifelong resident of Montana (fifth generation) and an RN at Madison Valley Medical Center in Ennis.

We strongly oppose almost all of the proposed rules on the Madison. Justin Edge has laid out exactly why this entire rule making process has been asinine from the beginning. We find his comments well thought out, well laid out, well written, and aligned with our own.

Rest/Rotation does nothing to ease pressure on fish, and without addressing public use will do nothing to ease angler interactions with one another.

Boat restrictions do nothing but appease wealthy landowners' need to have rivers all to themselves and force anglers into even smaller stretches of water. It's anti public access and anti Montana values.

A free stamp is a hassle that people will not bother with unless strictly enforced and seems like a waste of money trying to get exact data. None of these proposed rules are really backed in unbiased data anyway. Coding interaction as conflict in and of itself is a flag that these rules are coming from someplace other than environmental protection anyway.

Outfitter allocation will drive small outfitters out of business. I have already been specifically told by one large outfitter in the area that he will no longer hire me as a guide, though I have worked for him for years. As a large outfitter, there is no impetus to throw small outfitters work. They no longer have a way of growing their business either. This ramps up competition while tipping business viability even further towards big outfitters. We have been shushed saying that this experiment has worked over on the Big Hole, Beaverhead rivers and this consolidation of outfitters hasn't happened. But the Big Hole and Beaverhead are not the Madison River and the going rate to buy into those rivers is already in the \$50000-80000 range.

Precedent, we know that the Blackfoot is being scoped for the same reason. We don't want this to become the norm on Montana Rivers. Tourism is one way we can make money in this state. We strongly support regulations protecting the environment, unfortunately these current proposals aren't based in science and will do little to protect fish or the health of the river.

We support limiting development of access sites on the grey cliff sections, we support the continued collection of data, monitoring of fish, redds, water temperature and other scientific data that indicates the health of the river. We support the setting of time limits and adjustment periods to assess what is working and what isn't. We even support limiting the growth of outfitting on the river as long as the measures taken reign in the construction of millionaire-based outfitter monopolies. We support measures that account for time spent working as a guide on Montana waters.

We hope that you see rule making as a chance to do good for Montana rivers and the Madison and not a politically charged rush to do something, even if that something is wrong.

Thank you for your time in considering our comments.

Bill and Helen Denruyter

--

**Bill Denruyter**  
**Camp Creek Outfitters #40378**



[campcreekguide@gmail.com](mailto:campcreekguide@gmail.com)

406.546.4166

PO BOX 1342

Ennis MT, 59729

**From:** [d2tim112@yahoo.com](mailto:d2tim112@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:52:38 PM

---

Name: Dana

City: Ennis

Just stop! If the monied people want private playgrounds, let the move to Siberia and build them.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Henry Cadwalader](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] New Regulations on the Madison  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:46:34 PM

---

I just wanted to reach out and say that I oppose the new regulations proposed for the Madison. I think the river should remain open to all boaters and that the allocation of days to outfitters should not occur. I personally feel that the of proposed rules will hurt small outfitters who operate on the Madison.

Thank you for your time,

Henry Cadwalader

**From:** [Berryc516@yahoo.com](mailto:Berryc516@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:37:21 PM

---

Name: Dustan

City: Cleveland, OH

For the last six years, I have been coming to Montana an average of about two times per year. This year I have spent about 3 weeks total in the state between fishing (with guides and without), doing wildlife photography, sight-seeing, shopping and generally exploring the state.

Unfortunately, the proposed changes that limit access to the Madison River make me feel very unwelcome in the state I have grown to love. There is no broad reduction in Traffic?it is exclusively focused on limiting traffic among the population that uses guides to fish (mostly visitors). It is a thinly veiled effort to cater to a few wealthy special interests who don?t want ? out of towners? floating through their land. This is nothing more than a few wealthy landowners trying to enact an end-around to bypass Montana?s open water legal tradition without directly confronting it. Please do not allow this catering to the ultra wealthy landowners to prevent people like me from having equal access to these beautiful settings. I fear it will become incredibly evident to myself and many like me that I am now an unwelcome inconvenience if this occurs.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Sammye Morvay Pisani](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Upcoming Vote on Regulations on Madison River  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:31:27 PM

---

I oppose regulations that will shut down sections of the Madison River to boaters and that allocate days to outfitters based on history of use and monetize those days for resale. These proposed rules will immensely hurt small outfitters.

Please vote no to these regulations that will hurt small outfitters.

Thank you,  
Sammye Pisani

**From:** [Greg Robbins](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] new madison river rules  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:22:38 PM

---

Hello,

I oppose the Madison River rules changes. They will in effect hurt or eliminate the smaller river guides who I personally prefer to fish with due to the personalized service.

Please reconsider and rewrite the proposals to be fair to all commercial guides.

Greg Robbins

**From:** [Tristan Connell](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison regulation  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 5:57:44 PM

---

Hi,

Just taking a second to voice my opinion on proposed regulation. I oppose regulations that shut down sections of the Madison River to boaters and that allocate days to outfitters based on history of use and monetize those days for resale. Many of the proposed rules will kill small outfitters.

Tristan connell  
Lic. 37042  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Raymond White](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River , leave the outfitters alone !!!!  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 5:55:22 PM

---

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [Scott Anderson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 5:54:41 PM

---

I appose the new regulations that FWP is considering on the Madison River.

My name is Scott Anderson and I own Montana Fishing Company  
Outfitter # 12494

**From:** [Justin Edge](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River EA Comments  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 7:04:35 AM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)

Much has been made about the estimated abundances of brown and rainbow trout  $\geq 152$  mm ( $\approx 6''$ ) declining below the 20-year averages in the upper Madison River in 2019. Specifically, in the Pine Butte Section, estimated brown and rainbow trout abundances declined from 2018 to 2019. Estimated abundances of brown trout in the Varney Section remained relatively stable. Estimated abundances of rainbow trout declined below the 20-year average in the Varney Section.

While certainly we should be keeping close eye on fish populations, and FWP are doing that, there is nothing statistically significant about any of the population estimate data points in the context of historical inter-annual and decadal variation. And with regard to the decline in numbers of large brown trout in the Pine Butte Section, this was a predicted result by FWP of the water temperature regime change after repairs to Hebgen.

In recent years rainbow trout 12 inches and larger exhibited an upward trend in the Pine Butte monitoring section. The estimate for this cohort in 2018 was considered to be “towards the high end of their historic abundance in the Pine Butte section” according to FWP in the 2018 Annual Report to Northwestern Energies. With this in mind and the context of annual fluctuations of populations numbers over the last 20 years, the decline in a few cohorts of trout populations in one reach was nothing if not totally predictable and statistically consistent with decadal variation. However, some within FWP are using this natural and regular variation in population fluctuations as a convenient way to claim signs of a declining fishery in order to justify restrictive regulation proposals in this EA.

Here are the data for Madison River Pine Butte Section Rainbow and Brown Trout #'s/Mile in the years leading up to 2019

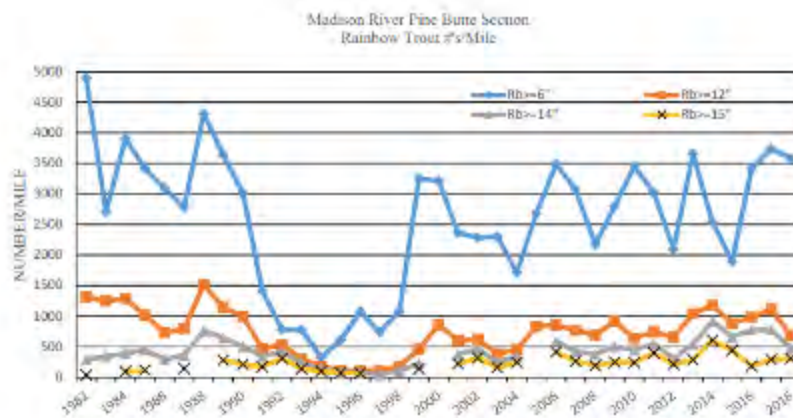


Figure 19. Long-term trend of the rainbow trout population by size group in the Pine Butte section of the Madison River during fall, 1982-2018.

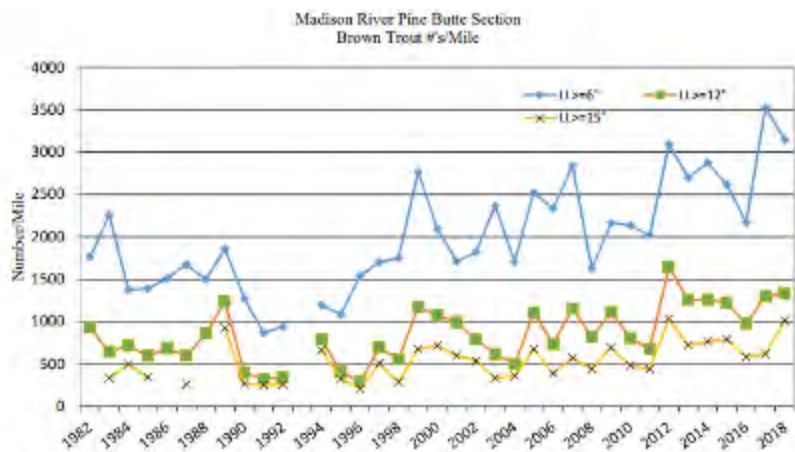


Figure 22. Long-term trend of the brown trout population by size group in the Pine Butte section of the Madison River during fall, 1982–2018.

Here are the data showing the 20-year average for all cohorts sampled

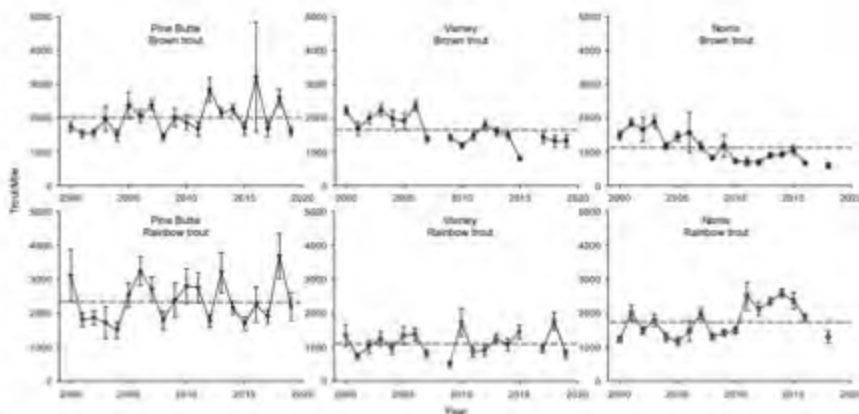


Figure 18. Estimated abundances of brown (brown squares) and rainbow (green circles) trout  $\ge 152 \text{ mm } (= 6'')$  captured in the three long-term sampling sections of the Madison River. Dashed lines are the 20-year averages of estimated abundances and error bars are the 95% confidence intervals for each sampling event.

As you can see, 2019 was not some sort of alarming year signaling a crisis or impending collapse of our fishery. Rather, it was a predictable decline in some cohorts of the population most likely due to natural cyclical life histories of wild trout populations observed all across the west. In almost every year, across each cohort, there has been an alternating population estimate of above and below 20-year averages. 2019 was no aberration in this trend. And yet in 2019, it becomes a convenient reference point for some within FWP with regards to the proposals in this EA. FWP curiously omit the context of 2019's population estimates and the fact that 2019 was within historical inter-annual and decadal variation. In fact, the confidence interval for the Pine Butte Rainbow Trout population estimate includes error bars indicating that the actual number of Rainbow Trout in that section could very likely be above 20-year averages.

And lastly, the one estimate of decline that has received so much media attention and has also been used to justify the need to impose regulations on restricting angling (even though there is no evidence of correlation of a decline in any population life history trait and angling), is the decline in relative abundance of larger brown and rainbow trout (age-2 and older fish, which are typically fish  $\ge 277 \text{ mm}$ .) Although brown and rainbow trout  $\ge 500 \text{ mm}$  have historically

composed a small percentage of the catch in the Pine Butte and Varney sections, FWP claim “those fish became increasingly rare during 2018 and 2019 sampling efforts.”

What’s curious to me is that FWP leave out any reference to a major environmental change that occurred recently with the completion of repairs to Hebgen reservoir. In fact, in the 2018 Annual Report, FWP suggest “surface releases from Hebgen during repairs of the Hebgen reservoir outlet structure, 2012-2017, could have contributed to faster trout growth, especially in the Pine Butte section” possibly explaining the historically high numbers observed in 2018. Higher temperatures were closer to the optimal range for trout growth. Water temperature from Hebgen Dam (Hebgen discharge) to McAtee have been monitored since 1995 and have shown their highest maximum temperatures from 2012 – 2017. Not surprisingly, this also correlates to some of the highest estimates in trout population numbers. And here’s the most enlightening quote from the 2018 Annual Report: *“Trout growth may slow now that repairs are completed at Hebgen Dam and cooler water is discharged from a depth of 40 feet.”* Lo and behold that’s exactly what seemed to have happened. FWP predicted this decline. Not due to angling pressure. Due to repairs at Hebgen. FWP suggested in the 2019 Annual Report that they would “assess whether changes in abundances are associated with 2188 project operations and if operational changes should be considered in the future.” Perhaps they’re referring to this major environmental change in water temps that they correctly predicted in 2018?

In conclusion, declines in populations and sizes of trout in the observed sections are statistically insignificant in the context of decadal variation and inter-annual fluctuations, and FWP knew that there could be a decline in growth of larger fish from 2018 to 2019 given the drastic regime change in water temperatures from Hebgen. As much as FWP would like the few observed declines in populations to be attributable to angling pressure in order to impose more restrictions, the 2019 population estimates are within observed inter-annual and decadal variation trends. Furthermore, FWP themselves predicted declines in size growth due to water temperature regime change.

**From:** [justinledge@gmail.com](mailto:justinledge@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 6:59:12 AM

---

Name: Justin Edge

City: Ennis

Much has been made about the estimated abundances of brown and rainbow trout > 152 mm (? 6?) declining below the 20-year averages in the upper Madison River in 2019. Specifically, in the Pine Butte Section, estimated brown and rainbow trout abundances declined from 2018 to 2019. Estimated abundances of brown trout in the Varney Section remained relatively stable. Estimated abundances of rainbow trout declined below the 20-year average in the Varney Section.

While certainly we should be keeping close eye on fish populations, and FWP are doing that, there is nothing statistically significant about any of the population estimate data points in the context of historical inter-annual and decadal variation. And with regard to the decline in numbers of large brown trout in the Pine Butte Section, this was a predicted result by FWP of the water temperature regime change after repairs to Hebgen.

In recent years rainbow trout 12 inches and larger exhibited an upward trend in the Pine Butte monitoring section. The estimate for this cohort in 2018 was considered to be >towards the high end of their historic abundance in the Pine Butte section? according to FWP in the 2018 Annual Report to Northwestern Energies. With this in mind and the context of annual fluctuations of populations numbers over the last 20 years, the decline in a few cohorts of trout populations in one reach was nothing if not totally predictable and statistically consistent with decadal variation. However, some within FWP are using this natural and regular variation in population fluctuations as a convenient way to claim signs of a declining fishery in order to justify restrictive regulation proposals in this EA.

In my full comments on this topic, which I am emailing to the email address for comments on this topic, I provide the data for Madison River Pine Butte Section Rainbow and Brown Trout #s/Mile in the years leading up to 2019 and the data showing the 20-year average for all cohorts sampled. Please see my email for those important graphs.

As you can see, 2019 was not some sort of alarming year signaling a crisis or impending collapse of our fishery. Rather, it was a predictable decline in some cohorts of the population most likely due to natural cyclical life histories of wild trout populations observed all across the west. In almost every year, across each cohort, there has been an alternating population estimate of above and below 20-year averages. 2019 was no aberration in this trend. And yet in 2019, it becomes a convenient reference point for some within FWP with regards to the proposals in this EA. FWP curiously omit the context of 2019's population estimates and the fact that 2019 was within historical inter-annual and decadal variation. In fact, the confidence interval for the Pine Butte Rainbow Trout population estimate includes error bars indicating that the actual number of Rainbow Trout in that section could very likely be above 20-year averages.

And lastly, the one estimate of decline that has received so much media attention and has also been used to justify the need to impose regulations on restricting angling (even though there is no evidence of correlation of a decline in any population life history trait and angling), is the

decline in relative abundance of larger brown and rainbow trout (age-2 and older fish, which are typically fish > 277 mm.) Although brown and rainbow trout > 500 mm have historically composed a small percentage of the catch in the Pine Butte and Varney sections, FWP claim > those fish became increasingly rare during 2018 and 2019 sampling efforts.>

What's curious to me is that FWP leave out any reference to a major environmental change that occurred recently with the completion of repairs to Hebgen reservoir. In fact, in the 2018 Annual Report, FWP suggest >surface releases from Hebgen during repairs of the Hebgen reservoir outlet structure, 2012-2017, could have contributed to faster trout growth, especially in the Pine Butte section? possibly explaining the historically high numbers observed in 2018. Higher temperatures were closer to the optimal range for trout growth. Water temperature from Hebgen Dam (Hebgen discharge) to McAtee have been monitored since 1995 and have shown their highest maximum temperatures from 2012 > 2017. Not surprisingly, this also correlates to some of the highest estimates in trout population numbers. And here's the most enlightening quote from the 2018 Annual Report: >Trout growth may slow now that repairs are completed at Hebgen Dam and cooler water is discharged from a depth of 40 feet.> Lo and behold that's exactly what seemed to have happened. FWP predicted this decline. Not due to angling pressure. Due to repairs at Hebgen. FWP suggested in the 2019 Annual Report that they would >assess whether changes in abundances are associated with 2188 project operations and if operational changes should be considered in the future.> Perhaps they're referring to this major environmental change in water temps that they correctly predicted in 2018?

In conclusion, declines in populations and sizes of trout in the observed sections are statistically insignificant in the context of decadal variation and inter-annual fluctuations, and FWP knew that there could be a decline in growth of larger fish from 2018 to 2019 given the drastic regime change in water temperatures from Hebgen. As much as FWP would like the few observed declines in populations to be attributable to angling pressure in order to impose more restrictions, the 2019 population estimates are within observed inter-annual and decadal variation trends. Furthermore, FWP themselves predicted declines in size growth due to water temperature regime change.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [guyser1@aol.com](mailto:guyser1@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 11:18:42 AM

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Name:  
City:  
And . . . if you don't have or want 'zoom'. Big business con.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Dav1900@hotmail.com](mailto:Dav1900@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 16, 2020 6:01:46 PM

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Name:

City:

Fished the Madison many times. There is no crowding issue. Look at the data. This is a made up problem to restrict public access to a public resource. How can the solution to "over crowding" be to cram everyone into a smaller section of river on certain days? That is idiotic. These proposed changes are ridiculous and not only that they have come about thru improper channels and have circumvented the normal protocol. Finally the guided trips make up only a fraction of the traffic on the river and again limiting them will not solve this made up problem.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [DAVID SCULLY](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Commercial Caps  
**Date:** Friday, October 16, 2020 6:01:31 PM

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I am not in favor of the use of commercial caps as they were used on the Big Hole and the Beaverhead rivers. Again, the Madison is not either of these two rivers and if there is to be any form of commercial caps, it must include each current outfitter. It should look at the highest of usage between **2018 and 2020**. User days need to have flexibility, since many clients are not every year clients, but some come every other year or every third year.

New outfitters need to have at least a minimum of 35 days in order to even maintain a very low annual income level.

Older outfitters will retire, but we need to have new and younger outfitters available to fill those voids. Montana should not turn into Idaho, where all the permits are held by a very, very, very few businesses. It leads to monopolies and oligopolies that will have total control of a client driven industry....that's not good at all! It will destroy the small businesses that are currently being initiated by independent outfitters.

Thank you for your time!

David Scully

#2505

**From:** [El Western Information](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed Madison River restrictions  
**Date:** Friday, October 16, 2020 2:20:09 PM

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To the FWP:

As a business owner who is dependent on all fishermen whether they float, row or walk, I STRONGLY oppose limiting the 19 miles upriver to walk-in only. Many of our long-time experienced fishermen/women have been fishing all parts of the Madison for their lifetimes. Making a large stretch of the river inaccessible to them because of physical limitations as they age is unjust. Crowding the rest of the Madison so only the hearty or privileged few can have private water is not in the tradition of open access that has been at the heart of Montana law.

There are other stretches of the Madison where wading fishermen can and do find quiet water if they are willing to walk. Walkers are not the real target of this restriction...appeasing wealthy private landowners is.

Kris Hauck

El Western Cabins & Lodges

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Reservations: [www.elwestern.com](http://www.elwestern.com) [[elwestern.com](mailto:info@elwestern.com)]

800-831-2773

[info@elwestern.com](mailto:info@elwestern.com)

Local: 406 682-4217

Fax: 406 682-5207

P.O. Box 487 (Mail)

4787 US Hwy 287 N (Shipping)\*

Ennis, Montana 59729

**From:** [bill.gearon](mailto:bill.gearon)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] River management  
**Date:** Friday, October 16, 2020 1:25:34 PM

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Last year my wife and I booked a multi day fly fishing trip on the Madison river. We hired a guide and used a float boat. Without a professional guide we would not have come ( and put thousands of dollars into the Montana economy). Our guide was EXTREMELY conscientious and showed great concern for the care and life of the river. All fish were treated as a treasure and promptly returned to the water. To limit these schooled and caring professionals, or replace them with anglers without such in depth training would be a grave error. We fished the river for many days and I can truly say that we left no footprint behind. When stopping for lunch he even picked up litter left behind by those not so careful. Frequently he saw fishing line in shoreline trees and went to retrieve it. It is my opinion that a reduction of these caring professionals would harm the river. In North Carolina, where I live, we have River Keepers who look after things. My observation in Montana is that you have professional guides that take on that job. To limit their access to areas of the Madison will subject that area to uncorrected abuse. These guides pick up after the river slobs who have no financial skin in the game to insure that the River lives, clean and healthy.

Bill Gearon  
910-382-8113  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [craig.v.egg@montana.gov](mailto:craig.v.egg@montana.gov)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Access Comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 16, 2020 11:48:49 AM

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Commissioners:

The Butte Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Skyline Sportsmen Association and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association proposes to limit summertime commercial access of the river on Saturdays from Lyons Bridge FAS to Palisades Day Use Area. Much of the commercial use in this area of the Madison River is from West Yellowstone shops, followed by shops from the Ennis Montana area. The petition, if adopted, will CREATE additional use issues and crowding on the river on Saturdays because when implemented, it essentially shortens the available water for commercial access.

There are very few public walk wade activities in this section of the Madison which is bordered by private property, so one must pose the question of whom is really benefitting from this proposal? If adopted our commissioners will be back at the table fielding complaints that traffic on the river has increased exponentially when indeed, accessible river miles would be reduced by the proposal from Skyline TU and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association.

Similarly, the Skyline TU/Anaconda Sportsmen Association petition proposes to eliminate commercial activity on Summer Sundays from Varney Bridge FAS to Ennis FAS. This section of the river is often navigated by Ennis guide shops and outfitters. Having coursed this water on multiple occasions, I can attest to the fact there is very little public walk wade access.

Further the channels in this section here have a very strong current and require experienced boat handlers to navigate. Again, I don't know what the proposal from Skyline TU and Anaconda Sportsmen Association accomplishes, other than reducing accessible river miles, resulting in more commercial use above Varney on said closure days. Again, if this is adopted our commissioners will be back at the table, fielding complaints regarding river traffic as a result of a proposal, that reduces the accessible river miles available to outfitters.

Both proposals, if adopted, WILL negatively impact issues that relate to river access and river experience by locals and tourists alike.

The Madison river, described as the 100 mile riffle, is long enough with a variety of access points to allow everyone to have a satisfying day on the river. Savvy commercial users and privateers have a wide variety of put in and take out places on the river, enabling them to spread out over the summer daylight hours, limiting conflicts. As soon as you begin shortening the available river space you risk manufacturing a crisis that did not exist previously. That is precisely what these proposals do.

I support the continued enablement of float access (no fishing from watercraft....) from Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge FAS and Ennis FAS to Ennis Reservoir. This is the only way that our older citizens, or those that may have limited use of their knees, etc., can access this water.

As a resident of Ennis, a life member of Trout Unlimited I am astounded by the ignorance reflected in these proposals from Skyline TU. I cannot believe a TU chapter based in Butte Montana would have more knowledge of the Madison River or should carry precedent over our local TU Madison/Gallatin chapter in these advisory matters. It has been suggested that the proposals from Skyline TU are more about limiting access to the Madison River, turning it into the personal playground of residents whose homes and properties adjoin and abut the Madison river. I sincerely hope this is not the real agenda here.

Finally, the FOAM proposal suggests a use stamp for non-commercial use of the Madison by float fishermen. The suggestion is these would be employed to gather better data regarding noncommercial use on the Madison River. FOAM suggests these use stamps would likely need to have quantity limits established in the future and has suggested in the past these use stamps may be distributed via local (or out of town) shops. As a full time resident of Montana, and the owner of a drift boat, the suggestion that I may be forbidden drift boat access to the river during a certain year,

and even walk-wade access, because I failed to secure a non-commercial stamp on time; or a shop owner may have distributed their limited selection of coupons to a group of “friends” is contrary to Montana values of public access to state and federal resources.

If implemented these proposals will only create conflict and erode public support and trust in its commissioners and their rulemaking efforts. I urge the commissioners to set aside these proposals.

Craig V Eggers  
340 Montana Way  
Ennis Montana  
59729  
[atmosdvd8@gmail.com](mailto:atmosdvd8@gmail.com)

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:atmosdvd8@gmail.com) for Windows 10

**From:** [justinedge@hotmail.com](mailto:justinedge@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 14, 2020 6:47:17 AM

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Name: Justin

City: Ennis

FWP claim there is "conflict" among boat users and wade anglers. Although, I've tried to get FWP to produce call records, police reports, warden calls, documentation to show that conflicts are occurring. So far, they've said there are no such reports or documentation. Interesting how the calls suddenly became much more infrequent, apparently though, after Big Bend area landowners got FWP on board with the boat ban...In this EA, on page 27, FWP now define "conflict" to be the "interaction" among boats and wading anglers. It's a weak attempt to privatize water, basically. This is a major threat to public access in Montana. Oh by the way, not just anglers. There are 120 acres of landlocked public lands in that upper section proposed for a boat ban. If this passes, they will be inaccessible during portions of the year. FWP provide no other alternative way to access. This should be a non starter.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [craig.v.egg@montana.gov](mailto:craig.v.egg@montana.gov)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public comments on Madison River Use  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 5:00:23 PM

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Hello

Below are my comments which I hope to be inserted into the record for consideration by FWP commissioners

Thank you for the opportunity for this full time resident of ENNIS to comment

Craig V Eggers  
340 Montana Way  
Ennis, Montana, 59729  
[Craigvincent2020@gmail.com](mailto:Craigvincent2020@gmail.com)

Madison River Access comments

The Butte Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Skyline Sportsmen Association and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association proposes to limit summertime commercial access of the river on Sundays from Lyons Bridge FAS to Palisades Day Use Area. Much of the commercial use in this area of the Madison River is by West Yellowstone shops, followed by shops from the Ennis Montana area. The petition, if adopted, will CREATE additional use issues and crowding on the river on Sundays because when implemented, it essentially shortens the available water for commercial access.

There are very few walk wade activities in this section of the Madison which is bordered by private property, so one must pose the question of whom is really benefitting from this proposal? If adopted our commissioners will be back at the table fielding complaints that traffic on the river has increased exponentially when indeed, accessible river miles would be reduced by the proposal from Skyline TU and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association.

Similarly, the Skyline TU/Anaconda Sportsmen Association petition proposes to eliminate commercial activity on Summer Saturdays from Varney Bridge FAS to Ennis FAS. This section of the river is often navigated by Ennis guide shops and outfitters. Having coursed this water on multiple occasions, I can attest to the fact there is very little walk wade access.

Further the channels in this section here have a very strong current and require experienced boat handlers to navigate. Again, I don't know what the proposal from Skyline TU and Anaconda Sportsmen Association accomplishes, other than reducing accessible river miles, resulting in more commercial use above Varney on said closure days. Again, if this is adopted our commissioners will be back at the table, this time fielding complaints regarding river traffic, when, as a result of this proposal, the accessible river miles available to outfitters would be reduced!

Both proposals, if adopted, WILL negatively impact issues that relate to river access and river experience by locals and tourists alike.

The Madison river is big enough with a variety of access points to allow everyone to have a satisfying day on the river. Savvy commercial users and privateers have a wide variety of put in places on the river, enabling them to spread out over the summer daylight hours, limiting conflicts. As soon as you begin shortening the available river space you risk manufacturing a crisis that did not exist previously. That is precisely what these proposals do.

I support the continued enablement of float access (no fishing from watercraft....) from Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge FAS and Ennis FAS to Ennis Reservoir. This is the only way that some of us who may

be older, or have limited use of their knees, can access this water.

As a resident of Ennis, a life member of Trout Unlimited I am astounded by the ignorance reflected in these proposals from Skyline TU. I don't understand why a TU chapter based in Butte Montana would have more knowledge of the Madison River or carry precedent over our local TU Madison/Gallatin chapter. It has been suggested that the proposals from Skyline TU are more about limiting access to the Madison River, turning it into the personal playground of residents whose homes and properties adjoining the river. I hope this is not the real agenda here.

Finally, the FOAM proposal suggests a use stamp for non-commercial use of the Madison by float fishermen. The suggestion is these would be employed to gather better data regarding noncommercial use on the Madison River. FOAM suggests these use stamps would likely need to have quantity limits established in the future and had had suggested in the past these use stamps may be distributed via local (or out of town) shops. As a full time resident of Montana, and the owner of a drift boat, the suggestion that I may be forbidden drift boat access to the river during a certain year, or even walk-wade access, because I failed to secure a coupon on time; or a shop owner may have distributed their limited selection coupons to a group of "friends" is contrary to Montana values of public access to state and federal resources.

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:go.microsoft.com) for Windows 10



**From:** [Justin Edge](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River EA Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 11:31:05 AM

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When people complain "there's too many boats on the water" they're speaking mostly to busy FAS sites, as if a half full or mostly full lot is a problem. And besides, how many is too many? Nobody knows the answer to that. It's baffling that overall annual use of guided trips pales in comparison to non guided use and is being targeted for 100% of the regulations. And how does anyone expect a meaningful impact to usage from such a lopsided regulation? I also disagree with the notion that the upper Madison is "crowded" per se. Perhaps during certain times, FAS parking lots are very full, but what's wrong with a lot that's full? The river itself is very rarely "crowded." This isn't the lower Madison we're talking about. It's actually not that bad even on the busiest days, thanks to the quick paced nature of the river itself. It's a natural dispersing quality. For example, take the video I'm attaching here as part of my comment. This video is from the top of Ruby Rock on June 27, at 11AM. The salmonfly hatch was in full swing. Mac was completely full with rigs. The one day this year where I observed a full lot there. But take a look at the river. For two miles of viewable river, only one boat. I'm not saying there aren't a lot of boats out there. Sure there are. But that's not the point. The point is, "crowded" and "a lot of boats" are not necessarily one in the same. Until we determine the carrying capacity of the river, reporting numbers of boats is just a number that means nothing. As someone who spent over 150 days on the water this year, I never felt crowded on the river itself. Lastly, we currently have no data on impacts to the fishery from angling pressure on the upper Madison. That's another major gap in our understanding of the resource and it's resiliency. Finally, I'm opposed to the nature of instituting regulations based on petitions, as both FOAM and GGTU have done here. It bypasses an informed decision making process, where those gaps in information have a chance to be filled to make the best decisions. We may in fact need caps on boats, or caps on guides, or any number of regulations to best manage the resource. But, until we gather the right information, we're taking stabs in the dark at moving goal posts all based solely on subjective emotion. That's wrong and will backfire. It also sets terrible precedence.

Justin

 [IMG\\_3370 2.mov \[drive.google.com\]](#)

**From:** [Donald Burks](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Plan  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 7:32:20 PM

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Dear FWP,

Are you changing the name to Fish Wildlife and People. I thought you guys were supposed to be biologist and not sociologist. Looking after our fish and making sure our rivers were protected for future generations. Your proposal does nothing to fix or address the problem. When you force all the outfitters on onto one stretch and they are joined by the people who wanted to float there anyway you have made it worse. Just like what happened on the Bighole. Attacking the commercial use and their clients who are also part of the general public and also pay a lot more more for a license while appeasing a few self entitled residents and your own bias against guides an outfitters really reflects the poor management and leadership in your department.

How about just send a note to everyone from out of state and tell them to stay home and the same goes for anyone who doesn't live here in the winter. That will reduce your crowding and get to where you are trying to go. How about charging a thousand buck for a fishing license? Maybe make it all private and only landowners have a right to fish. What you are proposing will eventually lead to that as the final solution. How about just shutup and fish.

Don Burks  
77 9th St. Island  
Livingston MT 59047  
406 223-3131  
Outfitter #3863

**From:** [VOLLMERSCOTT@YAHOO.COM](mailto:VOLLMERSCOTT@YAHOO.COM)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 9:21:14 PM

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Name: Scott Vollmer  
City: Gallatin Gateway  
Dear Commissioners,

Any reduction in the use of boats to gain access to fishing on the Madison River, is, by definition, a reduction in access to the fishery. I think we all need to remember that the entire Madison River can be fished by wading. While I do understand that not everyone owns a boat, I see no reason to discriminate against those who choose to use a boat simply because some are offended by boats in certain sections. I also do understand that there is an anecdotal record of a few "boat vs. wade" conflicts on the Upper Madison, but I think we have come to realize over the past 2 years that these "conflicts" are not nearly as prevalent as some profess. Having someone use a boat to get to your preferred fishing spot before you is not a conflict. I also believe we have come to realize that the amount of dissatisfaction with boats being used in the wade sections is not nearly as profound as some would lead you to believe. Therefore, I urge you to reject NEW RULE III, which is the walk/wade proposal from the GGTU et. al. petition.

There are many reasons to reject this new rule, some of which I touched on above. Another reason is that not allowing boats makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to access the fishery below \$3 Bridge without the use of a boat. However, the biggest reason why this new rule will not work is because it doesn't attack the main problem that we are trying to address - crowding. In fact, there is an estimation from the Department in the EA that this new rule would lead to more people using the fishery in the wade sections, which just means more crowding. Our goal should be to spread out use to the furthest extent, and there are ways to accomplish this goal. One way is to allow fishing from boats, like what is done in NEW RULE V. If allowed to fish from a boat, most anglers float on by and won't stop to the extent that they currently do.

However, I do realize that there is a strong culture of wade fishing on the Upper Madison, especially around \$3 Bridge and Reynolds. Some have even termed it "cultish". I also realize that the wade stretches were created to give the wade fisherman easier access to better wade fishing water. I believe that there is a better solution that was provided by one of our MOGA members, Rich Gockel. His proposal would contain a year-round regulation of not allowing boats to be used for any type of fishing from Quake to the end of the public land below \$3 Bridge. In their regulations, the Department lists this as "Closed to Float Fishing". Below this, all the way to Ennis, the river is open to float fishing, meaning you can fish from a boat or get out of the boat and wade fish. Meanwhile, in his proposal, Rich calls for the status quo to be retained in the Ennis-Ennis Lake stretch.

To me, this proposal makes sense. It does not limit access - you can still put a boat on at Reynolds or \$3 Bridge, you just can't fish in any manner until you reach the end of the public land below \$3 Bridge. In fact, a future goal if this works would be looking into an easement for a new site development at the public land at the Big Bend, meaning that people would no longer have any need to put a watercraft on for fishing purposes at Reynolds or \$3 Bridge. This would allow the wade fishers at \$3 Bridge to have their own section free of competition from anglers who gain access to fish via boats. It also would continue to allow boat access to

private land stretches below \$3 Bridge that are currently nearly impossible to wade to. Meanwhile, and most importantly, it would allow more fishing from boats, serving to spread out float use, not congest it. Below Ennis, the current regulations make sense. There are difficult sections to get to via wading in the Channels Ranch section, and we do not want to eliminate access by banning boats. Also, below Valley Garden, the nature of the river is such that allowing fishing from boats would create more problems than it solves. In fact, even the Channels Ranch folks don't want to eliminate this access - they are on record as preferring the regulations as they are now.

Finally, please don't buy into the argument from GGTU that NEW RULE III actually opens up 8.5 months of fishing from boats on sections where you can't do it right now. As most who use the river know, Raynolds and \$3 Bridge are unusable in the winter months. Also, in the lower wade reach, Valley Garden and Ennis are unusable in the winter as well because of the ice gorges. In most years, these accesses really only will be able to be used in May-June 15 and from September 30-December if NEW RULE III were adopted. That's 2.5 months. Outside of these times, the snow drifts are too deep, and the accesses aren't plowed or are chained off; making boat use impossible. For this and many reasons, I urge you to reject NEW RULE III.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Scott Vollmer, MOGA Director at Large, Madison Negotiated Rulemaking Committee

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Edge Outfitting](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River EA Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 11:01:09 AM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)  
[Justin Edge 2020 Madison River Draft EA Comments.pdf](#)

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Please see below my comments. Also attached as a PDF

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Madison River  
Recreation Management – Environmental Assessment

#### Comments

Justin Edge  
PO Box 1650  
Ennis, MT 59729  
Outfitter #36547  
Madison River SRP #264  
Phone number 406.599.6678  
Email: [justin@edgeoutfitting.com](mailto:justin@edgeoutfitting.com)

I have comments on both the Environmental Analysis, as well as the rules themselves. To begin, it is beyond frustrating that the future of communities like Ennis, who are directly impacted by the recreational use of the Madison, are being dictated in part by special interest groups from Butte filing petitions, as opposed to FWP making informed decisions and working with affected stakeholders. Is this a precedent that FWP wants to establish? As constructed, the rule package is difficult to fully comprehend and contains several rules that conflict with each other. Therefore, what follows is a summary of my comments of the Environmental Analysis and each new proposed rule as drafted.

Before my comments, here are some often forgotten facts:

- The impetus for considering these proposed rules for the upper Madison River is the perceived need to address conflict/crowding on the upper Madison.
- FWP, in this EA, defines “conflict” (among user groups) to be synonymous with “interaction.” FWP have defined “conflict” to be synonymous with “interactions.”
- No call records, police reports, or documentation exist to substantiate FWP’s claims of conflict, real or perceived.
- There is no biological crisis nor indication of imminent or future demise of the fishery documented on the Madison River.
- Surveys of Angler Satisfaction clearly show that the vast majority of respondents indicate a satisfactory experience with the Madison River.
- Surveys of Angler Satisfaction clearly show that when “crowding” is addressed it is at FAS not the actual river. A major distinction.
- Rest/Rotation, commercial use caps, and additional boat bans will not address crowding or conflict. FWP commits not one word in this EA to explaining how they think it will.
- Commercial Use is 15% of the annual use and is targeted for 100% of the

regulation.

- Outfitted tourism is the backbone of the Ennis community and the single largest economic driver for Madison County tourism.
- Float anglers are currently restricted to 35% less water than walk wade anglers and are targeted with additional restrictions, including the ban of boats to gain access to public lands and waters 3 days.
- Boat bans on portions of the river make the river more crowded in others.

## **Comments on Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Madison River: Recreation – Environmental Assessment**

### **The Curious Case of the phrase “Diversity of Angling Opportunity”**

An online survey was used from November 26, 2019 to January 6, 2020 to gauge the public’s views on management approaches. FWP used these results to help identify potential alternatives for consideration as part of a recreation management plan which were used to direct the production of this Environmental Assessment. Survey participants were asked about a proposed management goal, to *“Manage recreational use of the Madison River in a manner that ensures long term health and sustainability of the fishery, **diversifies angling opportunity** while reducing conflicts, and sustains the ecological and economic benefits of the river to Montanans and our guests.”*

A healthy fishery was widely supported by most respondents, followed by economic viability, and lastly the phrase “diversity of angling opportunity” which was the first time this phrase has been used by FWP during this lengthy and ongoing discussion about recreation management on the upper Madison. There was no mention of “diversity of angling opportunity” in the 2018 Draft EA. But who wouldn’t want a “diversity of angling opportunity,” right? Sounds good. This phrase was never defined in the survey. In addition, FWP never said what they would do if there was public support for a diversity of angling opportunities. They certainly never said public support for a diversity of angling opportunities would be used to justify a boat ban. In fact, to this day, I cannot get a definition from FWP on what they interpret a “diversity of angling opportunity” to mean. An honest question on the boat ban would have been, “Do you support closing down sections of the river to boats so that only landowners can access these sections to fish.” Of course, FWP couldn’t ask an honest question like that because it would get an overwhelming negative response from the public.

Traditionally, in fisheries management literature, the phrase “diversity of angling opportunity” means a variety of species composition, wilderness fishing, trophy fishing, etc. What’s strange is, FWP have apparently created their own novel definition of what they believe to be a “diversity of angling opportunity” with respect to how someone fishes and how they gain access to fish. I’ve scoured research papers and literature for a similarly interpreted definition of the phrase but cannot find one. I believe this instance is the one and only case where any agency has defined “diversity of angling opportunity” to mean various types of methods that people use to fish or gain access to fish. There is no available research on previous cases or the effectiveness or whether segregation of angler types is even appropriate. What’s obvious to me is that FWP included “diversity of angling opportunity” in their scoping document and survey because they knew people would say “of course I want that” even though most people couldn’t agree on what it even meant.

According to Merriam-Webster, “diversity” means “the condition of having or being composed of different elements.” Additionally, “opportunity” means “a set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something.” Given the contextual discussion within the EA, I presume that FWP interpret a “diversity of angling opportunity” as providing equal opportunity for all methods and categories of anglers (i.e., wade anglers, float anglers, guided, non-guided, young, old, beginner, experienced). Then again, I’m not certain of this because FWP do not clearly lay out how they define “diversity of angling opportunity” to be interpreted in this EA, which in and of itself is a major oversight. Assuming I’m close, there are several conflicts with the rules, supported by FWP within this EA that are contradictory to FWP’s presumed goal, as I’ve attempted to define it. Presumably, this phrase originated due to alleged conflicts occurring between wade anglers and float anglers and so FWP segregates the two types of anglers in order to manage this conflict. Like sending quarreling siblings to their bedrooms. I suspect a number of calls from landowners in the existing walk wade sections also have described a “conflict” with seeing anglers from their living rooms.

And so, FWP created a goal to provide for a “diversity of angling opportunity” with an entirely novel definition custom tailored to the intention of removing those boats from the upper walk wade water to afford a sanctuary for wading anglers (read: landowners), even though most of that water is unreachable to the general public by wading. Hence the existing rules allowing boats to access, but wade fishing only. And so, FWP has twisted themselves into knots trying to paint a picture that demonstrates they are providing a “diversity of angling opportunity” by banning boats to gain access to public waters and landlocked public lands, to the major benefit of riverside landowners. The major justifying cause? There’s “conflict” between anglers using boats to gain access, and wading anglers.

I contacted FWP about documentation of “conflict” and there is none. There is no database or recording process or even investigative process of individual conflicts to collect data in order to better understand patterns in conflicts for resolution. There are no call records. There are no police reports. Just FWP’s say that people complain about guides and boats in the walk wade sections, even though most members of the public do not know how to correctly identify guides from non-guides.

If we’re truly interested in achieving a greater “diversity of angling opportunity” as FWP expresses it, we should consider the obvious policy recommendation to rescind the bans on boats in over 20 miles of the upper Madison. Stop with the segregation of angler types. Wade anglers and float anglers are there for the same reason. They are all anglers. FWP is simply creating more headaches for themselves by segregating and attempting to manage for happiness among sub user groups. What’s next? A dry fly only section for those die hard, dry or die folks? You get my point. Allowing float angling throughout the river, would bring float angling up to par with access for wade anglers, and naturally have a dispersing impact on users. Cost to FWP would drop precipitously as well compared to the proposed rules here, because enforcement of proposed regulations would be burdensome and unnecessary due to the daily change in rules for each section. Further restricting boat access anywhere on the river only reduces a “diversity of angling opportunity” and adds to their discrimination, actually leading to more concentration of those boats elsewhere, accomplishing nothing. This debate is truly astonishing to me.

And furthermore, is “diversity of angling opportunity” achieved when guided anglers (often those who are beginners, young, or disabled) suddenly become disadvantaged due to rest and

rotation and non commercial use sections? Do those anglers not deserve equal opportunity as is understood by FWP's stated goal of maintaining a diversity of angling opportunity? It's even more outrageous when one considers that guided anglers make up only 15% of annual use. Yet, they are burdened with 100% of the regulation.

### **Alleged Conflicts**

If one picked up a newspaper, they might get the impression from coverage that the Madison River is a war zone and crowded beyond belief. They might get the impression that conflicts are pervasive and inescapable on the upper Madison. Hyperbole on the upper Madison is ubiquitous. Most people generally have a great time and don't feel like they were crowded or harassed in any way. Don't take my word for it. In reviewing the 2016 Angler Satisfaction Survey which is used as a foundational supporting document to this EA, it seems pretty clear from the results that a preponderance of survey respondents indicates some level of satisfaction far more times than dissatisfaction, including topics surrounding boats in the walk/wade water. Even a cursory glance at Table 5 on page 16 shows this. For reference of raw data, I'm talking about pages 44-52 of the survey document. Sure, there are cohorts that occasionally express slightly more dissatisfaction than satisfaction but if we're trying to ascertain if the public is generally satisfied of the way things are or generally dissatisfied, that particular survey shows that most people are satisfied, correct? For example, on page 51 of that survey, the vast majority of respondents indicate the quality of the fishing experience is overwhelmingly acceptable.

And furthermore, looking at the results of the 2012 online survey, another survey referenced in this EA, 269 out of 915 participants suggested "crowding" on the river was a problem. That's 29%. In fact, in that same survey, only 79 participants suggested commercial users should be limited at all. That's only 8%. I don't see where FWP are interpreting these results as indicating most people are unhappy or consider their experiences "unacceptable?" It seems clear from the results of these surveys, that in fact the opposite is true from best I can tell. That most people are satisfied or accepting of overall conditions on the upper Madison.

In the April 2018 EA which was very similar to this EA and was unanimously rejected by this same Commission, FWP used the following statement to first justify the boat ban. "*Wading anglers frequently express concerns that when they do try to access more remote reaches of these reaches, they frequently encounter anglers who use vessels or float tubes to gain access. Prohibiting the use of a vessel or a float tube to gain access for fishing in these reaches could diversify fishing opportunities by providing less-crowded conditions for anglers without vessels or float tubes.*"

We all have gotten to a spot we planned to fish or hunt and found someone already there, that's called disappointment not conflict.

And yet this entire process is being driven by claims of conflict and an unsatisfied public. I've been trying to understand what conflicts are exactly occurring that are real and actual, not perceived or exaggerated and I can't find anyone who has any database of recorded conflicts and the details of those alleged conflicts. FWP said these concerns and conflicts were raised in phone calls to Region 3. During the entire failed Negotiated Rulemaking Committee (NRC) process and still to this day FWP never produced a single call record to substantiate this claim. They have now had the entire 2019 and 2020 seasons to produce a call record. FWP has not said they received any of these calls during the 2019 or 2020 seasons. Since the calls seem to



have stopped once FWP was bought into the boat ban, it is possible Big Bend landowners made the calls. FWP has also never produced a police record of a fight or even a heated argument on the river. The only conflict is that a small group of rich landowners on the Big Bend doesn't want the public in their section of the river. In the lower section, many landowners spoke out against the ban at the Ennis NRC meeting.

The claim of conflict is important to FWP for legal reasons. Prior to 1999 the authority of the FWP Commission to regulate was limited to public health, public safety, and protection of property and public resource. In 1999 with the passage of HB626 FWP commission was given the ability to regulate based on public welfare, which includes regulating to reduce conflicts between user groups. Since the boat ban has nothing to do with safety, public health or protection of property, conflict has to be claimed to give the FWP the ability to regulate. And so here we are.

FWP also indicate where they shoulder most of the blame for "social conflict," – with commercial users, with this efficient diagnosis and prescription "*Social conflict management (rest-rotation two days a week.)*" on Page 27. If you're reading too fast, that's a subtle suggestion that to address "social conflict" we need to remove guides and outfitters from sections of river multiple days a week (rest/rotation). Thus, FWP are saying guides are the source of conflict and need to be removed.

As a commercial user and non commercial user, I take offense to this. Where in this process did we arrive so assuredly that using the term commercial users and social conflict management interchangeably or synonymously was stated as fact? I will again ask, where is the supporting data or records showing that commercial users are somehow singlehandedly to blame for social conflict? Guides and outfitters are individually identifiable with license tags on our boats while working. If there were so much conflict, one would think that there would be records of who did what, where, and when. I'm sure the Board of Outfitters would also be informed. Do they have no records of complaints either? Why are commercial users being treated this way? Where does the loathing or aversion towards working class people who are guides and outfitters come from?

And finally, FWP indicate which petition (GGTU et al.) they prefer for addressing alleged conflicts and maintaining "diversity of angling opportunity" with this statement "*This alternative is most successful at maintaining the diversity of angling through the establishment of rest-rotation sections, which would help to eliminate conflict between commercial/non-commercial users, the expansion on the restriction of boat use in the upper wade section, and the primitive status for the lower river would serve as a refuge for all types of floaters (angling and non-angling) who seek a seclusive and quiet experience.*"

So finally, we have boiled down what conflicts mean to FWP. On page 27 of this EA, FWP labeled as "conflict" anytime a walk/wade angler "interacts" with a float angler or guide. This is a fundamental problem. Interactions are not conflicts and can never be resolved with rules. At some point, as human populations grow, we all need to adapt to increases in interactions with others while recreating, as hard as that may seem. But to label these interactions as conflicts, is profoundly wrong and ultimately the central reason this "issue" remains unresolved in FWP's eyes.

## **Commercial Use Caps**

Capping commercial use using either of the rule proposals (2019 or 2020 historical use levels), would be seen as a huge victory among its supporters in the general public and some within the commercial industry (the large outfitters). I'm sure it is likely a very tempting rule proposal for this Commission for the same reason. However, we need to ask ourselves, does either of these cap rule proposals address the stated goals, and address perceived crowding? I strongly opposed commercial use caps for the following reasons.

It's clear from the social surveys that crowding is not happening on the river, and despite FWP's embellishment about FAS being overrun with people most of the time, the public has indicated only occasionally can FAS become overcrowded. Mostly during holidays and peak season. Go to any FAS site on a Saturday now in October and you have the place to yourself. So, what we have is an FAS and access issue, not an overcrowded river. Will commercial caps help with this? Or is this something better addressed by expanding access and improving FAS sites?

I start with FOAM's rule petition on caps. FOAM has the support of some large outfitters on the upper Madison likely because of the instant windfall economically. Not because it will have any measurable impact on crowding or conflict. FOAM ultimately does not represent well the sentiments of the small outfitter in the Madison Valley. In fact, virtually all small outfitters in Ennis believe this cap is a red herring. As for GGTU, I truly believe they are ignorant to what a commercial cap would even mean for commercial users and are proposing it simply because it sounds right and they know FWP already supports more regulations on commercial users. There's no other explanation. FWP would likely even tout it as a major "first step." But those of us who have studied the data ad nauseum will know, that this alternative will do nothing to stop the upward trajectory of recreational use. Not just on the Madison, but nationwide. So, it would be disgraceful and disingenuous to decide to punish the blue-collar outfitter. Outfitters in Ennis would become the sacrificial lamb and the decision would be hailed as "progress", but we all know capping commercial use won't slow people from using the Madison. But it will send shockwaves through our community.



I oppose the idea of any commercial cap at this point, for several reasons. First, because it will have no measurable impact on rising use. See the above graph. Don't overlook the small red

line in the bottom right. It represents commercial use compared to non commercial use in the blue line. Second, without simple transferability of days between businesses the FOAM plan is fatally flawed. No economic impact on how many families will be affected in Ennis and West Yellowstone by this rule was completed. There are many young outfitters who are just getting started, that this rule would immediately kill their businesses (I am one), and who's families may have to move.

Take myself for example, 2019 was my first year of operation as an outfitter. I recorded 23 days of use that year, because I was already on the books for another outfitter in 2019 and had few days available for my own business. Now, in 2020, even in the face of COVID, I have worked almost exclusively for myself and will have recorded significantly more days in 2020 than in 2019. However, GGTU's petition would essentially make my 2020 days irrelevant and they wouldn't count. I would be given 23 days in this alternative. What business, with 23 days, is even remotely viable? This would leave me with three options. One, keep the 23 days and use them every year and when they're gone, they're gone, and hopefully another outfitter will hire me to fill in the major gaps. Two, buy more days on the open market. Imagine buying 75 days to bring me close to 100 which would give me roughly the same wage. Do you think a small young outfitter like myself could afford that on one of the world's most famous trout streams? What bank would loan me money on that? Three, sell my 23 days to the highest bidder (likely the large outfitter) and either find another trade, move to another area without SRP restrictions, or hope that one of those large outfitters hires me and I'm unable to work for myself ever again. An indentured servant to a big outfitter. That sounds fun. And what if those larger outfitters who now control most of the days don't appreciate my outspokenness on this issue? Think they'll hire me for actively advocating against this EA, which would instantly give them an economic windfall? Doubtful.

Using 2020 as a year to cap would certainly be better for me and the outfitters who began their career in 2020 as outfitters if the Commission insists on a cap, but it would still have devastating impacts on many of my young outfitter friends who just this year started their outfitting career. Developing a client base and historical use takes years to achieve independence. Essentially, they would be in the system, but unable to grow or compete and for all intents and purposes, dead in the water so to speak. This is the real world. This is what will happen to many of small outfitters like myself. This cap may sound good and look good on paper, but it has real world consequences, one of which is certainly not an appreciable reduction in use on the upper Madison. Like uprooting families. And for what? Capping 15% of the use which will be replaced next year by unrestricted non commercial growth.

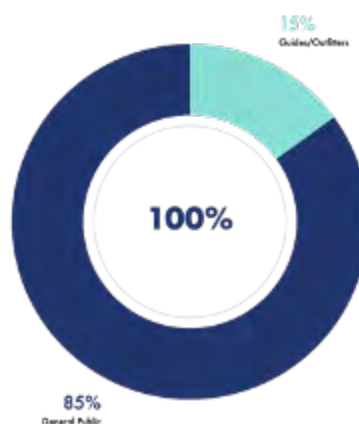
Commercial use is a complicated industry on the upper Madison. I would support the creation of a group whose task would be to work within the industry in cooperation with FWP to develop a widely supported plan. FOAM claims their commercial use plan has received widespread support among their members. However, FOAM has virtually zero support locally in Ennis who stand to be impacted the most. Except for those large outfitters who stand to gain a windfall. How many outfitters in FOAM's membership who supported this plan are significantly affected by it? My guess is most of them do not rely on the upper Madison as their primary river.

So, I'd like to speak to how a cap would or would not address alleged conflict and crowding. On page 25 of the EA, FWP rationalize commercial use caps with this statement on GGTU's proposal to cap commercial use at 2019 levels: "*This alternative would limit commercial outfitter trips to current (2019) levels, preventing crowding and social conflict from getting*

worse than it currently is.”

The hyperbole is dripping from the page here. It’s yet another exaggerated claim, unsubstantiated with actual data. Again, blaming guides for conflict and crowding, despite the overlooked fact that commercial use represents only 15% of annual use. I would like for them to please explain how capping 15% of annual use will suddenly prevent crowding or conflict that, for anyone who actually floats the river on a regular basis, will tell you is not actually a regular problem which is perhaps the reason that FWP cannot produce call records, documentation, or police reports supporting their claim that guides are the source of conflict. Sometimes people learn better through visual charts. Here’s one which explains my comment pretty succinctly using FWP’s own data.

### Upper Madison Annual Use



Contrary to the image FWP portrays in this EA, the upper Madison is not in fact a crowded war zone. The regulation of commercial users is being treated like it’s the silver bullet, when we all know that unregulated non commercial use combined with current regulations limiting float angling is the real threat to crowding and conflict. We have nearly 20 more miles of water to use for floating. A simple solution would be to use it. Allow commercial use and the general public to float fish in those miles of water currently off limits. Miles!

If FWP were truly interested in addressing commercial users’ contribution to crowding, the easiest and most effective solution would be to cap daily launches per FAS during peak season only, rather than an overall cap. You’re still effectively capping commercial use, but not as economically devastating, while still achieving the intended goal of reducing use at each FAS and dispersing users. Start simple with an idea like this.

FWP go on to suggest: *“The rest/rotation proposal would prohibit commercial use from Lyons Bridge-Palisades Day Use Area on Sunday and Varney Bridge to Ennis FAS on Saturday during the June 15 to September 30 period which should give the non-commercial users less crowded sections two days a week.”*

Of course, it will. But on the other hand, it will create, for the first time in this debate, an actually crowded upper Madison River proper for guided anglers. This runs very counter to the stated goal of maintaining a “diversity of angling opportunity” in that it severely degrades the experience of the guided angler at the benefit of the non commercial angler. Rest/rotation will give the guided anglers *more* crowded sections two days a week. Aren’t the opportunities

of the guided angler also worth considering here? Or are they not included in FWP's definition of a "diversity of angling opportunity?"

## **Rest and Rotation**

The notion of rest and rotation is perhaps the most illogical of all presented in this EA. Rest and rotation removes guides from multiple sections of river, two days a week in this rule proposal.

I strongly oppose any rest and rotation on the Madison River. The upper Madison River is simply too short of a river for rest and rotation to work, especially given the existing restrictions on float angling; and will only create more crowding by putting commercial users into a smaller box. The upper Madison is approximately 56 miles long. Float angling is allowed on only approximately 37 of those miles. A full day guided trip is on average around 10-12 miles, meaning there are essentially 3-4 full day guided trip options available right now, as most guided trips are in the float angling section. Rest and rotation would remove one of those full day options, twice a week. Essentially, all guides would have only roughly 27 miles to operate in on both Saturdays and Sundays. Rest and rotation will not solve any problems, it only creates bigger ones. Yet, rest and rotation are still being considered, mostly because of the viewpoint of sportsmen's groups from Butte who recognize it as more opportunities for them (non-commercial users) at the expense of others (commercial users/guided anglers).

On the upper Madison, the majority of commercial activity happens between mid-June through September. However, with only 37 miles of float water available due to current float fishing regulations, further restricting that peak season commercial traffic into a smaller space will only result in exaggerated bottlenecks, poor fishing, occasionally dangerous conditions, likely increased hooking mortality, overflowing parking lots, etc. Quite literally it will result in all the consequences FWP is allegedly trying to prevent.

The two sections being considered for rest/rotation are often used by commercial users to escape wind. As you may know, the Madison Valley is prone to strong winds. Lightweight driftboats, shallow fast water, and often new or beginner anglers in strong winds are a bad if not dangerous combination for a big chunk of the upper Madison. Namely between Ruby Creek and Varney where there is little protection from winds. We use Varney to Ennis and Lyons to Ruby on strong wind days because the Cottonwoods and large bluffs help protect strong winds. Forcing us into smaller sections, the most dangerous sections on strong wind days due to the shallowness of this reach, is an extremely bad idea and may lead to safety concerns. But with the addition of a cap, there will be few outfitters who want to cancel due to winds because if they don't use those days, they may lose them (i.e., FOAM's petition on commercial caps). Wind, weather, client skill, flows all dictate where guides feel most comfortable taking clients. And with a severely limited amount of float water available already, forcing guides into stretches of river they may not want to fish could lead to safety concerns.

The simplest solution to spread use is to expand float fishing opportunities throughout the river. Since this may be unpalatable to many, I would suggest starting with Pine Butte to Valley Garden. We're talking about a very small expansion. Maybe 5 miles total. But that 5 miles provides additional full day float options, and several new half day options. If after a few years, if it's still not enough then you consider more. But this small expansion would greatly improve spreading use and provide a great compromising strategy for a trial period.

FWP also imply that a “diversity of angling opportunity” would be “maintained” through rest and rotation. This proposal is singularly focused on guided anglers (15% of overall use). Essentially, FWP suggests that in order to maintain a “diversity of angling opportunity” it is necessary to separate via two reaches of the river, two days a week, guided anglers from non-guided anglers. I’ve yet to ascertain exactly what this segregation would accomplish. Both anglers are presumably fly fishing, and both are using the same means (floating and wading). The only obvious difference is the guided angler pays a fee for instruction and the other does not. FWP provide no direct evidence of any other difference in this angling opportunity nor do they provide any examples of such egregious conflicts between the two anglers. And in fact, they have no database to support claims of conflict between commercial users and non commercial users. There are no actually documented or confirmed cases of conflict to my knowledge. I’ve asked FWP. So, it’s confusing why FWP continue to segregate the two as if they were so radically different and diametrically opposed to one another, when in fact on one day the same angler could be guided and the next non-guided. This proposal to segregate the two anglers two days a week on nearly 20 miles of water in fact does nothing to encourage diversity, but rather very obviously expands further opportunity to the non-guided angler while simultaneously diminishing opportunity for the guided angler.

Logic tells us, the only true way of maximizing “diversity of angling opportunity”, is to remove restrictions on those users who are currently restricted (e.g., float anglers), and not discriminate against the guided angler who are often beginners, youth, or disabled. Frankly, this proposal is ripe for a constitutional challenge on the grounds that it discriminates, at minimum, against those who are disabled and unable to walk wade or fish without guided assistance.

The heartburn produced from this debate stems largely from FWP’s continued quest to segregate commercial from non commercial and wading anglers from float anglers. It’s clear to me that this will achieve nothing but more bitterness between the user groups, unnecessarily, and ultimately lead to very little social conflict improvement, all the while creating more work for FWP to police and enforce these burdensome regulations. Never before in this debate has there been a more clearly attractive management option which FWP refuses to entertain for reasons unknown: remove the restrictions on float angling and avoid rest and rotation. At least for a trial period.

## **Boat Ban**

This EA considers rules aimed at further restricting boats on the upper Madison River to the point of an outright ban for the purposes of gaining access to fish as unbelievable as that sounds to say. Here I address this boat ban rule proposal based on various important perspectives.

### *2020-2024 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*

In December of 2019, the Governor’s Office released the 2020 – 2024 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The plan listed goals for recreational management of Montana’s resources. Not surprisingly, privatizing sections of public waters is not one of them. The boat ban is in opposition to the first two goals listed in the statewide plan. The first goal of the statewide plan is. “*Support outdoor recreation participation for underserved, disadvantaged, and persons with disabilities*” Clearly the boat ban does not provide for the participation of persons with disabilities. Although in the case of the boat ban, disability

expands to anyone without superhuman wading abilities. The second goal includes; “*Utilize existing datasets to identify “locked” public land and develop cross-jurisdictional strategies to find solutions*” We already have a solution to the 120 acres of land locked state land at the top of the Big Bend, use a boat. The boat ban takes away that solution and provides no other. If approved, this rule is ripe for a constitutional challenge.

### *Public Access*

I strongly oppose any reduction of access in the existing walk/wade sections. Not allowing the use of boats to gain access to fishing is, by definition, a reduction of public access to public lands and waters. The boat ban results in a public access issue because the wade sections are inaccessible by foot where the river flows through private lands. The Madison is a tail-water that has much lower flow variations compared to a river like the Yellowstone. In the upper section, this results in there being steep banks with no dry land to walk on between the high-water mark and the water level at typical summer flows. In order to not trespass, you have to wade in the river. The fast current, bowling ball size rocks covering the river bottom and large boulders on the bank prevents access. The large bank boulders typically cause a deep hole on the other side. If you try to wade around the boulder you are swept off your feet. In the lower section 85% of the riverbanks are in private lands. In the section from Ennis Bridge to the Valley Garden access site much of the water is deep and fast and inaccessible by wading. Wading from Valley Garden to the lake and back is over 7 miles round trip. It is well beyond the ability of a typical angler to wade 7 miles in a day in the Madison.

For reference, Montana Angler did a detailed analysis of the wading conditions in both sections:

<https://www.montanaangler.com/montana-fly-fishing-blog/201911/negative-effectsbanning-boats-public-fishing-access-madison-river> [montanaangler.com]

If the public cannot use a boat, only the landowners in the wade sections will be able to fish the river where it goes through private land. In the upper section, not only does the river become privatized, 120 acres of landlocked state land becomes inaccessible to the public. The choice of Friday through Sunday is especially hard on working Montanan’s. Instead of being able to fish these sections on the weekend you would have to use a vacation day to fish. The rivers in Montana should be managed for the benefit of the public, not a few rich landowners.

While public access is a major issue to Montanan’s, FWP has never considered public access while they have been pushing the boat ban. None of the three Environmental Assessments even mention it, including this one. Their disregard for public access was put on display at the November 2019 FWP Commission Meeting. Near the end of the meeting Commissioner Aldrich asked Eileen Ryce, head of the Fisheries Division, if people couldn’t use boats could they still access the wade sections. She said she didn’t know and punted the question to Travis Horton the Fisheries manager for the Madison. He said he didn’t know either and “had never stepped foot in that water.” That’s a direct quote. The fisheries manager for the Madison doesn’t know what it’s like to wade the river in this reach?

Even though the Quake to Lyons reach has a significant amount of private lands adjacent to the river, making access already challenging, the Ennis to Ennis Lake reach is even more private. Passing this rule would severely limit public access to a local favorite fishing area.

### *Diversity of Angling Opportunity*

As FWP notes in the EA, *“The changes to the walk/wade sections will have complicated repercussions if combined with the rest/rotation changes on weekends during the June 15-September 30 period when the rules overlap. On Saturdays, commercial users (mostly boats) will be unable to outfit on the Lyons Bridge to Palisades section at the same time using boats to access fishing will not be allowed in the adjacent section of river from Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge FAS. Similarly, on Sundays, commercial users (mostly boats) will be unable to outfit on the Varney Bridge to Ennis FAS section at the same time using boats to access fishing will not be allowed in the adjacent section of river from Ennis FAS to Ennis Lake.”* FWP goes on to say, *“it will also make boat fishing more congested in the rest of the river on those days, assuming those people continue to fish on the upper Madison River.”* These are all correct assumptions and why this alternative and rest and rotation are poor management alternatives.

Currently, existing rules prohibit float anglers from nearly 20 miles of river (Quake to Lyons, and Ennis to Ennis Lake). Meanwhile, wade anglers, thanks to our state’s championed stream access laws, have unrestricted access to the upper Madison in its entirety. Understanding this, float angling opportunity is already severely restricted compared to opportunity for wading anglers. Moreover, the GGTU petition under consideration, and clearly supported by FWP, goes beyond limiting just float angling to 20 miles less water than wading anglers currently, but rather, *in addition*, 3 days a week prohibits the use of boats at all to gain access to public lands and waters to then wade fish! Meanwhile, wading anglers still have the same 100% access they always had. FWP suggests this is better at improving “diversity of angling opportunity?” This is an illogical idea. I struggle to understand how FWP could interpret further restriction of boat access which is already discriminated against in current regulations compared to wading anglers who have 100% access to the entire river, as improving “diversity of angling opportunities.”

FOAM, in their petition, propose to rescind the boat ban 4 days a week. FWP summarized this proposal by claiming, *“However, the FOAM petition would have a negative effect on diversifying angling opportunity. The proposal to rescind the restriction on fishing from a boat in the upper walk/wade section actually reduces angling diversity by diminishing the times and places for wade-only angling.”* It’s almost laughable to read that aloud. Factually and logically, it is inaccurate and wrong to suggest anyone’s opportunity is diminished. By definition, diversity and opportunity mean more of something. Expanding opportunity for float angling accomplishes that goal. And if float anglers are given more opportunity, float angling use will be more dispersed, in fact opening up more opportunity for wade anglers elsewhere too. In no way is anyone’s opportunity limited with this proposal. Presumably, FWP are suggesting that somehow wade angler opportunity is diminished as if the only user group that matters are wade anglers and that by the mere presence of float anglers, wade anglers are radically imposed upon. This is, again, because FWP have defined conflict to be synonymous with interaction. They aren’t, and wade anglers’ 100% access to the entire upper Madison still remains. So, the claim that allowing float anglers just 4 days a week from Quake to Lyons is somehow weakening the diversity of opportunity is truly a silly and illogical argument. One would think with this conclusion by FWP, that the goal is to “diversify wading opportunity.” Again, segregation of user groups is a bad idea, and only leads to divisiveness.

This statement recognizes the only user group that has standing in their mysterious definition of “diversity of angling opportunity” is wade anglers. This statement is totally one sided. Again, at the risk of sounding like a broken record, wade anglers currently, right this second, have the opportunity to wade at any point along the upper Madison. From mile 0-56. As long



as they access legally, they could tomorrow walk the entire length and fish. Float anglers on the other hand, are restricted from 20 miles (20 miles!!!) of water every day. So, to say that by expanding more water available to float fish, is somehow taking opportunity away from wade anglers is pure hogwash. It's so patently false that it begs the question, why does FWP continue to say it? I just don't understand this. It's not as if anyone is suggesting we take water or opportunity away from walk wade anglers.

If I said group A has access to 100% of a resource and group B has 65% (20 miles/56 miles) and our goal is to maintain a "diversity of angling opportunity," would we not give equal access (or at least some more access) to both groups by allowing group B to also have 100% access to the resource? Especially considering many of the lands surrounding the sections of river currently labeled "walk/wade" are private and difficult to reach. Instead, FWP are supporting a petition that would do the opposite by leaving group A's access at 100% and reducing group B's access from 65% to 55% three days a week. Incredibly, FWP calls this "improving diversity of angling opportunity." Frankly, this alternative idea is ripe for a constitutional challenge on the grounds that it discriminates, at minimum, against those who are disabled and unable to walk wade or fish without a boat or guided assistance.

Perhaps float anglers or guided anglers aren't considered equal under FWP's definition of "diversity of angling opportunity," though? Why was there no discussion within this EA defining what this descriptor even means? It plays such a central role in this EA, and yet no one thought it necessary to define it?

#### *Conflict?*

What does FWP define conflict as? On page 27, FWP assert "*Wade anglers will benefit from less interaction/conflict with boats.*"). Apparently, merely the interaction of one sub user group of anglers with another sub user group of anglers qualifies as "conflict." FWP also suggested FOAM's proposal to rescind the current boat ban 4 days a week, would lead to increased conflict: "*Increased conflict between boat and wade anglers would likely occur which could result in further displacement of wade anglers away from the Madison River. This alternative would likely provide some temporary crowding relief in the float fishing section (Lyons Bridge FAS to Ennis FAS) as boat anglers from those reaches would spread throughout the upper walk/wade reach.*"

There are two points I'd like to make with this statement. First, the claim that increased conflict between boat and wade anglers would likely occur as a result of rescinding the current boat ban is completely unsubstantiated and hyperbolic. In fact, if one looks at the current float sections, there's been very little conflict occurring between wade anglers and boat anglers. Thus, if anything, one should expect that to continue with an expansion of float water.

Second, FWP suggests that rescinding the boat ban would likely provide "temporary" crowding relief in the float fishing section. I'm not sure why they think it would be anything other than long term, not temporary. They do not explain this negatively implied suggestion.

#### *Impacts to Resource*

In the June 2020 EA, FWP estimated a Friday to Sunday boat ban would result in an additional 2,960 angler days in the upper wade section and 918 angler days in the lower. This will increase crowding around the access sites since anglers cannot use a boat to spread out use. This increased crowding will cause damage to the riparian areas and increase hooking mortality around the access sites. In the April 2018 Environmental Assessment of a boat ban

FWP said a boat ban would increase the risk of riparian damage. "*Prohibiting the use of a vessel or float tube to gain access to fishing in wade-only reaches would likely not have a significant impact on natural resource values unless it resulted in an increase in wade angling. If wade angling increased overall or in specific locations, increased disturbance and erosion could occur.*"

With the increased angler days estimated in the June 2020 EA the risk will become the reality. In the June 2020 EA, FWP concludes this increased crowding will cause damage to the river. "*It is anticipated that there may be an increase in wade/walk only anglers for these two days per week, which could have some minor effects to the physical and natural values through increased traffic on trails and shorelines.*" To GGTU and FWP, minor damage to the environment is just the price you pay to get rich landowners, mostly out-of-state, from their private section of the river.

In the most recent September 25th, 2020 EA, FWP makes a complete flip-flop. Instead of increased wading causing damage it's those boat anglers that are the problem. "*Impacts on bank trampling and erosion from boat anglers getting out to wade fish will be reduced as a result of banning the use of boats to access fishing in the walk/wade sections.*" This makes absolutely no sense. Getting in a boat floating a few hundred yards and then getting out is more of a problem than wading that same distance? This only makes sense if the FWP is now admitting that without a boat, public anglers won't make it to the private sections. Without a boat the public will be barred from the Big Bend and the Channels sections so bank trampling will go down in these areas because only the rich landowners will have access.

Again, it is hard to imagine how rule proposals that result in a net loss of angling opportunity across all user groups (neutral for wade anglers, loss to guided anglers, loss to non commercial float anglers) can be seen as "most successful at maintaining a diversity of angling." How do they square this? It is an illogical strategy.

### **Recreational Use Impacts on Natural Resources**

FWP claim that "*At many upper Madison River access sites, use is more than the access sites can accommodate, leading to a shortage of parking, crowded boat ramps, increased time for launching and take out of boats, damage to access sites and neighboring properties, and behavioral etiquette issues at sites.*"

This is truly remarkable. "Many" upper Madison River access sites? Where does this come from? As the authority on all thing's recreation in Montana, you can't simply state outlandish claims like this without backing it up. I drive by at least 3 upper Madison River access sites nearly every single day of my life. Do you know how many times I've seen war zone type situations like they describe above? None! Salmonfly and July 4<sup>th</sup> holidays are very busy and sometimes parking is completely full at sites near Ennis, but to make these sorts of claims is unethical and shameful. There is no other way for me to put this than to say this is a downright lie about the actual situation. Or perhaps, FWP accept the exaggerated claims made by some about crowding without actually driving down to the upper Madison to see for themselves that it's all nonsense. This is very upsetting and discouraging that professionals would make these claims in order to support their ambitions. Use is in fact rarely more than access sites can accommodate. FWP cannot simply make outrageous claims without some sort of documentation. Show me pictures of "many times." Show me what this overuse looks like that occurs so habitually. They can't because they haven't seen it themselves. It's so disconcerting

to read this from the alleged adults in the room. It makes me sick because the general public take their word as gospel. I can't tell you how outrageous this is, and it makes it abundantly clear their intention to make the case for stringent regulation, embellishment be damned. This quote is so untruthful. It's actually an intentional lie, I believe.

On the matter of hooking mortality, FWP writes *“During the 2017 creel survey conducted on the Madison River, FWP estimated that every rainbow trout was caught on average 4.5 times. Multiple hooking events during a short period of time likely will result in greater impacts for each hooking event due to cumulative stress when compared with the same number of hooking events over a longer period of time.”*

FWP does not mention what temporal scale this estimate is based upon, but I'm assuming they mean that every rainbow trout was caught on average 4.5 *times a year*. It's hard to imagine anyone suggesting this is considered a “short period of time” under which greater mortality could occur. It may be subjective, but is 4.5 times per year a troubling number for rainbow trout from a hooking mortality standpoint? This point may need further clarification. I do, however, believe that hooking mortality is a subject that deserves more attention and research. I am concerned about it. I would be in favor of a barbless restriction.

They continue on *“Population monitoring on the Madison River during the fall of 2019 has shown that the number of larger rainbow and brown trout in the Pine Butte section (~4 miles upstream of Lyon's bridge) have declined to near 20-year lows. The only years in the 2000s that were lower were during drought years (2003 and 2004). Trout sampling results in the Varney Section (~20 miles downstream) did not show the same result. Although a conclusive cause cannot be determined at this time, it is possible that cumulative hooking mortality has resulted in the observed decline in rainbow and brown trout in the Pine Butte section.”*

It's worth noting here that the only location that a decline in 20-year averages of any trout life history trait is in the Pine Butte section, which is in the walk wade water. No such declines were found in the float sections. It's also “possible” that any number of other variables or combinations of variables or even nothing all but natural cyclical variations caused this decline in the Pine Butte section. Conjecture is dangerous. It would be great if FWP would not participate in conjecture, but rather real science to discover actual trends if any exist and leave subjective conjecture out of it.

FWP here assumes that the Status Quo will result in the inevitable demise of all natural resources. Yet again, however, there is no relevant data to substantiate any of these claims. For example, they suggest *“Under this alternative the physical and natural resources would degrade given the unrestricted growth of river recreation and commercial use. The riparian area would suffer increased pioneered trails, pioneered boat ramps and sanitation problems as people continue to find their own ways to decrease crowding conflicts. The physical and natural resources within FAS's would decline with increasing use if river users create their own parking areas in riparian vegetation or along riverbanks.”*

The doom and gloom painted here is dripping from the page. However, the status quo has been the status quo for some time now, and I've not noticed any of these claims to be true even in the face of current population growth and popularity of recreating the upper Madison. So, these overstated claims of demise are just that. But FWP wasn't finished with these unsupported assertions. They continue: *“The potential for realized impacts to game fish populations through catch-and-release mortality (directly or indirectly by serving as an*

*additional stressor to disease, warm water temperatures, or reduced flows) will be greatest under this alternative, as there will be no restriction on angler numbers.”*

Again, the current conditions have persisted for quite a while now, and FWP has only identified one cohort of trout size declines in the Pine Butte section, which may or may not be completely unrelated to angling pressure and simply natural cyclical changes in population dynamics.

And still, FWP continue down this rabbit hole in an attempt to really bury the Status Quo Alternative with this claim: *“The preservation of the walk/wade sections would offer a minor degree of protection for the fishery because the ban on fishing from boats would be maintained and this segment of angler pressure would not be allowed to increase.”* This assertion is made as if walk wade angling has no impact whatsoever on the fishery (despite the one actual cohort decline in the Pine Butte wade section), and that float angling is what we should really be concerned about, without any evidence of support. Since when have we determined that float angling is detrimental to fish populations and wade angling is not? I’m getting lost trying to follow the logic trail.

FWP begins this summary by concluding that *“The Sportsmen Groups/GGTU alternative is able to partly achieve two of the three goals. The health of the fishery would be protected to a small extent by eliminating growth of commercial outfitters.”*

This statement is pure speculation. To date FWP has made no direct correlation on the upper Madison between guided angling and declining fish populations. And, how could they? Commercial use represents a mere 15% of annual use. In fact, guided anglers seek out guides almost exclusively because they are inexperienced. To suggest that protecting against angling pressure from inexperienced anglers is going to significantly improve the outlook of the fishery, is actually humorous. So how can they possibly make this claim? In the scientific community, statements such as these are often followed by several if not many citations where researchers have studied and confirmed results. Notice there are none here or anywhere else in this document when discussing potential impacts of any alternative to the fishery.

## **FAS Improvements**

FWP writes *“Having staff available at sites to direct traffic on boat ramps and in staging areas would help to ensure that parking areas are used most effectively and could alleviate some congestion issues at the sites, which can result in conflict. However, increased staffing at the access sites alone would likely not alleviate social conflict issues that occur on the river. Because the use at many sites is often more than they are able to accommodate, the FAS Rangers would have a difficult time managing the overflow.”*

Again, the claim that “because the use at many sites is OFTEN more than they are able to accommodate” is patently untrue. Full stop. FWP needs to be questioned on this. You simply cannot lie about current conditions just to support your management aspirations.

Furthermore, there is no discussion about the cost of FAS Rangers. Where will this funding come from? How much will it cost? Who will pay for it?

FWP continued *“Increasing the efficiency at boat ramps would put more boats on the river more quickly and could heighten the social conflict on the river. Commercial use would likely*

*increase in the remaining unrestricted stretches, and the displacement has the potential to cause increased pressure at the access sites and on the river.”*

Firstly, are we really suggesting that efficiency at boat ramps will be so great that boats will be going on the river like cars on a production line? This argument is so silly. Lastly, it’s unclear what FWP means by commercial use likely increasing in the “unrestricted stretches” in this quote.

## **Economic Impacts**

Throughout the analyses of impacts to economic resources these alternatives would have, there is no discussion of the economic impact to the local economy (namely Ennis), that the loss of families supported by young outfitters would have as a result of capping outfitter use to any year. Take myself for example. If 2019 is chosen as the cap year, my days in 2020 will not count and I will have no future business aspirations of my own. There are others like me in Ennis. We are all examining our options and waiting impatiently for a decision to be made in order to decide our futures. The stress and anxiety this up and down process has caused has largely been overlooked by FWP and the general public. There are faces and names to the young outfitters in Ennis and West Yellowstone who are trying to make a livable wage as professional fishing outfitters. These caps on commercial use days would overnight be replaced by non commercial growth, while forcing many young families to look elsewhere for work, potentially moving to other communities. Where is the economic analysis of this impact? Or at least an acknowledgement.

FWP assert that *“Economic viability would be preserved by allowing commercial outfitters to maintain current use and committing to enact an allocation methodology that would be acceptable to commercial outfitters by enabling them to continue to recruit customers and grow their businesses.”*

There is no cap/allocation method whereby outfitters would “continue to recruit customers and grow their businesses.” By definition, this is exactly what would be destroyed not preserved with a cap rule. Small outfitters, those with families in Ennis and West Yellowstone, would immediately be pushed out of the outfitting business, unable to compete with the capital behind the large outfitters. Absolutely nothing, economically, will be preserved about this alternative.

## **My Summary of the EA**

In summary, governing by petitions and rushing comment periods to beat an election especially on matters with sweeping impacts to industry and non commercial recreation on one of the world’s most highly regarded trout streams is risky precedent. It shortcuts the normal processes of data gathering and scientific research to make the most informed decision, in exchange for quick resolution and biased interests of the petitioning parties. And what standing does a group like GGTU, quite literally on the other side of the Continental Divide from the upper Madison, have on issues pertaining to this region? What gives them the right to make accusations of wrongdoing, when they and their members belong to communities completely unaffected?

What this petition opportunity gives FWP and the Commission is a way to achieve a quick PR victory with the image of “doing something” or “progress” especially concerning a cap on

commercial users, when it actually is just cutting the legs out from under an informed decision-making process. Yes, it has been years in the making, but to simply abandon the advancement of working with stakeholders and researching biological impacts will set a dangerous precedent moving forward on a variety of Fish and Wildlife issues to come before this Commission. I plead with the Commissioners to deny these petitions and instruct FWP to continue with research. Relevant research such as catch and release mortality studies. Climate change impact studies, actual observation of recreational use trends, etc. We need this information to make informed decisions and we don't have them. And in the meantime, begin collecting conflict data. Who, where, when, how, and why? We need to understand what conflicts are occurring and how to address them individually. If crowding is an issue, identify where that crowding is an issue. Not by just asking people, but by observing. If it's FAS sites, make them more efficient. If it's float anglers, open more water which is available. To alleviate any sort of crowding, the answer is never to make that resource smaller.

In lieu of sufficient information, FWP unfortunately makes a number of assumptions which are largely conjecture. Throughout the EA, FWP suggests commercial use is the responsible party for conflicts. Therefore, we must remove them from sections of the river to give the non commercial wade anglers a break as if outfitters are bullying. There is no evidence of guides causing widespread conflict. No guides have been called about this. FWP have no records of individual guides being reported on. I've asked them. It is pure conjecture. FWP may in fact get calls about "guides" doing shady things, but does FWP follow up? Do they confirm it was in fact a guide? It's my experience that the majority of the non commercial users do not know how to identify guides from non guides. They often assume that any person in a boat with two anglers is a guide. Remember when business shut down during the initial phases of COVID? People were all over social media claiming guides were still everywhere on the Madison working when in fact no guide was working. They assumed that all those boats were guides. So, you'll forgive me if I am skeptical of the claims of "all the calls" about guides being rude. Especially when FWP do not investigate or follow up even to confirm.

The existing ideology of segregating user groups (i.e., walk/wade vs. float anglers) within user groups (e.g., anglers) is never going to work. It has now become labeled as "conflict" anytime a walk/wade angler "interacts" with a float angler as FWP describes on page 27 ("Wade anglers will benefit from less interaction/conflict with boats."). Ultimately, this is why FWP have no actual data or information on the specifics surrounding conflicts. It's because "conflict" has become synonymous with "interaction" and if the mere interaction of two subgroups of a user group is becoming conflict, then perhaps we need to take a deep look inside ourselves and simply try to just get along. Can we not just all get along? Is it that offensive to walk/wade anglers to simply see a boat floating by? This is also ultimately why the debate has gone nowhere. There is nothing conflicting to solve. It's simply one group doesn't appreciate the other and so here we are. The best way for FWP to manage this situation, is to step away and to stop segregating. Walk/wade anglers and float anglers are both anglers. And yet walk/wade anglers are given more opportunity to the upper Madison than float anglers. Both deserve equal opportunity, so give it to them. Stop trying to manage for both subgroups and simply open the river to all angling groups without discriminating against how they access. The upper Madison is a navigable waterway. Let them use it. It's silly.

Lastly, until we clearly define carrying capacity by establishing upper limits on recreational use, any decisions made on policy are not going to be unified under a clearly defined goal. Essentially, we'll be chasing our tail and kicking toward a moving goal post indefinitely. In order to solve a problem, one must first be able to clearly define the problem. One of the first

steps in defining a problem involving numbers of users on a system, is identifying a carrying capacity or upper limit. Decision making would be so much simpler if we all understood what number we're trying to stay under.

### **My Suggestion for Rules**

- Remove walk/wade designations from Pine Butte to Valley Garden.
- Improve FAS sites at Varney Bridge and Valley Garden
- Barbless hooks only
- No cost stamp to non commercial users
- No commercial use cap on days
- Cap commercial use launches per FAS during peak season
- More comprehensive hooking mortality study
- More comprehensive study on recreational use patterns

## **Comments on Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Madison River: Recreation – Proposed Rules**

### **New Rule I – Commercial Cap**

This rule is a cap on commercial use at 2019 use levels, with an assumption that this is based on historic use of permittees during 2019. This would amount to 13,909 guided trips. This would be the cap for guided trips indefinitely.

I strongly oppose this new Rule for a couple reasons. First, guided trips represent only 15% of annual use on the upper Madison. Restricting 15% and ignoring the other 85% (non commercial general public) growth will have no meaningful impact on addressing the stated goals of reducing crowding and conflict. Second, it is retroactive and does not take into consideration business interests that are operating now in 2020 and booking for 2021. Rather than capping annual days for commercial users, I would support a daily cap on commercial use per FAS site during peak season, which would be more effective at dispersing and reducing use without the devastating economic result of an overall cap. It would not require any more additional enforcement either, as logs still have to be reported.

### **New Rule II – Rest and Rotation**

This rule is a 2-day rest and rotation schedule from June 15-September 30. Commercial use would be prohibited from Varney-Ennis (approximately 9 miles) on Saturdays and Lyons-Palisades (approximately 8 miles) on Sunday. The upper Madison is approximately 56 miles long. This rule would limit commercial float fishing to only 26 miles on Saturdays and Sundays.

I strongly oppose any rest and rotation on the Madison River. The Madison River is simply too short of a river for rest and rotation to work; and will only create more crowding by putting commercial users into a smaller box. Rest and rotation naturally make conditions

more crowded not less. Couple this rule with the boat ban proposals in the Quake to Lyons Bridge and Ennis to Ennis Lake stretches and you have adjacent sections where either boats or guides are not allowed on the same days, congesting float angling even further. Yet, rest and rotation are still being considered, mostly because of the viewpoint of sportsmen's groups from Butte who recognize it as more opportunities for them (non-commercial users) at the expense of others (commercial users).

### **New Rule III – GGTU Walk/Wade Sections**

This rule is a 3-day closure of 19 miles of river to gaining access to wade fishing via watercraft on the existing walk/wade sections from June 15-September 30. Currently boats are allowed in these sections to gain access. This rule would ban them entirely for purposes of gaining access to fish on Friday-Sunday. On Monday-Thursday, the status quo remains, and watercraft can be used to gain access to these sections. This rule differs from NEW RULE V, which is the walk/wade plan from the FOAM petition.

I strongly oppose any reduction in access in the existing walk/wade sections to boats. Not allowing the use of boats to gain access to fishing without an alternative is, by definition, an infringement of public access to public lands and waters and discriminatory to those who are young, old, or disabled.

### **New Rule IV – Greycliff to Headwaters**

This rule limits new site development below Greycliff to access via carry-in only, allowing a more primitive experience. This rule is also from the GGTU et. al. petition.

I support this rule change as it still allows commercial use and maintains the unique experience of this section of river.

### **New Rule V – FOAM Walk/Wade Sections**

From the FOAM petition, this rule allows fishing from a boat from Raynolds Pass to Lyons Bridge 4 days of the week, essentially rescinding the no float angling rule currently in place in this section. This rule varies from NEW RULE III, from the GGTU et. al. petition. This rule on Sunday-Wednesday fishing from a boat and gaining access to fishing with a boat is permitted from Raynolds Pass to Lyons Bridge. Thursday-Saturday is status quo from Raynolds to Lyons; boats can be used to gain access to fishing but still only walk wade fishing – no float angling. Status quo remains for Ennis to Ennis Lake; boats can be used to gain access to fishing but still only walk wade fishing – no float angling.

I support this rule as it will serve to spread out float anglers on 4 days of the week, while still allowing the ability to get out of the boat and wade fish. It provides more access, not less like what is found in NEW RULE III. In addition, it is my position that allowing people to fish from a boat will cause them to stop and wade fish *less* in the upper wade section, helping to eliminate “conflicts” between wade and float users (i.e., stopping to fish too close to someone who is already wade fishing).

### **New Rule VI – New Rule XV FOAM Commercial Use Plan**



This series of 10 new rules encompassing 6 of the 11 pages of the rule package is the FOAM tiered commercial use plan. FOAM developed this plan only for the Madison River, without concerns for its applicability for future commercial use plans on other rivers. I believe whatever is adopted by the Commission regarding the monetization of permits will have broad statewide application and must therefore be crafted with that in mind. These proposed rules differ from NEW RULE I, from the GGTU et. al. petition.

I can support a mechanism that manages commercial use on the Madison and other rivers across the state. Unfortunately, the FOAM plan is far too complicated, convoluted, and costly to support. It will lead to a monopoly of large outfitters and the purging of small outfitters. A daily cap on commercial users per FAS during peak season would also be far more effective, less economically burdensome, and removes transferability of permits from the calculus.

### **New Rule VI – Commercial Cap**

This rule allows those with a valid Madison SRP permit before June 15, 2020 to choose either 2019 or 2020 as their basis of historic use for the number of trips they receive under the cap. This rule also does not allow any form of rest and rotation until after the 3rd year evaluation.

I oppose this approach as I strongly believe that any annual cap on commercial use days will have long term negative economic consequences to communities like Ennis and will force out the smaller outfitters. I also strongly believe that a commercial cap will be inconsequential to rising recreational use from the non commercial sector and solve nothing by itself. I would support, however, a daily launch cap per FAS during peak season for commercial users instead of the proposed rule cap. It would be far more effective and less devastating economically.

### **New Rule VII – Transfer of Permits**

This rule, as written, only states that each outfitter can only hold a maximum of 2 permits at one time and that no one outfitter can hold more than 10% of the aggregate commercial cap. It does not speak directly to transferring river use days, and there is an admission that transferring river use days for pay conflicts with MCA 47-37-310(4). This statute would need to change through legislative action in order for this rule to apply. Additionally, this rule allows new permit holders to operate up to 10 trips if they did not buy an existing permit.

I strongly oppose an overall cap approach and transfer of permits.

### **New Rule VIII – Flex Trips**

This rule provides outfitters with a Madison permit to run an additional 10 flex trips above their historic trip allocation in 2 out of 3 consecutive years. These trips are non-transferable.

I oppose the notion of flex trips and overall commercial use caps.

### **New Rule IX – Transfer of Trips**

This rule allows transfer of trips between permit holders at the discretion of the permit holders

on forms prescribed by the Department. Like NEW RULE VII above, there is an admission that this rule conflicts with MCA 47-37-310(4), requiring a change legislatively.

I oppose this rule, as it is unnecessary at this point. Installing a cap on commercial users by limiting launches per FAS and transferability is a non-issue while still imposing effective reduction of use measures on commercial use.

**New Rule X – Tiers and Use it or Lose it**

This rule establishes a tiered system based on historic use and the reduction of trips within the tiers if permit holders do not continue to use their historic allocation

- Tier 1 – less than 25 trips – exempt from trip reduction
- Tier 2 – 26-50 trips – drop to 25 trips if they show 3 consecutive seasons of less than 26 total trips
- Tier 3 – 51-100 trips – drop to 50 trips if they show 3 consecutive seasons of less than 51 total trips
- Tier 4 – over 100 trips – drop to 80% of their historic allocation if they show 3 consecutive seasons of less than 80% use of their historic allocation
- In addition, if a permit holder shows zero use for 3 consecutive years, their permit is forfeited

I oppose this element as an unnecessary and complex measure.

**New Rule XI – Permit Application and Fees**

This rule sets the annual application fee for Madison permit holders at \$110

I support this element.

**New Rule XII – Reporting and Use Fees**

This rule simply requires the reporting of annual logs with no differentiation between historic trips and flex trips and a fee structure of 3% of gross revenue.

I support this element.

**New Rule XIII – Evaluation**

This rule provides for the evaluation of the Madison commercial use plan in year 1 and every 3 years thereafter. Annual reports of river use and satisfaction will be produced by the Department.

I support evaluation of plans and rules. We must be prepared to repeal and amend plans as necessary too, however.

**New Rule XIV – Commercial Use Working Group**

This rule establishes a group under the authority of the Region 3 River Recreation Manager, consisting of the manager, a Commissioner, and at least 3 Madison outfitters holding a permit. This group takes over authority granted to the Commission and can establish an appeal and complaint process, award trips or a fixed number of new permits via lottery, and reviews total use. The review of total use includes adjusting trip allocations if use declines, reviewing trip additions if transferred, and adjusting the amount of flex trips available to permit holders if needed

I oppose this element as unnecessary without a cap.

### **New Rule XV – Trip Distribution Pool**

This rule establishes a means to distribute forfeited trips to other permit holders. If a permit holder shows zero use for 3 consecutive years, their trips populate this pool. Existing permit holders who have shown at least 95% of their historic use in the previous season can apply via lottery to receive these trips.

I oppose this element, once again as it is unnecessary if we had a daily launch cap per FAS during peak season for commercial users.

### **New Rule XVI – Madison River Use Stamp**

This new rule was found in both the FOAM and GGTU et. al. petition establishes a no cost, no limit Madison Stamp required of all users. The purpose of this stamp is to report annual river use.

I oppose this rule as constructed. I support the gathering of data on river use and recognize the urgent need for exact (not estimated) data for non-commercial use. However, the requirement of commercial users to obtain this stamp for data collection is redundant and unnecessary. All river use data for commercial users will already be collected under NEW RULE XII. I strongly support the requirement of this stamp for non-commercial users while commercial users should be exempt.

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**From:** [maura.davenport@gmail.com](mailto:maura.davenport@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 10:11:03 AM

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Name: Maura

City: Ennis

I oppose any boat ban and think walk wade water should be rescinded to allow for better dispersal of all anglers. It also takes away from public access, making 120 acres of landlocked public land between \$3 Bridge and Lyons inaccessible. I also oppose caps on commercial use the way this is described in the rules. Capping commercial use will have no meaningful impact to addressing alleged crowding which I don't experience as someone who uses the river often and lives in Ennis. I've also never seen conflict, so I'm not sure what that's about. Rest and rotation seems like it would do the opposite of what is intended. It would make things more congested in other areas of the river. Overall, I'm disappointed with most of these proposals.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Littlelibby97@gmail.com](mailto:Littlelibby97@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 10, 2020 9:04:03 PM

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Name:  
City:  
No!! It?s not right or fair!!!!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [wligonrn@att.net](mailto:wligonrn@att.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 9, 2020 7:12:05 AM

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Name: Wanda Ligon

City: Woodstock

No. It needs to be open and accessible to all fishermen and boats! This is America! You are stripping fishers during their prime income making season! We fight the same thing in Georgia on the Chattochoochee River!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Amy Schumacher](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] oppose Madison River restrictions  
**Date:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 1:00:01 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to voice my opinion on the Madison River restrictions that are up for debate. I strongly oppose any and all restrictions to the Madison River.

River access for all is a right that should not be restricted.

Guides and outfitters along with anglers are the highest Stewards of such rivers and should never be punished by implementing these restrictions to their local waters.

River access on all days and all sections of the river is a right to all. The Madison Valley thrives from these services and it would be a shame for these small area towns and businesses to suffer from needless restrictions that would affect many incomes and recreational opportunities.

I strongly oppose any and all restrictions to the Madison River.

Thank you  
Amy Schumacher

**From:** [Parker Smith](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Opposed to Madison River Proposals  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 10:44:53 AM

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Hello,

My name is Parker Smith and I am a fishing guide at Galloup's Slide Inn in Cameron, MT. I am completely and totally opposed to the proposed restrictions on float access in the two wade sections of the upper Madison - from Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge and Ennis FAS to Ennis Lake. I am also completely opposed to the proposed rest and rotation from Lyons to Palisades and Varney to Ennis.

As a guide, I am on the Madison River nearly every single day. Given what I see on a daily basis, the proposed regulations would do nothing but exacerbate the problems the special interest groups fighting for the regulations are supposedly trying to remedy. The rest and rotation schedules would do nothing but cram every guide, outfitter, and private floaters and anglers into a much smaller section of the river, during the busiest times of the year - in my opinion basically negating the argument of over pressured fish.

The closing of the two wade stretches to boat traffic is nothing more than a grab for privatization of the river by a few wealthy landowners. In my opinion there is nothing in this proposed regulation that focuses on the well being of the resource. Once again, this would constrict anglers to a smaller section of river - negating the argument that there would be less pressure on fish. With all the focus these days of "keeping public lands in public hands," it blows my mind that regulations such as these should even be put forth.

One of the most maddening aspects of these arguments is that these special interest groups are vilifying guides and outfitters. They are making the argument that guides and outfitters are the sole reason for the perceived overcrowding of the Madison River. The guides and outfitters who cherish and respect the river are the best stewards of the Madison River. From making sure no trash ever makes it into the river to safely fighting, landing, and releasing fish - guides and outfitters are the ones on the front lines protecting the Madison River. In reality, the biggest problem for the Madison River is that it IS a world-class fishery, and the population of Bozeman and surrounding areas is skyrocketing. Guides and outfitters should NOT be the ones taking it on the chin.

As someone who depends on the Madison River for the majority of my income, and as someone who believes that public lands should remain public - I can in no way support the proposed regulations put forth by the special interest groups who in reality have no desire to protect the resource, but to privatize it for their own use and recreation.

Parker Smith

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [maxmattioli3@gmail.com](mailto:maxmattioli3@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 4, 2020 8:55:26 PM

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Name: Max Mattioli

City: Helena

I absolutely disagree with any rule that does not allow fishing access via watercraft, as this undermines Montana's steam access system. There is no basis for limiting access to walk in only. Removing these two sections from the list of floatable water will result in an increase in the number of boats elsewhere. It will also not solve the problem of congestion for walk-in anglers near the access points. This proposal does not benefit the public, local anglers, or guides; it only benefits those with access to the river via private lands.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jamesligon94@gmail.com](mailto:Jamesligon94@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020 2:33:08 PM

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Name: James

City: Ennis

This is unacceptable and a smack in the face to Montana public land access as well as the people who actually live and work in Ennis, West Yellowstone, Bozeman and several other towns. This will hurt human beings.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Richard Murphy](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison river access.  
**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020 6:26:11 AM

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I strongly oppose restricted access for private guides utilizing the Madison river entry points .

The rest and restriction policy only benefits big business. The independent guides, who have made a livelihood on this river will be the ones who suffer

I urge you to not pass this legislation.

Thank you,  
Richard Murphy

Thank you,  
Richard

**From:** [James\\_r.terry@outlook.com](mailto:James_r.terry@outlook.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 9:40:02 PM

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Name: James Robert Terry

City: Ennis

This is ridiculous. Banning boats from the wade only sections is idiotic and wrong. People have the right to access water, it's public land here in Montana, even if it's only a few days a week?. Banning commercial use on sections as large as Lyons to pal and Varney to town will cause record crowding issues in the remaining 16 miles of river. The people who will be most affected by this lunacy are my friends and neighbors, so take this proposal and shove it up your ass.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Andrew Bennett](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison rules comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 6:44:11 PM

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My name is Andrew Bennett a fishing guide I'm in Dillon Montana. Having guided on the rivers of southwest Montana for the last 20 years I have seen a lot of changes. I think we can all agree that our rivers and wild places are being increasingly crowded. That being said unless my understanding of the proposed rules is incorrect that our industry is the only one being penalized by rest days etc. I am on the rivers for over 150 days a year whether that be guiding or hanging with my family and guides are not the majority. Until we figure out a way to also regulate recreators it wouldn't be prudent to only regulate the guides and outfitters. Also while viewing most people using our public rivers guess where most the money comes from that the state receives to manage and upkeep these areas...the guides/outfitters/ and their clients. I started guiding at 20 in the Bozeman area and have fished the lower Madison more times than I can remember. I have spent the last 14 in Dillon and on a recent guide trip to the lower Madison I was very disappointed. The tubing on that river was getting bad when I was there but it has gotten worse. Beer cans everywhere, trash and guess what these things aren't coming from us they are coming from the people that don't care. Thanks so only give us restrictions is ridiculous and I'm sure if argued correctly unconstitutional. Also I give an amount of money to the state in license fees etc and to see the mass of bathrooms/ramp improvements/ trash cans just to accommodate tubers and others is completely unacceptable. How about some boat ramp repair on the big hole in some certain areas where people are using the river respectfully. Thanks that is all

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [jillian@hotmail.com](mailto:jillian@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 5:31:59 PM

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Name: Jillian

City: Ennis

I have not experienced crowding on the Madison River and I do not believe any changes need to be made to the way the guided fishing industry currently functions. Many of the people supporting these changes stand to gain a lot of money through the allocation of saleable days. If you feel you must restrict the number of guided days on the river, at least take the money out of the equation so everyone's motives are clear.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [matthew krick](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison river recreation plan  
**Date:** Saturday, October 31, 2020 10:50:36 AM

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My name is Matt Krick. I live in helena montana and I support the rest and rotation plan. It is badly needed. Please adopt this plan.

Matt Krick  
6875 black sandy loop  
Helena MT 59602

**From:** [fredrandalljr@gmail.com](mailto:fredrandalljr@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 11:08:00 PM

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Name: Fred Randall

City: Cameron MT

Hello - Thank you for your work on this. I am a homeowner near the Madison just upstream from Raynolds Pass Bridge. While I am not currently a Montana resident, I have been coming here for over 30 years and am considering making Montana my permanent home. I purchased my home here several years ago, and I purchased the home because it had an easement access to the Madison. The access is approximately a 25 minute walk upstream from Raynolds Pass Bridge.

I have been, and intend to continue to be, a big supporter of the local economy, including the outfitters, fly shops, stores and restaurants. I bring in people from out of state to show them the incredible beauty here as well as to fish. Sometimes we float commercially. More often we wade, and the \$3 Bridge and Raynolds Pass Bridge have been my favorite places to fish in the world. A big part of the charm has been the absence of watercraft on this part of the river.

Due to the proximity to Raynolds Pass Bridge and the number of rental cabins along the river, the part of the river where I live has become increasingly crowded. Most of the fisherman are wade fisherman, and most of the wade fisherman are pretty reasonable. They move up and down the river, fish a hole or two, and then move on.

However, this part of the river seems to be increasingly busy due to anglers accessing the river from boats. The boats put in just upstream, float down a bit, and pull over. Many, many times in the last few years, including in April and this October, I have had numerous days where the boat (or boats) pull over, the anglers position themselves in the optimal spots, and remain there most of the day. I find it rather astounding, especially since there is so much good water downstream. The result is that the wade anglers that walk in from Raynolds or other public access, the wade fisherman who are renting accommodations along the river, as well my neighbors and me have significantly less access to the river.

As such, I really do not think it would be positive to permit fishing from a boat on the upper Madison, and I think there should be additional limitations on watercraft on the upper Madison.

While I know no one can regulate angler behavior, the experiences I have had with boats on the river cause me concern. I have no idea if these are commercial outfitters or not. But the anglers accessing river from boats seem to have concluded that their means of transport gives them a priority over wading anglers. And the presence of boats takes away from the historical beauty and ambience that has made this part of the river magical for other anglers and me for over 30 years.

As an example of social conflict with boats, I accessed the river yesterday from my easement. A boat was parked 10 feet downstream from a good run I liked to fish. The occupants of the boat were upstream 100 yards fishing a hole upstream - the hole I was hoping to fish but hadn't been able to because boats had been there the two previous days. I fished the run near the boat and hooked a marvelous rainbow. Unfortunately, it went under the boat, and into the



fast water below the boat. I had to navigate around the boat and get into the water in a pretty precarious place to dislodge the fish from the boat. A little harrowing. And that is a social conflict.

As such, I believe the proposal 5 should be more restrictive, and watercraft should be restricted on the upper part of the river. And those restrictions should not be only from June through September. There will continue to be increased pressure from wading anglers as more homes are built and rented, and more people utilize the public access points. There is a lot of water downstream from Lyons, and I look forward to floating it with commercial outfitters. Keeping the upper Madison boat free helps maintain the character and quality of the experience.

As for the rest of the proposal, there are so many economic, personal, business and other issues at stake that I don't feel qualified to comment. However, with that said, I would like to see some focus on climate change, and additional focus on the health of the river. All this will be meaningless if temperatures and snowpacks shift and the health of the river, the trout and the insects are compromised.

Thank you for your consideration.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Janae gordon](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] MT Outfitter Madison Recreation Plan Comments - Please Read  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 9:47:21 PM

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I have been a licensed Guide Outfitter in Montana (20 years and 13 years, respectively) and hold an M.S. degree in Wilderness and Recreation Management. Over the past 20 years I have seen the Madison River (and other rivers) become increasingly more crowded. The Madison has become a “bumper boat” ride with commercial outfitters basically taking over the Madison River with a sense of entitlement. The river is for everyone and not just those who make money off of this public resource or those who can afford to pay outfitters for the privilege.

I receive frequent emails from FOAM about their strong opposition to any regulation of outfitters, but as an outfitter, I totally disagree. I have watched as outfitters and guides have branched out from YNP to the Missouri River Headwaters leaving little room for those seeking a peaceful and natural outdoor experience. I encourage FWP to regulate the river access to commercial outfitters so that the Madison River can be enjoyed by all.

Montana Outfitter and FOAM member

**From:** [janaegord@yahoo.com](mailto:janaegord@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 9:41:14 PM

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Name: Anonymous MT Outfitter

City: Bozeman

I have been a licensed Guide Outfitter in Montana (20 years and 13 years, respectively) and hold an M.S. degree in Wilderness and Recreation Management. Over the past 20 years I have seen the Madison River (and other rivers) become increasingly more crowded. The Madison has become a 'bumper boat' ride with commercial outfitters basically taking over the Madison River with a sense of entitlement. The river is for everyone and not just those who make money off of this public resource or those who can afford to pay outfitters for the privilege.

I receive frequent emails from FOAM about their strong opposition to any regulation of outfitters, but as an outfitter, I totally disagree. I have watched as outfitters and guides have branched out from YNP to the Missouri River Headwaters leaving little room for those seeking a peaceful and natural outdoor experience. I encourage FWP to regulate the river access to commercial outfitters so that the Madison River can be enjoyed by all.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jon Malovich](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#); [FWP Commission](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rec Plan and EA Comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 8:56:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [MGTU&MRF madison statement - MAB.docx](#)  
[ATT00001.htm](#)

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Please accept the Joint Statement from Madison River Foundation and Madison Gallatin Trout Unlimited to be entered in regards to public comments regarding the Proposed Rec Plan and EA.

--

Jonathan Malovich  
*Executive Director*  
Madison River Foundation  
*Office- 406-682-3148*  
*Cell- 406-599-6389*

**From:** [balamtomlin@yahoo.com](mailto:balamtomlin@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 8:38:36 PM

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Name: Henry Tomlin  
City: Billings  
To Whom it May Concern,

As a Montana citizen, I want to thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River. I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I strongly disagree with the proposed rules 3 and 5. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 3 and 5:

I strongly disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge and in the valley garden stretch. Fishing from a boat in these traditionally walk/wade areas would promote animosity between floating anglers and wading anglers. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

I have not yet developed an adequate opinion on Rule 2. I think that Rest and Rotation is a potential solution and should continue to be explored, but I sense that it will require a more nuanced and imaginative structure than is currently proposed.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. I want to again emphasize my desire to maintain the regulation status quo above Lyons Bridge and below Ennis Bridge.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Andresino, Michael L.](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments by a Non-Resident Angler on the Proposed Rules for Madison River Recreational Use  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 8:27:34 PM

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Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission  
Madison River Comments  
1420 East Sixth Avenue  
Helena MT 59601

Dear Commission Staff:

I am writing to comment on a number of the proposed rules being considered by the Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission in its public notice dated September 15, 2020, regarding recreational use of the Madison River.

### My Background

I write as an angling tourist to Montana, who has traveled there to fish the Upper Madison River in each of the last two summers. I live in Massachusetts and enjoy fly-fishing in fresh and salt water throughout the New England region, with occasional trips to other fishing destinations in the U.S. and Canada. I am member of the Board of Directors of Greater Boston Trout Unlimited (our local TU chapter), although these comments represent my own personal views.

My recent trips to Southwest Montana consisted of 5 days in the area in August 2019 and 11 days in August 2020, fishing primarily on the Madison as well as other rivers, in a combination of guided float, guided wading and non-guided (DIY) wading trips.

As such, my experience comes from a limited sample size, and I understand the Commission should view my comments as those of an occasional tourist and not an expert or local stakeholder. That being said, I hope to make those trips to Montana an annual event for many years to come, and will willingly contribute my share of the approximately half-billion dollars that non-residents spend annually in Southwest Montana (Draft Madison River Environmental Assessment (EA), Table 7).

### My Observations

The Madison is a fantastic, world-class fishery, and the Commission's first priority should be to protect the resource at all costs. If there is not a healthy fish population, living in clean, publicly-accessible water, then there will be no "angler conflicts" to be managed. Fortunately, it seems from the EA that, while fishing pressure may be causing some catch and release mortality and degradation of the bank environment, the quality of the fishery itself is not in jeopardy (EA, p. 30-33). Rather, the problem seems to be one of protecting the fishing experience by managing the number of people, boats and vehicles, and keeping them away from one another if possible.

To this, I can only say that problems depend on your perspective. In my limited

observation, the Upper Madison in mid-season offers a great fishing experience. It is not crowded by my standards, there is plenty of water for everyone, and once away from the ramps, there is solitude in long stretches if you want it. The fishing access sites and riverbanks are pristine and free of trash. And most importantly, everyone I observe is getting along well, with minimal conflict. I have no idea what the Madison was like before the Bozeman area experienced its recent explosive growth, so I take other stakeholders at their word that conditions have deteriorated. But all I can say is, compared to other places I have fished, you have it well. I am glad for our recreational opportunities here in New England, but after hiking crowded rivers or ocean jetties looking for an open place to cast, listening to arguments at the boat ramps, and filling my net or stripping basket with trash on the way out, I feel like Varney Bridge, even on a busy day, is a happy place.

### Proposed Rules

- Given that I see less of a problem than other stakeholders, it is not surprising that I am not in favor of drastic action, and I recommend that the Commission take incremental steps, and periodically review and adjust as needed. If you accept as a premise that outfitter trips are going to be capped under either proposed Rule 1 or 6 (and I would argue that there is room for some increase), then in my view the Commission's goal should be to encourage the anglers, both commercial and non-guided, to organically spread out throughout the river. I would not be in favor of changes that cause anglers to cluster any more than is currently occurring, as shown on Table 4 of the EA.

I have the following comments on certain specific rule proposals:

Rule 2, Rest/Rotation – I oppose this rule, because I believe it would have the effect of concentrating more anglers in the available portions of the river, and thus increase the potential for weekend conflicts.

Rule 3, Boat Access to Walk/Wade Sections – I oppose this rule, as I believe it would either encourage more pressure on the available wading access points, or more boats on the other sections of the river.

Rules 7-12, 14 & 15, Outfitter Permit Management and Flexibility – I am generally in favor of the permit management and flexibility rules proposed in the FOAM group's petition. I have been impressed with the professionalism of the Montana outfitter and guide community, as well as their stewardship of the resource.

Rule 16, Use Stamp – I am in favor of this rule and would go it one better, as noted below....

### Charge the Tourists More

- Unlike my other comments, this one goes directly against my own interests as a non-resident, guided angler. I would favor an additional, modest Madison River usage fee on anglers such as myself, if these funds were used to support the excellent fishery

that the Commission is seeking to protect. Like the Montana non-resident fishing license and related fees, such an additional fee would seem well worth the cost when the angler realizes the outstanding facilities and stream access that their money goes towards. The community of anglers who travel to Montana to enjoy guided fishing, I believe, would not be deterred by such an additional, targeted expense. I realize this goes beyond the scope of the rule proposals and may not be in the power of the Commission or the Department to implement, but I offer it anyway.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and I look forward to many more years of fishing the Madison.

Regards,

Michael Andresino  
225 Woodland Rd.  
Milton, MA 02186  
michael.andresino@arentfox.com

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**From:** [Gcappis@gmail.com](mailto:Gcappis@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 6:16:36 PM

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Name: Greg Cappis

City: Bozeman

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
2. Lyons Bridge to Palisades
3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold's Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [quinceykjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:quinceykjohnson@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 6:02:03 PM

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Name: Quincey Johnson

City: Ennis, MT

We all know how special the Madison River is. That's why it's critically important that we protect the resource for present and future generations. Simply put, FOAM's petition doesn't do that, but instead protects their financial interest. Rather than attempting to make compromises, they are seeking to expand their stranglehold on the river and believe it is their right to make a living off a public resource. The guiding community has tried to paint regulations as an attack on their livelihood, yet without any protections the fishery will suffer; so too will their businesses. Please use data from years prior to 2019 and 2020 when creating a commercial cap on the river. We've known for years that use has been too high, therefore, keeping the cap at 2019-20 is not sufficient to addressing overcrowding. Please enable a diversity of angling opportunities on the river by maintaining a walk-wade section. Public lands are managed in a variety of ways across the Mountain West, and restricting boat access a few days a week is comparable to not allowing motorized vehicles in Wilderness Study Areas or closing Yellowstone National Park to cars during the winter months. GGTU's proposal to limit boats in the walk-wade section Friday-Sunday is a deserving compromise. And lastly, please put river health at the forefront of this conversation, not economic gains. It's time to enact meaningful regulations on the Madison River to ensure it remains one of Montana's last, best places for generations to come. Fly-fisherman from around the world, local businesses, and our trophy trout populations will thank you.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [quinceykjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:quinceykjohnson@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 6:01:27 PM

---

Name: Quincey Johnson

City: Ennis, MT

We all know how special the Madison River is. That's why it's critically important that we protect the resource for present and future generations. Simply put, FOAM's petition doesn't do that, but instead protects their financial interest. Rather than attempting to make compromises, they are seeking to expand their stranglehold on the river and believe it is their right to make a living off a public resource. The guiding community has tried to paint regulations as an attack on their livelihood, yet without any protections the fishery will suffer; so too will their businesses. Please use data from years prior to 2019 and 2020 when creating a commercial cap on the river. We've known for years that use has been too high, therefore, keeping the cap at 2019-20 is not sufficient to addressing overcrowding. Please enable a diversity of angling opportunities on the river by maintaining a walk-wade section. Public lands are managed in a variety of ways across the Mountain West, and restricting boat access a few days a week is comparable to not allowing motorized vehicles in Wilderness Study Areas or closing Yellowstone National Park to cars during the winter months. GGTU's proposal to limit boats in the walk-wade section Friday-Sunday is a deserving compromise. And lastly, please put river health at the forefront of this conversation, not economic gains. It's time to enact meaningful regulations on the Madison River to ensure it remains one of Montana's last, best places for generations to come. Fly-fisherman from around the world, local businesses, and our trophy trout populations will thank you.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [philip.pinson@gmail.com](mailto:philip.pinson@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 5:20:24 PM

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Name: Philip Pinson

City: Gallatin Gateway

I have been float fishing the Madison for over 35 years and have noticed a substantial decline in fish health over the past decade due to the increased pressure of fly fisherman (such as myself) in addition to climate change via warmer & longer summers with shorter winters. For those of you who have not witnessed what pressure we're referring to - simply swing by the Lyons bridge parking lot (or any fishing spot) on a summer morning and you will see the line of boats waiting to depart, every day, 7 days a week. These (long overdue) rule proposals are essential to sustain recreational and environmental well being for future generations. I strongly urge the committee, fishing & recreational community to take a long-term view to ensure the Madison River & surrounding headwater ecosystems have a healthy WILD trout population for sustained economic and environmental benefits.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Peterson, Colleen R](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Cc:** [Mcgrath, Christopher P](#); [James, Amanda L](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River EA Comments from BLM  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 4:56:31 PM  
**Attachments:** [BLM Comments FWP Final signed.pdf](#)  
[Madison SRP Program CMA Signed \(1\).pdf](#)

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To Whom It May Concern,

Attached are the BLM Dillon Field Office's comments for the Draft Madison Rulemaking EA. If you have any questions please contact Chris McGrath, Outdoor Recreation Planner, at 406 682-4082 or Amanda James, Field Manager, at 406-683-8023.

Sincerely,

Colleen Peterson

Colleen Peterson  
Resource Assistant  
Dillon Field Office - BLM  
1005 Selway Drive  
Dillon, Montana 59725  
(406) 683 - 8041

**From:** [John Sullivan](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Cc:** [Kevin Farron](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Montana BHA Comments/Suggestions on the Madison River  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 4:43:21 PM  
**Attachments:** [MT BHA Madison River Comments 10.30.20 .pdf](#)

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Dear Montana FWP Commission:

Please find the Montana Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers' comments and suggestions on Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA.

Thank you,

John B. Sullivan III  
Chairman  
Montana Chapter  
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers  
[johnbsullivaniii@gmail.com](mailto:johnbsullivaniii@gmail.com)  
406-360-4086

**From:** [markpeterson1939@gmail.com](mailto:markpeterson1939@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP Commission](#); [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison-Gallatin Trout Unlimited Madison River Plan Comment Letter  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 3:58:58 PM  
**Attachments:** [MGTU-MRF Joint Comment Letter.pdf](#)

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Commissioners,

Attached you will find the written comment from the Madison-Gallatin Chapter of Trout Unlimited regarding the current proposals for the Madison River Use Plan. It is my understanding that you will be receiving the same letter from Jon Malovich who is the Executive Director of the Madison River Foundation. MGTU and MRF are the two major conservation groups in the Madison River drainage and have agreed on supporting the process outlined in our comments.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Best regards,

Mark Peterson  
President  
Madison-Gallatin



**From:** [Nick Gevock](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#); [FWP Commission](#)  
**Cc:** [Ryce, Eileen](#); [Skaar, Donald](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] MWF comments on Madison River rules  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 3:57:53 PM  
**Attachments:** [MWF comments on Mad. River recreation rules.pdf](#)

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Dear Fish and Wildlife commissioners,

Please accept these attached official comments from the Montana Wildlife Federation on the proposal recreation rules for the Madison River.

Sincerely,

--

[Nick Gevock](#)  
Conservation Director  
Montana Wildlife Federation  
PO Box 1175  
Helena, MT 59602  
Phone: 406.458.0227 ext. 108  
Cell: 406.533.9432  
[ngevock@mtwf.org](mailto:ngevock@mtwf.org)  
<http://www.montanawildlife.org> [[montanawildlife.org](#)]



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](#) [[avast.com](#)]  
[\[avast.com\]](#)

**From:** [Andrew Friedrich](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Proposed Rules Comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 3:31:51 PM

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Dear Commissioners:

I am a non-resident who has made countless visits to the Madison over the last 40 years, and hopes to make more. For about the last ten years or so I've generally visited for several days at least once a year. (I had hoped to make it two visits a year but after a couple of years adding a late June trip I gave up on that - too many people and way too many boats - and now stick to one in the fall.) Apart from seven guided floats over the decades, I have fished on foot. The majority of my time has been on what is now the upper wade section, and that is my primary area of concern.

I am very much opposed to opening that water to fishing from watercraft as allowed by proposed rule V. There are plenty of river miles below Lyons for floaters to fish from their watercraft, many of which as a practical matter cannot legally be accessed by wade fishers. Please preserve the upper wade for those of us on foot. In much of that wade section there already is heavy pressure from waders on both sides of the river. To allow fishing from watercraft would add to the pressure on the sides of the river and, moreover, deprive the fish of the mid-stream areas of refuge they now have.

With respect to proposed rule III, while I personally would prefer no floaters at all in the upper wade, I think allowing floating for transit only is a fair compromise. But that is with the qualification that the float should in fact be used to access areas which as a practical matter the walk and wade fishers cannot legally get to or where there is little or no wade fishing activity. I think all floaters, both guides and non-commercial, should refrain from using the "transit" float through the readily accessible and heavily pressured wade areas to drop in and cherry pick prime spots, low-holing or high-holing wade fishers along the way.

I support having a no-fee use stamp with reporting requirements.

I support the concept of having reasonable limitations on commercial use but don't know enough to suggest what those limitations should be or how to implement them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Andrew Friedrich

**From:** [cbrooks34@gmail.com](mailto:cbrooks34@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 2:04:49 PM

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Name: Connor B.

City: Bozeman

I'm a Bozeman resident and frequent user of the Madison River. I am in favor of placing a cap on the total number of recreational boats that can float the river each day. However, I am strongly against placing restrictions on Montana guides in terms of limiting their ability to float the river on certain days. If we are going to place any limits on guides, we should limit the number of out of state guides that travel to Montana to use our rivers. Whatever the restrictions, we should not do anything to hurt taxpaying Montanan businesses!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [PAUL BUNKER](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan Proposal  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 1:24:10 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

As part of the “wiser” generation at the age of 68, with 1 knee replacement on the books and another in the not too distant future, I would hope that you would consider the following comments. Whatever you can do to allow me to have access to waters on the Madison, I would be most grateful.

I have been involved with the Yellowstone National Park’s effort to restore native fish populations in the park for the past 15 years. One of the things that got me “hooked” on Yellowstone was participating in the park’s volunteer fly fishing program. During this time, I not only got to learn about the park’s fisheries but also the science behind the efforts in restoring habitat. I hope the commission would seek out their advice on how to protect the valuable fishery you have in the Madison River. They have gone beyond the cost benefit to users (anglers) who often have competing motivations and agendas and have focused on the science to what is best for the entire eco-system. I hope you can do the same in the matter of how best to preserve the Madison for all, including us “wiser” folk.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
2. Lyons Bridge to Palisades
3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold’s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into

Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays – the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Thanks once again,

Paul

Paul & Suzanne Bunker

3415 N Lincoln Ave #132

Loveland CO 80538

303-904-1276

pnsbunker@comcast.net

**From:** [dlkumlien@gmail.com](mailto:dlkumlien@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Cc:** [fwpdistrict2@gmail.com](mailto:fwpdistrict2@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River plan comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 12:43:23 PM

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Dear MTFWP Staff and Commission members,

I write to express my gratitude for all of the work you have done on the Madison River recreation plan. It is a daunting and a very difficult issue, and I thank you all for your service.

I have previously submitted comments, but I wish to add to what I've already submitted.

I am 40+ year Madison River outfitter (#281) and avid Madison River angler. In 1979-1980, I was nominated by Governor Tom Judge to serve on a Madison River Study Committee. The issues our committee studied were quite similar to those we face today, and there was tension amongst user groups but not at the level of the vitriol encountered today. I wish I had my notes and materials from our '79-'80 committee work as some of our findings are very informative for what is going on today. One of the things we found was that the overall use of the river above Ennis Lake was 70% outfitter and guide use and 30% public. I believe that current survey data indicates this use distribution has changed to something closer to 50-50% use. What this clearly points out is that the most significant user group growth is by the public users. The commercial use has grown, too, but nowhere near the rate of the public. In the mid '70's, I worked in an outdoor sporting goods store with a fly fishing department. I personally knew most of the folks who owned drift boats in Bozeman. All I have to do is look at the alley behind my home in Bozeman. There are 7 river float craft parked in the alley. 5 are owned by public users, and 2 are owned by commercial users, and I don't know any of these folks.

Our '79-'80 committee came to similar conclusions regarding user group conflict situations and the condition of the Madison River fishery. Our '79-'80 committee found the Madison River fishery and riparian zone were in very good condition. Our committee agreed that, eventually, continued growth would impact both the fisheries and habitat. However, what it came down to in '79-'80, was that the problems on the Madison River were subjective arguments and conflicts between user groups and primarily revolved around subjective conflicts between commercial users and public anglers. After 2 years of study, our recommendation to the governor was there were no fisheries or habitat issues, and if the goal was reducing use of the river to address these subjective user group conflicts, it would require a comprehensive program to regulate BOTH public and commercial use. The Governor chose not to pursue a program of regulating the public, our committee work was ended, and the one-year moratorium on Madison River outfitters licenses was lifted. I deeply regret that we did not implement ANY recreation management plan for the Madison at that time.....

I believe that to solve the current situation requires that SOMETHING must be done now. Personally, I would support a cap on commercial use, the implementation of a Madison River user stamp to help gather comprehensive river use data, and the creation of a process to gather more comprehensive information on ALL aspects of the Madison River to definitively determine overall use, the biological condition of the fishery and the riparian habitat, and socio-economic impacts of any proposed plans,

rules, or laws.

I firmly believe we need to gather more comprehensive “census data” on river users. Our ’79-’80 committee had the benefit of this census type data, and I believe we need to go back to this approach to securing ACTUAL use not rely on “survey” type information. This will require more funding, of course, and I would suggest seeking legislative and executive branch support to allow MTFWP to begin charge for the Madison River user stamp and generate revenue to support the census approach to gathering user group data, to conduct more extensive scientific research on the fisheries and habitat, and to conduct significant study of the socio-economic impacts of the plan on user groups and surrounding communities. In my opinion, the socio-economic information is critical to plan acceptance and success. On the recent Zoom call, the comments from a young woman caller struck a chord with me. She was a nurse, I believe, at the Ennis hospital, and her husband was a new outfitter. She said that she and her husband had been discussing the proposed rules, and they were both deeply concerned how the cap on commercial would impact their ability to make a living and to stay and live with their young family in the Ennis community. I’ve not heard ANY in depth analysis of the socio-economic impacts of the current proposed rules and plans. This socio-economic research is, in my opinion, critical to coming up with an effective and a fair plan. These socio-economic studies will require funding which could be generated from a revenue producing river user stamp.

For the Madison River, “rest and rotation” is not a good idea. While the language makes a nice hash tag, it’s implementation WOULD SERVE TO PROTECT THE RIVER and do nothing except to mollify a small but vocal group of public river users who have clearly demonstrated their dislike for commercial users. The concentration of use on certain river sections will do nothing to protect the fishery and will create less enjoyable river experiences. I have heard it said in previous hearings and meetings that “we won’t know what use patterns will actually result from rest and rotation.” I would argue that Mother Nature provides us with an excellent naturally occurring example of the concentration of use that WILL OCCUR during rest and rotation. When the famous salmon fly hatch is on, and the big bugs are concentrated between Lyons Bridge and McAtee, all one has to do to see what rest and rotation will look like is to look at the EXTREMELY HEAVY USE that is concentrated at Lyons Bridge during the morning launch period and compare that to the use of Varney Bridge access during the morning launch period on that same day. After the salmon fly fishing dies down in the river between Varney and Ennis, Varney use will be considerably less. Again, rest and rotation is a nice hash tag, but it does nothing to spread out use on the river which is what is needed to protect the fishery and the river experience.

No fishing from boats and boat use restrictions are discriminatory and do nothing to protect the fishery and shouldn’t be implemented. I believe these rules are highly discriminatory toward the elderly and the infirm angler who cannot access these sections on foot. In addition, these rules are EXTREMELY discriminatory against anglers with disabilities, and they also discriminate against resident and non-resident PUBLIC angler users who simply wish to pay for guide services to get access to the river. REMEMBER, these paying folks are simply paying members of the public and include residents AND non-residents. As with rest and rotation, these no boats, no fishing from boats rules DO NOTHING to protect the fishery and habitat. Bottom line, spreading out the use over the entire length of the river and CAPPING ALL USER GROUPS is the most effective strategy to protect the Madison River fishery and its habitat and to reduce user group conflict and protect the

river user experience.

I have heard from public angler fishing friends who tell me they no longer fish the Madison and that it is too crowded. I ask them when and where they encounter the crowded conditions, and if they ever change their use patterns to less busy times? Their response is “there’s never a time that the Madison river isn’t crowded!” I would argue that this is NOT TRUE. I have found that by adjusting my fishing time and location choices, it has a tremendous impact on the crowds I encounter on all of the rivers I fish. During June of 2019, I ran an experiment. I took 7 floats during the salmon fly hatch. 3 were guided trips, and 4 were with friends and with me fishing as a public angler. 2 were on the Big Hole, another very busy river, and 5 were on the Madison. I purposely launched all of my trips between 6:30AM and 8AM. I’ve attached 2 pictures. 1 was from a June 14 Big Hole commercial float. These are long-term clients who are also Montana residents. The salmon flies were out between Divide and Browns Bridge, the river was in good shape, and we had the fishing was good. When I arrived at the Divide access at 7:30AM, there were no anglers in the parking area. Shortly after we arrived, a pair of public anglers arrived. They launched shortly after we did, around 8AM, and we were the only ones on the river all the way down to Maidenrock FAS! The other picture is from the Storey Ditch access on the Madison on June 25<sup>th</sup> at the peak of the salmon fly hatch between McAtee and Ennis. This was a float with friends, and when we arrived at Storey at 6:30AM, THERE WERE NO other anglers at Storey Ditch. My friends and I floated to Varney, had the river to ourselves, and had good fishing. My point is that many of the public AND commercial users complain that the river experience and the fishing “isn’t like it used to be”, and they want things to “return to the good old days”. I would argue the good, old days are still there if you are willing to some VERY modest adjustments to the time and location you wish to fish. Furthermore, it would take draconian measures to limit both public and commercial use to try and return to the good old days. Want a return to the good old days? I believe this would mean capping commercial use at 1990 levels, determining public use, and capping it at the same level as commercial users producing a 50% commercial and 50% public split of a MUCH smaller group of users. By no means do I advocate this approach. I don’t think these type of restrictions would be acceptable to anyone, but this is what it would take to return to those “good old day” levels.

Bottom line, spreading current use over the entire length of the river and CAPPING ALL USER GROUPS is the most effective strategy to protect the Madison River fishery and its habitat, to reduce user group conflict, and as much as possible, protect the river user experience.

Sincerely,

Dave Kumlien

40+ year Montana Fly Fishing Outfitter #281  
40+ year member Madison-Gallatin Trout Unlimited  
Founding Board Member of the Whirling Disease Foundation  
Founding President of the Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana  
Proud grandpa of 7 Madison River fishing and floating grandkids



[dlkumlien@gmail.com](mailto:dlkumlien@gmail.com)

406-570-0023

Bozeman

**From:** [Pieske, Shawna](#) on behalf of [FWP Commission](#)  
**To:** [Wedde, Kim](#); [Ryce, Eileen](#); [Skaar, Donald](#); [Pat Byorth \(fwpdistrict2@gmail.com\)](#); [Rich Stuker](#); [Shane Colton](#); [Tim Aldrich \(Cartim8@gmail.com\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Madison River Comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 12:30:50 PM  
**Attachments:** [Madison Rec Plan Public Comment.pdf](#)

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**From:** Nicholas A Peterson <nicholasapeterson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 30, 2020 11:38 AM  
**To:** FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Comments

Thank you for taking my attached comment under consideration.

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Nicholas A. Peterson  
[nicholasapeterson@gmail.com](mailto:nicholasapeterson@gmail.com)  
Ph: 406 581 9254

**From:** [Flyfisher8@aol.com](mailto:Flyfisher8@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 11:52:40 AM

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Name: John McClure

City: Cameron, MT.

To whom it may concern,

My name is John McClure and I have been a licensed guide and outfitter in Montana for 15 years, and an employee The Slide Inn for eighteen years. I have been a resident of Montana for 15 years as well, and the Madison River has been a big part of my life as someone who spends close to 200 days on it each season. Obviously use on the Madison River has grown quite a bit since I first got here, and a lot more land owners have staked a claim around the river than when I first started fishing here in 2002.

I realize that the proposal set forth by MT FWP is in response to a social issue, but I do have to comment on something that I was very surprised never came up during these discussions and that is the impact of the dam being under construction for close to a decade and how that impacted the fishery. Because we had water coming over the top of Hebgen Dam from 2009 - 2017 the average water temperatures during July, August, and September were routinely 4 degrees higher than what we saw before construction and from 2018-2020. During this time period we would start our guide trips at 6:00 a.m. and try to be off the water by 3:00 pm because water temperatures were between 70-73 degrees and the fishing would usually slow down around 1:00 pm.. Thus, the surveys were conducted when the Upper Madison had the equivalent of a 4 degree fever and it still showed how resilient it can be through it all because of it's oxygen content and bio mass. This was the biggest variable that has not been talked about and I just needed to speak my piece on it before I began with my opinion on the purposed rules.

Here are my feelings on the following rules

Rule 1: I support this.

Rule 2: I do not support Rest and Rotation sections on the Upper Madison. This works on the Big Hole River because they have 117 miles of floatable river from Mud Creek the Jefferson and we have 36 miles from Lyon's Bridge to Ennis Bridge. I do not believe that this would help with crowding, and strongly oppose closing any sections of water to outfitting.

Rule 3: I do not support this. I would say that I've floated the section from Slide Inn to Pine Butte as much as any outfitter or guide over the last ten years and there are only two sections in that entire stretch where you have to infringe on an area where wade anglers might be present. The first is about 500 yards above Raynolds Bridge where you have to hug the left bank and the second in 300 yards below Raynolds boat ramp where you have to stay on the right to avoid a row of boulders. Everything else can be navigated in the middle of the river where wade anglers are not present and there really are not that many boats that run this section to really affect the experience of the wade angler. The only people that will benefit from this rule would be land owners that are not full time residents and who do not want to see boats on the river. These land owners have also grown increasingly hostile toward guides and the general public over the last five years and there are now plenty of no trespassing signs on areas that never had issues with foot traffic.

Rule 4: I really don't understand this one. Greycliff to the Milwaukee boat ramp is not used very much and receives very little traffic already.

Rule 5: I do not support this. While this would spread float traffic out I think this would increase conflict between float anglers and wade anglers. I lived and fished around Reynolds and Three Dollar for years and the best holding water in those sections is by the banks which is where the wade anglers are already. I could see opening up Pine Butte to Lyons but I think it would be a big mistake to open the whole upper river between Quake and Lyons to float fishing from a boat. I would like to see the status quo remain on both wade sections on the upper Madison

Rule 6: I support this

Rule 7: I support this.

Rule 8: I support flex trips

Rule 9: I support this.

Rule 10: I support this

Rule 11: I support this

Rule 12: I support this but PLEASE make sure all commercial users pay this. I don't think it is fair that people that make money off the tubers on the lower Madison do not pay their 3%

Rule 13: I support this

Rule 14: I support this.

Rule 15: I support this

Rule 16: I support this

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments on a matter that is very important to me. The Upper Madison has changed my life forever (in the best way possible) and is where I now make my living and my home.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Nicholas A Peterson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 11:38:12 AM  
**Attachments:** [Madison Rec Plan Public Comment.pdf](#)

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Thank you for taking my attached comment under consideration.

--

Nicholas A. Peterson  
[nicholasapeterson@gmail.com](mailto:nicholasapeterson@gmail.com)  
Ph: 406 581 9254

**From:** [Alison Child](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River proposals  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 10:58:49 AM

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Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commission,

Below are my comments on the proposed Madison River regulations that you are considering.

We have been fishing the Madison River every summer for over 30 years. The quality of the fishing has decreased substantially over the years. There are fewer fish, more boats, more people and more pressure on the resource. Changes must be made to preserve the river and the recreational experience. We own property in Madison County.

We agree with the comments you received from Walter Pease which are outlined below:

Walk /Wade proposal comments

The presence of a Walk/Wade section available for anglers who cannot or choose not to rely on float fishing is a unique and valuable asset to the Madison River fishing experience. I am appalled by the Rule V proposal from FOAM that will allow fishing from boats in the upper Walk/Wade section on 4 days per week. This will destroy the Walk/Wade experience for many anglers, and directly conflicts with two of the Madison River Recreation Goals cited by FWP in the draft Environmental Assessment for any new regulations. The two goals that would be denied by this rule are 1) reducing conflicts on the river, and 2) ensuring the long term health and sustainability of the fisheries. Let me expand on these two points.

As far as conflicts between anglers and boaters, the opening of the upper Walk/Wade section to fishing from boats will definitely increase conflict between wade anglers and float fishermen. If fishing boats are allowed to fish while drifting past wade anglers as well as to anchor in prime spots and fish without leaving their boat, this is not a good environment for reducing conflicts. Imagine the situation when boats are anchored in some of the prime holes with anglers casting from boats, shutting out the wade angler. This rule would effectively end the unique walk wade opportunity that now exist for Madison River anglers.

Even more importantly is the impact enacting this rule would have on the fishery. All of us know the importance of this stretch of river to the health of the fishery. Under current walk/wade rules, the fish actually have a refuge in this section of the river. There are many, many places in this stretch that wade anglers cannot reach, and boaters cannot offload their fishermen to fish. Under this regulation, these refuge spots would no longer exist, as these spots would be reachable by drift anglers. This rule would greatly increase the stress on the fish in this upper section. Further, imagine what happens during spring runoff, which also often coincides with spawning season, when the river below the West Fork becomes muddy. The number of float fishermen in this stretch would be unbearable, increasing stress on spawning fish. And back to my first point, the conflicts at that time would be more numerous than ever.

This Rule V cannot provide any value to the river or the Madison River fishing experience, and must be rejected. As a side note, I can say from observation that I don't observe any real problems with the current regulations for the Walk/Wade sections. It is rare that boats are so numerous as to adversely affect wade fishermen. This will not be the case if Rule V is adopted.

My other comments are as follows.

#### Commercial Caps

In order to stop increasing pressure on the river, commercial caps need to be implemented. The 2019 level for the caps would seem to be a fair point that would balance economic concerns with the concern for increased pressure. Along with this, monetization of commercial permits should not be allowed.

#### Rest and Rotation

I do not see the benefit of establishing rest and rotation regulations. This will only force outfitters into other sections of the river on those days, increasing the problems of crowding and conflict, not decreasing them. The Madison isn't long enough to make this a viable solution to any of the problems. If the fish need a break from angling pressure, re-instituting a closed season above McAtee bridge for a couple of months is a better solution.

I understand you are under a lot of pressure from competing groups but please make decisions to protect the long term health of the Madison River.

Thank you,

Alison Child and Paul Kirwin  
Madison County and Park City Utah

**From:** [Frank Salinas](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Adoption of new rules Madison River  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 10:08:02 AM

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To Whom it may concern:

Next year will be my 17th consecutive year fly fishing the Madison River. Our group concentrates our wade fishing from the West Fork to Lyons Bridge. We find that it is an area where we can safely enter the water due to the lower speed of the river in that stretch. Other areas of the river from 3 Dollar Bridge to the West Fork have waters that are often too difficult for us to enter safely. We also occasionally make use of guided drift boats and we appreciate the faster water downstream from Lyons Bridge.

For this reason, I would hope that NEW RULE III would be adopted which would limit the days boats would be allowed as well as limiting the boats to wade fishing and not allow fishing from boats.

I would oppose NEW RULE V that would allow fishing from boats in the described stretch of river. Allowing NEW RULE V would certainly be attractive to guided boats which would increase the fishing pressure, and likely interfere with those that are wade fishing on the few good holes on that accessible stretch. NEW RULE V would seem to be in opposition to the stated goal of addressing the crowding on the Madison River.

I appreciate the Fish and Wildlife Commission's commitment to preserving and protecting one of the best fly fishing rivers in the country.

Thanks for soliciting input from the fly fishing public on this important issue.

Sincerely;  
Frank Salinas  
805/390-0061



**From:** [Paul Olson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Rules  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 9:53:31 AM

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I have fished the Madison River in past years but the over crowding has sent me elsewhere. I would hope the department would do something to reducing the crowding on the river so maybe I'll return to fishing it. I support the sportsman's/GGTU proposal capping outfitting to 2019 or earlier levels. On the Big Hole River, non-commercial use zones has help with crowding and I support implementing non-commercial use zones on the Madison. Non-commercial use days on the Big Hole have made fishing the river way more enjoyable for me.

I also support the proposal for walkin/wade fishing on two sections of the Madison River from June 2 to September 30 each year. Dealing with boats floating by when you are wade fishing has been frustrating for me in the past. Outfitting use has been a problem on the river and I oppose any rule making that would allow expansion of outfitter/guide use beyond 2019 levels. In that light, I oppose creating flex trips or days that allow outfitters to exceed their caps in 2 of any 3 years as proposed by outfitting interests. Again this will continue to create problems with over crowding and I support the proposal from GGTU and sportsman's groups to reduce allocated outfitter days if the outfitter/guide fails to use their days in any consecutive 3 year period.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my comments. Paul Olson, 524 Wolf Ridge Road, Wise River, MT 59764

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:go.microsoft.com) for Windows 10

**From:** [joshbergan@yahoo.com](mailto:joshbergan@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 8:32:16 AM

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Name: Joshua Bergan

City: Belgrade

I am commenting in opposition to the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Skyline Sportsmen Association, and the Anaconda Sportsmen Association Madison River Petition. I believe this proposal would cause greater congestion issues, and don't believe that groups whose primary rivers of concern are other than the Madison should be proposing rules.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [ivan\\_marcotte@yahoo.com](mailto:ivan_marcotte@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 8:19:35 AM

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Name: Ivan Marcotte

City: Asheville, NC

As a non resident, but frequent user of the Madison River, this resource is being loved to death. I applaud the commission for trying to thread this contentious needle to protect the resource even if it means limiting my use of the river.

I support capping the number of outfitters on any given day, but would suggest not eliminating outfitters on any given day because I think that would increase use on other days.

As a more mature (age) angler, I have enjoyed being able to use a boat to access the wade only sections. My concern with eliminating this option is that it would likely force more boats into the lower sections.

Finally, I have been able to float the Smith and saw the benefit of both restricting access and limiting the number of outfitters as a means of enhancing the quality of the experience.

Thank you again for taking care of such a wonderful resource.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [phamm5854@yahoo.com](mailto:phamm5854@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:29:44 PM

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Name: Phillip Hammond

City: Cameron

As a resident of Madison county and frequent fisherman on the upper Madison River I have strong feelings regarding the over use of the river by commercial outfitters. There are so many outfitters on a given day from early June through August that it creates an unpleasant experience on the river. As a local resident I have decreased my fishing days on the river by 75% which makes me sad. I'm in favor of capping the outfitter days to 2018 level, ban outfitters from river use 2 days a week, Keep the float/wade stretch the way it is - no changes. Please do not pander to the outfitters and local businesses, they will be just fine.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Kyle Arledge](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:28:14 PM

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To Whom it may concern:

Next year will be my 17th consecutive year fly fishing the Madison River with my Dad and Brother. Our group concentrates our wade fishing from the West Fork to Lyons Bridge. We find that it is an area where we can safely enter the water due to the lower speed of the river in that stretch. Other areas of the river from 3 Dollar Bridge to the West Fork have waters that are often too difficult for us to enter safely. We also occasionally make use of guided drift boats and we appreciate the faster water downstream from Lyons Bridge.

For this reason, I would hope that NEW RULE III would be adopted which would limit the days boats would be allowed as well as limiting the boats to wade fishing and not allow fishing from boats.

I would oppose NEW RULE V that would allow fishing from boats in the described stretch of river. Allowing NEW RULE V would certainly be attractive to guided boats which would increase the fishing pressure, and likely interfere with those that are wade fishing on the few good holes on that accessible stretch. NEW RULE V would seem to be in opposition to the stated goal of addressing the crowding on the Madison River.

I appreciate the Fish and Wildlife Commission's commitment to preserving and protecting one of the best fly fishing rivers in the country.

Thanks for soliciting input from the fly fishing public on this important issue.

Kyle Arledge  
(805)428-4249

**From:** [Aaron Arledge](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rule changes  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 7:32:49 PM

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To Whom it may concern:

Next year will be my 17th consecutive year fly fishing the Madison River. Our group concentrates our wade fishing from the West Fork to Lyons Bridge. We find that it is an area where we can safely enter the water due to the lower speed of the river in that stretch. Other areas of the river from 3 Dollar Bridge to the West Fork have waters that are often too difficult for us to enter safely. We also occasionally make use of guided drift boats and we appreciate the faster water downstream from Lyons Bridge.

For this reason, I would hope that NEW RULE III would be adopted which would limit the days boats would be allowed as well as limiting the boats to wade fishing and not allow fishing from boats.

I would oppose NEW RULE V that would allow fishing from boats in the described stretch of river. Allowing NEW RULE V would certainly be attractive to guided boats which would increase the fishing pressure, and likely interfere with those that are wade fishing on the few good holes on that accessible stretch. NEW RULE V would seem to be in opposition to the stated goal of addressing the crowding on the Madison River.

I appreciate the Fish and Wildlife Commission's commitment to preserving and protecting one of the best fly fishing rivers in the country.

Thanks for soliciting input from the fly fishing public on this important issue.

Aaron arledge  
A.arledge@sbcglobal.net  
[805.501.9127](tel:8055019127)

Sent from iPhone

**From:** [Jacob Bellner](#)  
**To:** [lrlelliott@hotmail.com](mailto:lrlelliott@hotmail.com); [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed Madison River Rights  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 1:52:30 PM

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I write in support of the proposed regulations for the Madison River

As a younger man I worked for many years guiding the Madison for Bud Lilly's trout shop in West Yellowstone. Bud, and many of the other fly shop owners of that era were conservationists in the purest sense of the word. Sadly that no longer appears to be the case. I have returned to fish it since. The river needs your help. Your biologists have documented a decline in the large fish population, global warming and thermal pollution from Ennis Lake are stressing the fish in the stretches above and below Ennis and over two hundred thousand angler days a year are pressuring the fish.

I have seen the arguments against your regulations and I found them specious. Being a guide or an outfitter working the Madison river is a privilege, not a right. And the notion that guides and outfitters are only "10-15%" of the problem ignores the fact that people who hire a guide usually catch more fish than on their own.

The economic concerns voiced ignore the impact of their current behavior on the fish. Opponents of these regulations should be required to read the old parable about the goose that lays the golden egg!

As I mentioned earlier I guided the Madison for a number of years and I remember the uproar over proposed catch and release regulations and the howling about Dick Vincent's study that required the closure of a number of miles below Lyons bridge. Which required the approval of FWP to become effective. The results of that study led to the current catch and release regulations on the Madison river. It is my hope that you will find the same courage that your predecessors found and implement the proposed regulations.

I would also urge you to strongly consider additional restrictions to protect the fish.

Sincerely Lawrence R, Elliott  
827 Washington Street, Traverse City MI 49686  
[lrlelliott@hotmail.com](mailto:lrlelliott@hotmail.com)  
(269)-845-0120

**From:** [Ajprugby@gmail.com](mailto:Ajprugby@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 1:24:39 PM

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Name: Drew

City: Big Sky

I highly agree with rule 1 & 2. As a Gallatin County resident, my wife and I didn't bother to float the Madison this year due to the sheer amount of commercial use that takes place throughout the river system.

I disagree with rule 3. I personally feel that the walk/wade section can endure the current amount of usage that takes place every summer. We use our craft to portage between fishing holes that would be impossible to do if we were wading. Most of us that work M-F would never have the opportunity if this rule were to be implemented. Also, this new rule would cause more congestion if people don't have the ability to float and spread out.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [terryjh@msn.com](mailto:terryjh@msn.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 12:43:23 PM

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Name:

City:

We support a CAP on the number of commercial boats allowed on the river on a given day.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [robertvr23@gmail.com](mailto:robertvr23@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 12:28:53 PM

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Name: Robert Van Rensburg  
City: West Yellowstone  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
2. Lyons Bridge to Palisades
3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow

floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [roberthart248557@aol.com](mailto:roberthart248557@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 12:22:43 PM

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Name: Robert Hartmann

City: Murphys CA

The wade section should be restricted to walking/wading fisherman only. Guides should not have the advantage of dropping in on top of a fisherman via watercraft who has walked a substantial time to reach a lessor pressured destination. Unfortunately some guides but not all are so anxious to put their clients over fish that they become rude idiots. I have fished the Madison for over twenty years and have no doubt that the quality of fishing in the wade section has declined from excessive pressure.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [shepard.brad@gmail.com](mailto:shepard.brad@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 12:22:40 PM

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Name: Bradley B. Shepard

City: Livingston

TO: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commissioners

Regarding: Recreation Management Use on the Madison River

Dear FWP Commissioners,

I am submitting my specific comments, recommendations, and preferences regarding the Environment Assessment (EA) for Recreation Management Use on the Madison River. I think it is time for FWP (Commission and Staff) to make a decision that is not totally driven by commercial users. While I respect the privilege, and I do consider it a "privilege" not a "right", for some individuals to make money off of our state resources, I think it is up to FWP to balance that privilege with rights of Montana citizens to enjoy their Montana resources. I have lived in Montana for over 50 years, but I was not born here. Trout fishing brought me to this state over 50 years ago and I still spend much of my free time trout fishing.

I used to fish the Madison River on a regular basis back in the 1970's, but as it got progressively more and more crowded with commercial anglers I spent less and less time fishing the Madison and concentrated on off-season times. It has gotten so bad in the past 10 years I think I have only fished the Madison River about 30 times in the past 10 years. I have also fished the Big Hole and Beaverhead rivers on a regular basis and one of the best things that FWP ever did was create the "citizen" days on specific reaches of these rivers for certain days. I now only fish these rivers during these special times. I wanted to give you this background on my perspective actions regarding trout fishing, so you know I feel strongly about how our recreation and fish resources are managed.

I support the main three components of this recreation management, but strongly believe the top priority must be protecting and fostering the long-term health and sustainability of the fisheries. I am afraid that fishing pressure, even under limited harvest regulations and voluntary release of trout by anglers, appears to be impacting trout populations in the Madison River. Your own data has documented an apparent decline of larger fish and reduction in angler satisfaction. In my opinion you have done about all you can with fishing regulations. It is now time to do something about fishing pressure and a more equitable allocation of fishing use through recreation use management restrictions. In my opinion we are at a cross-roads in our state and in our nation about how we allocate our resources. Do the rich get everything and the middle class and poor nothing? I do not like the European model of fish and wildlife management and do NOT want to see that happen here.

I have read the EA, FOAM, and George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited's (GGTU) documents. I think the GGTU proposal provides the greatest potential for meeting my preferred goal for Recreation Management of the Madison River. If only one of the three alternatives is selected for adoption, I support the GGTU alternative with a few modifications. I am uncomfortable with the incorporation of commercial "flex trips" that would allow commercial users to exceed their allocated use. I think this system would be rife for problems and cause unnecessary crowding. I especially think 10 "flex trips" is too many. Commercial users can schedule trips far in advance. The only time I would allow these "flex trips" to be used would be when FWP closed the river to fishing during certain time periods for thermal or other reasons to protect the fish resources.

I am concerned that using the 2019 or 2020 client use days as a base, as proposed by both FOAM and the GGTU, could further harm trout populations in the river. Your own data

suggest this level of use will likely not sustain a quality fishery in the Madison River. I recommend a lower base level of commercial use. I suggest an average of the last ten years or a level of use that resulted in fish populations that provided high quality fisheries should be used.

I suggest that this recreation use plan offers an opportunity for FWP to re-allocate commercial fishing use pressure to spread it out over fall, winter, and spring seasons. I believe Montana residents have been forced to fish these seasons if they want to avoid horrible crowding and I believe it is time for commercial users to shift some of their pressure to these time periods too. If their clients don't want to fish during these seasons, then they really aren't very avid anglers. FWP should provide better data broken out by seasons so we can better evaluate this option.

I support the "Use Stamp" but want to see these stamps enforced and the data provided by these stamps used in management as soon as data are available. I don't agree with waiting two years until beginning to use these data. I also would like to see some quantifiable criteria set up beforehand that would trigger specific management actions to try to adaptively manage this valuable resource.

I support using walk-in access points to limit use of the lower river below Graycliff FAS. I think this is a good idea and we need to start promoting more "primitive" use restrictions on our more crowded rivers.

I think it would be reasonable to restrict out-of-state commercial use to low levels and use funds generated from "Use Stamp" revenue to enforce these restrictions. I support providing opportunities for Montana guides and outfitters but question whether supporting out-of-state guides and outfitters is generating economic gain for Montana.

I recommend facing the reality that it may be necessary to implement a lottery use system if changes implemented by this plan do not achieve their goals of protecting the quality fishery and providing a quality angling experience. I do not believe we are there yet, but population growth in our region and state cannot be ignored.

I wholeheartedly support the "Rest/Rotation" portion of the plan and urge you to implement this action. I found this really means a lot to me when fishing the Big Hole and Beaverhead rivers and I schedule my trips around these days.

I support hiring of "River Rangers" to ensure these management restrictions are followed. These "River Rangers" should definitely be on the job the first two to three years following the implementation of these recreation use restrictions to convince users these restrictions have teeth.

While I support collecting data to quantify economic benefits of commercial and recreational angling on Montana's waters, I do not think these economic data should dictate our fish or fishing use management. We know that angling has non-economic benefits for anglers that is impossible to quantify in economic terms. As I stated earlier, commercial use of our shared state resources is NOT a "right", it is a "privilege" that should not interfere with the "right" of Montana citizens to enjoy our state's resources. This has commonly been called the "tragedy of the commons" that leads to over-use of resources and their ultimate decline. This philosophy and clarifications of "rights" versus "privilege" should be more clearly stated in the plan.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. I look forward to seeing FWP and its Commission adopt rules that protect the interest of all Montanans to use and enjoy Montana's resources.

Sincerely,

Bradley B. Shepard

65 9th Street Island Drive  
Livingston, Montana 59047

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [bnchristopher@gmail.com](mailto:bnchristopher@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 10:36:44 AM

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Name: Christopher Scott

City: BOZEMAN

Please adopt a plan to reduce outfitter/guide trips or allow the general public stretches of the river that lack outfitter/guides. The general public is being pushed off the Madison by the greedy guide industry. It is virtually impossible to get a shuttle on the Madison anymore since the shuttle companies are overwhelmed by all the guide trips. I would also like to see higher fees being levied on the guide industry so that more money can be reinvested in the public access sites and facilities on the Madison.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [jspence@bigskyanglers.com](mailto:jspence@bigskyanglers.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 9:23:42 AM

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Name: Justin Spence  
City: West Yellowstone, MT  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I am in support of proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. Rest and Rotation for Commercial use, as proposed, will NOT work. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
2. Lyons Bridge to Palisades
3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these commonly floated sections will force ALL guided float trips that spread out among all of these floats into Palisades and downstream - sections of river that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic, or abandoning the concept entirely. One alternative would be to close a particular access point to commercial use on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison.

At face value this rule seems noble, but it?s worth noting several things here to consider. Firstly, the issue we are facing on the Madison is overcrowding, taking boats out of the wade

section on weekends lessens anglers' ability to spread out, forcing everyone into the same wade fishing accesses. Secondly, several landowners in the upper wade section have become increasingly aggressive about confronting wade fishing anglers, accusing them of trespassing according to their own interpretation of the Montana Stream Access Law. They are aggressively posting no trespassing signs, arguably illegally, and chasing anglers off of the public water adjacent to their property.

I believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of our beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat-based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades. This rule is an access issue and should be looked at with a more critical eye as it benefits very few (a handful of property owners) at the cost of many (the angling public).

In addition, I do NOT support the proposal to allow fishing from the boat in sections where boats are currently allowed for transportation purposes only. The existing rules maintain a nice compromise between maintaining access to our public waters and providing a section of river where wading anglers can have access to water that is not influenced by the effect of boat angling. If nothing else, I feel that it is culturally significant to retain the wade fishing only distinction.

Thank You all for your time and effort on this important matter.

Justin Spence, Big Sky Anglers

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Eruk Williamson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] New rules  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 9:14:59 AM

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Please pass New Rules I,II,III,IV. WE SUPPORT any reduction in guided float boats on the Madison River.  
Eruk and Jane Williamson  
406-600-7342

**From:** [Pieske, Shawna](#) on behalf of [FWP Commission](#)  
**To:** [Ryce, Eileen](#); [Skaar, Donald](#); [Wedde, Kim](#); [Pat Byorth \(fwpdistrict2@gmail.com\)](#); [Rich Stuker](#); [Shane Colton](#); [Tim Aldrich \(Cartim8@gmail.com\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Comments on proposed Madison River rec rules  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:27:04 AM  
**Attachments:** [FarlingCommentsMadisonRec Rules10-2020.pdf](#)

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**From:** Bruce Farling <[brucefarling@gmail.com](mailto:brucefarling@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 8:52 PM  
**To:** FWP Commission <[FWComm@mt.gov](mailto:FWComm@mt.gov)>  
**Cc:** Ryce, Eileen <[ERyce@mt.gov](mailto:ERyce@mt.gov)>; Horton, Travis <[THorton@mt.gov](mailto:THorton@mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on proposed Madison River rec rules

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for considering the attached comments on the proposed Madison River Recreation Rules.

Bruce Farling  
232 West Sussex Avenue  
Missoula, MT 59801

**From:** [nicholedye1@hotmail.com](mailto:nicholedye1@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:21:39 AM

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Name: Nichole Dye  
City: West Yellowstone, MT  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I am in support of proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. Rest and Rotation for Commercial use, as proposed, will NOT work. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
2. Lyons Bridge to Palisades
3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these commonly floated sections will force ALL guided float trips that spread out among all of these floats into Palisades and downstream - sections of river that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic, or abandoning the concept entirely. One alternative would be to close a particular access point to commercial use on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison.

At face value this rule seems noble, but it?s worth noting several things here to consider. Firstly, the issue we are facing on the Madison is overcrowding, taking boats out of the wade

section on weekends lessens anglers' ability to spread out, forcing everyone into the same wade fishing accesses. Secondly, several landowners in the upper wade section have become increasingly aggressive about confronting wade fishing anglers, accusing them of trespassing according to their own interpretation of the Montana Stream Access Law. They are aggressively posting no trespassing signs, arguably illegally, and chasing anglers off of the public water adjacent to their property.

I believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of our beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat-based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades. This rule is an access issue and should be looked at with a more critical eye as it benefits very few (a handful of property owners) at the cost of many (the angling public).

In addition, I do NOT support the proposal to allow fishing from the boat in sections where boats are currently allowed for transportation purposes only. The existing rules maintain a nice compromise between maintaining access to our public waters and providing a section of river where wading anglers can have access to water that is not influenced by the effect of boat angling. If nothing else, I feel that it is culturally significant to retain the wade fishing only distinction.

Thank You all for your time and effort on this important matter.

Nichole Dye

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [aarondfreed@gmail.com](mailto:aarondfreed@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:08:29 AM

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Name: Aaron Freed

City: West Yellowstone, MT

To start, I do think that the Madison is a very crowded river, and I do think that the fishing experience here could be improved. I do not fish the river much during peak seasons at all for specifically that issue. However, I do not particularly like most of the options currently on the table, and do not think that they will significantly help reduce perceived crowding issues.

I do not support removing boats from the wade-only stretches since it will limit access to stretches of the river, and to public lands that currently can only be accessed by boats. This goes against our public stream access law in my eyes and should not be adopted. However, if it comes to removing boats for a few days a week as a compromise, I can live with that.

Conversely, I also think that allowing fishing from boats a few days a week in these stretches (as proposed by FOAM) also has the potential to increase conflict, and is not a great solution. I feel rules regarding boats in these stretches are fine as is, and do not need to be adjusted. While this change may spread out commercial use, the walk-wade areas (particularly in the Reynolds Bridge, \$3 Bridge and West Fork areas) see such heavy wade use that having more boats will only increase conflict, especially since many of these anglers already seem to want boats removed altogether and will be even more disgruntled with people fishing from boats.

Regarding the float stretches, I am in favor of capping the number of trips as discussed, and don't see an issue there. However, the rest-rotation plan being considered is a terrible idea and will only make things worse. Private floaters may be happy with it but commercial use will be condensed into an even smaller area, which will only increase crowding and lead to a worse overall experience for paying clients, which of course bring lots of revenue to the state and local businesses. Not only does rest-rotation of Lyons to Palisades reduce the amount of water for commercial floats to spread out in, it also reduces a guide's ability to use Windy Point access as a launch point as a way to spread out from the crowds. And I especially do not like the George Grant TU proposal of rest-rotation for Lyons to Palisades on Sundays, to go along with no floating in the wade stretches on that same day; all commercial floats will be extremely condensed with only Palisades to Ennis stretches available for float trips.

I do not have any issues with the plan for a no-cost stamp for recreational users, though I have doubts as to whether people will honestly report their use, or if they will report it at all. However, I am all for trying it if it will help gain information for future management strategies, as I think the population of recreational fishermen is growing and also probably needs to be regulated along with commercial use.

For background, I am a year-round resident of West Yellowstone, Montana, and a manager at Blue Ribbon Flies. I am not a fishing guide, but obviously my livelihood still depends in large part on the Madison River maintaining its status as a top fishing destination. While I appreciate the time and effort put into the George Grant TU chapter and other organizations' proposal, it is clear that they do not use the Madison River enough to understand how to help ease the issues currently in effect on the river. I like the FOAM petition better on the whole, though it is not a perfect proposal either. In the end, I hope that whatever rule changes are

adopted, that they are not permanent and will be revisited in a year or two to evaluate their effectiveness and adjust as necessary.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [clint@parsleylegal.com](mailto:clint@parsleylegal.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 7:23:02 AM

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Name: Clint Parsley  
City: Austin

I support Big Sky Anglers' position on Rules 2, 3, and 5 as they have set out below. I have fished with them for years and believe they have a well-rounded approach to the issues presented and a set of values that I admire and try to emulate.

Thank you for your consideration.

Clint Parsley

#### Rule 2: Rest and Rotation

\*\*Being proposed here is a Saturday closure of all commercial use from Varney Bridge to Ennis and a Sunday closure from Lyons Bridge to Palisades. These closures will be active from June 15-September 30\*\*

Our position is that Rest and Rotation as it is currently defined will not work on the Madison River and will in fact make crowding worse. The method needs improvement.

This doesn't seem too extreme at face value but it should be noted that the language being used for Rest and Rotation is flawed in that the Sunday closure of Lyons-Palisades incidentally results in the closure of AT LEAST 8 float section options to commercial use. Each of the following sections utilizes a portion of or all of the proposed closure and would be closed for guided trips on Sundays.

- Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
- Lyons Bridge to Palisades
- Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
- Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
- Windy Point to Palisades
- Windy Point to Ruby Creek
- Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
- Windy Point to Storey Ditch
- Raynold's Pass to Windy Point
- Pine Butte to Windy Point
- Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips on Sundays into Palisades and downstream, into those sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river below Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

Closing of the entire section doesn't work on the Madison, perhaps we can explore rest and rotation on the individual fishing access level as a possible alternative. For example, Lyons Bridge access could be closed on Sundays to commercial use. Another consideration might be to close that particular float on a given day, but still allow for other floats that overlap the same section to occur. Allowing boats to spread out is the key to avoiding crowded situations.

#### Rule 3: Closure of Walk/Wade Section to boats

\*\*Being proposed here is a closure to ALL boats (not just commercial) in the sections of river commonly referred to as the walk/wade stretches (Quake Lake outlet - Lyons Bridge and Ennis to Ennis Reservoir) on weekends: Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. These closures will be active from June 15-September 30\*\*

Our position is that we do NOT support the ban of watercraft on the wade section at any time and we do NOT support fishing from boats in the wade section.

At face value this rule seems noble, but it's worth noting several things here to consider.

Firstly, the issue we are facing on the Madison is overcrowding, taking boats out of the wade section on weekends lessens anglers' ability to spread out, forcing everyone into the same wade fishing accesses.

Secondly, several landowners in the upper wade section have become increasingly aggressive about confronting wade fishing anglers, accusing them of trespassing according to their own interpretation of the Montana Stream Access Law. They are aggressively posting no trespassing signs, arguably illegally, and chasing anglers off of the public water adjacent to their property.

We believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of our beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat-based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

This rule is an access issue and should be looked at with a more critical eye as it benefits very few (a handful of property owners) at the cost of many (the angling public).

#### Rule 5: Closure of Walk/Wade Section to Boats-Alternate to Rule 3

\*\*Being proposed here is an alternate rule to Rule 3: this is presented by FOAM (Fishing Outfitter Association of Montana) and proposes a closure to boats on the two walk/wade stretches on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Leaving Sunday open to boats to accommodate the Rest and Rotation closure of Lyons to Palisades to commercial use in Rule 2. It also proposes to allow fishing from the boat in the walk/wade section from Sunday through Wednesday. These closures will be active from June 15-September 30\*\*

Our position is that we do NOT support the ban of watercraft on the wade section at any time and we do NOT support fishing from boats in the wade section.

As mentioned, this is intended to be an alternate to Rule 3. Best case scenario in our view is the omission of BOTH of these Rules, retaining the status quo in the walk/wade sections. We believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jim Arledge](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Adoption of NEW RULES I through XVI (Recreational use on the Madison River)  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 8:08:42 PM

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To Whom it may concern:

Next year will be my 17th consecutive year fly fishing the Madison River. Our group concentrates our wade fishing from the West Fork to Lyons Bridge. We find that it is an area where we can safely enter the water due to the lower speed of the river in that stretch. Other areas of the river from 3 Dollar Bridge to the West Fork have waters that are often too difficult for us to enter safely. We also occasionally make use of guided drift boats and we appreciate the faster water downstream from Lyons Bridge.

For this reason, I would hope that NEW RULE III would be adopted which would limit the days boats would be allowed as well as limiting the boats to wade fishing and not allow fishing from boats.

I would oppose NEW RULE V that would allow fishing from boats in the described stretch of river. Allowing NEW RULE V would certainly be attractive to guided boats which would increase the fishing pressure, and likely interfere with those that are wade fishing on the few good holes on that accessible stretch. NEW RULE V would seem to be in opposition to the stated goal of addressing the crowding on the Madison River.

I appreciate the Fish and Wildlife Commission's commitment to preserving and protecting one of the best fly fishing rivers in the country.

Thanks for soliciting input from the fly fishing public on this important issue.

Jim Arledge  
[jockoar15@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jockoar15@sbcglobal.net)  
805 469 9448

**From:** [dgarland10@gmail.com](mailto:dgarland10@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 4:53:31 PM

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Name: David Garland

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
2. Lyons Bridge to Palisades
3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow

floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

David Garland

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [n.calabro91@gmail.com](mailto:n.calabro91@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 3:41:53 PM

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Name: Nicholas Calabro  
City: West Yellowstone, MT  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I am in support of proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. Rest and Rotation for Commercial use, as proposed, will NOT work. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
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5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these commonly floated sections will force ALL guided float trips that spread out among all of these floats into Palisades and downstream - sections of river that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic, or abandoning the concept entirely. One alternative would be to close a particular access point to commercial use on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison.

At face value this rule seems noble, but it?s worth noting several things here to consider. Firstly, the issue we are facing on the Madison is overcrowding, taking boats out of the wade

section on weekends lessens anglers' ability to spread out, forcing everyone into the same wade fishing accesses. Secondly, several landowners in the upper wade section have become increasingly aggressive about confronting wade fishing anglers, accusing them of trespassing according to their own interpretation of the Montana Stream Access Law. They are aggressively posting no trespassing signs, arguably illegally, and chasing anglers off of the public water adjacent to their property.

I believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of our beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat-based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades. This rule is an access issue and should be looked at with a more critical eye as it benefits very few (a handful of property owners) at the cost of many (the angling public).

In addition, I do NOT support the proposal to allow fishing from the boat in sections where boats are currently allowed for transportation purposes only. The existing rules maintain a nice compromise between maintaining access to our public waters and providing a section of river where wading anglers can have access to water that is not influenced by the effect of boat angling. If nothing else, I feel that it is culturally significant to retain the wade fishing only distinction.

Thank You all for your time and effort on this important matter.

Nicholas

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Leo Watson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment Leo Watson  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 3:23:35 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
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8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold's Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays – the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire

section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Leo Watson

**From:** [Dgreenemt1@gmail.com](mailto:Dgreenemt1@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 2:06:58 PM

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Name: Dick Greene

City: Bozeman

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river, doing so will force overcrowding further down stream of Palisades just moving the problem.

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
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3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
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The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

As previous Montana Outfitter 6396 and co-owner of Bud Lilly's Trout Shop from 1995 through 2016 I have seen these issues raised numerous times. At one point in the early 2000 outfitter use was pegged at 17% of total use. Now in your recent statistics outfitted trips accounted for 11%.

I believe FOAM's approach in their recommendations while not perfect, seems easier to administer and maintains the best option for spreading out the use of the Madison for all parties.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Andrew Gorder](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] HHA Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 1:57:11 PM  
**Attachments:** [HHAMadisonRiverRulemakingComments \(10-28-20\).pdf](#)

---

Attached,

Please find a comment letter from Hellgate Hunters and Anglers.

Thank you,

**From:** [jaredcady.getmdry@gmail.com](mailto:jaredcady.getmdry@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 11:35:00 AM

---

Name: Jared Cady  
City: West Yellowstone, MT & Graham, WA  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I am in support of proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. Rest and Rotation for Commercial use, as proposed, will NOT work. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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The incidental closure of all of these commonly floated sections will force ALL guided float trips that spread out among all of these floats into Palisades and downstream - sections of river that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic, or abandoning the concept entirely. One alternative would be to close a particular access point to commercial use on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison.

At face value this rule seems noble, but it?s worth noting several things here to consider. Firstly, the issue we are facing on the Madison is overcrowding, taking boats out of the wade

section on weekends lessens anglers' ability to spread out, forcing everyone into the same wade fishing accesses. Secondly, several landowners in the upper wade section have become increasingly aggressive about confronting wade fishing anglers, accusing them of trespassing according to their own interpretation of the Montana Stream Access Law. They are aggressively posting no trespassing signs, arguably illegally, and chasing anglers off of the public water adjacent to their property.

I believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of our beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat-based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades. This rule is an access issue and should be looked at with a more critical eye as it benefits very few (a handful of property owners) at the cost of many (the angling public).

In addition, I do NOT support the proposal to allow fishing from the boat in sections where boats are currently allowed for transportation purposes only. The existing rules maintain a nice compromise between maintaining access to our public waters and providing a section of river where wading anglers can have access to water that is not influenced by the effect of boat angling. If nothing else, I feel that it is culturally significant to retain the wade fishing only distinction.

Thank You all for your time and effort on this important matter.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [lucas.alcocer@sstx.org](mailto:lucas.alcocer@sstx.org)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 11:06:14 AM

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Name: Lucas Alcocer  
City: Austin  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow



floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [emily.bubbers@gmail.com](mailto:emily.bubbers@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 11:03:25 AM

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Name: Emily Bubbers  
City: Helena  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I am in support of proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. Rest and Rotation for Commercial use, as proposed, will NOT work. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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I believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of our beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat-based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades. This rule is an access issue and should be looked at with a more critical eye as it benefits very few (a handful of property owners) at the cost of many (the angling public).

In addition, I do NOT support the proposal to allow fishing from the boat in sections where boats are currently allowed for transportation purposes only. The existing rules maintain a nice compromise between maintaining access to our public waters and providing a section of river where wading anglers can have access to water that is not influenced by the effect of boat angling. If nothing else, I feel that it is culturally significant to retain the wade fishing only distinction.

Thank You all for your time and effort on this important matter.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Andrew Gorder](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Proposed Rules  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 10:56:43 AM

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Montana FWP/Member of the Fish & Wildlife Commission,

Thank you for initiating the rule-making process on common sense reforms aimed at managing use on the Madison River. As a Montana resident and an avid angler, I have slowly watched the Madison succumb to an increasing number of users (both commercial and non-commercial) over the past 12 years. I used to fish the Madison regularly, but have stopped entirely unless I can find time during the off-season (i.e. Feb. March, or October) when the crowds are not overwhelming. Unfortunately, I know scores of other Montana anglers who have also been displaced from the Madison.

While I know and respect many of those who make a living off of Montana's public resources, I believe it is time to implement an outfitting moratorium in place based on 2019 (or prior) levels. The commission should not allow any flex days or any other mechanism (as proposed by some) to allow commercial growth beyond 2019 levels. I would similarly encourage FWP to reject any attempt to further monetize the resource by allowing for the sanctioned sale of outfitting privileges, which will simply ensure that no commercial use will ever be lost to attrition. I also encourage the adoption of a rest-and-rotation strategy for commercial outfitting — similar to regulations on commercial use on the Big Hole, Beaverhead and Bitterroot Rivers. This has worked very well on these rivers, and local communities did not go under as a result.

Montana has always made tough decisions to regulate use in order to ensure that its resources (and the experience that those resources provide) can be enjoyed by all and by future generations. Just look at the regulations on the Smith River, for example, which could have been loved to death. Likewise, Montana should do the same for the Madison and take reasonable steps to regulate commercial use. It is now or never, because interest in the Madison is never going to decrease. Therefore, I write to encourage the adoption of the of New Rules 1 through 4, and New Rule 16.

Sincerely,

Andrew Gorder

**From:** [mklara0424@gmail.com](mailto:mklara0424@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 10:55:15 AM

---

Name: Matthew Klara  
City: Helena/West Yellowstone  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I am in support of proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. Rest and Rotation for Commercial use, as proposed, will NOT work. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic, or abandoning the concept entirely. One alternative would be to close a particular access point to commercial use on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison.

At face value this rule seems noble, but it's worth noting several things here to consider. Firstly, the issue we are facing on the Madison is overcrowding, taking boats out of the wade section on weekends lessens anglers' ability to spread out, forcing everyone into the same wade fishing accesses. Secondly, several landowners in the upper wade section have become increasingly aggressive about confronting wade fishing anglers, accusing them of trespassing

according to their own interpretation of the Montana Stream Access Law. They are aggressively posting no trespassing signs, arguably illegally, and chasing anglers off of the public water adjacent to their property.

I believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of our beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat-based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades. This rule is an access issue and should be looked at with a more critical eye as it benefits very few (a handful of property owners) at the cost of many (the angling public).

In addition, I do NOT support the proposal to allow fishing from the boat in sections where boats are currently allowed for transportation purposes only. The existing rules maintain a nice compromise between maintaining access to our public waters and providing a section of river where wading anglers can have access to water that is not influenced by the effect of boat angling. If nothing else, I feel that it is culturally significant to retain the wade fishing only distinction.

Thank You all for your time and effort on this important matter.

Matt Klara

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jkirsnis@aol.com](mailto:Jkirsnis@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 10:01:53 AM

---

Name: Jason Kirsnis

City: Hawthorne

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

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Thank you

Jason Kirsnis

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Evans, Scott](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 9:59:03 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Sent from my iPhone

**Scott Evans**

*Project Engineer*

**Independence Excavating, Inc.**

5720 E. Schaaf Rd. | Independence, OH 44131

440.488.4428 Direct

sevans@indexc.com

[www.indexc.com](http://www.indexc.com) [[indexc.com](http://www.indexc.com)]



**From:** [connormay.j@gmail.com](mailto:connormay.j@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 9:56:05 AM

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Name:

City: Bozeman

As a resident of Montana for around 20 years I have seen a great deal of change in our state. I fell in love with the Madison River many years ago and it became my main floating/fishing destination. Over the last few years I have found it to be overpopulated with out of state visitors and guides. I know guiding brings in revenue but there has to be a cap on amount of guided. Waiting at the windy point boat ramp for 30-45 minutes to put in my drift boat is not acceptable. Especially when Montanans are the one who pay for the funding to have these accesses. As a Montanan I find it harder and harder to go enjoy this river as guides and out of state people pressure this river more and more.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jack.spencer413@gmail.com](mailto:Jack.spencer413@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 9:37:50 AM

---

Name: Jack Spencer

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Brianna Taylor](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] The Madison River Recreation Plan Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 9:36:21 AM  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)

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To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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I understand the sentiment of Rest and Rotation, however the way it is proposed here does not accomplish the goal set forth by the Madison River Recreation Plan. It would increase crowding in certain areas especially on the busiest days of the week.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to

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Brianna S. Taylor  
SSG Purchasing Agent, SCM  
720-287-6307  
[brianna.taylor@sncorp.com](mailto:brianna.taylor@sncorp.com) | [sncorp.com](http://sncorp.com) [[sncorp.com](http://sncorp.com)]



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**Non-Sensitive**

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**From:** [Michael Richter](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] madison river rules  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 5:45:54 PM

---

Please implement the rest and rotation schedule! Montana residents need somewhere to go on the madison without being tangled up in all the guides. I'm guessing the outfitters are opposing this but even off duty guides will enjoy it once it is implemented. Please also implement the new rule 1 to cap levels at 2019 without any flex days or other tricks to go above 2019 days. Thank you for giving us a chance to fish the Madison again!!!  
Mike Richter



**From:** [riley@flywatertravel.com](mailto:riley@flywatertravel.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 5:12:00 PM

---

Name: Riley  
City: Medford  
To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules

banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [cam coffin](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 3:13:44 PM

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To whom it may concern

My name is Cam Coffin I live in West Yellowstone, MT and have been a resident of the state my entire life. First off thank you for taking public comment on these important issues concerning the Madison river and thanks for taking the time to read this letter. I would like to express my concerns on the proposed rules 2, 3 and 5.

Rule 2 on rest and rotation as written will do nothing more than increase crowding from Palisades downstream on Sundays and eliminate at least eight different sections that could be used to ease overcrowding and pressure on the Madison river. These sections are;

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
2. Lyons Bridge to Palisades
3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch

This does not include 3 other sections that are currently used by commercial as well as non-commercial boats which further helps to spread anglers out among the river. These sections are;

1. Raynolds Bridge to Windy Point
2. Pine Butte to Windy Point
3. Pine Butte to Palisades

The float section of the Madison is currently only 37.6 miles and by eliminating approximately 8 miles of this total even for just a day would greatly intensify the commercial usage on all sections below Palisades thereby increasing conflicts rather than reducing them. While rest and rotation may or may not have worked on rivers like the Big Hole please keep in mind that the Big Hole offers roughly 102 miles of floatable water 2 ½ times more than the Madison.

Rule 3 & 5 concerning the walk/wade sections as written eliminates watercraft or floatation devices from these sections on certain days. I cannot support the ban of watercraft in this section at any time but also cannot support fishing from boats in this

section at any time either. Watercraft and floatation devices should be used for access only. If adopted these rules will not only set a bad precedent for other recreation plans but also would privatize these sections of water through limited access as proposed by this rule. Private landowners in these sections have become increasingly aggressive toward wade fishing anglers accusing them of trespassing according to their own interpretation of the Montana Stream Access Law and chasing anglers off the public water adjacent to their property. The Montana Stream Access Law has been essential for all anglers who fish any of Montana's waters and I feel that this rule, if adopted, would only benefit a few private land owners who have only exacerbated conflicts over the past several years.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter. The task that you now take on is a daunting one and I wish you the best of luck.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

404 Washburn Circle  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758  
[Camcoffin@gmail.com](mailto:Camcoffin@gmail.com)  
(406) 640-1394

Sincerely

Cam Coffin

**From:** [njp@nelegalsearch.com](mailto:njp@nelegalsearch.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:52:36 AM

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Name:  
City:  
To whom it may concern:

Thanks for all of the time and effort you are putting into working on a solution for the Madison. I have fished the Madison for 30 years and it's my favorite river in the world. My father and I (and sometimes my brother) take an annual trip.

One thought is that perhaps you will never be able to come up with a solution for the heavy fishing period of late June, July--so many competing interests. Perhaps consider closing the stream down in Feb, March, April, May, early June--or at least give the stream some rest days during those time periods. The crowds in late June, July don't turn us off--I'm just worried the fish are getting hammered all year and it might be easier to give them a rest (I recognize it's catch and release) but give them a rest leading into the summer.

We float below Lyons but also wade fish in the wade sections in late June, early July--when crowds are at their peak--so I'm familiar with the crowding situation--it actually doesn't bother us--I just think the fish need a rest at some point and might be easier to do in winter/spring. Also as far as not allowing boats in wading section on certain days. My father is 80 he loves that section but it's becoming difficult for him to strictly wade fish--it's very nice to have the boat to transport and then get out at certain spots to wade sections that are easier wading. I'm not in favor of the rule limiting boats in the wade section for transportation (I like the current rule of no fishing from boat) I have waded those sections (three dollar, Reynolds etc for 30 years and not once have I been bothered by boat traffic nor felt that it was ruining the experience). If you do adopt that rule perhaps have an exemption if a guided boat has a client over 70.

Thanks again for all of your efforts.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [william.h.west@gmail.com](mailto:william.h.west@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:43:16 AM

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Name: Billy West  
City: Livingston  
To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
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9. Raynold's Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a

dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

From: [skyjayhawk@cox.net](mailto:skyjayhawk@cox.net)  
To: [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
Subject: Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
Date: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:28:05 AM

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Name: Sherri Yohe  
City:  
To Whom it May Concern



Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.



I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:



Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:



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Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.



I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.



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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Michael Arneson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreational Plan  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 5:22:33 PM

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I realize the ongoing discussions have been contentious and many stakeholders are at the table. I also appreciate the need for give and take and compromise to reach what likely will be an imperfect solution. My one hope is that FWP doesn't lose sight of the primary objective: ensuring that the Madison River resource is conserved and preserved for the benefit of future generations. With the benefit of extensive technology, research, science and best practices, it would be inexcusable to settle on any 'solution' that doesn't address the primary objective. The threats of climate change, pollution, overuse, abuse, short-term biases and partisan politics are all real, formidable and escalating. Thank you in advance for considering the environmental consequences of whatever resolution you come up with, and for your efforts to protect and preserve this amazing river. Anything short of that will in the long run fail all of us.

Mike Arneson  
1301 Towering Pines Road  
Big Sky, MT 59716

**From:** [Rich Fairbanks](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 1:32:51 PM

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## To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Rich F. Fairbanks III

Residences: Meridian, ID  
Property Owner: West Yellowstone, MT

Rich Fairbanks  
(208) 602-8782  
[fairbanks.rich@gmail.com](mailto:fairbanks.rich@gmail.com)

**From:** [Whit Fairbanks](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 1:13:34 PM

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## To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

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When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Whitney R. Fairbanks

Residences: Dallas, TX  
Property Owner: West Yellowstone, MT

Whit Fairbanks  
(469) 600-9638  
[Whitfairbanks@yahoo.com](mailto:Whitfairbanks@yahoo.com)

**From:** [Rege Dinkel](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Comments for Rule Changes  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 10:50:04 AM  
**Attachments:** [RD Madison River Recreation Plan Comments 1022020.docx](#)

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Hello

Attached is a word doc with my comments regarding the proposed Madison River rule changes. Thanks.

Rege Dinkel  
Camp Hill, PA

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Virus-free. [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com) [[avg.com](#)]

[\[avg.com\]](#)

**From:** [nate.montanatroutonthefly.com](http://nate.montanatroutonthefly.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Proposal  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 10:38:02 AM

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To whom it may concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River.

As a Montana native, I have been a guide and outfitter on the Madison River since 1999. I have seen an uptick in users on the Madison River in Yellowstone National Park and Montana in my career. However, I have not seen a boater conflict with wade anglers. If anything, I have witnessed boater conflict with other boaters. Closing any Madison River section, permanently or rest and rotation to boats, will not solve crowding problems.

Here are my comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed, and I believe it will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections with much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches. It cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays – the exact opposite of the rule's intended result.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.



**Rules 3 and 5.** I **STRONGLY** disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana's values and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule can cause even more significant crowding of boat-based anglers and recreational floaters into the river's sections downstream of Palisades.

Thank you,

**Nate Stevane**

Owner & Outfitter #8533

Trout On The Fly, LLC

[www.MontanaTroutOnTheFly.com](http://www.MontanaTroutOnTheFly.com) [[montanatroutonthefly.com](http://montanatroutonthefly.com)]

(406)580-7370

**Mailing Address:**

4467 Ethan Way

Bozeman, MT 59718



**TROUT ON THE FLY**  
— FLY FISHING OUTFITTERS —

**From:** [will@lillardflyfishing.com](mailto:will@lillardflyfishing.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 9:54:11 AM

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Name: William Lillard

City:

Dear Fish & Wildlife Commission,

My name is Will Lillard. Thank you for taking the time to review my comment. I am the owner and operator of Lillard Fly Fishing Expeditions (LFFE). LFFE is an environmental education company that specializes in 7-20 day fly fishing trips for middle and high school students. Our mission is to inspire confident and independent anglers with a lifelong passion for conservation and stewardship. We run trips in NC, CO, MT, WY, and ME. My Montana Outfitters License # is 36523 and I was issued a Madison River SRP #325 on April, 1 2020. LFFE is a small family-owned company that I started in 2010 while earning a master's in Environmental Conservation Education. Our trips utilize some of the most spectacular public lands in the United States as our classroom. Breathtaking scenery, world-class fishing, and a service project all help foster a deep connection to wild places. Our trip offerings continue to grow, and so does our impact.

In 2020 we ran our first Montana Road Trip. The 10-day camping trip visits some of the best public water in the country including a few days wade fishing on the Madison. The trip's success was the result of years of hard work and substantial financial investments. LFFE hopes to recoup these efforts and investments over several years. As written, Rule I of the proposed rule changes will prevent LFFE from continuing to provide teenagers with the lifelong memory of wading for wild trout on the Madison River. I feel the cap at 2019 levels will cripple small businesses who made the investment of time and money to begin operating on the Madison River in 2020 only to have that ability taken away. Instead, I support new rule VI as proposed by FOAM, allocating user days to outfitters based on the higher of their historic use from 2019 or 2020.

Thank you again for taking my concerns into consideration.

Sincerely,

Will Lillard

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [John Bunker](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 9:50:03 AM

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### To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I am a resident of New Hampshire and have enjoyed the opportunity to spend over two hundred days angling in Yellowstone National Park, and almost fifty days on the Madison and Missouri Rivers. I also volunteered for almost a decade with the Yellowstone Volunteer Fly Fishing Program. I look forward to spending many more days on the Madison River.

As a senior citizen (71) I am very concerned with the potential implications of the proposed rule changes. These rule changes may limit access to selected Madison river sections for many senior citizens.

Specifically, I would like to comment on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

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When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Thank you,

John F. Bunker, ScD, MHS  
PO Box 688  
Stratham, NH 03885

**From:** [Diane C. Robinson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 9:07:37 AM

---

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. ***This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers.*** It will also **increase** crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Thank you very much,

Diane Robinson

**Diane C. Robinson, MPA, CRA**

Senior Contract and Grant Administrator  
Central Business Office – Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA)  
Southern California Permanente Medical Group

**Kaiser Permanente Research**

Department of Research & Evaluation  
100 S Los Robles, 2nd Floor  
Pasadena, CA 91101

Cel Phone (626) 221-6651

Email: [Diane.C.Robinson@kp.org](mailto:Diane.C.Robinson@kp.org)

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[kp.org/research](http://kp.org/research) [[kp.org](http://kp.org)]



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**From:** [Kent Taylor](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment - Madison River  
**Date:** Sunday, October 25, 2020 9:10:31 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
2. Lyons Bridge to Palisades
3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold's Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays – the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a



floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Kent Taylor  
Mapleton, UT

**From:** [Kris Suplee](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River EA Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, October 25, 2020 3:46:03 PM

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FWP please hear and consider my comments regarding the current Madison River Rec plan.

First off let my state for the record I'm a small independent one boat outfitter in Ennis MT. I own a home and raise my family here. I think these current plans will negatively effect my family and many like mine in our ability to provide for our families. The way these current rules are written the large outfitters will have full control of who and where the guides will get to operate on the Madison river.

I also do not support the adoption of any rules from petitions of any outside organizations such as GHHU trout unlimited or other parts of Montana whose only interest is creating an exclusive experience for their members the few times a year they come to the Madison River.

I don't support a Rest and Rotation program the river is to short and will only cause further crowding.

I don't support a year long restriction on guide trips without and equal restriction on the daily public recreational floaters.

The crowds are in full force June 15-August. I firmly believe we should have a shoulder season structure like the Big Hole / Beaverhead rivers have.

I also feel we should have a daily launch cap for recreational floaters during the shoulder season. Which could easily be acquired by a permit on a first come first serve basis that day online.

In closing I do feel we need to restrict the daily amount traffic on the Madison River but not solely at the expense of our residents guides and outfitters who are the true stewards of the environment. Just so some nonresident and out of state property owners can have a better wade fishing experience.

Thank You

Kris Suplee  
Suplee Fly Fishing LLC  
Madison River SRP #306

Kris Suplee  
krissuplee@yahoo.com

**From:** [gordonolson@outlook.com](mailto:gordonolson@outlook.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 25, 2020 3:40:32 PM

---

Name: Gordon Olson  
City: West Yellowstone

Although I agree that the overcrowding needs to be addressed but I am not thrilled with the GGTU recommendations. We own a home in West Yellowstone but we are not Montana residents. We spend 6 months a year there as non-residents. We bought our home there to fish the Madison (and the Buffalo). I would like to see perhaps an exemption for homeowners. I know that's rather self serving but most of my neighbors are in the same boat. My 2nd concern is how does the GGTU proposal really help in relieving pressure on the fish? I don't know if it really addresses the overcrowding, does it? Something needs to be done, we have seen the fishing take a big hit over the last few years and we know steps need to be taken to address the problems. We will certainly welcome a change. I know that we didn't enjoy the Madison in 2020 like we had in the past. Good luck, we appreciate your efforts.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [shall58@msn.com](mailto:shall58@msn.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 25, 2020 3:25:07 PM

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Name: Terry & Sue Hall

City: Island Park

Rule 2 = Agree with closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sunday to commercial boats and Saturday closing from Barney to Ennis

We would encourage limits on commercial boats everyday on Madison from Quake Lake to Ennis.

Rule 3 - We would like removing all commercial boats ( not private boats) from walk and wade sections of the Madison Quake Lake outlet to Lyons and Ennis to Ennis Reservoir on weekends Friday Sat and Sunday. No boats of any kind from Raynolds Pass to Lyons at any time.

**NO FISHING FROM BOATS IN ALL WALK WADE SECTIONS.**

Rule 5 - Donot agree with this alternative. We donot want **FISHING FROM BOATS IN ALL WALK WADE SECTIONS.**

Thank You  
Terry & Sue Hall

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Sue Hall](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments Madison River Recreational Plan Proposal  
**Date:** Sunday, October 25, 2020 3:23:53 PM

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Rule 2 = Agree with closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sunday to commercial boats and Saturday closing from Barney to Ennis

We would encourage limits on commercial boats everyday on Madison from Quake Lake to Ennis.

Rule 3 - We would like removing all commercial boats ( not private boats) from walk and wade sections of the Madison Quake Lake outlet to Lyons and Ennis to Ennis Reservoir on weekends Friday Sat and Sunday. No boats of any kind from Reynolds Pass to Lyons at any time.

NO FISHING FROM BOATS IN ALL WALK WADE SECTIONS.

Rule 5 - Donot agree with this alternative. We donot want FISHING FROM BOATS IN ALL WALK WADE SECTIONS.

Thank You

Terry & Sue Hall

**From:** [Andy7knight@gmail.com](mailto:Andy7knight@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 25, 2020 1:32:15 PM

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Name:

City:

I would like the number of commercial guided trips to be reduced from their highs of 13,000 to a lower quantity in the range of 10,000-11,000 as the boating pressure is too high to be accommodated at the boat ramps and contributes to high boating traffic.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [sueayre@lobo.net](mailto:sueayre@lobo.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 25, 2020 9:47:27 AM

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Name: Sue Hedrick  
City: Moriarty, NM  
To Whom it may Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules

banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [ndbrookie@aol.com](mailto:ndbrookie@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 12:24:49 PM

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Name:  
City:  
YOU

To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

I am out of state fisherman from the East coast and have fished the Madison every year for twenty years and I support the above and keep the status quo.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [gordonolson@outlook.com](mailto:gordonolson@outlook.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 11:27:45 AM

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Name: Gordon Olson  
City: West Yellowstone

Although I agree that the overcrowding needs to be addressed but I am not thrilled with the GGTU recommendations. We own a home in West Yellowstone but we are not Montana residents. We spend 6 months a year there as non-residents. We bought our home there to fish the Madison (and the Buffalo). I would like to see perhaps an exemption for homeowners. I know that's rather self serving but most of my neighbors are in the same boat. My 2nd concern is how does the GGTU proposal really help in relieving pressure on the fish? I don't know if it really addresses the overcrowding, does it? Something needs to be done, we have seen the fishing take a big hit over the last few years and we know steps need to be taken to address the problems. We will certainly welcome a change. I know that we didn't enjoy the Madison in 2020 like we had in the past. Good luck, we appreciate your efforts.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [SHARON SCHAROSCH](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River recreation plan  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 10:06:54 AM

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Please consider my response when evaluating the plan for the Madison River.

Sharon Scharosch



October 23, 2020



**Madison River Recreation Plan Proposal. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks is seeking public comment until October 30th, 2020. The results of this will affect your fishing on the Madison River.**

To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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9. Raynold's Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

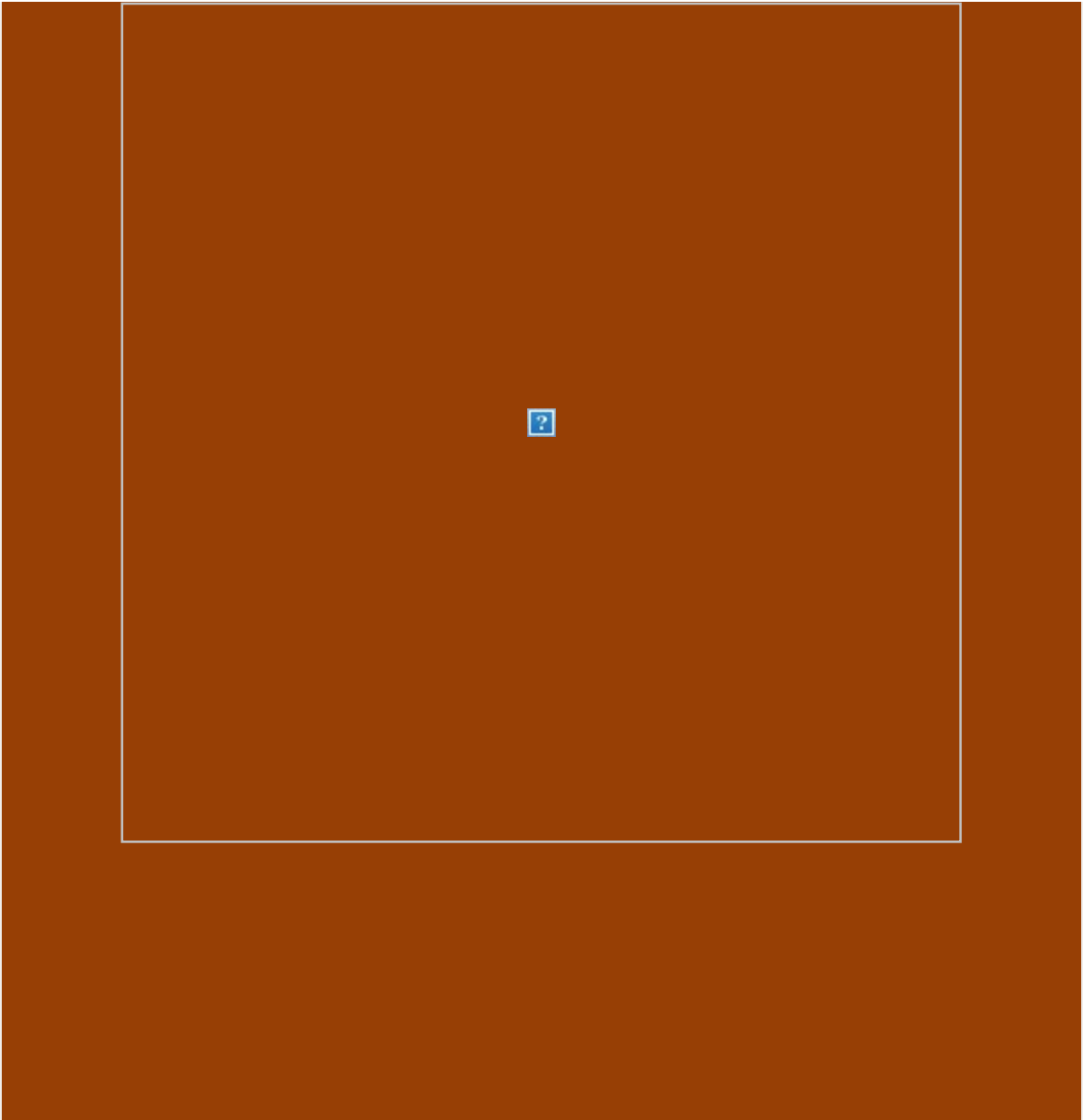
The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays – the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

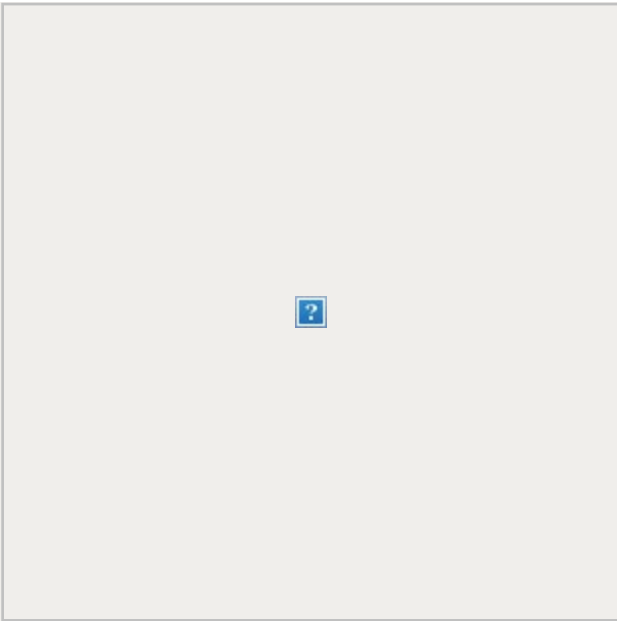
I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.



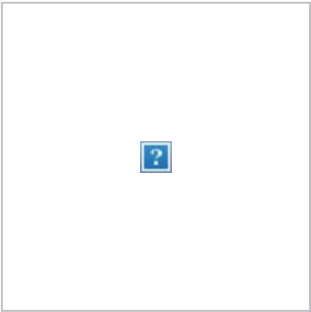


Big Sky Anglers | 39 Madison Avenue, West Yellowstone, MT 59758 [www.bigskyanglers.com](http://www.bigskyanglers.com)  
[\[bigskyanglers.com\]](http://bigskyanglers.com)

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**From:** [Andrew J Uhr](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on Madison River Recreation Plan Proposal  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 10:02:08 AM

---

Dear Sir:

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules

banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

--

Andrew J Uhr  
Brevard, NC

**From:** [Troy-Evans@hotmail.com](mailto:Troy-Evans@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 9:59:19 AM

---

Name: Troy Evans

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [obr216@hotmail.com](mailto:obr216@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 9:30:08 AM

---

Name: JACK OBRIEN  
City: WEST NEWBURY, MA  
To Whom it May Concern:

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules

banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Troy-Evans@hotmail.com](mailto:Troy-Evans@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 9:21:08 AM

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Name: Troy Evans

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
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7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points. I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana?s beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources. When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Troy-Evans@hotmail.com](mailto:Troy-Evans@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 9:11:00 AM

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Name: Troy Evans

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [chrisdanielphotography@yahoo.com](mailto:chrisdanielphotography@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 8:33:14 AM

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Name: Chris Daniel  
City: West Yellowstone  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Troy-Evans@hotmail.com](mailto:Troy-Evans@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 8:29:36 AM

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Name: Troy Evans

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Troy-Evans@hotmail.com](mailto:Troy-Evans@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 8:16:37 AM

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Name: Troy Evans

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Troy-Evans@hotmail.com](mailto:Troy-Evans@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 7:51:00 AM

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Name: Troy Evans

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Troy-Evans@hotmail.com](mailto:Troy-Evans@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 7:48:18 PM

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Name: Troy Evans

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [srforsberg@comcast.net](mailto:srforsberg@comcast.net)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments regarding Madison River proposals  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 7:30:31 PM

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Hi – attached are my comments regarding the Madison River proposal. I feel that some parts of it are good, but there are several that will provide contrary results to what you are hoping to accomplish because you will be forcing fishermen into a smaller section of the river on certain days. There are thousands of people that depend on the Madison for their living, so I would appreciate it if you would reconsider Rules 2, 3, and 5. I always come out to Montana every summer from Minnesota. However, passage of these restrictions could change that. Thank you.

Steve Forsberg  
Plymouth, MN

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

**From:** [James Brown](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed rule changes to Madison  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 3:59:31 PM

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Dear Sirs,

I have read through the proposed rule changes for the Madison River. I understand that these rule changes seek to remedy overcrowding on the river to insure a quality angling experience, and importantly, to offer protection to the resource itself. My comments follow.

1. 13,900 commercial trips per year is too many. If overcrowding is to be addressed, it must begin here. There needs to be an annual sliding scale of reductions to reach a more scientifically endorsed sustainable level. Protecting the health of a public resource is more important than protecting the profits of any individual private business. The local economy will flourish if the resource flourishes. The local economy will decline if the resource declines.
2. There also needs to be a method of permitting and limiting personal watercraft.
3. The rest and rotation policies are too complicated. Limiting usage should be broad based and easily understandable to all.
4. There needs to be a section of the upper river set aside as sanctuary where all angling is prohibited.
5. Eliminating boating traffic in the wading section sounds good in principle but should be avoided. It creates a dangerous precedent that may weaken Montana's stream access laws. It would be better to allow boats in the wading section but disallow anglers to fish from boats in this section, or to get out of their boats and fish in this section.

Respectfully,

Jim Brown  
2801 Western Ave  
Apt 1105  
Seattle, WA 98121  
Tel: 203-817-6635  
Email: [jtonerbrown@gmail.com](mailto:jtonerbrown@gmail.com)

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Laceyjweldon@gmail.com](mailto:Laceyjweldon@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 2:56:25 PM

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Name: Lacey

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [bweldon121@gmail.com](mailto:bweldon121@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 2:55:36 PM

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Name: Ben Weldon

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Troy-Evans@hotmail.com](mailto:Troy-Evans@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 2:40:54 PM

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Name: Troy Evans

City:

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
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3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
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8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold's Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Paatrick@gmail.com](mailto:Paatrick@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 2:18:58 PM

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Name: Patrick  
City: West Yellowstone  
To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Landon](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 2:04:06 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16. I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

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Sincerely,

Landon Greenhalgh

**From:** [cbolman46@gmail.com](mailto:cbolman46@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 1:53:57 PM

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Name: Ralph "Chip" Bolman

City: Littleton

To Whom it May Concern.

I write as a visiting angler who has fished in Montana almost every year since 1985, and who holds the Madison River near and dear. In October, 2019, I had a lifetime day on the Madison in YNP near Nine-Mile Hole, taking 19, 23 and 24 inch migratory Brown Trout in one afternoon. I am interested in maintaining this precious resource and ensuring that all who so desire can have access to it.

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Sarah Rodcay](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 1:47:25 PM

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## To Whom it May Concern

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When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Thank you,  
Sarah Heames

**From:** [leahannyoung@yahoo.com](mailto:leahannyoung@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 12:23:26 PM

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Name: LeahAnn Young

City: Shreveport, Louisiana

We are non-residents who live in your state from May - September.

We fish an average of 4 days per week.

Our comments:

#1 - We contribute to your economy. We travel in an RV and rent our location. We buy from the local trout shops, gas stations, grocery, entertainment, and all stores to meet our needs.

#2 - We have no advantage (to catch a fish) over an instate resident.

#3 - We follow the same rules as an instate resident.

#4 - We SUPPORT your proposal!

THANK YOU for protecting the water and fish!

We will see you in May 2021!

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [sueayre@lobo.net](mailto:sueayre@lobo.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 11:37:26 AM

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Name: Sue Hedrick  
City: Moriarty, NM  
To Whom it may Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [blpayne@earthlink.net](mailto:blpayne@earthlink.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 11:02:58 AM

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Name: Brian Payne

City: Livingston

I have been fly fishing via walking/wading the Madison River every year since the 1972 legislative ruling. Today river access has become a headache. Some landowners do not follow the stream access rules. And guide boat traffic on the river can at times rival the traffic on I-90. Guides need to make a living but need to be reeled in. I support your recommendation for weekend limitations.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jonathan Heames](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 10:46:21 AM

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## To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Thank you!  
Jonathan

**Jonathan Heames** / *Big Sky Anglers* / *Owner*  
[39 Madison Avenue / PO Box 2153, West Yellowstone, MT 59758 \[x-apple-data-detectors\]](#)  
**TEL** [406.646.7801](tel:406.646.7801)  
**WEB** [www.bigskyanglers.com](http://www.bigskyanglers.com) [[bigskyanglers.com](http://bigskyanglers.com)]



**From:** [mtnwings@frontiernet.net](mailto:mtnwings@frontiernet.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Regulations  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 10:42:08 AM

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Dear Sirs,

I have fished the Madison River nearly every year since I was 13 years old in 1959. The changes in the fishery over that time have been well documented, and I applaud your recent efforts to address the overcrowding issue.

I will leave it to the best judgement of the FW&P scientists as to how to accomplish that, except for one issue. The WALK/Wade section should be just that, no floating allowed. I am not a landowner, and have owned a drift boat for many years, but it ruins the day to have a boat float through the hole I am fishing below Quake Lake.

Thank You, Tom Rahn

**From:** [cyajam56@comcast.net](mailto:cyajam56@comcast.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 10:39:42 AM

---

Name: Jeff Mayfield

City: Quincy, IL

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO COPY AND PASTE THIS TEXT IF IT SUITS YOU

To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

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When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Respectfully,

Jeff and Lori Mayfield

Quincy, Illinois

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Ryan White](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules -- Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 10:25:16 AM

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Hello,

I would like to add my voice to the public comments for the proposed rules on the Madison River.

I strongly support the proposed rules for the river, but most strongly:

Rule 1: Cap outfitter levels

Rules 3 and/or 5

The latter would limit/close boat traffic in the walk/wade section. Given the intensity of use of this section, limiting boats to lessen the toll on the resource and give walk/wade anglers a dedicated stretch that is not impacted by boating traffic. Current levels of boating traffic are alarmingly high. Further, most anglers do not have a boat or the economic means to hire a boat, so there is also an issue of equity at stake here. There remain miles and miles of the river below the walk/wade section that boaters can still use.

Thank you for your consideration,

--

Ryan White  
[rywhyte@gmail.com](mailto:rywhyte@gmail.com)  
(650) 868-0535

**From:** [Annuityfunds@aol.com](mailto:Annuityfunds@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 9:53:28 AM

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Name:

City:

The ultimate concern with this issue is overuse/crowding. I've stopped fishing the Madison due to the overuse. Too many guides. Limit the guides. It's been too crowded for several years.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Marshall Fairbanks](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 9:51:08 AM

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## To Whom it May Concern

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9. Raynold's Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays – the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Best,  
Marshall Fairbanks

Get [Outlook for iOS \[aka.ms\]](#)

**From:** [tightlinesonthefly@yahoo.com](mailto:tightlinesonthefly@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 9:32:47 AM

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Name: Ray Wolanzyk

City: Washington State

I'm in agreement with rest and restoration, we see over crowd in Washington State as populations increases and limited Blue Ribbon fisheries available. Guided trips should be regulated to weekdays only giving the general public a higher quality of the fishing as we are the largest contributors funding licenses fees. Another approach is limiting access similar to the Smith River also Oregon's Deschutes River. British Columbia has several programs in place which has escalated the fisheries. Fishing license fees as well as daily access permits residents and nonresident Limiting availability. I would love to see this implemented here in Washington State, thank you for setting the standards, hopefully this trend will continue protecting the limited resources we have left. Once their gone it's hard to reestablish!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [garrettskelton@gmail.com](mailto:garrettskelton@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 9:13:02 AM

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Name: Garrett Skelton

City: Coeur D Alene

Whatever the mandate may be a believe that there needs to be some sort of system in place that is fair and equal yet somehow regulates the pressure because ultimately at the end of the day the fish are what make the Madison the Madison

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [mschristofis@aol.com](mailto:mschristofis@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 8:35:57 AM

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Name:

City:

I just want to say that as an outsider from Michigan, I have been fly fishing the Madison for over 30 years and would hate to not be able to get access (or limited) to this river. I only spend a week or two a year there which really is not that much. In my opinion, the guide services do appear to take up a large portion of those who fish it and that's what should be limited. I fish for the recreational purposes but guides do it to make money which really is exploitation of a natural resource. I would like to see their use limited and also prefer catch and release, barbless hook regulations.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Robwebb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Robwebb@sbcglobal.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 8:13:25 AM

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Name: Bob Webb  
City: Belgrade  
To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

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When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [bugdr1@gmail.com](mailto:bugdr1@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 8:04:45 AM

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Name: Ron Schuyler

City: Fort Lupton, CO

Dear Commission Members,

I am from out of State, but the Madison is MY river; I would rather be there than anywhere else in the USA. Therefore, these rules are important to me. Thank you for trying to make my experience better; however, I can live with the present, I know what to expect and know how to work around other people. I only wade, so the wade section is most important to me, but I understand that what you change in one spot on the river will also effect other sections. I am comfortable with all sections except 2,3 and 5. Please eliminate these. Specifically on 3 and 5, if you stop boats on the wade section, you will increase the pressure on actual waders in the section. Trying to increase access to the wade section would be a better approach. In any case, if there is overcrowding, it will somewhat take care of itself. If the quality of fishing goes down, people will stop or reduce their use of the river. Increase access and you will eliminate most of the problem.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Ivanmiller79@yahoo.com](mailto:Ivanmiller79@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 7:48:58 AM

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Name: ivan J Miller

City: West yellowstone

Closing Lyon-pal and windy to Stoney Ditch is not good. That would force everybody to Palisades, this is not common sense. Then Palisades will be overrun with people. Keep the wade stretch open to boats. This is the plea of wealthy land owners that don't want to see people on their public river. Yes, there are too many guides and people on the river. Maybe limiting the number of total days on the river. I have been fishing the Madison for 20 years and it is getting more crowded every year. It's more important for Northwest Energy to do the proper flows. The river this year was absolutely horrible how they did the flows in June through July. 3000 cfs to "flush it out" there is nothing to flush the river is all rocks anyway. And then running at 300 cfs or 500 cfs was bad and warmed up the river too much never let it get below 800 cfs thanks

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [theflytier@aol.com](mailto:theflytier@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 7:43:09 AM

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Let me begin by saying I really appreciate the tough assignment you have accepted to try and manage the overcrowding of the Madison River.....I, like a lot of interested sportsmen have fished on the Madison since the late 80's and in that time have seen the dramatic increase in fishing pressure and the dramatic decline in the fish in the river....the river is not anywhere what it used to be with maybe the exception of the conditions we found during the whirling disease period...

And Yes. My experience of the river and fishing it has been affected.....dramatically for the worse.... and I can only see this as an ongoing downward trend

I have a home that overlooks a section of the river above the Windy Point Access and from early July until Mid September the image you get when sitting and looking at the river is one of a continuous carousel ride....It's one boat after another and many times 2 and 3 coming down side by side.....just like a carousel. starting around 9 in the morning and going through 4 to 5 in the afternoon....and by far the majority are guided trips

Again I applaud your efforts but I truly believe the only way you are going to affect change in a positive way is to reduce the number of commercial trips....not keep them at the current level which has already exceeded the rivers capacity to offer a fulfilling fishing experience and maintain the health and quality of the fish. ....not try to use rotation to appease anyone or periodically close sections.....it's to reduce the fishing pressure that has been created by more and more guides floating the river....pure and simple

just because the water flows and there is maybe room to launch a boat without a fistfight, doesn't mean one should be launched when it in aggregate it creates the current dilemma we face.....I'm all for small business and success stories but the Madison as a resource is now being exploited.....just because the water can flow. ...

How much easier the management of this would be if you just reduce the permits/float trips to maybe the 2012 - 2014 era...and how about limiting the OUT OF STATE commercial use....not a "if this then that or maybe sunday but not thursday..."

Thanks for listening.....

mike pollard

**From:** [Rick Fairbanks](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 7:38:13 AM

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## To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

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I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

**Rules 3 and 5.** I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

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When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

Richard F. Fairbanks

Residences: Ogden, UT and West Yellowstone, MT

Rick Fairbanks

[rickfairbanks@hotmail.com](mailto:rickfairbanks@hotmail.com)

(801) 540-4030 cell

**From:** [rickfairbanks@hotmail.com](mailto:rickfairbanks@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 7:34:56 AM

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Name: Richard F Fairbanks  
City: West Yellowstone, MT & Ogden, UT  
To Whom it May Concern

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---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Skipkirby@cinci.rr.com](mailto:Skipkirby@cinci.rr.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 7:27:17 AM

---

Name: M H Kirby  
City:  
To Whom it May Concern

My wife and I have been Flyfishing the Madison River for over 17 years and thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

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---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [driftboat@me.com](mailto:driftboat@me.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 7:01:15 AM

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Name: Rick Collins  
City: SAINT CHARLES  
To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Griffmoody@icloud.com](mailto:Griffmoody@icloud.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 6:42:21 AM

---

Name:  
City:  
To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

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---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Skipkirby@cinci.rr.com](mailto:Skipkirby@cinci.rr.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 6:40:03 AM

---

Name: M H Kirby  
City:  
To Whom it May Concern

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---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Hotshoes1@aol.com](mailto:Hotshoes1@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 6:39:23 AM

---

Name: Anthony Ursini  
City: Deep River  
To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

Rule 2. The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

1. Lyons Bridge to Windy Point
2. Lyons Bridge to Palisades
3. Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek
4. Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge
5. Windy Point to Palisades
6. Windy Point to Ruby Creek
7. Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge
8. Windy Point to Storey Ditch
9. Raynold?s Pass to Windy Point
10. Pine Butte to Windy Point
11. Pine Butte to Palisades

The incidental closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, into sections that have much lower fish counts per mile than the upper reaches and cannot handle the inevitable increase of fishing pressure. The concentration of guide boats caused by the proposed rule will also result in circumstances that we believe will be perceived as overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays ? the exact opposite of the intended result of the rule.

I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

Rules 3 and 5. I disagree with removing boats from the walk/wade sections of the Madison. This will only benefit the few landowners in these areas at the expense of the many public anglers. It will also increase crowding at wade fishing access points.

I believe that there is significant value to the angling public in retaining the existing rules

banning angling from a floating craft upstream of Lyons Bridge. I also believe that actively limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Brock Medsker](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 6:15:25 AM

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## To Whom it May Concern

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on this important proposal for the Madison River, I agree with proposed rules 1, 4, and 6-16.

I would like to issue the following comments on Rules 2, 3, and 5:

**Rule 2.** The language currently being used to define rest and rotation is flawed and I believe will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Specifically, by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on AT LEAST 8 popular float sections of the river:

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I encourage the Commissioners to explore other options for Rest and Rotation rather than closing an entire section to all commercial traffic. One alternative would be to close a particular access on a given day, rather than the entire section. Another could be to allow floats to occur that pass through this section but do not start at Lyons Bridge and terminate at Palisades. Allowing boats the ability to spread out on the Madison is the key to helping prevent perceived crowding.

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limiting stream access to public water does not represent Montana values, and establishes a dangerous precedent that flies in the face of Montana's beloved Stream Access Law. Limiting access in this instance may also result in future litigation, wasting both taxpayer money and State resources.

When combined with Proposed Rule #2, this rule has the potential to cause even greater crowding of boat based anglers and recreational floaters into the sections of river downstream of Palisades.

**From:** [Mark Xander](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rule Changes  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 3:43:09 PM  
**Attachments:** [Blank.pdf](#)  
[ATT00001.txt](#)

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**From:** [gordonolson@outlook.com](mailto:gordonolson@outlook.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 3:03:33 PM

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Name: Gordon Olson  
City: West Yellowstone

Although I agree that the overcrowding needs to be addressed but I am not thrilled with the GGTU recommendations. We own a home in West Yellowstone but we are not Montana residents. We spend 6 months a year there as non-residents. We bought our home there to fish the Madison (and the Buffalo). I would like to see perhaps an exemption for homeowners. I know that's rather self serving but most of my neighbors are in the same boat. My 2nd concern is how does the GGTU proposal really help in relieving pressure on the fish? I don't know if it really addresses the overcrowding, does it? Something needs to be done, we have seen the fishing take a big hit over the last few years and we know steps need to be taken to address the problems. We will certainly welcome a change. I know that we didn't enjoy the Madison in 2020 like we had in the past. Good luck, we appreciate your efforts.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Rege Dinkel](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#); [FWP Commission](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rec Plan Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 2:33:23 PM  
**Attachments:** [RD Madison River Recreation Plan Comments 1022020.docx](#)

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Note: I have also attached my email comments in a word doc.

Hello, and thank you for considering my comments. I apologize in advance for my long-winded comments. I believe what MFWP is doing to protect the resource is important for the river and those that enjoy it today and in the future.

I start by providing background as a reference. I am retired and reside in Pennsylvania. I am lucky to be able to enjoy the great fishing and natural beauty of the Madison and the friendly residents in Montana and Ennis in particular. My wife and I travel via RV to Cameron, and 2021 will be our 5th consecutive year. I stay from early June to mid-July in a campground. 90% of my fishing is on the Madison. I also do a yearly guided tour on the Beaverhead or Big Horn as a change up and I visit surrounding waters including the Ruby and park rivers. I believe our economic impact is broad during our 4 to 5 week stay – we visit fly shops, the Ennis grocery store, hardware store, gas stations, bars, restaurants, distillery, the Griz, the sporting goods store, rodeo, etc. During our extended stay we also take day trips to other places to enjoy Montana and its history (Bozeman, West Yellowstone, Butte, Virginia City, Helena, etc.). I hope the residents consider us as desirable tourist.

I fish with my wife and 3 other friends I have made at the campground who also visit every year for multiple weeks, one stays thru September. They are from Florida, South Carolina, and Colorado. We all exclusively wade when on the Madison. Renting or buying a boat has been considered but the crowds on those section of the river make it unattractive for me. (self-adjusting).

The perspective I want to share is from the wade fisherman, particularly the tourist wade fisherman, although I believe my interest align well with the resident wade angler in many cases.

We wade fish almost exclusively in the section from Reynolds bridge to West Fork (8 miles?). Fishing on other sections is unattractive mainly because of the flotilla of

boats passing by. I assume many other wade anglers have similar opinions since the number of wade anglers I see below Lyons seems minimal. Access might be a contributing factor. We know this section reasonably well and split time between Reynolds, Three Dollar, the West Fork areas. If too many anglers are near the access point - we walk further to have more space and usually better fishing to boot (self-adjusting). Same in PA and the park – if you do not like a crowd, walk further and the crowd gets smaller. In this section, crowding is not to the point where I feel I need to find another river to fish.

I want to be clear in my comments below – I am NOT anti-guide or anti-boat. I do hope that the commission will maintain a section that is friendly to wading every day of the week and my reasons follow.

My opinion: The past four years, the number of guide and private boaters that float and wade the section between Quake Lake and Lyons Bridge is small compared to other parts of the river and has minimal and acceptable impact on the wading experience for me. Would I like to have less people who wade fish AND less boaters who wade this section? Sure, everyone would prefer less on the sections they fish, but that is not reasonable given the overall pressure on the resource. As MFWP noted in its analysis on page 37 of the draft EA, wade anglers would prefer to have less of everyone. I suspect much of that is because many in this group are nonresidents that travel great distances to fish the Madison. A crowd can be a disappointment.

On page 37 of the draft EA it suggests since waders want less of other wader and boat, then it does not matter the mix. As stated,:

***Given that this group was just as unhappy with all wade anglers as with the boat-access anglers suggests that they are more unhappy with the numbers of anglers rather than their mode of transportation.***

Not true. And can be verified or disproved with a survey asking if given the choice, which is preferred: more people wading or more boats floating through. Other waders have an impact on my experience for sure, but walking further mitigates the issue 9 out of 10 times. This is not the case if adding fishing from boats. A person wading can not escape or walk past a line of boats coming down

the river, spaced 5, 10, 15 minutes apart. No matter where and how far I walk, the string of boats floating through the run/hole/area will put fish down. Boats are mobile and continually move to the next spot and cover as many good spots as possible. The experienced guides I have contracted typically prefer to be early on the river for that very reason: most guides fish the same runs, rocks, eddies etc. The more boats crossing a spot, the less chance of hooking trout in that spot. Waders in these areas are stuck with the consequence of more boat traffic. I am not as mobile as a boat and can't drift downstream or across the river to the next spot. Walking further does not mitigate the issue. I believe that boat traffic on other parts of the river is one reason those areas have fewer wade anglers and they prefer the restricted areas for a better experience.

I also believe the loss of wade anglers as the Madison is homogenized could be greater than assessed on page 37 of the EA. The impact could extend beyond those days when new boat traffic is allowed. Having to contend with a significant increase in boating traffic on this section 4 out of 7 days will likely mean some search for a more wade friendly river for their entire trip. It's a long way to travel to have decent wade fishing 3 days a week. Will short timers or day trippers fill the void – possible. I suspect many more wade anglers (nonresidents and maybe residents) will feel the same once the boat traffic in this section expands significantly, particularly year 1 when it's a new stretch to be explored. I have fished the lower wade section near Ennis and for me this is not a viable alternative as more of the wading fisherman that remain could move into this section, creating additional crowding

Parking is recognized as a potential issue in areas newly opened to additional boat access. On page 25 of the EA:

***This change might increase traffic slightly at boat ramps and parking areas for those days as more boaters use this section of river. Conversely, it is anticipated that there may be a decrease in wade-only anglers for these four days per week, as some of those anglers will seek other rivers or other parts of the Madison without boats. This could have some minor benefits to the physical and natural values through decreased traffic on trails and shorelines.***

I assume the writer meant to say ***other parts of the Madison with less boats*** and not

*without boats.* I believe 'slightly' understates the impact. My experience is whenever a new section of a river or stream is opened to a group that has been excluded (it happens here in PA), there is a surge in use from the excluded anglers to try the new water. Since current boaters and guides will also see this a means to flee the congestion downstream (a reason FOAM proposed this?), I believe the interest will be large - at least initially and until these location also become congested for boat anglers. It seems to me that is when the upper Madison becomes homogenized, a depressing word for me, a wade angler, used on page 25. I also feel that parking areas at Reynolds and Three Dollar bridge are not currently set up for more than a handful of additional trucks with boats/trailers during the morning rush. Those areas would likely need to be expanded particularly at Three Dollar where truck/boat queuing on the bridge could occur during the morning rush if no changes are made. Local residents and travelers to Cliff Lake could be impacted during this time.

MFWP comments of potential minor benefit to the physical and natural values through decreased traffic in the new areas opened to increased boating. It seems logical that some portion of wade anglers who leave for other areas of the Madison will park in riparian vegetation and along riverbanks, resulting in additional degradation at other locations. (whack- a- mole).

In my opinion a reduction in quality of wade fishing opportunities on the Madison can result in an overall reduction in guided trips over time. Why? On page 25 of the EA:

***This alternative would homogenize recreational opportunities throughout the river from Quake Lake to Ennis as a result of the proposal to rescind the ban on fishing from boats four days per week in the current walk/wade only reach. Increased conflict between boat and wade anglers would likely occur which could result in further displacement of wade anglers away from the Madison River.***

In other words, homogenization would mean the upper Madison will become a more boat friendly river, with degraded wading opportunities - diminishing the wading experience in more areas of the upper Madison. I suggest a strong wading experience is seed corn for the guides. As noted in the EA, most guided tours are for nonresidents. I suspect if guided anglers are surveyed by MFWP, the results



will show that a large percentage of the nonresidents come to the Madison to fish for multiple days or weeks. Wade fishing is how many will spend most of their fishing time. Guide fishing is a great luxury that many also will schedule, but most anglers cannot afford a guide every day. In my opinion if the Madison becomes known as a wade unfriendly boat river, the guides will eventually see this affect their livelihood because of an overall reduction in nonresident anglers (unintended consequence). If someone travels a good distance to stay for a few days or weeks and has an average guide experience for one day (bad weather, wind, etc.) and 3-5 days of average or poor wading – will they come back? Will they influence others? This is supported by several references in the EA that a majority of guided tours are for nonresidents. And nonresidents support a strong wade experience. I believe there is a large overlap in the two nonresident groups and many nonresident who hire guides come for both experiences.

Finally, on page 34 the EA estimates \$152M (2020 dollars) is spent on fishing trips and related expense in the Madison area on all fishing expenditures, guide and unguided. On page 47, FOAM writes it is estimated that \$23M in activity in 2017 is attributed to guide and outfitter services. Using these values, roughly 75-85% (\$120M) of economic activity is derived from nonresidents and residents using their own boats or wading. Some of the \$120M could also be assigned to guided tour activity on the day of the guided trip (visit gas stations, restaurants, etc.). If I estimate another \$20M for indirect activity for guided services, that leaves \$100M in activity for all other fishing not attributed to guide services. It's also reported on page 34 that nonresident spend a little more than \$7 for every \$1 that residents spend on fishing trips. Of the \$100M, then 7/8 or \$88M could be assigned to a combination of nonresidents with watercraft and nonresidents who wade during their nonguided stay. I do not know the mix. This is NOT intended to suggest in any way that nonresidents interests are greater than residents and guides, or that nonresidents should be given greater weight. If I have represented these values as intended in the EA, this is to support my contention that many nonresidents come to the Madison to wade fish - part or all the time – and maintaining a good wade fishing experience on the Madison benefits everyone, directly or indirectly.

For these reasons I strongly oppose Rule 5. I support Rule 3, or status quo /no change for these areas.

Thank you for considering my comments. As I write this to express my perspective and personal interest, I appreciate the competing interest and the challenge MFWP

faces to develop a balanced long term plan. Protect the Madison for future generations.

Rege Dinkel

Camp Hill, PA

17011

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[\[avg.com\]](http://avg.com)

**From:** [smerlino86@gmail.com](mailto:smerlino86@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 1:37:30 PM

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Name: Steve M

City: Gallatin County

It boils down to the unfortunate reality that an uncontrolled free-for-all will eventually ruin the Madison river. You cannot just continually pound a way and exploit a natural resource and expect it to be fine.

I get the plight that businesses and outfitters are facing but if left unchecked they'll eventually destroy their own industry. These are different times in Montana and we all know its true, its not the 90s anymore, people are coming here. Trash and litter is already starting to pop up and become a problem, the latest report from biologist said numbers of larger fish are down, its only the beginning.

That said, I don't believe regulation should start and stop with outfitters. There should be regulation across the board. It would take effort but it needs to be done.

A lot of people care deeply for the Madison River and the things that make it special will vanish all because of dollar signs and not wanting to somehow "offend" anyone.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Brian Anderson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#); [FWP Commission](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on Management plan options  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 12:49:44 PM

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To commission,

Please do NOT allow fishing from boats in the walk/wade section from Quake to Lyons.

Thanks,

Brian Anderson

3502 Santa Rosa Drive

Millcreek, Utah 84109

(801) 550-3623

[Anderson.brian4@comcast.net](mailto:Anderson.brian4@comcast.net)

**From:** [Walt and Joan Pease](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on proposed Madison River Regulations  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 12:38:58 PM

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Dear Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commission-

Below are my comments on the proposed Madison River regulations that you are considering. To provide you background for my comments, I am a Madison County property owner who lives 6 months in Madison County, and live the remaining 6 months as a resident of Tennessee. I fish the Madison regularly from April to November, so I am on the river often to observe the river and its users. My fishing is concentrated in the upper Walk/Wade section, so I believe I can comment effectively on the proposals for that section of the river. I will address my comments as to what I see as an order of importance.

#### Walk/Wade proposal comments

The presence of a Walk/Wade section available for anglers who cannot or choose not to rely on float fishing is a unique and valuable asset to the Madison River fishing experience. I am appalled by the Rule V proposal from FOAM that will allow fishing from boats in the upper Walk/Wade section on 4 days per week. This will destroy the Walk/Wade experience for many anglers, and directly conflicts with two of the Madison River Recreation Goals cited by FWP in the draft Environmental Assessment for any new regulations. The two goals that would be denied by this rule are 1) reducing conflicts on the river, and 2) ensuring the long term health and sustainability of the fisheries. Let me expand on these two points.

As far as conflicts between anglers and boaters, the opening of the upper Walk/Wade section to fishing from boats will definitely increase conflict between wade anglers and float fishermen. If fishing boats are allowed to fish while drifting past wade anglers as well as to anchor in prime spots and fish without leaving their boat, this is not a good environment for reducing conflicts. Imagine the situation when boats are anchored in some of the prime holes with anglers casting from boats, shutting out the wade angler. This rule would effectively end the unique walk wade opportunity that now exist for Madison River anglers.

Even more importantly is the impact enacting this rule would have on the fishery. All of us know the importance of this stretch of river to the health of the fishery. Under current walk/wade rules, the fish actually have a refuge in this section of the river. There are many, many places in this stretch that wade anglers cannot reach, and boaters cannot offload their fishermen to fish. Under this regulation, these refuge spots would no longer exist, as these spots would be reachable by drift anglers. This rule would greatly increase the stress on the fish in this upper section. Further, imagine what happens during spring runoff, which also often coincides with spawning season, when the river below the West Fork becomes muddy. The number of float fishermen in this stretch would be unbearable, increasing stress on spawning fish. And back to my first point, the conflicts at that time would be more numerous than ever.

This Rule V cannot provide any value to the river or the Madison River fishing experience, and must be rejected. As a side note, I can say from observation that I don't observe any real problems with the current regulations for the Walk/Wade sections. It is rare that boats are so numerous as to

adversely affect wade fishermen. This will not be the case if Rule V is adopted.

My other comments are as follows.

Commercial Caps

In order to stop increasing pressure on the river, commercial caps need to be implemented. The 2019 level for the caps would seem to be a fair point that would balance economic concerns with the concern for increased pressure. Along with this, monetization of commercial permits should not be allowed.

-

Rest and Rotation

I do not see the benefit of establishing rest and rotation regulations. This will only force outfitters into other sections of the river on those days, increasing the problems of crowding and conflict, not decreasing them. The Madison isn't long enough to make this a viable solution to any of the problems. If the fish need a break from angling pressure, re-instituting a closed season above McAtee bridge for a couple of months is a better solution.

I realize the difficulty the Commission faces in deciding the way forward with these regulations. I implore you to think through each proposed new regulation to make sure the health of the fishery and the angling experience isn't made worse by the new regulations than what we currently have.

Sincerely,  
Walter Pease

Cameron, MT  
Nashville, TN

**From:** [d.c.keifer@gmail.com](mailto:d.c.keifer@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 10:45:03 AM

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Name: Daniel Keifer  
City: Abington PA  
Dear Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks,

I would like to provide my comments and observations regarding the proposed rules for a Madison River Recreation Management Plan. I am pleased to see the work resume on such a plan. It is seriously needed, and I hope something gets approved this time.

While I think that any plan is better than continuing with no plan, here are my comments about specific provisions of the proposed rules.

+ What I find missing is any scientific, quantitative connection to the fishery itself. There is already evidence of adverse impacts of the increased angling pressure and river use on the fishery itself. Any river recreation plan must be directly tied to the health of the fish populations; with provisions for periodic evaluation of how fish populations are doing, and modifications to the plan, as needed.

I have seen the suggestion to develop a "resource carrying capacity" metric. I think this has been mentioned by Madison River Foundation. A metric like this would tie angler/social behavior together with fish populations, and allow a good frame of reference for evaluating the effectiveness of a plan going forward.

+ Also missing is any provision and resources for enforcement. Without enforcement of a set of social/behavioral rules, there will be a lack of certainty as to the plan's effect. Over the past half dozen years or so, I have spent more than one hundred days fishing the river between Reynolds Pass and Palisades. Not once "never" have I seen a conservation officer nor had my license checked.

+ The proposed set of rules does not reduce the use of the river from its current level. A cap is not sufficient. It is already over-used. I do not propose something drastic; however, putting the brakes on in a limited way would demonstrate that managing the river's use is going to be a deliberate, serious process.

+ In a related way, the proposed rules seem to move the use of the river around "between sections, among different user groups" across the calendar "rather than actually reducing the pressure on the river. I do not think this is acceptable over the long haul for the river and the user community.

+ The proposal to allow any fishing from boats in the wade-only section of the upper Madison IS UNACCEPTABLE. This would be a giant step backward. It would make worse what is already a bad situation. Wade-only should be just that "wade-only.

+ The plan must also include provisions that manage the use of the river by private watercraft for fishing. To my mind's eye over the last decade or so of fishing the Madison, the use of the river by private watercraft for angling has been a significant part of the increased pressure.

+ The use of a mandatory Madison River User Stamp is a TERRIFIC IDEA. There should be a nominal fee for it (this is a WORLD-CLASS FISHING DESTINATION). It should be accompanied by a piece of literature which explains proper fish handling and angler etiquette.

Any plan that is adopted can always be reviewed and changed, if needed. Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

Thank you for accepting my comments. Best regards,

Daniel Keifer  
Abington PA

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [RallyPoint Outdoors](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Public Comment  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 9:12:39 AM

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Hello,

My name is Chris “Warren” Berg and I have been a guide on the Madison River for six years. My wife and I live in Ennis and she works at a local business.

Here are my comments of the proposed Madison river SRP changes.

- outfitter use days should be based on 3 to 5 years of historical use not just the last one or two years. This will give the committee a better idea of the overall use by an outfitter.
- Rest and rotation is not a valuable tool for reducing overcrowding on the Madison. I understand that this works on other rivers in different parts of the state but with the Madison’s limited number of floatable miles this will greatly increase congestion
- creating wade only sections of the river that are off-limits to access by boat is catering to rich landowners on the upper and lower sections of the river. A knowledgeable guide uses these sections to get off busy parts of the river in the summer and causes little impact to the ecosystem.
- limiting out of state guides would greatly reduce the number of floaters in the Lyons bridge to Palisades stretch
- The flex days that are allowed each year will help new outfitters work towards a permit. This should be reviewed every year to allow new Outfitters an opportunity to build days on the Madison. Existing Outfitters who do not use their days should have them taken away and thrown into a lottery as proposed so that they can be reallocated. A free market system should recognize stagnation of an outfitter and those days should be available to a young outfitter that wants to build a business and provide for his or her family without being stuck in perpetually guiding for someone else or having to take out a huge business loan to buy days that were essentially free when he started guiding.

I think that the proposal is losing sight of what actually matters for the Madison River. The health of the resource including fish numbers should be the ultimate priority not the subjective milestone of “river crowding”. If river crowding is an issue, open the entire river from Reynolds Bridge to Ennis Lake to fishing from a boat. If trout population is the issue revert back to closing sections of the river during spawning.

The economy of Ennis greatly relies on the Madison River as do surrounding towns. The population explosion of Gallatin County has had an undeniable effect on the crowding and health of the Madison. Guides from out of state do not spend money in Montana towns and walk their boats through spawning habitat below Lyons bridge in order to maximize their clients catch. This does disrupt redds, increases congestion and increases hooking mortality by overplaying fish from a stationary boat.

This proposal inadvertently helps trout but more can be done on the Madison. Unfortunately this proposal helps wealthy landowners more and forces the “common man” to be jammed into a reduced area and the guides and outfitters who bring money into the local economies to fish an even more reduced area.

Chris Warren Berg  
Rallypointoutdoors@gmail.com  
406-600-9550

**From:** [RallyPoint Outdoors](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Public Comment  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 9:12:39 AM

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- The flex days that are allowed each year will help new outfitters work towards a permit. This should be reviewed every year to allow new Outfitters an opportunity to build days on the Madison. Existing Outfitters who do not use their days should have them taken away and thrown into a lottery as proposed so that they can be reallocated. A free market system should recognize stagnation of an outfitter and those days should be available to a young outfitter that wants to build a business and provide for his or her family without being stuck in perpetually guiding for someone else or having to take out a huge business loan to buy days that were essentially free when he started guiding.

I think that the proposal is losing sight of what actually matters for the Madison River. The health of the resource including fish numbers should be the ultimate priority not the subjective milestone of “river crowding”. If river crowding is an issue, open the entire river from Reynolds Bridge to Ennis Lake to fishing from a boat. If trout population is the issue revert back to closing sections of the river during spawning.

The economy of Ennis greatly relies on the Madison River as do surrounding towns. The population explosion of Gallatin County has had an undeniable effect on the crowding and health of the Madison. Guides from out of state do not spend money in Montana towns and walk their boats through spawning habitat below Lyons bridge in order to maximize their clients catch. This does disrupt redds, increases congestion and increases hooking mortality by overplaying fish from a stationary boat.

This proposal inadvertently helps trout but more can be done on the Madison. Unfortunately this proposal helps wealthy landowners more and forces the “common man” to be jammed into a reduced area and the guides and outfitters who bring money into the local economies to fish an even more reduced area.

Chris Warren Berg  
Rallypointoutdoors@gmail.com  
406-600-9550

**From:** [Jerald Sherman](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] New regulations  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 11:32:12 PM

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I live in Bozeman.

I have fished the upper Madison River since the 1970's . It definitely used to be a spectacular fishery, but has diminished over the last 20 years. I usually fish the walk and wade sections between Slide Inn and Lyon's Bridge. There are not as many fish now and there are way too many people on the water. Also, the water temperature is higher now and the fish may be stressed due to the above.

I usually fish 3 consecutive days a week from June through October.

I have observed the same guides on the river with 2 Clients most of the days I am on the river. There are frequently 2 or more guides. I assume that they may be on the river more than the 3 days I fish. As I usually move along the river on a pretty even course, I skip around them and continue on walking till I reach a good spot. So, it is my opinion that the guided trips contribute to a general overcrowded population of fishermen on the river. Of course , I and all the other unguided sports on the river ALSO contribute to the overpopulation. In addition, there are additional fishermen wading on these waters due to the boats/rafts that put in at Renold's Pass Access.

In order to reduce the overall crowd , I suggest limiting the outfitters, as well as the unguided fishermen, on the wade section. I would be willing to go elsewhere some of the time in order to improve the fishing experience on the Madison wade section. I have no suggestions as to HOW to do this.

In regard to the downstream Circus past Lyon's Bridge on the Madison, with it's "Conga Line" appearance, any one with a lick of sense will recognize that it needs to be fixed. The problem is obviously too many outfitters and too many boats per outfitter. I don't see many non- guided boats on the river, but there are a few. The solution to this problem is that there has been lax regulation in the past and the outfitters have taken advantage of this. So, now is the time to regulate it. Set the max number at a level of past years and let the outfitters work it out as to how to schedule it.

The river will never be as good as it used to be, but we may be able to prevent it from getting worse! If we don't do anything now it will be too late for the fish and the fishermen.

Jerry Sherman

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android \[go.onelink.me\]](#)

**From:** [George Sideris](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 4:56:04 PM

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I am in full support of the proposed and other changes to protect the river.  
It's a step in the right direction, but more needs to be done. Short term interests will eventually be punished must deeper unless changes are enacted. Let's all do the right thing now to save the future of one of our treasures.  
Sent from my iPad

From: [garry.king](mailto:garry.king)  
To: [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Proposed Madison River Rules comments  
Date: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 1:34:25 PM

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Dear Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Madison River Rules. I have the following comments on each proposed new rule.

**New Rule I. Commercial cap at 2019 Levels.- Strongly Support. This is a priority issue, tied with new rule II.**

**New Rule II. Rest/Rotation June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This is a priority issue, tied with new rule I.**

**New Rule III. Walk/Wade Sections June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This rule should only apply June 15-September 30 and then be open to fishing from boats for the remainder of the year.**

**New Rule IV. Limit Development on lower river near Greycliffs. Strongly Support.**

**New Rule V. Walk/Wade only Thursday-Saturday, year-round. Opposed I believe new rule III is superior and new rule V should be rejected.**

**New Rule VI. Commercial cap at 2019 or 2020 levels. Strongly Oppose, allows for additional growth, 2020 commercial use is an unknown that likely would cause an overall total increase above 2019 levels. Outfitters should be capped at 2019 levels.**

**New Rule VII. Transfer of Permits.. Strongly Oppose new rule VII.** There is a statute governing how transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. **No partial transfer of days from a permit. No separation of the permit from the larger business entity.** Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Rule VIII. Create Flex trips. Strongly Opposed,** allow for growth in 2 out of any 3 years with no control. **This would defeat the spirit of the moratorium. New Rule VIII should be rejected.**

**New Rule IX. Transfer of Guided Trips. Strongly Opposed to New Rule**

**IX.** There is a statute governing transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. No partial transfer of days from a permit. Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Proposed Rule X.** Mandatory Guide Trip Reduction.. **Strongly support!!** Provides for reductions in outfitter allocated days if they fail to use their days do not use their days. Support.

**New Proposed Rule XI.** Commercial Use SRP Fees.. \$110 annual renewal fee. **Support.**

**New Proposed Rule XII.** Reporting and Use Fees. Annual report and payment of 3% of revenue. **Support, except I oppose the the flex days component.**

**New Proposed Rule XIII.** Plan Evaluation after 1<sup>st</sup> year and every 3 years thereafter. **Oppose. I propose review after 3 years and every 5 years thereafter. No sunset on rules.**

**New Rule XIV.** Commercial Use Working Group. **Partially support. I oppose any delegation of authority from FW Commission to working group. Oppose any flex trip elements.**

**New Rule XV.** Trip Distribution Pool. **Opposed.**

**New Rule XVI.** Madison River Use Stamp. **Support**

**Client Use Days- River Use Days. Strongly Opposed**

Thank you for considering these comments.

Garry King

**From:** [faith conroy](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Regulations Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 11:24:34 PM  
**Attachments:** [FWP Commission Letter 102020.pdf](#)

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Please forward my attached letter to the FWP Commission for consideration regarding proposed regulations for the Madison River.

Thank you.  
Faith Conroy

**From:** [Dawson\\_jim@hotmail.com](mailto:Dawson_jim@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 3:56:10 PM

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Name: Jim Dawson

City: Cameron

Maintaining a walk wade section is important to protect nonfloating anglers ability to fish. Contrary to FOAM AND MOGA?s disinformation the upper section of the Madison river is entirely walkable. It is not hostile to guiding, and accessible to anyone willing to lace up their boots and walk.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Dawson\\_jim@hotmail.com](mailto:Dawson_jim@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 3:52:51 PM

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Name: Jim Dawson

City: Cameron

It is imperative to do something now as the continuing growth in angler pressure is pushing the river to a point of collapse. Numbers of large fish in the Madison are declining, consistent with over use. If not addressed before the current election, regulation may become much more difficult to implement for a number of years.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [mikeposthumus@gmail.com](mailto:mikeposthumus@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 9:41:11 PM

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Name: Mike Posthumus

City: Ennis

I am a land owner, avid sportsman, and resident in Ennis, MT. I am not an outfitter or guide, and I have some but limited experience with watershed and ecosystem management. I understand the importance of balancing ecological systems with human systems and the challenges resources managers face in making these decisions. After reviewing the proposals and language, and comparing the proposed solutions against the Madison River Rule Making Environmental Assessment, I believe the both proposals fail to address the problem expressed by the public and may in fact create more conflict. Restricting boat access as the Trout Unlimited proposal suggests will remove any viable access to public land (BLM land) three days per week between Quake Lake and Lyons FAS, and will actually create more congestion at fewer viable river access sites. This will also create more congestion on the river and may increase negative perceptions of fishing experiences. Congestion at landings is the most significant complaint in your report and these restrictions will only exacerbate that specific problem, especially on weekends when traffic is most dense and these restrictions are in effect. To that effect, I believe the FOAM proposal's recommendation for expanding use options by reopening float traffic from Quake Lake to Lyons FAS helps diversify recreation opportunities, as the mandate for this work suggests. I also support the specific action of commissioning a detailed study of actual use patterns and their impacts. Data in your reports shows that that less than 15% of the Madison's fishing days come from commercial outfits. It seems ludicrous to me to restrict 15% of the users and allow the remaining 85% to continue without restrictions if we are truly considering social conflict and fishery health. I fully support capping day use of the Madison in a fair manner that restricts public and commercial use equally if there is social conflict and fishery health is actually at risk. As we have only seen responses from surveys, and have little scientific evidence supporting true user conflict, I'm compelled to suggest a more thorough study to document public use and actual conflicts, versus perceived conflicts. It seems that many users may feel inconvenienced by the fact that more people are choosing fishing as a sport, and are suffering from Not In My Back Yard feelings. Ultimately, the Madison is huge and I've never felt restricted or unable to fish where and when I want, and the fishing remains excellent. Compared to fisheries in other regions of the world, we are very fortunate to have as much access, and as much room as we have on this river unlike systems in the east that are impossibly crowded. Lastly, if commercial fishing caps are mandated, I am concerned about the possibilities of future guides and outfitters having the fiscal resources to start a businesses. It seems by capping commercial use rates, a new economy of fishing days will increase the cost of guided trips, the cost of starting a business providing trips, and will create a form of Monopoly for the most cash-liquid large-scale outfitters who can easily buy and hoard fishing days.

In summary I would not support the wholesale adoption of either proposal. I prefer FOAM's recommendations for expansion of use options to reduce congestion (which directly addresses the source of conflict according to your data) while conducting a more thorough investigation of the root cause of the perceived issues at hand. I would want to confirm that there is a real problem that needs fixing before applying unnecessary restrictions that seem to unequally impact the very people that make this region a viable place to live and work.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [ebruursema@gmail.com](mailto:ebruursema@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 4:55:20 PM

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Name:

City:

I would like to begin these comments by thanking FWP for their hard work regarding this issue. It is no easy task to balance the diverse group of interests surrounding the Madison River. After reading these proposals, I feel that the recommendations made are a good start, especially those put forth by the GGTU chapter. I think they will go some ways toward spreading anglers out and maintaining some diversity of experience. However, I do not see how these proposals will effectively address the overall crowding and over-use issues currently being experienced. FWP's own data shows that 75% of the river's use comes from out of state fisherman. This, obviously, is by far the largest contingent of users. If FWP is serious about truly reducing crowding, more needs to be done to limit use by out of state anglers. A possible solution is to cap the number of stamps provided to out of state fisherman. Another possible solution would be to charge out of state fisherman a fee for their Madison River use stamp. This could be done for in state residents as well, though it should be at a reduced rate. The fee may deter some fishermen.

I also have concerns that the current proposals are overly complex and will be very difficult to enforce. I would like it spelled out more clearly how FWP plans to enforce these rules if they are instituted.

Another proposal that I would like to address is the 10 flex days provided to each outfitter on top of their currently allotted trips. This proposal incentivizes outfitters to use those flex days because available trips will already be limited and thus in greater demand, and they may lose their flex days if not used. With 222 outfitters currently guiding the upper Madison, this allows for the potential of an additional 2,220 guided trips on top of the more than 13,000 already allowed. This number is too high and FWP should consider reducing or eliminating it.

I am very pleased to see that the primitive status of the Lower Madison is being prioritized. I hope these comments are helpful. Thank you for your time.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Zach Montano](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 1:44:29 PM

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Greetings,

Thank you for your time and efforts to create a much needed comprehensive management plan for the Madison River. As a resident of southwest Montana for over 16 years I would like to take this opportunity to voice my support and opposition to some of the current proposals and petitions.

I would wholeheartedly support a plan that sets limits on commercially guided trips at or near current levels.

However, commercially guided trips are a small fraction of the use on the Madison river and the "elephant in the room" of non-commercial recreational use must be addressed. I support some sort of boater pass system to identify and set limits for non-commercial use. Being a Bozeman resident, I see first hand how the current and future growth of the Gallatin Valley will dramatically increase use by non-guided public on the river. We must set up a system now before the river gets completely overrun by public floaters and anglers. I believe non guided use makes up something like 85% of river uses so this seems to be a no brainer for the health of the fishery and experience of river users.

I strongly oppose "rest and rotation" and "non-commercial zone" proposals. I think it is unfair to public users that chose to hire a guide to be penalized and denied access to certain sections of the river. These mechanisms would increase the sense of crowding since guided trips will be concentrated into shorter sections of the river. If I choose to buy a fishing license and support the Montana economy by hiring a professional fishing guide, I deserve to have the same level of access as someone who chooses not to hire a guide. Rest and rotation really does not address the problem of overuse. It does not set limits on non guided usage and would allow for use on the river to continue to grow.

Additionally, I oppose efforts to ban boats in the "wade only" sections of the Madison. Boats are an important access tool and are the only way I can take my young sons out to fish certain sections of the Madison River. Banning boats would largely have the effect of privatizing large sections of the river for wealthy landowners.

Thank you for your time and am optimistic this process will result in a more ecologically sound and user friendly experience on the Madison River.

Zach Montano  
Bozeman, MT

**From:** [jheames@bigskyanglers.com](mailto:jheames@bigskyanglers.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 11:53:34 AM

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Name: Jonathan Heames

City: West Yellowstone

Thank you for taking comments on this subject. I am fine with much of what's being presented here but there are a few things that require attention:

#### -REST AND ROTATION

As it is currently defined, this is flawed and will have an inverse effect of overcrowding the accesses available to commercial use. What is NOT being talked about is that by closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades you will effectively be closing at least 8 float options:

Raynold's Pass - Windy

Pine Butte - Windy

Pine Butte - Palisades

Lyons - Windy

Lyons - Palisades

Lyons - Ruby

Lyons - Mcatee

Windy - Ruby

Windy - Mcatee

Windy - Storey

Perhaps it would be wise to consider closing an individual access rather than a section?

#### USER STAMP

I am in support of some sort of user stamp for all users, whether you charge for this or not is the subject of discussion. It is my opinion that using the SRP structure to come up with a parking pass for all users would be the most cost effective and easiest to implement, rather than try to have anglers print a daily stamp and hire many rangers to enforce.

Good luck!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Chad Olsen](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on Madison River Recreation EA & Proposed Amendments  
**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2020 1:39:51 AM

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**TO:**  
Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission, and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks:

I, Chad Olsen, own and operate Greater Yellowstone Flyfishing Outfitters, guided fly fishing, and backcountry adventures in Montana, Wyoming, and Yellowstone Park. I'm a licensed Montana Outfitter (MBO License #5981), FOAM member, and have been operating on the Madison River as a guide since 1994 and as an outfitter since 1996. I have held a Madison SRP (#160) since the program's inception in 2007/2008 and hold numerous permits with state and federal agencies in Montana, Wyoming, and Yellowstone Park. I formerly owned Greater Yellowstone Flyfishers guide service and fly shops in Cooke City (1993-2000) and Bozeman/Four Corners (1999-2013).

I have personally witnessed Bozeman's and Montana's growth and increased fishing and recreational pressure on the Madison, other rivers, and other areas. My commercial use on the Madison has significantly decreased in the last decade due to increased fishing and recreational pressure and, in my opinion, a decline in the quality of both the fishing and overall experience. Since closing my fly shop in the fall of 2013, I have altered course by offering trips to less pressured areas and expanded our territory.

While the Madison River is no longer a centerpiece of our operations, I have several concerns regarding the proposed petitions and amendments. Potential new rules could set a precedent for possible recreation plans on other rivers in Montana. My first concern is that restricting use will pressure other rivers. It's similar to rip-rapping rivers. Rip-rap stabilizes one bank but then causes the river to accelerate and causes problems further downstream. More rip-rap is installed, which then exacerbates the problem further downstream and so on. Like a wild freestone river, recreationists need the ability to ebb and flow naturally. While a river recreation plan may be in the Madison River's best interest, I fear it will lead to additional, complicated plans on other rivers that will continue to put pressure on less utilized waters. This will create a vicious cycle of regulations and permits throughout the state and strain the resources and social conflicts.

That said, let me address my concerns directly with the proposed amendments.

### **NEW RULE I and NEW RULE VI - Madison River Commercial Caps**

Let me first say that I'm not opposed to capping commercial use on the Madison, but how it is being determined is fundamentally flawed. This is my **BIGGEST** concern about the proposed amendments. Using one year (GGCTU/Sportsmens) or even two years (FOAM) isn't really "historical," nor is it an accurate representation of the reality of outfitted trips. First, establishing one or two-year historical use for allocation creates a "gold rush" of sorts with outfitters irresponsibly using the river as much as possible to establish the highest amount of allocated user days. Secondly, one or two-year historical use is neither accurate nor equitable. Why in the world have I been keeping outfitter logs since 1996 if my true historical use is not going to be taken into consideration for allocation? Shouldn't longer-tenured outfitters have the ability to use their highest years or an average of the most recent 3-5 years? This would

avoid the "gold rush" scenario and be a more accurate representation of outfitted use. Lastly, which year to be used for allocation has been a moving target anywhere from 2018 to 2020.

Take my situation, for example:

2020 Estimated Madison Guide Days - 6 to 8

2019 - 1 Day

2018 - 21 Days

If **NEW RULE I** is adopted, I will only have 1 day each year to guide on the Madison, 11-18 days with flex days (2 out of 3 years) if FOAM language is adopted.

### And under **NEW RULE VII TRANSFERRED PERMITS** and **IX TRANSFER OF GUIDE DAYS**

Why should I have to pay my way back into user days on the Madison when I already have established historical use? This, of course, assumes a future amendment to statute 47-37-310(4).

2017 - 0 Days

2016 - 7 Days

2015 - 8 Days

2014 - 6 Days

2013 - 9 Days

2012 - 53 Days

2011 - 50 Days

2010 - 22 Days

2009 - 79 Days

2008 - 93 Days

Clearly, my user days have dropped off significantly since 2012 for reasons stated previously. Still, after 25 years of historical use, I feel like I should have precedence for more than ONE or even 11 - 18 days of use with potential flex days!

### **NEW RULE II REST/ROTATION OF MADISON RIVER COMMERCIAL USE**

While a rest/rotation approach to the two proposed sections of Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sunday and Varney to Ennis on Saturdays MAY diversify angling opportunities, it WILL NOT solve crowding and social conflicts on other parts of the river. It may very well increase pressure on these sections, considering that all commercial use will be forced into even fewer floatable miles, especially if floating is prohibited in the wade sections. Non-commercial users will likely avoid the commercial float sections and use the rest/rotate sections, leading to more pressure on those sections or a net-zero effect. Since 89% of angling pressure is non-commercial and is growing at a rate over twice as fast as commercial, it is reasonable to assume that pressure would increase in the rest and rotate sections. Rest and rotate management on the Madison SHOULD NOT be implemented at this time. Those who support this approach are fooling themselves and have no data or rationale to support this. More data should be gathered using an unlimited, no-cost Madison River use stamp and Adaptive Evaluation of any new Madison River Recreation Plan.

**NO to Rest/Rotate!**

### **NEW RULE III WALK/WADE SECTIONS OF MADISON RIVER**

Taking away boat access in the two walk/wade sections (Quake to Lyons and Ennis to Ennis Lake) Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays for three and a half months will also make crowding worse on other parts of the river. This is especially true when combined with eliminating an



additional river section to commercial float fishing on Saturday (Varney to Ennis) and Sunday (Lyons to Palisades). On Saturdays, all commercial float trips would be crammed between Lyons and Varney, and on Sundays' between Palisades and Ennis. Since non-residents take most commercial trips and non-resident anglers comprise 75% of angler use on the Madison, this approach discriminates against non-residents, puts additional stress on the resource, doesn't address crowding or social conflicts, discriminates against anglers with disabilities or other conditions who cannot wade fish, and does NOT diversify angling opportunities or support the local economy. While Monday through Thursday will continue under current regulations, and this new rule would be attractive by allowing fishing from a boat the rest of the year, it does NOT address the root problem of crowding and social conflict during the peak season.

#### **NEW RULE IV LIMIT DEVELOPMENT ON MADISON RIVER**

I support this approach to keep the lowest section of the Madison (downstream of Greycliff) primitive, minimizing its use.

I would also like to suggest that there be no restrictions on outfitting on the lower Madison at this time since the majority of guided trips occur on the upper Madison. Also, most of the guided trips on the lower Madison occur during the spring and fall. Using a river use stamp and adaptive management approach, restrictions could be placed on outfitted trips in the future if necessary. The larger concern on the lower Madison is the recreational and tuber use that is out of hand. See comments on river use stamp and closing comments regarding this.

#### **NEW RULE V MADISON RIVER WALK/WADE SECTIONS (FOAM)**

While this proposal is attractive to open this section to float fishing, it does not diversify angling opportunities. It will create additional social conflict as it breaks years of tradition for walk/wade anglers in this section to fish with minimal boat traffic. A better approach would be to open this section to float fishing Monday - Wednesday only, but that would likely lead to more crowded float fishing on those limited days and animosity from wade anglers towards floaters and guides.

**I favor keeping the walk/wade sections status quo, not adopting either New Rule III or V.**

#### **NEW RULE VI MANAGEMENT OF LIMITED COMMERCIAL USERS**

**1) I'm in favor of outfitters having the right to choose their allocated use based on 2019 OR 2020.** My reasons for this are stated previously (New Rule I) due to my fluctuating use over the past 3 years and unjustness!

**I fully support 2-7 under New Rule VI.**

#### **NEW RULE VII TRANSFERRED PERMITS**

I support all provisions of Rule VII and will support an amendment to statute 47-37-310(4) to transfer permits via buy/sell. Outfitters exchanging permits or days freely is not likely to occur.

#### **NEW RULE VIII FLEX TRIPS**

I fully support Rule VIII - Flex Trips. This is important due to yearly fluctuations and seasonal contingencies. This would be critical for me if an allocation is only based on 2019!

#### **NEW RULE IX TRANSFER OF GUIDED TRIPS**

I fully support this rule as this is the most reasonable method to grow trip capacity economically. Having to purchase an entire outfitting business to obtain additional Madison

user days is neither economically feasible for most outfitters, nor is it an equitable or reasonable approach. Let's establish rules that make sense for everyone involved and not favor outfitters with more financial clout. New outfitters and smaller operators should have a reasonable avenue to grow their Madison use. The current Big Hole/Beaverhead (BH2) system is almost impossible for non-permitted outfitters to obtain days on those rivers. Again, it will be necessary to amend the statute to transfer permits or days via buy/sell. Outfitters exchanging permits or days freely is not likely to occur.

#### **NEW RULE X MANDATORY GUIDED TRIP REDUCTIONS**

The provisions under Rule X are reasonable and fair.

#### **NEW RULE XI PERMIT APPLICATION AND FEES**

#### **NEW RULE XII REPORTING AND USE FEES**

Existing rules are formalized in the Administrative Rules of Montana.

#### **NEW RULE XIII PLAN EVALUATION**

This Rule is a **MUST!** Evaluation and an Adaptive Plan only makes sense, given the uncertainties around the new rules. Evaluate the rules' effectiveness, flaws, and data after the first year and subsequently every three years with the ability to make changes if needed. Something as important and contentious as a river recreation plan on the most heavily used river in the state should NOT be set in stone. Please allow for flexibility in the way this plan is managed and adapt accordingly. Much has been learned from the BH2 process, and no one wants to make changing the rules or obtaining user days as difficult as it is for BH2, please! The BH2 is NOT fair or equitable.

#### **NEW RULE XIV COMMERCIAL USE WORKING GROUP**

Having a diverse group of vested outfitters and managers to oversee provisions under Rule XIV is an excellent idea. Please allow the establishment and authority of such a group to work on behalf and in conjunction with the Commission.

#### **NEW RULE XV MADISON RIVER SPECIAL RECREATION USE PERMIT TRIP DISTRIBUTION POOL**

This approach is a great way to keep outfitted numbers within a cap and fair for outfitters to gain additional days if needed. Again, the BH2 process for gaining entry on those rivers or adding days is next to impossible!

#### **NEW RULE XVI MADISON RIVER USE STAMP**

I fully support the unlimited, no-cost Madison River Use Stamp and requirement to report river use each year! This will allow FWP to gather data on all river users. If non-commercial anglers make up 89% of the Madison's angling pressure, how much overall non-commercial use is occurring on the river? Outfitters and guides are taking the first step in responsible management of the river. However, we should not take full responsibility when the majority of use is non-commercial. The trout do not know the difference between a commercially guided angler and a non-commercial angler. The resources are not impacted less by non-commercial anglers or recreationists. In fact, outfitters and guides are ambassadors of our rivers and resources, sharing knowledge, expertise, experience, and educating clients on safety, etiquette, responsible fighting, handling, photographing, and releasing of fish. It's time that the general public steps up and does its part in responsibly managing the resources.

Bozeman is growing uncontrollably, and people are moving there and to other parts of

Montana for the outdoor lifestyle. Capping commercially guided trips will have little to no effect on the pressure on the river if recreational use is left unchecked. The last 5-10 years have seen unprecedented pressure on our rivers and resources not just from guides and anglers but general recreationists. The lower Madison is overwhelmed with tubers during the summer, and more and more recreational floaters in rafts, SUP's and other watercraft are using Montana rivers each year. There has been an explosion of recreationists in recent years, and this year's Covid-19 pandemic has led to mind-blowing numbers of recreationists on Montana rivers and forests. While this may be a one or two-year spike, I fear that many more people have discovered Montana, its rivers, and resources, which will lead to ever-increasing pressure.

Furthermore, these non-angling recreationists are using our rivers free of charge. Anglers pay for access and help support FAS through license purchases. General recreationists put additional stress on facilities, access points, and resources free of charge. Many, but not all, tubers and recreationists do not respect rivers and resources or have the same values as anglers and outdoor enthusiasts. Littering, loud music, drunk obnoxious behavior, and poor boat ramp and river etiquette are common among certain recreationists.

At some point, non-commercial anglers and recreationists may need to be limited on the Madison and other Montana rivers. At the very least, we must start with the free river use stamps to gather overall river use data. Until we have reliable data, we cannot move forward with comprehensive river recreation plans that take all users into account. Eventually, I favor a statewide river use stamp for anyone using a Montana river - rafts, kayakers, tubers, SUP's, etc. A daily, weekly, and seasonal permit could be sold using Montana's ALS system. Funds generated could be used for enforcement, education, garbage, and access enhancement. I also favor a short online educational survey regarding river safety and etiquette that must be completed before purchasing a river use permit.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding my insight on the proposed Madison River Recreation Plan.

Sincerely

Chad Olsen  
Greater Yellowstone Flyfishing Outfitters  
[chad.gyff@gmail.com](mailto:chad.gyff@gmail.com)  
406-579-4850  
Fly Fishing Adventures in Montana & Wyoming

**From:** [dennisoc40@aol.com](mailto:dennisoc40@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 3:08:47 PM

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Name: Dennis O'Callaghan

City: Vacaville, CA 95688

I have fished the Madison River for well over 50 years. It is a true treasure and deserves protection for the fish and to preserve the experience of fishing this great river.

I personally feel the greatest threat to the river is the overuse by commercial interests. They always want more of the pie. I think the walk/wade sections of the river should be preserved for non-commercial use. Allowing limited non-commercial boating of the river is reasonable.

I also believe the commercial sections of the river should be limited so as to allow a better experience for those people who wish to float the river with a guide. Increasing commercial usage is NOT the answer to this problem. I realize the economics of this situation but I believe that without controls the commercial interest will want to continue to expand usage and their profits.

We must first consider the river and the fish. Next the usage by ordinary fisherpersons and last the elephant in the room the commercial guided trips. The fly shops do just fine based on the equipment purchased by local and visiting fisherpersons and guided trips. Limiting the number of guided trips on the river must be a consideration. Protecting the River has to be priority ONE.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [tomjones@yahoo.com](mailto:tomjones@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 2:24:53 PM

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Name:

City:

Montana's rivers and streams are public resources. Outfitters have made the social conflict a reality by putting as many boats on these resources as possible during peak season. The proposed plan would reward these outfitters with a permit to continue this trend all the while giving the exact individuals that created the crowding monetary value in their historical use. This comes at a cost of not only the public but any future guide or outfitter that would be required to "purchase" these permits from the individuals that created the social conflict in the first place. It's a win win for the outfitters at an expense to future generations. Just because someone has profited off a river in the past doesn't mean they should be entitled to going forward.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Scottyasmith@earthlink.net](mailto:Scottyasmith@earthlink.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 2:06:29 PM

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Name:

City: Bozeman

It is about time to do something to limit the guides on the river. Your proposal seems like a good start.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [jmontag@3rivers.net](mailto:jmontag@3rivers.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 10:40:13 AM

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Name: Jeff Montag

City: McAllister

I agree River is overcrowded, but don't believe it has been established that the health of the fishery is in jeopardy at this point. Controlling commercial activity is a start, but the real source of crowding is non-commercial use. I oppose continuing the closure of River sections to fishing from boats, as this is in effect privatizing those sections for the benefit of land owners. Anyway, wade fishing adversely effects the riparian habitat and boat fishing does not. There is no preferred method of fishing.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [jgraham@berry.edu](mailto:jgraham@berry.edu)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 8:02:45 AM

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Name: John H. Graham

City: Rome

I do not support FOAM's proposal to open the walk/wade stretch of the Madison (Raynold's Bridge to Lyon's Bridge) to fishing from a boat for 4 days of the week. This is the only stretch of the river with widespread public access. Not all of us can afford a drift-boat or a guided fishing trip on the river. I've tried wade fishing at the Palisades and had to deal with drift boats coming through the area I was fishing every 2-3 minutes all day long. I can't imagine that happening in the wade stretch.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Gregory Kent](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Saturday, October 17, 2020 11:01:59 AM

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Hello,

I am writing to offer my opinion on the plan to regulate the Madison River. I support limiting the use of boats but not banning them all together. This incredible resource is too valuable recreationally and economically to shut it down as is being considered.

Best,

Gregory Kent

**From:** [Nelson Mostow](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River fishing petitions  
**Date:** Friday, October 16, 2020 8:05:58 PM

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I am a fly fisherman from Cleveland, Ohio. I try to get to the Rockies every summer to fly fish with a guide. I have fished the Madison on float trips over the years and had a great time.

Since over fishing is a problem, I agree that coming up with a plan for management is important. The plan of capping guided float trips at their current level seems to be the most fair way to limit fishing at this time, and then working on a plan to manage commercial and non-commercial fishing likewise seems best. .

I am sure you already have data on the economic impact of fishing tourism, but, needless to say, when I go to Montana, I eat in restaurants, stay in hotels or motels, visit National Parks, rent cars, buy fishing licenses and tackle, etc. Not only that, when I get back to Cleveland, I encourage others to come to Montana to enjoy its openness, its wildness and its beauty!

Thus, I support legislation which manages the fishing in a way which limits Madison river fishing by all at whatever level is needed to maintain it as a prime recreational river for all to enjoy

Sincerely,

Dr. Nelson Mostow  
Moreland Hills, Ohio 44022

**From:** [ignatiusdoty@gmail.com](mailto:ignatiusdoty@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 16, 2020 11:44:32 AM

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Name: dwight Doty

City: Waco, TX

I fully, enthusiastically support adoption of rules II, III, IV. Regarding proposed commercial guided trips I support the proposal that will minimize the number of trips as the proposed rules being put forward are the result of overuse. I support transferring permit control to the State, rule XI. I support rule XVI except that there should be a nominal fee for the stamp to cover the cost of issuance and the usage studies based on stamp data. Unfortunately, there is no rule proposed to control non-commercial access, why not?

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [GARY F EVANS](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison river EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 15, 2020 2:16:48 PM

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To whom it may concern, I was told I could make a comment about how to better manage the Madison river at this email address.

I have been fishing the Madison river my entire life, well over 50 years! I grew up in Bozeman and later owned some cabins, fly shop and an outfitting business on the Madison river. I guided on the river from 1989 through 2008. I continue to fish the Madison river several days each year. In my opinion the river and fish seem very healthy, but there is an ever increasing number of boats on the river each year. I floated the Madison 5 or 6 times this summer. My observation is that the overwhelming majority of boats on the river are guides and outfitters. The days I floated I would say 9 out of every 10 boats were guide boats. I now live in southeast Idaho, Rexburg, to be specific. I regularly float and fish the Henry's Fork, South Fork of the Snake River and the Teton river. Although these rivers have a high volume of boat traffic as does the Madison river, the state of Idaho mitigates over use by limiting the number of boats an outfitter can have on any one section of river each day. In my opinion the only way to really control the boat traffic on the Madison river is to begin to limit the number of guide boats on each section of the river each day. I am sympathetic to guides and outfitters because of my past experience as a guide and outfitter, however, the only real way to limit the number of boats on the river by any meaningful number is to limit access to guides and outfitters. I know this will affect their businesses, but they can increase their per trip fee by a considerable amount to help compensate for lost days on the river. The end result may not be as big an economic impact on guides and outfitters as initially thought. I believe the end result for guides and outfitters will be an increase in economic impact over time as the quality of the fishing and the fishing experience will be greatly enhanced by fewer boats being on the river.

Limiting the number of private boats allowed on the river will do little to decrease the overall user days on the river. Before any consideration is given to limit access to the general public I believe commercial traffic on the river needs to be curtailed. I believe most outfitters would agree with this assessment.

Thank you for taking time to read my thoughts. If you desire to discuss with me my thoughts and ideas please feel free to contact me at, 208-403-7143 or at [garyjill1@msn.com](mailto:garyjill1@msn.com).

Thank you,

Gary Evans

**From:** [Jon Yousko](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed Madison River Regulations  
**Date:** Thursday, October 15, 2020 10:19:16 AM

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As a long-time recreational angler here in Montana, I wanted to take a few moments to send you some feedback regarding the proposed Madison River regulations. I spend close to 100 days on the river fishing each year (I'm NOT a guide or outfitter), a good deal of which is spent in Montana. Over the last 15 years, it's obvious that river traffic has exploded exponentially here in Southwest Montana. River's are packed in the busy summer months with both anglers and non-anglers and the entire river experience is just not what it used to be. With the growth of Montana, that can be expected and it's great to see more and more people out there enjoying the natural resources that Montana offers. We're lucky to live in such an amazing place.

I worked in the fishing industry for nearly a decade here in Montana and have a clear understanding of how the "take people fishing" business has grown across the board with outfitters and guides in Montana. With the internet, social media and the ease of travel it's easy to see how guides and outfitters have grown their business by double digits year after year. Most of my best friends are guides and outfitters and I've seen firsthand how busy they've been and continue to be with new customers and clients.

As a recreational angler, I feel these public resources should be first and foremost available to the public. I've got no problem with commercial use, but this use should be secondary to public use. More importantly, there needs to be some sort of regulation on commercial use. To think that there are no limits on how many guides or outfitters can be out there working on a body of water is completely crazy to me. The fact that an outfitter can send as many trips out as he/she wants is absurd and we're now starting to see the problems of over-crowded rivers with boats everywhere, river rage between anglers and recreational floaters, boats working around loopholes to float down walk and wade zones, and so many other things that just continue to erode the fishing experience. Guides want more access, more trips, more boat ramps in quiet places. Their solution to the issue is more access as they feel this will reduce the number of boats and anglers in crowded areas.

With all that said, I just wanted to say that I support the proposed changes to the Madison River. We NEED regulation of guides and outfitters. We NEED walk and walk zones (I own a jet-boat, driftboat and raft) that are boat-free. We NEED sections of rivers that are "walk-in" only that provide remote experiences and not more boat ramps that open these places up to more crowds. We NEED sections of rivers that are rested from outfitting and guiding that give resident anglers a place to go to avoid unreasonable guide traffic. But most of all, we need some sort of regulation on outfitters and guides in this state.

Jon Yousko  
Bozeman, MT

**From:** [mquinnwy@gmail.com](mailto:mquinnwy@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 14, 2020 8:39:54 PM

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Name: michael quinn

City: wilson wy

while I may support the new regulations, I find it extremely disingenuous that you pretend to seek public comment. The last change in regulations on the Madison River was supported by 5% of respondents, and you proceeded to adopt the regulations. If you aren't going to listen to criticism from users, don't insult us by pretending to solicit 'public comment'.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [steelhead\\_59801@yahoo.com](mailto:steelhead_59801@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 5:16:34 PM

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Name: Carey Bridgeman

City: Missoula

I am in support of regulating guide days and new outfitter permits. I have to work 5 days a week Like most people, it stinks to finally get a chance to fish and the place is overrun with fisherman being guided. Our fisheries around Missoula can?t take it, and I just don?t think it?s right for so many people to profit on our rivers while degrading the quality of experience.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Bob Hayes](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rest and Rotation  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 7:17:47 AM

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I am FOR Rest and Rotation use of the Madison River. There is far too much out of state and commercial pressure on all of the rivers in Montana but the number of guides on the Madison is atrocious. I've avoided this river for years because of the number of boats and fishermen crowding the water. I'd love to see this managed more like the Big Hole and Beaverhead.

Bob Hayes



**From:** [vollmerscott@yahoo.com](mailto:vollmerscott@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 9, 2020 3:41:31 PM

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Name: Scott Vollmer  
City: Gallatin Gateway  
Dear Commissioners,

New Rule XVI establishes a no cost, no limit Madison River Stamp for all users. The reason for this rule is to gauge an accurate, not estimated, count of non-commercial use on the Madison River. While I strongly support gathering accurate data on non-commercial use on the Madison, I am opposed to this rule as constructed. As I have stated before to Department leadership and to Commissioner Byorth, it is redundant and unnecessary to collect data on those hiring guides as this data is already collected via annual logs in the current SRP and it will continue to be collected if New Rule XII is adopted. Therefore, while I support the requirement of a Madison River Stamp for non-commercial users, commercial users should be exempt. There is no reason to require those hiring guides to have their use reported twice, which would happen if those hiring guides are required to acquire a Madison Stamp. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Scott Vollmer, MOGA Director at Large, Madison River Negotiated Rulemaking Committee

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Linda Masella](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison Rec Rules  
**Date:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 8:55:38 PM

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Please pass the Madison Rec rules.

**From:** [ddfinks@yahoo.com](mailto:ddfinks@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 2:20:28 PM

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Name: Dan Franks

City:

I have been paying property taxes and fishing on the Madison River and surrounding areas since 1989. I strongly feel that the wade section between Quake Lake and Lyons Bridge should restrict navigation by any kind of watercraft especially commercial. There should be one stretch of the Madison that if a fisherman is willing to walk an extra mile you are able to get away from people. Nothing like walking for 1/2 hour to an hour only to find yourself in the company of three and usually more people to enhance your fishing experience. Thank you for your consideration.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Milligan, Valisa](#) on behalf of [FWP Fishing](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Madison river  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 2:04:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [madison.docx](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)

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**Valisa Milligan**

*Administrative Support*

Fisheries Division

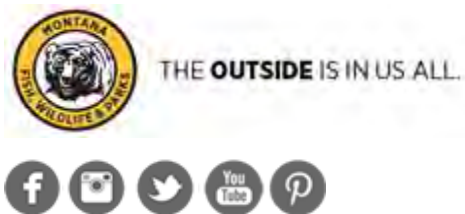
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

P.O. Box 200701

Helena, MT 59620-0701

Ph: (406) 444-5290

[Montana FWP](#) | [Montana Outdoors Magazine](#)



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**From:** Pieske, Shawna <[Shawna.Pieske@mt.gov](mailto:Shawna.Pieske@mt.gov)> **On Behalf Of** FWP General  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 1:19 PM  
**To:** Pat Byorth ([fwpdistrict2@gmail.com](mailto:fwpdistrict2@gmail.com)) <[fwpdistrict2@gmail.com](mailto:fwpdistrict2@gmail.com)>; Rich Stuker <[rstuker@itstriangle.com](mailto:rstuker@itstriangle.com)>; Shane Colton <[scolton@yellowstonelaw.com](mailto:scolton@yellowstonelaw.com)>; Tim Aldrich <[Cartim8@gmail.com](mailto:Cartim8@gmail.com)> <[Cartim8@gmail.com](mailto:Cartim8@gmail.com)>  
**Cc:** FWP Fishing <[fwpfsh@mt.gov](mailto:fwpfsh@mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Madison river

---

**From:** peter woolley <[peterwoolley84@hotmail.com](mailto:peterwoolley84@hotmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 9:55 AM  
**To:** FWP General <[fwpgen@mt.gov](mailto:fwpgen@mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison river

Hi

I hope this reaches you.

Thank you,

Pete Woolley

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:Mail[go.microsoft.com]) for Windows 10

**From:** [gchirdon@gmail.com](mailto:gchirdon@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 12:43:32 PM

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Name: Gordon Chirdon

City: Ennis

As a Madison County resident and avid float/wade fly fisherman, I support proposed Rule III over Rule V to reduce overall fishing pressure by prohibiting fishing from boats while still providing access for the Raynolds Pass to Lyons Bridge and Ennis FA to Meadow (Ennis) Lake Walk/Wade sections of the Madison.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Snyder, Jessica](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Comments on Madison River Draft Proposal  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 10:54:36 AM

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**Jessica Snyder**

*Paralegal*

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

P.O. Box 200701

Helena, MT 59620-0701

Ph: (406) 444-9785



THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

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**From:** D&C Cleveland <cleve2cleve@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 10:51 AM  
**To:** Snyder, Jessica <JessSnyder@mt.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on Madison River Draft Proposal

I have two serious concerns with the 2020 FWP draft proposal on the Madison River:

**First, it does not adequately address the major problem it is supposed to address: Overcrowding.**

According to FWP's own data, the river was crowded in 2019. So capping the number of trips at the 2019 level may help stem increases, but it will not make the river less crowded. The draft offers "rest and rotation" as a partial solution. Insofar as rest and rotation offers the fish some rest and relief, I applaud it. But as a solution to overcrowding rest and rotation would only seem to transfer MORE boats on the sections not being rested.

FWP own surveys indicate that in the busiest months, out-of-state anglers make up the majority of users on the river. They are the majority of clients being guided in boats. And while I am not aware of any surveys of the resident/non-resident ration on the walk/wade sections, an informal scan of the parking lots at Reynolds or \$3 will confirm that out-of-state anglers also compose a significant, if not majority, of the crowding on the walk/wade sections. Yet the draft proposal does nothing to address the amount of foot traffic on these sections, and little to address the huge influx of out-of-state and even out of country anglers.

More and more people are coming to Montana to fish the Madison from all over the US. The Bozeman airport continues to add new direct flights every summer. If we do not address the overcrowding problem now in a more serious way than giving outfitters what they already have plus more (e.g. flex trips) we will only have to do this all again in the future. In the mean time, the river

and the “experience” suffer. In addition, as

**Second, the resident Montana angler seems to be left out of any major consideration in this draft proposal. Their concerns seem to be simply unimportant.**

FWP’s own surveys indicate that many resident Montana anglers have given up fishing the Madison. They feel pushed off their own river — and they are. (When one well-known outfitter was asked what the solution to overcrowding was she said — in all seriousness — that the resident angler should fish “from 4 PM to 8PM, in the shoulder seasons, and leave the river to the professionals in the summer.”) Yet nothing in the proposed draft addresses the concerns of the resident Montana foot angler.

Rest and Rotation on most sections of the river does essentially nothing for resident foot anglers, because there is no access to the river in these sections, except right at boat access sites. Unless you have a boat, or can walk in the water only to fish, you are out of luck.

There is nothing to address the significant overcrowding on the walk/wade sections. **There are no resident anglers “citizen days” and there should be.** As the boat traffic continues at current levels and prices for guided trips go up, pressure on the walk/wade sections will only increase.

I also question why out-of-state anglers should have total access to Montana’s overcrowded rivers, when many of their states give us no such reciprocal rights if we wanted to fish in their states. Try getting access to most Colorado rivers, for example. Just try to lower an anchor in a Wyoming River and you will understand what I mean. It is largely “pay to play” in those states.

FWP should be the voice for resident anglers in Southwestern Montana. These anglers have no professional organization with paid lobbyists to represent them. Thank heaven that the George Grant chapter of Trout Unlimited has spoken up in behalf of Montana Anglers. (The Madison/Gallatin branch of Trout Unlimited has been gravely silent on the crowding of the Madison, I believe because their membership and leadership are heavily populated by guides and outfitters.)

Let me be clear here. I am NOT anti-guide. I use Montana guides often, and I fully recognize that there are many wonderful, considerate guides out there who care about the Madison deeply and will tell you, privately, that they recognize the river is overcrowded from much of the prime season.) But these new Madison River rules simply cannot and must not ignore the Montana resident angler while giving the guide/outfitter community primary consideration. Every time that FOAM has been asked what compromises they might consider, they have responded by asking for more trips, more access, and less regulation. I do not think that given their stance, they should be entrusted to look after the welfare of all the parties involved.

**To my mind, more consideration should be given to the idea of a Madison River Stamp.**

Right now, the draft proposal makes mention of a Madison River Stamp to be obtained by all users of the Madison River, but at no cost, and with no limit to the number of stamps. Yet the use of a Stamp could be one of the surest and most effective ways to control crowding and misuse of the river, if used differently.



I think everyone should pay for a Madison River stamp, so that they help support efforts to protect the river and help defray the costs of such efforts. Everyone should have “skin in the game.” Just as with fishing licenses, the cost for residents would be less than for out-of-state anglers. More importantly, the stamp should be used to control the number of out-of-state anglers — not the number guides or outfitters — that can use the river in any one year, which currently is the major cause of crowding in the summer months. Every resident angler would have access to a stamp. Out-of-state anglers would have access to a limited number of stamps as determined by FWP, available on a first-come, first-served basis. They could be obtainable online.

I can already hear the objections from the guiding community. After all, a stamp system will have an impact on their customer base, and their incomes are at stake. The whole purpose of the stamp is to have a dampening effect on the over-use of the river. But the damping effect does not have to be severe or crippling to guiding community. Initial levels of out-of-state stamps could and should be set to approximate the 2019 guiding levels already described in the draft proposal. If there is a dramatic drop in the anticipated customer levels, more out-of-state stamps could be made available quickly online. (If a walk-in customer did not yet have a stamp and stamps were still available, the fly shop staff could help them obtain the stamp online on the spot.)

As data of stamp sales and river usage come in the first year of the program, the stamp system can be quickly and easily adapted to current conditions. It can be “fine tuned” based on real data, not just opinions.

The stamp program offers other advantages. Guides and outfitters don’t have to keep track of what sections of the rivers are open, or flex days, or any of that. They merely have to make sure that their clients have the proper stamp. In addition, a stamp program eliminates the problems of “selling” days. It allows new guides or outfitters the opportunity to compete for business — as required by Montana statute. (Such an opportunity is virtually impossible under the proposed draft guidelines, unless you have a LOT of money.) All guides and outfitters have the ability to compete for the existing customer base, just as they do right now. Well established fly shops and outfitters will still have the advantages of experience, an established customer base, and whatever advertising and promotion they currently do.

The out-of-state angler will have to be alerted to and educated about the stamp system, but that can and will happen quite quickly over the first year the program. Visitors will have to plan ahead in order to get a stamp, but most have to plan ahead to travel here anyway, and it is worth a little planning to help save one of the most iconic trout rivers in America.

In short, the problems and adjustments with the stamp system need not be dire or insurmountable, and it really can address the problems of overcrowding. I think it deserves more consideration. We limit traffic on the Smith River, we control the number of people who can hunt elk and other big game. We can handle overcrowding and fish health on the Madison in a similar fashion.

David Cleveland

308 Slough Creek Drive  
Bozeman, MT 59718

**From:** [Snyder, Jessica](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] response to Draft Madison River Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 10:54:23 AM

---

**Jessica Snyder**

*Paralegal*

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

P.O. Box 200701

Helena, MT 59620-0701

Ph: (406) 444-9785



THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

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**From:** D & C Cleveland <cleve2cleve@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 10:46 AM  
**To:** Snyder, Jessica <JessSnyder@mt.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] response to Draft Madison River Plan

Dear Jess Snyder,

Realizing that the FWP legal department had to combine 2 different suggestions to come up with a plan, I believe you did the best you could with this assignment.

However, what is left after the combination, is a ‘Plan’ that does not address the issue of the protection of the Madison or the crowding issue. It does not address the fact that Montana residents don’t like fishing their own river because it is too crowded.

The problem with the non resident angler was well documented by FWP past surveys. Over 70% of the anglers are non residents. In my 7 years of fishing the walk wade sections, the real problem is not commercial boat use of the walk wade clogging up those sections, but from non residents on foot. In addition to what you are proposing, simply establishing Montana Resident Citizens Days, Friday, Saturday and Sunday on both walk wade sections would help with the crowding and allow the Montana resident an opportunity to access their home river. For those of us with no boat, this is very important.

**Montana residents have literally been pushed off the Madison River.**

FWP survey data: 67.4% of Montana residents say they fish the upper Madison river less frequently.

68.9% of Montana residents seek times and places where there is less crowding.

**Both resident and non-residents under Statue 12.11.405(8) should have reasonable and equitable opportunities . . . to enjoy Montana’s resources”**

Walk Wade Rules III and V appear to not allow fishing from boats from June 15 to September 30. But there is a bit of confusion concerning those rules. The walk wade section Rule III and Rule V are not clear as to what happens before June 15 or after September 30. Are anglers allowed to fish from their boats or flotation devices before June 15th and after September 30? Rule V states that on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesday and Wednesdays fishing from a water craft is prohibited. So on all the other days of the week one can fish from a boat?

These two rules really need to be combined and more carefully reworded so there is no confusion about when boats are allowed and when or if anglers are allowed to fish from boats. I am recommending that no one be allowed to fish from a boat on the wake wade sections at any time of the year.

The second issue I have with the Plan is the actual proposed increase of days allotted to commercial outfitters through flex days. The original point of a Plan was to **reduce the use** of the Madison River, cutting down on boat trips either commercially guided or strictly recreational. The **addition** of flex trips is honestly a joke and should not seriously be considered.

Charlotte Cleveland  
308 Slough Creek Dr.  
Bozeman, MT 59718

284-2452

**From:** [Barbara McClure](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Letter to Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commission  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 6, 2020 11:59:44 AM  
**Attachments:** [Commision Letter.docx](#)

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Please distribute this letter to the commissioners in advance of the upcoming meeting, no later than October 30th.  
Thank you.

**From:** [Keith Shein](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Restriction on the Madison River  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 6, 2020 10:33:03 AM

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October 6, 2020

Dear Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commission,

As a homeowner in the Madison Valley, and as an angler who has fished the Madison River for over three decades and consider it an international jewel, I'm writing to encourage you in the strongest terms to create restrictions that will protect the river.

For the last years, a fight for restrictions brewed between conservationists, fearful for the health of the Madison, and commercial interests, fearful of loss of revenue. Commercial interests have said that despite an almost incomprehensible number of over two-hundred thousand angler days on the river, that it is in great shape, and that no restrictions are necessary. However, FWP data released this spring show the river in decline, with fish counts in some stretches down forty percent. Though this decline may be attributable to multiple causes, one is clearly from overfishing, and that cause is something we can do something about. As well, the Commission received the results of a survey related to the possibility of restrictions on the river. Thousands of people responded, and overwhelmingly they were Montanans. These voices clearly advocated for restrictions on the river. The Commission must act to protect the Madison River.

Before the Commission are two, at times, opposing petitions. Please vote to:

1. Impose a commercial use cap on the river. The 2019 level of 13,909 guided trips is too high and not sustainable, especially given the distinct possibility that, anticipating coming restrictions, commercial interests increased and inflated trip amounts in 2019 to secure a higher number. Fish and wade anglers need protection. Please find an average of guided trips from between 2010 and 2016 to create a commercial use cap.
2. Establish a system of rest and rotation. Between 6/1 and 9/30, there should be no commercial use on Tuesdays and Saturdays between Lyon Bridge to Palisades, and no commercial use from Varney Bridge to Ennis on Thursdays and Sundays. The fish need a break from angling pressure, especially from guide boats that fish bank-to-bank, dredging weighted nymphs. Wade anglers need a break from boats to reduce social conflict.
3. Establish walk-wade sections of the river. Between 6/1 and 9/30, no boats with fishing equipment would be allowed between the outlet of Quake Lake and Lyon Bridge, and between Ennis and Ennis Lake. This should be seven days a week, restoring historical regulations. Especially on the upper river, it will protect spawning habitat, and it will allow fish to hide in the middle of the river. It will provide wade anglers much needed protection from boats and reduce social conflict, encouraging angler satisfaction on the river, currently in decline from crowding.

4. Don't allow monetization of commercial permits. These permits belong to the state of Montana and its citizens. They are leased, not owned by guides and outfitters. And we saw what happened on the Big Hole and Beaverhead when monetization was permitted: all those permits are now owned by large, out of state outfitters, giving them defacto control over an important use of the rivers. This cannot be allowed on the Madison.
5. Restrict limited development below Greycliff. Help this stretch of the lower river stay primitive for all times. No other section of the river, at this point, could be so saved.

I know this decision is more than difficult. Conservationists and commercial users cannot agree, and the Commission must forge a plan that considers these competing interests. However, foremost should be your obligation to conservation. The Madison River is the most used and overfished in the entire state, and it is one of the state's and the world's best trout streams. It will not remain so unless protected, and if it breaks, commercial interests in the Madison Valley will suffer greatly. Creating restrictions to protect the river will save it and the livelihoods of all that depend on it.

Sincerely,  
Keith Shein  
25 Big Bend Road  
Cameron, MT 59720

**From:** [roblowe.mt@gmail.com](mailto:roblowe.mt@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 5, 2020 6:34:38 PM

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Name: Rob Lowe

City: Billings

And please please please leave the walk and wade sections as such. She doesn't need anymore float traffic in any stretch. With our high water rules, wading and private land ownership aren't the issue, it's landowner and outfitter greed that are ruling this roost. Personally I think walk and wade stretches from Quake down and Ennis bridge down be nothing but walk and wade yearlong. Sorry your clients are too lazy to do so, but there's about 50 miles to float with these people.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [eric@propertiesnorthwest.com](mailto:eric@propertiesnorthwest.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 4, 2020 9:13:38 AM

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Name: Eric Smith

City: Missoula

As a longtime MT resident and responsible individual (non-commercial) user of the Madison River for fishing and camping with friends, I agree with and support the proposal. My Dad used to take me fishing on the Madison when I was a kid. I actually have not fished the Madison in the last several years because of overcrowding and rude behavior, especially by guides and their clients. I would like to enjoy the river again before I am too old to do so. Please implement these proposed restrictions.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Ross Anderson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] New rules on the Madison River  
**Date:** Saturday, October 3, 2020 3:42:47 PM

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I would like to make the following comments on the proposed new rules being discussed at the public hearing on October 30th.

1. I don't agree with the restrictions in Rule 111 that no watercraft or floatation devices can be used to access fishing on the Walk/Wade sections of the Madison River on the weekends. That is often the time that my family is at my cabin and we like to float that upper section because of my age and inability to walk for miles as I use too. My sons and grandsons are either working or in school during the week and we all want to access the upper and lower parts of the River on the weekends. They are the ones I need to man the oars. I am 83 years old.

2. I would like to see Rule 11 include no commercial use for the entire year. I have had commercial guides bring clients and fish the same hole I was fishing in the fall. They have plenty of River to fish without accessing the Walk/Wade section and creating overcrowding and further frustrating the walk/wade fishermen.

3. I don't like the idea that anyone can fish from their boats in the Walk/Wade sections. Let's keep it like it is prohibiting any fishing from float boats year around. That is changed in Rule V. The fish are being hammered by guides in the rest of the River all year long so they don't need to spoil these stretches by allowing for more and frequent overuse. The fish have learned to not feed during the day as a result ruining the fishing for the rest of us.

Thank you for your consideration of these suggestions!

C. Ross Anderson, landowner and cabin owner in the Madison Valley for 38 years.

**From:** [zackboughton@gmail.com](mailto:zackboughton@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020 11:44:54 AM

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Name: Zack Boughton

City: Bozeman, MT

As a user of the Madison River I want to continue to see this river be a resource we can continue to enjoy. After reading through the Madison River Rule Proposal I feel the following:

1) I support the New Rule I and II which caps outfitter days to the 2019 level and restricts areas which outfitters can guide on Saturdays and Sundays. The outfitting levels on this river are out of control in my opinion.

2) On New Rule III I strongly disagree that we need to limit vessels in the stretch from Quake to Lyons. This area is tough to access on foot and will only create more problems with private landowners.

I believe we need more stringent standards that we hold our guides and outfitters to. They use and abuse the resource and give back nothing. Please try to find a way to improve the overall level of professionalism with these guys and gals.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [rkyntelkhorn54@gmail.com](mailto:rkyntelkhorn54@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020 7:03:48 AM

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Name: David Ungerman

City: Jefferson City

These proposals are sound and are badly needed and in fact long overdue. I support these measures. It is obvious that the commercial guides will not regulate themselves and care little for our natural resources as a whole. Therefore these measures should be instituted and possibly further restricted for the good of the resource and our outdoor heritage as residents of the state of Montana.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Mark Ellwanger](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020 6:39:48 AM

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As an avid Montana angler I would not like to see restrictions placed on accessing the Madison River float trips with a guide.

Thank You,

Mark

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone \[overview.mail.yahoo.com\]](#)

**From:** [Phinbsmrk@aol.com](mailto:Phinbsmrk@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 10:30:07 PM

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Name:

City:

I am in favor of restricting the number of guide boats per day, rotating sections to let the fish rest some days and keeping wade fishing only spots as wade fishing only all of the time. The fish in the Madison are getting a lot of pressure.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [bd\\_montana@yahoo.com](mailto:bd_montana@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 12:05:43 PM

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Name: Brett Dorwart

City: Fort Peck

I think that commercial fishing should be kept at 2019 levels, also I think that the rest rotation periods are a good tool to control the pressure on the river. Resident fisherman should take preference to commercial interests. I think it is ridiculous that commercial interests should be allowed to force out the sportsman and women that live here in Montana. I support anyone's choice for making a living, but it should not be at my expense. I wouldn't expect anyone to sacrifice just so I could work in my choice of employment.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [justinmetcalf123@gmail.com](mailto:justinmetcalf123@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 12:03:21 PM

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Name: Justin Metcalf

City: Missoula

Good day. I have been fishing the Madison River my entire life and I live in Missoula. I support regulating guided trips on Montana rivers as the pressure increases. I feel these policies have been successful in other rivers by not harming the guiding and/or tourism industry, while greatly increasing the condition of the fishery and ability for local Montanans to access the resources.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [pmunday@mtech.edu](mailto:pmunday@mtech.edu)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 12:02:55 PM

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Name: Pat Munday

City: Walkerville MT

I generally support the proposed rule changes for the Madison River and applaud George Grant TU and other conservation groups for leading the effort to make these changes. The proposed rules are very generous to outfitting businesses and unfortunately do little to reduce commercial use of the Madison, which has been out of control for many years now. Better late than never, however.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [carter.bermingham@gmail.com](mailto:carter.bermingham@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 3:39:14 PM

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Name: Carter Bermingham

City: Missoula

I strongly support the proposal put forth by the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited and other sportsmen's groups. For far too long, the Madison (and other rivers across the state) has been valued more for its economic capabilities than its recreational ones. The increase of commercial use has a way of increasing revenues for guides, while decreasing the experience for the rest of us. We should not be left to hold the punching bag as residents while outfitters and guides are given full run of the river all in the name of money and jobs. Their argument seems to boil down to one of greed, and I don't support it. We need to start taking steps NOW to mitigate the overcrowded nature of the river and the damage that has been done the quality of the experience on the Madison. With all the articles being circulated in national newspapers concerning cheap Montana real estate, are we really under the impression that more people won't move here? When they arrive, are they not going to use the river? Will the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development reducing their push for advertising the Montana experience of fly fishing? I doubt it - therefore SOME proactive measures need to be taken to look after the people in the state who live and recreate here. Once you're done with the Madison, do the Blackfoot next because Paw's Up is doing their best to turn that place into conveyor belt of commercial traffic.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [watlaw@gmail.com](mailto:watlaw@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 1:13:24 PM

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Name: Herman A Watson III  
City: bozeman  
Dear Chairman Colton

Chuck Watson here. My spouse and I support the GCC of Trout Unlimited proposal and we fish the walk wade section roughly fifty (50) days a year. I have represented FFF in years past.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [rickjohnsonflyfishing@gmail.com](mailto:rickjohnsonflyfishing@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 12:10:44 PM

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Name: Rick Johnson

City: Blacksburg

I support the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited Madison River petition as it protects the resource, Madison River, better than the alternative proposals. It also protects the general public who cannot afford the very high rates charged by guides and outfitters, and preserves sections of the river for wade fishermen. I travel to Montana because of its river access laws and the availability of wade fishing. I spend approx \$5000 per annual trip and fish the Madison.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [mga9031@gmail.com](mailto:mga9031@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 10:36:21 AM

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Name: M Faw  
City: DILLON  
What about the Trout?

Decades back the Madison River was a Top Ten trout destination. Now it's a dead zone. I live here and tell visitors to avoid that river because of far too many drift boats (arrogant guides and outfitters who passed around a petition in Ennis trying to have fisheries biologist fired is a great example) and so few Trout!

I favor the Sportsmen's Groups petition, but would like to see outfitters pay \$10,000 for their SRP permit and someone needs to verify trips and logs because outfitters are cheating the system.

finally, pass something that benefits the trout--and not outfitters. I oppose their FLEX ideas and doubt their numbers that wading anglers are taking the fish. Seems they forgot to add in the number of asses they bring down the river in boats. While waders are recreation, boats are business and they are privately profiting from a public resource.

I support the Sportsmen's Group petition as the best solution at this time. So long Madison River.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Kieran Saba](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 6:57:12 PM

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1. **Outfitting moratorium.** Please implement New Rule I, proposed by GGTU/Sportsmen's Groups, to put an outfitting moratorium in place based on 2019 levels. Do not allow any flex days or any other mechanism to allow commercial growth beyond 2019 levels.
2. **Rest/Rotation.** Please implement new Rule II, proposed by GGTU/Sportsmen's Groups, to close a short section of river on Saturday and another short section of river on Sunday to commercial use. This will give the public a way to avoid the intense commercial use on the Madison River. This works great on the Big Hole and Beaverhead Rivers.

Thank you  
Kieran Saba

**From:** [Ray Posel](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] rest/rotation  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 5:06:07 PM

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To whom it may concern: Please implement New rule #1 and #2 proposed by GGTU/ Sportsman groups.  
thank you

**From:** [Ann Cook](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 2:51:29 PM

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Please note my comments as listed below:

1. I Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. I Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. I Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River: Providing for special walk/wade rules on two sections for June 15-September 30.
4. We should Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. I Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit to comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for your consideration

Ann A Cook

**Ann Arthur Cook**

Cell 406-599-0992

[hun@ecooks.org](mailto:hun@ecooks.org)

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**From:** [Brian Cook](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment on the Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 11:29:53 AM

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Please note my comments as listed below:

1. I Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. I Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. I Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River: Providing for special walk/wade rules on two sections for June 15-September 30.
4. We should Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. I Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit to comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for your consideration

Brian Cook

**From:** [jncshouse@gmail.com](mailto:jncshouse@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 10:07:09 AM

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Name: Joel Shouse

City: Bozeman

I have lived in the Bozeman area since 1975 and have actively fished the Madison River since that time. I also directed a Section 208 water quality study of the Madison River (1975-1978) wherein we worked to understand and develop alternative plans to relieve the thermal problems in the lower Madison. I also served as Madison County's Consulting Planner from 1978- 1993. During this period we developed a plan to limit the development and siting of structures within 500 feet of the upper Madison so as to maintain the quality of the fishing experience. I later worked with FWP on the studies of the Smith River and later authored the Smith River Management Plan. This Plan was the first attempt to control the amount of use of a river in Montana and has resulted in the preservation of the wonderful experience of a semi-wilderness float.

In the Department's introduction to the Madison River Plan three objectives are listed in the following order: 1) Preserve the Fishery; 2) Preserve the quality of the fishing experience; and 3) Consider the economic impact of fisherman's use to the local area. I feel that priorities in the Plan should be as stated above. The Madison River, as are all streams in Montana, are owned by the citizens of Montana. When the use of a stream reaches a point to where limits have to be placed on use, the first place limits need to be placed are on commercial use. At some point in time limits may have to be placed on public use in order to preserve the fishing experience, but more importantly on the protection of the fishery.

Therefore, for these and other reasons, I fully support the Alternative 3.0 as proposed by the Sportsman Groups/GGTU Alternative. The Plan for the Big Hole River contains similar restrictions and seems to be working well. This Plan represents a place to start and changes should be able to be made in the future to refine and improve the management of one of the greatest fishing rivers in the United States.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [garrett.ouldhouse](mailto:garrett.ouldhouse)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Final Comments on Proposed Rules  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 3:42:16 PM

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Dear Commissioners

The Anaconda Sportsmen's Club signed early on with the George Grant's Trout Unlimited Petition because our Members feel they have been pressured off the river due to over abundance of Outfitter use. It has turned into a bad experience and has turned others away too. The Madison River is one of the States prized Blue Ribbon Streams: and should be managed for the Public and not Someone's livelihood.

We have reviewed GGTU final submitted Comments Oct 25th and concur with them on Supporting Rules #'s 1,2,3,4,10,11,12,13,16 and Oppose Rules #'s 6,7,9,15 Reject Rules #'s 5 and 8 and partial Support Rule #14.

I reflect on my Childhood memories of my Family Camping and Fishing on the Madison River every 4th of July. My Dad's destination.. Great Memories! Today's experience can't be that way now, because the increase of people but implementing these rules will give the Public a better experience and that's what it's supposed to be all about. Thank You for your patience and time.

. Gary Ouldhouse Anaconda Sportsmen's Club President

**From:** [stuebeck@gmail.com](mailto:stuebeck@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Ryce, Eileen](#); [Skaar, Donald](#); [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Cc:** [fwpdistrict2@gmail.com](mailto:fwpdistrict2@gmail.com); [Mark Thompson](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rule II and III clarifications  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 2:33:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [GGTU comments clarifications.pdf](#)

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Hello Eileen and Don. As discussed yesterday with Don Skaar, we are sending you written clarification of proposed rules II and III. It has come to our attention that there is a disconnect between our intent and FWP initial interpretation.

Our formal comment letter is attached. The body of this letter is pasted below.

Steve

.....  
October 25, 2020

Madison River Comments  
PO Box 200701  
Helena MT 59620-0701

Dear Eileen and Don:

The George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited recently submitted official comments on the proposed Madison River Rules. Two issues have come to our attention since we submitted those comments, and we now wish to comment and clarify on these two issues. The two issues are:

1. Walk/Wade intent clarifications.
2. The effect of Rest/Rotation on commercial vehicle shuttles.

**Walk/Wade, proposed New Rule III.**

As you know, New Rule III is being proposed because the commission accepted the petition from GGTU/Sportsmen's organizations. In that petition we proposed changes to the current "no fishing from boats" provision in the regulations. The intent of our proposal was:

1. Maintain the current "no fishing from boats regulation" Monday-Thursday.
2. Friday-Sunday. **No boats allowed for fishing at all.** Our intent was to increase the regulation Friday-Sunday to not only prohibit float fishing, but to prohibit using boats to access wade fishing. Under our proposal the only boats that would be allowed Friday-Sunday would be recreational floaters that are not engaging in fishing.
3. Limit the applicability of the above two rules to the time period June 15-September 30.

Recently, it has come to our attention that FWP staff have been interpreting this proposal to allow float fishing Friday-Sunday. This is clearly the opposite of our intent. Upon inquiries with FWP, we were directed to page 26 of the EA, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph.

***"The changes to the walk/wade sections will prohibit using a boat to access fishing on Friday-Sunday in the Quake Lake-Lyons Bridge FAS and Ennis FAS to Ennis Lake reaches from June 15-September 30. This means boats cannot stop to let the occupants wade fish....."***

Apparently, this language is being interpreted to allow float fishing Friday-Sunday. The natural extension is that this would also permit float outfitting Friday-Sunday, resulting in an expansion of

commercial use. All of this is clearly to opposite of our intent.

While the petitioning organizations were afforded to opportunity, by FWP Legal, to review the draft rule to ensure our intent was captured in the proposed rule, we were not afforded the same opportunity to review the EA prior to release. New Rule III is clear:

1. ***On Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from June 15 to September 30 no watercraft or flotation device can be used to access fishing.***

There is no qualification in this language to make the rule specific to only wade fishing. The rule clearly applies to **ALL** fishing. That's our intent Fridays-Sundays, no boats may be employed for any fishing purpose.

Finally, we ask FWP to very carefully review any final combination of rules for the "law of unintended consequences." The A la Carte design of this rule proposal could result in some peculiar combinations of final rule elements. We strongly encourage FWP to approve New Rule I, II, III, IV, X, XI, XII, modify XIII and reject the remaining proposed rules.

However, different combinations of rules will result in unintended consequences. For instance, if FWP rejects the Rest/Rotation proposal and interprets proposed New Rule I to allow float fishing Friday-Sundays, then commercial users not only do not give up a mid-river section on weekend days, they actually gain a stretch they cannot currently float outfit on. This would also really impact wade-only anglers that are using the upper and lower sections of river as a refuge from not only boats but also intense commercial use.

Please proceed with extreme caution on your interpretation of the Friday-Sunday provisions of New Rule I. As stated previously, it is our intention to have no boats utilized for fishing, wading or float fishing, Friday-Sunday from Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge and Ennis to Ennis Lake.

**Rest/Rotation, proposed New Rule II.**

During the public hearing, FWP staff was asked if there would be an implication for commercial vehicle shuttles on Saturdays and Sundays in the proposed rest/rotation zones. This was not a question that we expected to hear and we believe that FWP staff was also unprepared to answer this question. In response FWP staff indicated that a strict interpretation of New Rule II would appear to prohibit all commercial activity, including vehicle shuttles. During the public comment period our representative, Steve Luebeck, clarified that vehicle shuttle were not intended to be impacted by the rest/rotation provision contained in our petition and new Rule II.

We are now writing to reiterate that vehicle shuttles are not intended to be impacted by our Rest/Rotation proposal. It was our intent to prohibit commercial outfitting only on the river under our Rest/Rotation proposal. Commercial vehicle shuttles are outside the scope of our proposed Rest/Rotation rule. When New Rule II is formally adopted, please clarify that vehicle shuttles are not prohibited.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional comment. As stated above, we strongly encourage FWP to approve New Rule I, II, III, IV, X, XI, XII, modify XIII and reject the remaining proposed rules.

Sincerely,



Mark Thompson



**From:** [Matt Pickett](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River needs a rest  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:25:02 PM

---

I agree with the comments I have copied and pasted here.

1. **Outfitting moratorium.** Please implement New Rule I, proposed by GGTU/Sportsmen's Groups, to put an outfitting moratorium in place based on 2019 levels. Do not allow any flex days or any other mechanism to allow commercial growth beyond 2019 levels.
2. **Rest/Rotation.** Please implement new Rule II, proposed by GGTU/Sportsmen's Groups, to close a short section of river on Saturday and another short section of river on Sunday to commercial use. This will give the public a way to avoid the intense commercial use on the Madison River. This works great on the Big Hole and Beaverhead Rivers.

Thank you for considering this important test from Commercial Guides.

- Matt Pickett

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Harold Johns](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#); [Harold Johns](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rules  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 8:51:42 PM

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Please accept New Rule 1 to put a moratorium on outfitters restricting them to 2019 levels. Please do not allow any other mechanisms to allow more commercial growth.

Please accept the sportsmen's group's recommendations to close a short section of the river on Saturday and another section on Sunday. This will be good for the public and we must remember that the river belongs to the public. Commercial use is okay but has to be managed.

Harold Johns Board Member, Skyline Sportsmen's Association



**From:** [raygross0144@gmail.com](mailto:raygross0144@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 1:26:57 PM

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Name: Raymond L Gross, Jr

City: Dillon

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I have the following comments on each proposed new rule.

New Rule I. Commercial cap at 2019 Levels.- Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule II.

New Rule II. Rest/Rotation June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule I.

New Rule III. Walk/Wade Sections June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This rule should only apply June 15-September 30 and then be open to fishing from boats for the remainder of the year.

New Rule IV. Limit Development on lower river near Greycliffs.. Strong Support.

New Rule V. Walk/Wade only Thursday-Saturday, year-round. Opposed I believe new rule III is superior and new rule V should be rejected.

New Rule VI. Commercial cap at 2019 or 2020 levels. Strongly Opposed, allows for additional growth, 2020 commercial use is an unknown that likely would cause an overall total increase above 2019 levels. Outfitters should be capped at 2019 levels.

New Rule VII. Transfer of Permits.. Strongly Oppose new rule VII. There is a statute governing how transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. No partial transfer of days from a permit. No separation of the permit from the larger business entity. Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

New Rule VIII. Create Flex trips. Strongly Opposed, allow for growth in 2 out of any 3 years with no control. This would defeat the spirit of the moratorium. New Rule VIII should be rejected.

New Rule IX. Transfer of Guided Trips. Strongly Opposed to New Rule IX. There is a statute governing transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. No partial transfer of days from a permit. Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

New Proposed Rule X. Mandatory Guide Trip Reduction.. Strongly support!! Provides for reductions in outfitter allocated days if they fail to use their days do not use their days. Support.

New Proposed Rule XI. Commercial Use SRP Fees.. \$110 annual renewal fee. Support.

New Proposed Rule XII. Reporting and Use Fees. Annual report and payment of 3% of revenue. Support. Oppose to the flex days component.

New Proposed Rule XIII. Plan Evaluation after 1st year and every 3 years thereafter. Oppose. I propose review after 3 years and every 5 years thereafter. No sunset on rules.

New Rule XIV. Commercial Use Working Group. Partially support. Oppose any delegation of authority from FW Commission to working group. Oppose any flex trip elements.

New Rule XV. Trip Distribution Pool. Opposed.

New Rule XVI. Madison River Use Stamp. Support

Client Use Days- River Use Days. Strongly Opposed

Raymond Gross, Jr  
Dillon, Montana

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Chris Marchion](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:57:15 AM

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I support the George Grant Trout Unlimited proposal addressing Madison River access planning. In particular I support the following comments:

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Chris Marchion  
Anaconda Montana

563 6145

Sent from Windows Mail

**From:** [Aaron Gransbery](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:31:31 AM

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Dear Montana FWP. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Madison River rules. I fish the Madison River every year but it is getting harder to continue that tradition with the immense pressure of outfitter guided trips taking over the river. Please accept the following comments on the proposed Madison rules:

1. I support New Rule I, the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. I support New Rule II, the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.) This works great on the Big Hole River and would also on the Madison!
3. I support New Rule III, the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river. New Rule IV
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I oppose New Rule VIII, the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. I insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years. New Rule X. Commercial days need to go down, this rule provides a mechanism to reduce total commercial impact over time.

A recreation management plan, outfitting moratorium and rest/rotation system on the Madison River is long overdue. Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

**Aaron Gransbery**  
**Anaconda**

**From:** [dtribby@midrivers.com](mailto:dtribby@midrivers.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 9:41:49 PM

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Name: Montana Sportsmen Alliance

City:

Dear FWP Commissioners:

The Montana Sportsmen Alliance (MSA) submits the following specific to the Environment Assessment (EA) for Recreation Management Use on the Madison River.

MSA believes this process has taken far too long to complete and FWP continues to "kick-the-can" down the road. It is time FWP and the Commission adopt rulemaking which supports the Madison River Recreation Goal. MSA supports the three components of the goal, but believes all actions must first and foremost support long-term health and sustainability of the fisheries. FWP data documents large fish are declining and angler satisfaction continues to deteriorate. Fish mortality resulting from hooking, angler satisfaction, impacts of commercial and non-commercial use, and changes in fish populations have been studied for many years. Data is abundant to move forward and make an informed decision.

Specific to the EA presented, we offer the following:

The GGTU proposal provides the greatest potential for meeting the goal for Recreation Management of the Madison River. If only one of the three alternatives is selected for adoption, we support the GGTU alternative. MSA believes additional and new actions not identified in the EA should be considered and proposed management actions modified, including:

Utilizing 2019 or 2020 client use days as a base is proposed by both FOAM and the GGTU. FWP's own data suggests this level of use will not sustain the fisheries in the Madison River. A much lower base should be utilized. For example, consider averaging the number of client use days from 2010-2015 as a base level. The litmus test for whatever level of use is allowed, must be whether the fisheries can be maintained or improved.

MSA opposes the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their caps in two of any three years.

It has been stated commercial use accounts for only 15% of the overall angler use on the Madison River. While this may be true, in the months of July/August commercial use accounts for over 90% of the total use on some reaches. This information needs to be clearly displayed.

The use of a No Cost/No Limit Madison River Use Stamp may provide data useful to FWP in making future decisions. MSA questions the need to wait until after two years of data has been collected and analyzed before making a decision on future management. In addition, trigger points and the associated resulting management should be identified prior to adopting a "use stamp".

We question the need to limit development of additional FAS acquisitions below Greycliff. Wouldn't additional FAS help to distribute angler use? Development of additional FAS on

the lower portion of the Madison River, if coupled with limiting commercial and potentially non-commercial use may help to achieve the goal for recreational use on the Madison River.

If use by commercial outfitters and their clients is in conflict with non-commercial user, please consider eliminating or greatly reducing the permitted outfitters who reside outside of Montana. On any given day there is a steady stream of vehicles pulling drift boats coming from Idaho to fish the Madison River. We believe these outfitters and their clients spend few dollars in Montana, except for the fishing licenses purchased. Client use days should be prioritized for Montana outfitters. This will help protect Montana outfitter and guides and support those communities dependent on commercial fishing use.

If sustainability of the fisheries cannot or will likely not be achieved through limiting commercial use, the EA must address placing limits on non-commercial use as well. This has been adopted on other rivers in Montana and non-commercial fishermen would adapt. FWP limits the number of big game permits issued in an effort to maintain populations and hunter satisfaction; why should fishing on the Madison River be different?

The walk and wade section should be just that. There should be no allowance for floaters to transect these sections of the Madison River ever. If their clients want to fish this section, do what many others do, hike into the areas.

If realistic reductions were placed on the number of client use days allowed, there would not be a need for rest-rotation. Rest-rotation places a burden on many outfitters and if other management actions were put into play, this simply is not needed. In addition, rest-rotation may simply shift a significant number of those client use days to other stretches of the Madison or other rivers, further exacerbating over use on those areas.

We do not support the need for FWP to hire ?Rangers? for the traffic control of FAS?. There are too many FAS? currently to adequately patrol and public education is a better and cheaper tool, and quite simply we do not believe FWP can afford this expenditure.

More clarification is needed related to the monetization of client use days and how this would be determined. MSA is strongly opposed to any such value and ?right? placed on client use days. Monetization of these client use days, would make for sale a public resource, which MSA is opposed. Monetization would essentially would make it extremely difficult for a new outfitter to enter the business. These client use days were not purchased by current outfitters and as stated previously, we are opposed to the monetization of a public resource. FWP must require of transfer of any outfitter permit comply with current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA.

In summary, MSA appreciates the opportunity to comment on this proposed rulemaking. We ask you to consider points identified above and other ideas received in the final rulemaking. MSA welcomes the opportunity to assist and will continue to comment as opportunities are provided.

Sincerely;

MSA Leadership

John Borgreen  
Joe Perry

Jeff Herbert  
Don Thomas  
Laura Lundquist  
JW Westman  
Steve Schindler  
Robert Wood  
Sam Milodragovich  
Doug Krings  
Dale Tribby

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Linda Windels](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 7:41:46 PM

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1. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Please limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. I insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

I am a resident of Idaho Falls and have had many opportunities to fish the beautiful Madison River. I've felt for a long time that the river was being loved to death. Please consider adopting the statements above, so the river has a chance to provide future generations with the wonderful experiences we have had.

Sincerely,  
Linda Windels



**From:** [Esther Lilly](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreational Plan  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 6:39:37 PM

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I endorse the position of Trout Unlimited to base their decisions on science to protect The fisheries of all rivers in Montana. I encourage all interested parties to incorporate this as the priority in any and all decisions concerning Montana fisheries.

Sincerely,

Esther Lilly,  
Widow of Bud Lilly

**From:** [mhamming@comcast.net](mailto:mhamming@comcast.net)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Madison River Recreation Management Plan  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 3:30:19 PM

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To whom it may concern:

Please cap outfitters at 2019 levels.

Please implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)

Please revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.

Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.

I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.

I oppose the creation of “flex trips” that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.

Please have FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.

I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Mary Hamming

**From:** [paulsiddoway@gmail.com](mailto:paulsiddoway@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 26, 2020 1:36:25 PM

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Name: Paul Siddoway MD

City: Butte

I hope all the members of the commission remember that in 2016 the fishing season was eliminated on most of the streams in Southwest Montana, and that there was a lot of public opposition to this plan. Of course, there was a lot of support from the outfitting industry. It should have been announced at that time, that at some point restrictions would be placed on some of these streams due to overcrowding and if there was significant changes in the quality of the fishery. Please pass the Recommendations from George Grant TU and remind the outfitting industry about the huge decision in their favor in 2016 that opened fishing to year around. The year around fishing season decision also needs to be revisited, as Brown Trout numbers are decreasing on many of these streams and the fisheries department has not determined the cause. At the very least, a closure during spawning times could be helpful, until an answer to the decline has been determined. Best Regards, Paul Siddoway, MD

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

From: [sluebeck@gmail.com](mailto:sluebeck@gmail.com)  
To: [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
Cc: [Ryce, Eileen](mailto:Ryce.Eileen@gmail.com); [Mark Thompson](mailto:Mark.Thompson@gmail.com); [fwpdistrict2@gmail.com](mailto:fwpdistrict2@gmail.com)  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] GGTU Madison River comments  
Date: Monday, October 26, 2020 1:12:21 PM  
Attachments: [GGTU Madison River Comments on Proposed Rules and EA.pdf](#)

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Please find the comments of the George Grant Chapter of TU attached as a PDF. The text of the comments is also pasted below.

Thank you.

.....  
October 25, 2020

Madison River Comments  
PO Box 200701  
Helena MT 59620-0701

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. As you know, the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited (GGTU) is headquartered in Butte, Montana and represents over one thousand conservation-minded anglers throughout southwest Montana. Our members live within a one hour drive of the Madison River and consider it one of our back-yard rivers. Over the past 40-years many of our members have been displaced by the ever-growing crowding and congestion on the Madison River. The time has finally arrived to adopt a sensible recreation management plan.

The George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited has the following comments on each proposed new rule.

**New Rule I.** Commercial cap at 2019 Levels.- **GGTU Strongly Supports proposed New Rule I. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule II.**

**New Rule II.** Rest/Rotation June 15-September 30. **GGTU Strongly Supports proposed New Rule II. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule I.**

**New Rule III.** Walk/Wade Sections June 15-September 30. **GGTU Strongly Supports New Rule III.** This rule should only apply June 15-September 30 and then be open to fishing from boats for the remainder of the year.

**New Rule IV.** Limit Development on lower river near Greycliffs. **GGTU Strongly Supports New Rule IV.**

**New Rule V.** Walk/Wade only Thursday-Saturday, year-round. **GGTU is opposed to new Rule V. We believe new rule III is superior and New Rule V should be rejected.**

**New Rule VI.** Commercial cap at 2019 or 2020 levels. **GGTU is Strongly Opposed to New Rule VI,** which allows for additional growth, 2020 commercial use is an unknown that likely would cause an overall total increase above 2019 levels. Outfitters should be capped at 2019 levels, PERIOD.

**New Rule VII. Transfer of Permits.** **GGTU opposes new rule VII.** There is a statute

governing how transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. **No partial transfer of days from a permit. No separation of the permit from the larger business entity.** Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Rule VIII.** Create Flex trips. **GGTU is Strongly Opposed to New Rule VIII.** This proposed rule allows for growth in 2 out of any 3 years with no control. **This would defeat the spirit of the moratorium. New Rule VIII should be rejected.**

**New Rule IX.** Transfer of Guided Trips. **GGTU is opposed to New Rule IX.** There is a statute governing transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit should be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. No partial transfer of days from a permit. Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Proposed Rule X.** Mandatory Guide Trip Reduction. **GGTU strongly supports proposed rule X,** which provides for reductions in outfitter allocated days if they fail to use their days do not use their days. Support.

**New Proposed Rule XI.** Commercial Use SRP Fees. \$110 annual renewal fee. **GGTU Supports proposed new Rule XI.**

**New Proposed Rule XII.** Reporting and Use Fees. Annual report and payment of 3% of revenue. **GGTU supports proposed rule XII. We are opposed to the flex days component.**

**New Proposed Rule XIII.** Plan Evaluation after 1<sup>st</sup> year and every 3 years thereafter. GGTU is **opposed as written.** GGTU proposes review after 3 years and every 5 years thereafter. No sunset on rules.

**New Rule XIV.** Commercial Use Working Group. **GGTU is partially in support of New Rule XIV.** We oppose any delegation of authority from FW Commission to working group. GGTU opposes any flex trip elements.

**New Rule XV.** Trip Distribution Pool. **GGTU is opposed to New Rule XV.**

**New Rule XVI.** Madison River Use Stamp. **GGTU supports New Rule XVI.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We urge the Commission to move forward with a final rule as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Mark Thompson  
President

**From:** [roy](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Rules  
**Date:** Sunday, October 25, 2020 2:03:13 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to encourage you to adopt Recreation Rules for the Madison River.

This is long overdue, the time has come to do the right thing and adopt some sort of rules.

I support GGTU and Skyline Sportsman's rules but more importantly, adopt some rules.

And I'd hope you allow for the rules to be modified in the future to adjust for appropriate changes going forward.

However you proceed I'm asking you to finally adopt some rules for the Madison River.

Please stop the free for all that's been going for so long.

The Madison River deserves some protection.

This is your chance to provide that.

Sincerely,

Roy Morris

Roy Morris  
2901 Quincy  
Butte, MT  
406-491-4255  
[roy@montana.com](mailto:roy@montana.com)

**From:** [Claire Lind](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 12:50:18 PM

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FWP Commissioners-

I support the George Grant Trout Unlimited & Sportsmens' petition to cap outfitters on the Madison River. Rest and rotation of guided fishing and outfitters should be implemented. There should be rest and recovery in place for those that are commercially using it and overfishing it with their out of state clients. This beautiful river should be for the public and their future generations. In order for this to happen, we need to put caps on its uses now. Commercial use should be capped and not expanded.

There should absolutely be 'walk and wade' only zones on this special river.

Development should be limited on the lower Madison to keep it primitive and pristine.

Flex trips amongst outfitters should not be allowed as it is a swindly way of getting around rules and regulations that are set in place for good reason.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Claire Lind  
Missoula, MT

**From:** [Jill Luebeck](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 5:21:00 PM

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Dear Montana FWP. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Madison River rules. I love fishing Montana's rivers, but my husband won't even take me to the Madison River because of the intense outfitting pressure. I have the following comments on the proposed rules:

1. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. I insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law [47-37-310](#)(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

A recreation management plan, outfitting moratorium and rest/rotation system on the Madison River is long overdue. Please adopt a plan immediately.

Thank you.

Jill Luebeck

Butte

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [Kerra Luebeck](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 4:00:13 PM

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Dear Montana FWP. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Madison River rules. I love fishing in Montana but I do not fish the Madison River because of the intense outfitting pressure. Please accept the following comments on the proposed Madison rules:

1. I support New Rule I, the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels. This is a no-brainer, it should be capped at 2015 levels, but if this is the best you can do, then its better than nothing! Stop the bleeding!!!!
2. I support New Rule II, the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.) This works great on the Big Hole and Beaverhead Rivers!!! Why not 7-days of rest/rotation?
3. I support New Rule III, the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30. Wading anglers need relief too!!
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river. New Rule IV
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels. Forget about a 2020 cap, lets go back to 2015.....at least no further than 2019.
6. I oppose New Rule VIII, the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests. Ok, you recognize this an effort to defeat the moratorium, right? No flex trips!!!!
7. I insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law [47-37-310\(4\)MCA](#) and not adopt any new rules on this issue. Ok, there is already a law on the books on this issue, dump proposed New Rule IX. If the outfitter wants to get out of the business in its entirety, close their business and forfeit their outfitting license, then fine. Otherwise, no partial transfer of a single river permit, or transfer of use days.
8. I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation is any 3 consecutive years. New Rule X. Commercial days need to go down, this rule provides a mechanism to reduce total commercial impact over time. Adopt this!

A recreation management plan, outfitting moratorium and rest/rotation system on the Madison River is long overdue. I can't believe it took you people this long to get this done.

Thank you.

Kerra Luebeck

Butte

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Will Lorenz](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 3:45:49 PM

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Dear Montana FWP. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Madison River rules. I love fishing in Montana but I do not fish the Madison River because of the intense outfitting pressure. Please accept the following comments on the proposed Madison rules:

1. I support New Rule I, the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels. Extremely high priority.
2. I support New Rule II, the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.) This is an extremely high priority issue.
3. I support New Rule III, the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river. New Rule IV
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels. Extremely high priority.
6. I oppose New Rule VIII, the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests. Extremely high priority.
7. I insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years. New Rule X.

A recreation management plan, outfitting moratorium and rest/rotation system on the Madison River is long overdue. Please adopt a plan immediately.

Thank you.

Bill Lorenz

Butte

**From:** [Jim Wallace](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] GGTU proposal  
**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2020 12:29:10 PM

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I would like the FWP to use the George Grant Sportsmen proposal regarding the future Madison River plans. It is my hope that a viable resolution can be put in place.

Thank you,

Jim Wallace  
Sheridan, Montana

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [clbokeko@gmail.com](mailto:clbokeko@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 8:26:38 AM

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Name: Chris L. Bokeko

City: Ennis

I agree with the George Grant Chapter, SSA, and ASA management plan.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Jonathan Ball](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 4:59:25 PM

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In regards to the proposed changes to the Madison river I support the following:

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law [47-37-310](#)(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thanks,

Jonathan Ball  
Billings, MT

**From:** [Al Luebeck](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rule Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 3:49:04 PM

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Please accept the following comment on the proposed new Madison River rule

I strongly support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposals to:

1. cap outfitters at 2019 levels. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of use beyond 2019 levels.

2. implement noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use occurring on the river

3. provide for special walk/wade rules on two river sections between June 15 and September 30

Also, please limit development on the lower river below Bear Trap Canyon to protect the primitive nature of this section.

Presently the Madison River suffers from severe overcrowding and does not provide a quality fishing experience. I used to enjoy fishing the Madison River. But I, along with numerous other Montana sportsmen, haven't fished this river in years because of the overuse occurring on the river. Please adopt the rule proposal from GGTU/sportsmen.

Sincerely,  
Al Luebeck  
2710 Amherst Ave.  
Butte, MT 59701

**From:** [ngevoock@mtwf.org](mailto:ngevoock@mtwf.org)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 5:49:34 PM

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Name: Nick Gevoock

City: Helena, MT

The Montana Wildlife Federation and our thousands of members support putting out the GGTU/Skyline Sportsmen/Anaconda Sportsmen proposal for public comments. It's time to let the public weigh in on this proposal. We think any proposal must include a rest-rotation schedule with no commercial use on certain citizen days, similar to the Big Hole and Beaverhead rivers. We support no floating on some sections, including maintaining the section upstream from Lyon's Bridge. We also think the Fish and Wildlife Commission should cap commercial use at 2019 levels, and consider looking at 2015 levels as a baseline. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Mark Thompson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rec Rules Support  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020 11:59:41 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

I am contacting you today in support of something being done to curb the growth in fishing pressure on the Madison River. This river is in my back yard yet I feel as a local I have been displaced. While I understand this process has been a long one, I truly believe that the GGTU/ Sportsmans proposal has merit. I also know the biggest push back you will hear from FOAM members/ Commercial use is that rest rotation doesn't work. The fact is that if you are a local, and you don't want to compete with commercial boats all day, then you go where the commercial users can't on the Big Hole. This can be the same for Madison. In summary, here are my comments:

1. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at 2019 levels.
2. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. I support to limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. I request that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

I want to thank you for your time.

Mark Thompson  
Butte, MT

From: [Harold Johns](#)  
To: [FWP Madison River COM](#); [Harold Johns](#)  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
Date: Sunday, October 18, 2020 8:13:50 PM

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Dear Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commissioners,

Comments on Proposed Madison River Rules:

October 18, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I have the following comments on each proposed new rule.

**New Rule I. Commercial cap at 2019 Levels.- Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule II.**

**New Rule II. Rest/Rotation June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule I.**

**New Rule III. Walk/Wade Sections June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This rule should only apply June 15-September 30 and then be open to fishing from boats for the remainder of the year.**

**New Rule IV. Limit Development on lower river near Greycliffs.. Strong Support.**

**New Rule V. Walk/Wade only Thursday-Saturday, year-round. Opposed I believe new rule III is superior and new rule V should be rejected.**

**New Rule VI. Commercial cap at 2019 or 2020 levels. Strongly Opposed, allows for additional growth, 2020 commercial use is an unknown that likely would cause an overall total increase above 2019 levels. Outfitters should be capped at 2019 levels.**

**New Rule VII. Transfer of Permits.. Strongly Oppose new rule VII.** There is a statute governing how transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. **No partial transfer of days from a permit. No separation of the permit from the larger business entity.** Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Rule VIII.** Create Flex trips. **Strongly Opposed**, allow for growth in 2 out of any 3 years with no control. **This would defeat the spirit of the moratorium. New Rule VIII should be rejected.**

**New Rule IX.** Transfer of Guided Trips. **Strongly Opposed to New Rule IX.** There is a statute governing transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. No partial transfer of days from a permit. Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Proposed Rule X.** Mandatory Guide Trip Reduction.. **Strongly support!!** Provides for reductions in outfitter allocated days if they fail to use their days do not use their days. Support.

**New Proposed Rule XI.** Commercial Use SRP Fees.. \$110 annual renewal fee. **Support.**

**New Proposed Rule XII.** Reporting and Use Fees. Annual report and payment of 3% of revenue. **Support. Oppose to the flex days component.**

**New Proposed Rule XIII.** Plan Evaluation after 1<sup>st</sup> year and every 3 years thereafter. **Oppose. I propose review after 3 years and every 5 years thereafter. No sunset on rules.**

**New Rule XIV.** Commercial Use Working Group. **Partially support. Oppose any delegation of authority from FW Commission to working group. Oppose any flex trip elements.**

**New Rule XV.** Trip Distribution Pool. **Opposed.**

**New Rule XVI.** Madison River Use Stamp. **Support**

**Client Use Days- River Use Days. Strongly Opposed**

**From:** [rbrucecampbell@msn.com](mailto:rbrucecampbell@msn.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 4:20:19 PM

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Name: Robert Campbell

City: Bozeman

I write to express my support for the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited's plan for 'rest and rotation' on the Madison River, as well as the section boating restrictions. I have fished the Madison for the last two decades and have watched the commercial guide operations take over the river to the detriment of both the fishery and the non-commercial, that is, resident Montanan's fishing experience. Please adopt the proposal that places some curbs on the commercialization of the Madison.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

From: [Glenn Elison](#)  
To: [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Madison River Rules comments  
Date: Sunday, October 18, 2020 1:39:41 PM

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Dear Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Madison River Rules. I have the following comments on each proposed new rule.

**New Rule I. Commercial cap at 2019 Levels.- Strongly Support. This is a priority issue, tied with new rule II.**

**New Rule II. Rest/Rotation June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This is a priority issue, tied with new rule I.**

**New Rule III. Walk/Wade Sections June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This rule should only apply June 15-September 30 and then be open to fishing from boats for the remainder of the year.**

**New Rule IV. Limit Development on lower river near Greycliffs. Strongly Support.**

**New Rule V. Walk/Wade only Thursday-Saturday, year-round. Opposed I believe new rule III is superior and new rule V should be rejected.**

**New Rule VI. Commercial cap at 2019 or 2020 levels. Strongly Oppose, allows for additional growth, 2020 commercial use is an unknown that likely would cause an overall total increase above 2019 levels. Outfitters should be capped at 2019 levels.**

**New Rule VII. Transfer of Permits.. Strongly Oppose new rule VII.** There is a statute governing how transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. **No partial transfer of days from a permit. No separation of the permit from the larger business entity.** Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Rule VIII. Create Flex trips. Strongly Opposed,** allow for growth in 2 out of any 3 years with no control. **This would defeat the spirit of the moratorium. New Rule VIII should be rejected.**

**New Rule IX.** Transfer of Guided Trips. **Strongly Opposed to New Rule IX.** There is a statute governing transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. No partial transfer of days from a permit. Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Proposed Rule X.** Mandatory Guide Trip Reduction.. **Strongly support!!** Provides for reductions in outfitter allocated days if they fail to use their days do not use their days. Support.

**New Proposed Rule XI.** Commercial Use SRP Fees.. \$110 annual renewal fee. **Support.**

**New Proposed Rule XII.** Reporting and Use Fees. Annual report and payment of 3% of revenue. **Support, except I oppose the the flex days component.**

**New Proposed Rule XIII.** Plan Evaluation after 1<sup>st</sup> year and every 3 years thereafter. **Oppose. I propose review after 3 years and every 5 years thereafter. No sunset on rules.**

**New Rule XIV.** Commercial Use Working Group. **Partially support. I oppose any delegation of authority from FW Commission to working group. Oppose any flex trip elements.**

**New Rule XV.** Trip Distribution Pool. **Opposed.**

**New Rule XVI.** Madison River Use Stamp. **Support**

**Client Use Days- River Use Days. Strongly Opposed**

Thank you for considering these comments.

Glenn Elison

From: [Beaverhead Hunters & Anglers](#)  
To: [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Madison River Plan  
Date: Sunday, October 18, 2020 1:08:38 PM

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Dear Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commissioners,  
Comments on Proposed Madison River Rules:

October 18, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I have the following comments on each proposed new rule.

**New Rule I. Commercial cap at 2019 Levels.- Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule II.**

**New Rule II. Rest/Rotation June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule I.**

**New Rule III. Walk/Wade Sections June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This rule should only apply June 15-September 30 and then be open to fishing from boats for the remainder of the year.**

**New Rule IV. Limit Development on lower river near Greycliffs.. Strong Support.**

**New Rule V. Walk/Wade only Thursday-Saturday, year-round. Opposed I believe new rule III is superior and new rule V should be rejected.**

**New Rule VI. Commercial cap at 2019 or 2020 levels. Strongly Opposed, allows for additional growth, 2020 commercial use is an unknown that likely would cause an overall total increase above 2019 levels. Outfitters should be capped at 2019 levels.**

**New Rule VII. Transfer of Permits.. Strongly Oppose new rule VII.** There is a statute governing how transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. **No partial transfer of days from a permit. No separation of the permit from the larger business entity.** Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Rule VIII. Create Flex trips. Strongly Opposed,** allow for growth in 2 out of any 3 years with no control. **This would defeat the spirit of the moratorium. New Rule VIII should be rejected.**

**New Rule IX. Transfer of Guided Trips. Strongly Opposed to New**

**Rule IX.** There is a statute governing transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. No partial transfer of days from a permit. Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Proposed Rule X.** Mandatory Guide Trip Reduction.. **Strongly support!!** Provides for reductions in outfitter allocated days if they fail to use their days do not use their days. Support.

**New Proposed Rule XI.** Commercial Use SRP Fees.. \$110 annual renewal fee. **Support.**

**New Proposed Rule XII.** Reporting and Use Fees. Annual report and payment of 3% of revenue. **Support. Oppose to the flex days component.**

**New Proposed Rule XIII.** Plan Evaluation after 1<sup>st</sup> year and every 3 years thereafter. **Oppose. I propose review after 3 years and every 5 years thereafter. No sunset on rules.**

**New Rule XIV.** Commercial Use Working Group. **Partially support. Oppose any delegation of authority from FW Commission to working group. Oppose any flex trip elements.**

**New Rule XV.** Trip Distribution Pool. **Opposed.**

**New Rule XVI.** Madison River Use Stamp. **Support Client Use Days- River Use Days. Strongly Opposed**

Raymond Gross  
Beaverhead Hunters & Anglers



From: [Raymond Gross](#)  
To: [FWP Commission](#); [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on Madison River Proposed Rules  
Date: Sunday, October 18, 2020 12:45:19 PM

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Dear Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commissioners,

Comments on Proposed Madison River Rules:

October 18, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I have the following comments on each proposed new rule.

**New Rule I. Commercial cap at 2019 Levels.- Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule II.**

**New Rule II. Rest/Rotation June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule I.**

**New Rule III. Walk/Wade Sections June 15-September 30. Strongly Support. This rule should only apply June 15-September 30 and then be open to fishing from boats for the remainder of the year.**

**New Rule IV. Limit Development on lower river near Greycliffs.. Strong Support.**

**New Rule V. Walk/Wade only Thursday-Saturday, year-round. Opposed I believe new rule III is superior and new rule V should be rejected.**

**New Rule VI. Commercial cap at 2019 or 2020 levels. Strongly Opposed, allows for additional growth, 2020 commercial use is an unknown that likely would cause an overall total increase above 2019 levels. Outfitters should be capped at 2019 levels.**

**New Rule VII. Transfer of Permits.. Strongly Oppose new rule VII.** There is a statute governing how transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. **No partial transfer of days from a permit. No separation of the permit from the larger business entity.** Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Rule VIII.** Create Flex trips. **Strongly Opposed**, allow for growth in 2 out of any 3 years with no control. **This would defeat the spirit of the moratorium. New Rule VIII should be rejected.**

**New Rule IX.** Transfer of Guided Trips. **Strongly Opposed to New Rule IX.** There is a statute governing transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. No partial transfer of days from a permit. Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Proposed Rule X.** Mandatory Guide Trip Reduction.. **Strongly support!!** Provides for reductions in outfitter allocated days if they fail to use their days do not use their days. Support.

**New Proposed Rule XI.** Commercial Use SRP Fees.. \$110 annual renewal fee. **Support.**

**New Proposed Rule XII.** Reporting and Use Fees. Annual report and payment of 3% of revenue. **Support. Oppose to the flex days component.**

**New Proposed Rule XIII.** Plan Evaluation after 1<sup>st</sup> year and every 3 years thereafter. **Oppose. I propose review after 3 years and every 5 years thereafter. No sunset on rules.**

**New Rule XIV.** Commercial Use Working Group. **Partially support. Oppose any delegation of authority from FW Commission to working group. Oppose any flex trip elements.**

**New Rule XV.** Trip Distribution Pool. **Opposed.**

**New Rule XVI.** Madison River Use Stamp. **Support**

**Client Use Days- River Use Days. Strongly Opposed**

Raymond Gross, Jr

Dillon, Montana

**From:** [Raymond Gross](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment on Madison river Rules  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 12:02:09 PM

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## **To Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission**

**October 18, 2020**

### **Client Days, or River-Use Days are a Vested Interest**

I was on the Beaverhead River Rules, Citizens Advisory Committee, in 1999 and 2000. Fish Wildlife and Parks gave the committee side boards, one was that there would be no vested interest created in the River Rules. Client Days, or river-use days, on the Beaverhead and Big Hole Rivers have become a vested interest. Fishing Outfitters have been selling client days out right, even advertising the sale of them. The going rate is \$1000 to \$1500 per client day. I heard an outfitter recently sold client days for \$1500 a client day. There was legislation passed to address transfer of client days, 37-47-310 MCA. Section (4)(a) states “When a fishing outfitter’s business is sold or transferred in it’s entirety, any river-use days that have been allocated to that fishing outfitter through the fishing outfitter’s historic use of activities on restricted-use streams are transferable to the new owner of the fishing outfitter’s business”. This law has been abused and mismanaged. Some outfitters sold their client use days and then applied for a one boat outfitter and received additional client use days. I urge the Commission to not entertain client use days, or river use days for the Madison River Plan because that will create a vested interest in the river rules and set up a legal challenge for a taking from fishing outfitters if the commission revises the rules in the future.

Raymond Gross  
Dillon, Montana

**From:** [Rick Parke](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Purposed Madison River rules  
**Date:** Sunday, October 18, 2020 9:37:12 AM

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1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years

**From:** [Kieran Saba](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River recreation Plan  
**Date:** Saturday, October 17, 2020 2:48:08 PM

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1. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I also support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for your time  
Kieran Saba

**From:** [David Stone](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Upper Madison river  
**Date:** Saturday, October 17, 2020 11:08:06 AM

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I am commenting on the upper Madison fishing. I support the GGTU to revise the current walk/wade regulations in the upper Madison. Also I deffinatly do not want to see any commercial expansion as its getting to be ridulus trying to fish as the outfitters now think they should be the only ones on the river. We the public need to get our river back ! Weekends should be outfitter free! Outfitters need to be capped at the 2019 levels. Rember it's the sportsman dollars that keep fish there.

**From:** [Martha Diaz](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Outfitter Limitations on Madison River  
**Date:** Saturday, October 17, 2020 9:40:49 AM

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Dear Sirs/Madames:

1. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law [47-37-310\(4\)MCA](#) and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I also support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for your support in keeping our MT rivers protected for the people of Montana's use.

Martha Diaz  
Silver Star, MT

**From:** [Ryan McCarty](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 16, 2020 5:00:29 PM

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I am submitting the following comments regarding the proposed Madison River Recreation Plan.

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you

Ryan D. McCarty  
Attorney at Law  
Angel, Coil & Bartlett  
125 W. Mendenhall St., Ste. 201  
Bozeman, MT 59715-3544  
Office: (406) 586-1926  
Fax: (406) 585-7654

#### CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE

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From: [sluebeck@gmail.com](mailto:sluebeck@gmail.com)  
To: [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on Madison River Rules.  
Date: Friday, October 16, 2020 3:45:01 PM

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I have the following comments on each proposed new rule.

**New Rule I.** Commercial cap at 2019 Levels.- **Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule II.**

**New Rule II.** Rest/Rotation June 15-September 30. **Strongly Support. This is the highest priority issue, tied with new rule I.**

**New Rule III.** Walk/Wade Sections June 15-September 30. **Strongly Support. This rule should only apply June 15-September 30 and then be open to fishing from boats for the remainder of the year.**

**New Rule IV.** Limit Development on lower river near Greycliffs.. **Strong Support.**

**New Rule V.** Walk/Wade only Thursday-Saturday, year-round. **Opposed I believe new rule III is superior and new rule V should be rejected.**

**New Rule VI.** Commercial cap at 2019 or 2020 levels. **Strongly Opposed, allows for additional growth, 2020 commercial use is an unknown that likely would cause an overall total increase above 2019 levels. Outfitters should be capped at 2019 levels, PERIOD.**

**New Rule VII. Transfer of Permits..** Oppose new rule VII. There is a statute governing how transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. **No partial transfer of days from a permit. No separation of the permit from the larger business entity.** Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Rule VIII.** Create Flex trips. **Strongly Opposed.** allow for growth in 2 out of any 3 years with no control. **This would defeat the spirit of the moratorium. New Rule VIII should be rejected.**

**New Rule IX.** Transfer of Guided Trips. **Opposed to New Rule IX.** There is a statute governing transferability is to occur 47-37-310(4), which supersedes any regulation proposed by FWP regarding transferability. Any transfer of permit be allowed only when the entire business is transferred. No partial transfer of days from a permit. Meaning, the existing outfitter is getting out of the fishing outfitting business in its entirety and has to forfeit its outfitting permit.

**New Proposed Rule X.** Mandatory Guide Trip Reduction.. **Strongly support!!** Provides for reductions in outfitter allocated days if they fail to use their days do not use their days. Support.

**New Proposed Rule XI.** Commercial Use SRP Fees.. \$110 annual renewal fee. **Support.**

**New Proposed Rule XII.** Reporting and Use Fees. Annual report and payment of 3% of revenue.

**Support. Oppose to the flex days component.**

**New Proposed Rule XIII.** Plan Evaluation after 1<sup>st</sup> year and every 3 years thereafter. **Oppose. I propose review after 3 years and every 5 years thereafter. No sunset on rules.**

**New Rule XIV.** Commercial Use Working Group. **Partially support. Oppose any delegation of authority from FW Commission to working group. Oppose any flex trip elements.**

**New Rule XV.** Trip Distribution Pool. **Opposed.**

**New Rule XVI.** Madison River Use Stamp. **Support.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Steve Luebeck

17 Queens Court

Butte, MT 59701

**From:** [astroprof89@hotmail.com](mailto:astroprof89@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 15, 2020 12:50:13 PM

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Name:

City:

Having fished the Ennis to Quake Dam section of the Madison River most years since 1976, I appreciate the tremendous environmental riches and unexcelled flyfishing opportunities this area represents.

This stretch of river has been long been over-exploited: overfished, over-floated, and historically overgrazed. Also, the present regulations result in floating anglers excessively exploiting the trout, while overrunning wading flyfishers who have spent time and energy hiking to reach less crowded fishing. After being partially handicapped some years ago, I now find it even more frustrating to wobble a mile or more to the river, crawl through the underbrush, rig my flyrod, and then get bombed by anglers in float boats who see streamside anglers, but run over their water anyway.

I implore the Commission to adopt alternative 3.0: Sportsmen Groups/GGTU alternative, and subsequently continue to strengthen protections of the river, its wildlife, and the surrounding landscape.

Thank you

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Robin MCKERNAN](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 15, 2020 11:39:04 AM

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1. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I also support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for your time  
David McKernan

**From:** [Harold Johns](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#); [Harold Johns](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Thursday, October 15, 2020 11:33:13 AM

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1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

**From:** [psimmons100@gmail.com](mailto:psimmons100@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 15, 2020 11:28:08 AM

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Name: Patricia Simmons

City: Bozeman

I am 74 year woman living in Montana for 41 years. I learned to fly fish while wading and some floating (not commercial) on the Madison River. I'm very concerned with the increase in commercial fishing for the entire season over that last several years. I support the proposed plan by Trout Unlimited, Anaconda Sportsmen and Skyline Sportsmen. I'm a long time member of Montana Wildlife Federation and Gallatin Wildlife Association so are very familiar with Anaconda and Skyline Sportsmen's organizations. Please do not equalize or expand the number of commercial fishermen. We need to protect us individual fishers and our beautiful, precious, one-of-a-kind Madison River and its inhabitants. The reduction of Rainbow Trout is already a sign of stress. Climate change is upon us and you cannot ignore this and its impacts in order to allow the same or more people to make a profit of this special Montana River! Get brave and stand up for our fisheries that is a major goal of MFWP.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Rich Day](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on Madison River Recreation Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 14, 2020 2:31:11 PM

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Dear Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks:

I offer the following points in support of the proposed Madison River Recreation Plan:

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thanks for your consideration,

Rich Day  
Butte, MT

**From:** [trois\\_maloney](#)  
**To:** [FWP\\_Madison\\_River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Support the GGTU  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 14, 2020 2:13:39 PM

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1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.



**From:** [Mikal Harpster](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 14, 2020 1:25:41 PM

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I support the following ideas for the Madison River Recreation Plan:

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation is any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for your time!

Mikal Harpster



PGA, Head Golf Professional  
1500 Fairmont Road  
Anaconda, MT 59711  
406-797-3000 Golf Shop  
406-797-3241 x372 Resort

**From:** [Zach Luebeck](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 14, 2020 9:53:20 AM

---

Dear FWP:

I support the effort by George Grant Chapter and the Butte area sportsmen associations to implement recreation rules on the Madison River. I ask FWP to adopt a final rule in November that contains only the following elements:

1. Cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Replace the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30 only as proposed by the sportsmen's organizations.
4. Limit development on the lower river to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I urge FWP to oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, or any other formula for that matter.
7. I insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Zach Luebeck

17 Queens Court

Butte, MT 59701

**From:** [Pedro Marques](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rec Rules  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 14, 2020 8:01:51 AM

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Hello,  
Please see my public comments below regarding proposed Madison River Rec Rules.

Similar rules have worked well in the Big Hole!

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

--

**PEDRO MARQUES**

Executive Director



(406) 960-4855- office

(406) 552-2369- cel

[www.bhwc.org](http://www.bhwc.org) [[bhwc.org](http://bhwc.org)]

**From:** [Scott Reynolds](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River REC.  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 6:46:34 PM

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1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law [47-37-310\(4\)](#)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation is any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you Scott Reynolds

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Tom Bowler](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Support for the GGTU Madison River Petition  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 4:26:13 PM

---

Hello,

I wish to provide my support for the petition proposed by George Grant TU and others to try and mitigate the recreational pressure on the Madison River. I can say it no better than they have so would reiterate these points:

- Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
- Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
- Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
- Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
- Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
- Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
- Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
- Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Tom Bowler  
735 W Broadway  
Butte 59701

**From:** [Carl Hamming](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rec Rules  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 4:19:03 PM

---

Good Afternoon,

As a board member of GGTU, I support the following:

1. The GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. The GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. The GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Please limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. It is very important that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter. It's been a long time coming and we're very excited and committed to pushing this matter across the finish line to implement a framework of regulations that benefits all users on the river. Even if it's not perfect, it is a compromise and a solid starting point to build upon. Future generations will be grateful for our actions today.

Carl Hamming,  
Anaconda, MT

**From:** [gwtrost@aol.com](mailto:gwtrost@aol.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison river plan  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 3:44:55 PM

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**To whom it may concern,**

**I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at 2019 levels.**

**I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)**

**I support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30, and limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river. I also oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels and oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.**

**I insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue and support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter.**

**Thank you,**

**Gus Trost**




From: John Miller  
To: Eric Madison River GGM  
Subject: [PATTERNS] Madison River Rules  
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2020 2:25:09 PM

I support the following in your proposed rule making:

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at 2019 levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-57-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

John Miller  
50 River Drive  
C

 ReplyForward  
[drive.google.com]  
[google.com] [google.com] [google.com]

Compose:  
Madison River Rules





**From:** [David James](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreational Plan  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 1:07:46 PM

---

Hi All,

I think FWP is doing a great job sorting out crowd management on the Madison River.

Here are some specific ideas that I support:

- The GGTU proposal to cap outfitters at 20-19 levels
- GGTU proposal to implement rest and rotation zones
- GGTU proposal re walk and wade regulations on the upper river
- Limit development on the lower river
- Outfitter transfers must comply with State law 47-37-3`10 (4)MCA
- Reduce outfitter allocations if unused for three consecutive years
- 

I oppose the idea of flex trips.

Thanks you!

David James  
Swift River Investments

Main Office: 53 Williams St., Upton, MA 01568; Tel 508-320-1399

David's Phone: Cell 978-257-0759; Vermont: 802-952-1093

**From:** [Steve Wellman](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 12:22:06 PM

---

To who it may concern,

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for your time,

Steve Wellman  
Butte, Montana

**From:** [bjornemo](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison river proposal.  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 12:08:27 PM

---

As a Board member of the Anaconda Sportsman club we and I support this proposal. I am also a Board member of the Anaconda Sportsman campground on the Big hole river and the rules on the Big hole seem to work well that's why we and I support this proposal as follow. Jim Bjornemo 1604 tammy Anaconda Mt.

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive

**From:** [Ray Pearson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Regs  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 11:45:04 AM

---

1. Please adapt Madison Rivers Rules as follows:
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
4. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30
5. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
6. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
7. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
8. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
9. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.
10. Thank you
11. Ray Pearson
12. 115 N. Broadway Suite 500
13. Billings, MT 59101

**From:** [Quint Drennan](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 11:49:56 AM

---

My wife and I support the following.

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at 2019 levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.  
Quint and Cicely Drennan  
Gallatin Gateway, Mt.

**From:** [Mike Stefanac](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Commets  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 8:17:21 PM

---

comments.

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law [47-37-310\(4\)](#)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years
- 9.

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [ggb1810@yahoo.com](mailto:ggb1810@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 4:16:04 PM

---

Name: Greg Bottrell

City: Yucaipa

I agree with the proposed rule changes for the Madison River as set forth by the petition submitted by the George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited and the two additional groups supporting this same petition

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [lfcastren@yahoo.com](mailto:lfcastren@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 11:33:08 AM

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Name: LES CASTREN

City: 52

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Madison River Recreation Plan. It's about time FWP settles this issue and quits studying everything to death. I support FWP's moratorium on new outfitters on the Madison and implementing rotating non-commercial zones already used on the Big Hole and Beaverhead rivers. I support George Grant Trout Unlimited /Skyline Sportsmen proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the Upper Madison I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years and to limit development on the lower Madison (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the wildness of this section of the river. I OPPOSE ANY rule expanding commercial use of the river beyond 2019 levels OPPOSE the creation of " Flex- Trips" allowing outfitters to exceed moratorium caps The Madison is OVER USED--OVER ABUSED and these recommendations will help alleviate many problems THANK YOU LES CASTREN

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Bruce Hamming](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rec Rules  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 8:24:33 AM

---

Greetings,

Please see below for my comments concerning the proposed rec rules for the Madison River.

1. Please cap outfitters at 2019 levels.
2. Please implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Please revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. I oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. I oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Please have FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. I support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute comments.

Bruce Hamming

**From:** [garrett.ouldhouse](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 3:24:29 AM

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1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at 2019 levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years. as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

**From:** [Lonnie Mason](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River  
**Date:** Saturday, October 10, 2020 8:49:32 PM

---

I support the GGTU regulations, the River is over fished.  
Thank You,  
Lonnie Mason

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [asbdvm@gmail.com](mailto:asbdvm@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 10, 2020 11:33:06 AM

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Name: Andrew S Burnett  
City: Sparks  
I support GGTU's proposal

A commercial use cap set at 2019 levels;  
Rest and Rotation schedule seasonally, June 15 to September 30:  
Saturday: Varney Bridge Fishing Access Site (FAS), to Ennis FAS: no commercial activity;  
Sunday: Lyons Bridge FAS to Palisades Day Use Area: no commercial activity;  
Seasonal walk/wade, June 15 to September 30 (banning current ability to use boats or any watercraft for access Friday to Sunday in Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge and Ennis FAS to Ennis Reservoir on certain days);  
Monday to Thursday: Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge FAS and Ennis FAS to Ennis Reservoir: no fishing from watercraft or floatation devices; however, watercraft and floatation devices can be used to access fishing;  
Friday to Sunday: Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge FAS and Ennis FAS to Ennis Reservoir: no watercraft or floatation device can be used to access fishing.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Mark Luebeck](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comments  
**Date:** Saturday, October 10, 2020 10:15:49 AM

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Dear Fish Wildlife and Parks:

I am writing regarding the Madison River Recreation Management Plan. Please:

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at 2019 levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Sincerely,

Mark J. Luebeck

**From:** [kirwan](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rules  
**Date:** Friday, October 9, 2020 1:45:58 PM

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To whom it may concern

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond 2019 levels.
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation in any 3 consecutive years.

Sincerely, B Kirwan Webb M.D.

Butte , Montana

10/09/20



**From:** [Robin McKernan](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 1:38:57 PM

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I encourage you to:

1. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to cap outfitters at **2019** levels.
2. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to implement rest/rotation (noncommercial zones on the Madison River on Saturdays and Sundays to give the general public some relief from the intense commercial use on the Madison River.)
3. Support the GGTU/sportsmen's proposal to revise the current walk/wade regulations on the upper Madison River. Providing for special walk/wade rules on two section June 15-September 30.
4. Limit development on the lower river (below Bear Trap Canyon) to protect the primitive nature of this section of river.
5. Oppose any rule that would allow any expansion of commercial use beyond **2019 levels.**
6. Oppose the creation of "flex trips" that would allow outfitters to exceed their moratorium caps in 2 of any 3 years, as proposed by outfitting interests.
7. Insist that FWP require transfer of any outfitter permit comply with the current state law 47-37-310(4)MCA and not adopt any new rules on this issue.
8. Support the proposal to reduce outfitter allocated use if the outfitter fails to use their allocation is any 3 consecutive years.

This is very important. Thank you.

**Robin McKernan**  
**1614 West Park Ave**  
**Anaconda, MT 59711**  
**406-559-6262**

**From:** [stevenfzwisler@centurytel.net](mailto:stevenfzwisler@centurytel.net)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Monday, October 5, 2020 1:18:59 PM

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Name: Steven F Zwisler

City: Whitefish

I generally support the "George Grant et al" petition. I fished and hunted waterfowl on the Madison in the 70's and 90's and have fond memories of my time there. That caused me to wonder if the remarkable increase in human river use has affected waterfowl and other bird life along the river, especially during nesting season. I recall an extraordinary number and variety of birds along the river corridor. I hope this is a consideration in the deliberations surrounding rule-making. I see that the environmental assessment did address riparian habitat concerns but not bird life or mammal life specifically.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [bogleconst@hotmail.com](mailto:bogleconst@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 4, 2020 9:45:50 PM

---

Name:

City: Hamilton

I am in favor of the George Grant, Skyline Sportsmen, and Anaconda Sportsmen Madison River Petition.

I especially favor the walk/wade area protections from fishing from boats and tubes.

The wade fishermen need areas to fish without a boat fishing through the area they are fishing every few minutes. Letting anglers fish from boats through these areas will ruin the wade fishing.

This is what occurs on my home water of the Bitterroot River. I wish we could get some no fishing from boats areas here.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [clmurphy63@yahoo.com](mailto:clmurphy63@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Sunday, October 4, 2020 8:33:02 PM

---

Name:

City:

I support limiting commercial outfitting trips as stated in the Skyline Sportsman Association

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [bakershole@gmail.com](mailto:bakershole@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Saturday, October 3, 2020 11:02:34 PM

---

Name: Matt Allen

City: Idaho Falls, Idaho

I have been fishing on the upper Madison from 15 to 30 days a year for the last 20 years. I live in Eastern Idaho now but I formerly lived in Missoula.

I fish most often in the walk-wade water from Slide Inn to below \$3 Bridge but I also fish down in the water between Varney Bridge and Valley Garden. I typically fish any month between March and early November. In addition to protection of the river and fishery, preservation of the experience for wading anglers like me is very important.

I have read the proposals from FOAM and from the George Grant group. The George Grant proposal is far more reasonable in the allocation of burdens associated with this needed change in regulations.

Although I would strongly prefer the George Grant proposal, I still don't think that it goes far enough to protect the experiences of walk-wade anglers. I would ban float access to the water between Quake Lake and Lyon Bridge every day, not just for weekends. Even if you keep this stretch open to float access, I would maintain the ban on float fishing in this stretch year round. The walk-wade experience is vital to local anglers, especially older anglers. The increasing use of this part of the river by drift boats, rafts, and pontoons has significantly reduced the available water for those on foot especially the older anglers. I have frequently seen boats landing below \$3 Bridge and crowding out those who could only access the river on foot.

Although I see the merit of a special Madison permit or sticker, I would charge for that privilege in a nominal amount but an amount that would deter some casual tourist use. \$10 would be appropriate.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Taylor DeTienne](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rest and rotate  
**Date:** Saturday, October 3, 2020 4:35:27 PM

---

As a resident of west Yellowstone and former fishing guide myself I am in favor of the rest and rotation plan. There are simply too many boats in my opinion floating from Lyons to Palisades on a daily basis. If the state is not going to limit outfitters and guide license holders I believe limiting them one day a week is fair enough. They can float other sections or fish other lakes or rivers one day a week.

**From:** [shawn29.92@gmail.com](mailto:shawn29.92@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020 11:25:41 AM

---

Name: Shawn Chesley

City: Bend

Not allowing fishing from a boat forces more people to fish in fewer spots, increasing pressure in the good holes. When you are fishing from a boat and a good stretch is occupied, usually you float on by. If you were not allowed to fish from the boat, you would likely stop and end up with traffic jams of parked boats. Rest and rotation is an excellent way to ease the pressure on weekends so locals can enjoy some fishing, and gives the guides a chance to air out their smelly waders. In summary, let people fish out of boats, and keep the guides out on the weekends.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [lilysscott@gmail.com](mailto:lilysscott@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.MadisonRiver.COM](http://FWP.MadisonRiver.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020 10:58:10 AM

---

Name: Lily Scott

City: Missoula

I strongly favor the George Grant proposal. The proposal by FOAM does nothing to address the problematic situation of over-crowding on the Madison, particularly by guides catering to wealthy, out-of-state clients. Neighboring states (e.g., Oregon) and provinces (e.g., BC) regulate the outfitting industry in order to maintain local public opportunity, and it is high-time Montana does so as well. Indeed, over-crowding by outfitters is fast becoming a problem elsewhere (e.g., Blackfoot). The George Grant proposal actually addresses the problem with a real and applied solution, and with those regulations in place I might actually return to the Madison!

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [roblowe.mt@gmail.com](mailto:roblowe.mt@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 9:06:30 PM

---

Name: Rob Lowe

City: Billings

Please implement the rest and rotate on the Madison. I guided on it back in college, and have no desire to return to see the abuse of this wonderful resource. She needs a day or two of rest each week, as we all do. Let's not love the Madison to death, Let's give the resource the respect it deserves and give this lovely a day off.

---

This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [paulsiddoway@gmail.com](mailto:paulsiddoway@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 12:37:29 PM

---

Name: Paul Siddoway MD

City: Butte

The Time for recreation rules on the Madison River is long overdue. In conjunction with the majority of previous public surveys, I strongly favor the Petition brought forth by GGTU, Skyline sportsmen, and Anaconda Sportsmen association. This allows for a cap on commercial trips, and special rest-rotation zones free of commercial use on certain days and continued protection of wading anglers. There should also be continued close monitoring of the fishery as recent data makes it clear that numbers of larger fish have declined on certain sections of the river. The decision to open the entire river to fishing year around was a mistake that needs to be reconsidered as well. All Wild Fisheries should allow for closures during peak spawning times. Best Regards, Paul Siddoway

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Dirk Schenck](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Guide support for GGTU's Rest and Rotation petition  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 11:49:26 AM

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To whom it may concern:

Thank you for considering input from all of us who care about the future of Montana's fish and fisheries.

I have been guiding for over twenty years, both in Pennsylvania and Montana, and have watched various streams being abused like rented mules. Two examples are the Madison and Yellowstone rivers.

I am a member of FOAM and appreciate their position of supporting outfitters and guides but in this case, they have gone too far. In their myopic fervor, they are killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

There needs to be shared sacrifice and FOAM's proposal is, in a word, selfish.

**I wholeheartedly support GGTU's Rest and Rotation proposal.**

Please feel free to contact me for any reason.

Respectfully,

Dirk Schenck  
MT Guide #26825

--

**Dirk Schenck**  
[dirk\\_schenck@post.harvard.edu](mailto:dirk_schenck@post.harvard.edu)

“Everybody, soon or late, sits down at a banquet of consequences.”

- Robert Louis Stevenson

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**From:** [Pieske, Shawna](#) on behalf of [FWP Commission](#)  
**To:** [Wedde, Kim](#); [Skaar, Donald](#); [Ryce, Eileen](#); [Pat Byorth \(fwpdistrict2@gmail.com\)](#); [Rich Stuker](#); [Shane Colton](#); [Tim Aldrich \(Cartim8@gmail.com\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Use Public Comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 2, 2020 7:37:46 AM

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**From:** Riverside Anglers <trout@riversideanglers.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 30, 2020 11:36 PM  
**To:** FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Use Public Comments

Dear Fish, Parks and Wildlife Commission,

Thank you for taking on this challenging subject. I have lived in Montana and fished and guided on the Madison River since 2001. There is no doubt that I have seen an increase of recreationists on the Madison since my first year of guiding. I have been saying to my clients these past years, we have to be part of the conversation if we want a reasonable recreational plan solution. As I mentioned earlier in this paragraph, we are talking about people, this is a social issue with little science behind the motivation to pursue the outcome of restricting people's access to the Madison. I firmly support the establishment of a Working Group to find a science-based process to address social issues on the Madison, they can also review any outcomes of this current use plan. I also support the establishment of a stamp issued by FWP to collect hard data on the users of the Madison River.

I do not support the following proposals recently put forth:

1. Rest and Rotation-not the solution to the non-existent problem. Also no evidence proves that this will work, especially not on the sections of the Madison. This idea is presented to handicap the commercial users on the Madison. It is also not successful on the BH2.
2. Any change to the current boat access regulations in the wade stretch of the Madison. The current regulations provide a variety of angling and recreating opportunities from Quake Lake to Ennis Lake, leave them alone. Most of the upper float stretch flows through private land, owned by the Sun West Ranch, and is not accessible to anyone without a boat. Having a float and wade stretch is logical on this river.
3. The change in fishing regulations in 2016. MT FWP changed the regulations on the Madison River to open the river to year round fishing instead of the Montana General Season. This was heavily supported by a group of individuals that claimed they were being displaced from accessing the Madison River during the summer. I would suggest you take a survey of the license plates in April at Reynold's Pass FAS, they aren't the displaced "locals", they are out of staters and folks from outside of the Madison County immediate area. With the current proposals from George Grant Trout Unlimited, once again we have a special

interest group trying to bend the rules to a publicly accessible river strictly to limit the access to another group, that they see as a 'problem'. Please stop kowtowing to folks that hardly spend any time on the Madison! I would also like to see the Madison Fishing regulations changed back to Montana General Season to protect the fishery.

4. I do not support limiting only the commercial users on the Madison River. There are many days throughout the summer on the Madison, that the recreational floaters out number the guided float trips. Hard data on this fact is in your own graphs. Recreational floaters need to be part of the solution and part of the program. Any rules for future limits or allocation must include both recreational users and commercial users, I support this proposal.

I hope I have not taken up to much of your time voicing my concerns. Any changes made to access on the Madison River will have enormous effect on the enjoyment that many thousands of people have experiencing this very unique ecosystem, not to mention the livelihoods of another several thousand people.

We, Outfitters and Guides want to be part of this Madison River Recreational Use Plan process, as we should, so that we can continue to protect this resource.

Sincerely,  
Alice H. Owsley

Alice Owsley  
MT Outfitter #9435  
Riverside Anglers, Inc.  
PO Box 474  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758  
[trout@riversideanglers.com](mailto:trout@riversideanglers.com)  
[riversideanglers.com](http://riversideanglers.com) [[riversideanglers.com](http://riversideanglers.com)]  
406-640-1698

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**From:** [Brian Wheeler](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Invalid Comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 2, 2020 7:11:12 AM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)  
[Comments to FWP on the proposed Madison River Recreation Rules.docx](#)

---

Thanks for your response Kim.  
I've attached our comments below.

Sincerely,  
Brian & Ande Wheeler

On Sat, Oct 31, 2020 at 12:09 PM FWP Madison River COM <[madisonrivercom@mt.gov](mailto:madisonrivercom@mt.gov)> wrote:

Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler,

Thank you for this information. If you would like to submit a comment via email, please do as such and we will accept this comment as you notified before the public comment period ended on October 30.

Sincerely,

Kim

**Kim Wedde**

*Office Manager*

Fisheries Division

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

P.O. Box 200701

Helena, MT 59620-0701

Ph: (406) 444-5594

[Montana FWP](#) | [Montana State Parks](#) | [Montana Outdoors Magazine](#)



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**From:** Brian Wheeler <[bwheel00@gmail.com](mailto:bwheel00@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 2:21 PM

**To:** FWP Madison River COM <[madisonrivercom@mt.gov](mailto:madisonrivercom@mt.gov)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Invalid Comments

I wanted to inform you that your website isn't allowing comments to be submitted.

[http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/rules/pn\\_0308.html?  
fbclid=IwAR2J5Z6Y2Xg6EAdLAdmCcfIEgmvCezFJ519zxRc1ttIwqIZQz\\_KhIDW3f5w](http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/rules/pn_0308.html?fbclid=IwAR2J5Z6Y2Xg6EAdLAdmCcfIEgmvCezFJ519zxRc1ttIwqIZQz_KhIDW3f5w)

Each time my wife has tried to press submit, it responded "Invalid Comments" with no explanation.

We tried using both of our email addresses to no avail.

It's pretty troubling that this is happening on the final day of the Public Comment period!

This is a significant problem in need of an immediate response and solution.

Sincerely,

Brian Wheeler

**From:** [Keith Balfour](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Regulations Change  
**Date:** Saturday, October 31, 2020 1:56:59 PM

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FWP Commission:

I applaud your efforts here, but the proposed Rest & Rotation falls well short of the stated and desired goals. In fact, on some days, especially weekends, it will make congestion worse.

It also leans strongly toward a private land owner and anti-guided angler solution.

While it has some beneficial components, such as no cost, no limit stamp and New Rule 13, I urge you to go back to the drawing board.

Respectfully,

Keith Balfour  
Ennis



**From:** [Riverside Anglers](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments regarding the Madison Recreational Use Plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 11:34:25 PM

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Dear Fish, Parks and Wildlife Commission,

Thank you for taking on this challenging subject. I have lived in Montana and fished and guided on the Madison River since 2001. There is no doubt that I have seen an increase of recreationists on the Madison since my first year of guiding. I have been saying to my clients these past years, we have to be part of the conversation if we want a reasonable recreational plan solution. As I mentioned earlier in this paragraph, we are talking about people, this is a social issue with little science behind the motivation to pursue the outcome of restricting people's access to the Madison. I firmly support the establishment of a Working Group to find a science-based process to address social issues on the Madison, they can also review any outcomes of this current use plan. I also support the establishment of a stamp issued by FWP to collect hard data on the users of the Madison River.

I do not support the following proposals recently put forth:

1. Rest and Rotation-not the solution to the non-existent problem. Also no evidence proves that this will work, especially not on the sections of the Madison. This idea is presented to handicap the commercial users on the Madison. It is also not successful on the BH2.
2. Any change to the current boat access regulations in the wade stretch of the Madison. The current regulations provide a variety of angling and recreating opportunities from Quake Lake to Ennis Lake, leave them alone. Most of the upper float stretch flows through private land, owned by the Sun West Ranch, and is not accessible to anyone without a boat. Having a float and wade stretch is logical on this river.
3. The change in fishing regulations in 2016. MT FWP changed the regulations on the Madison River to open the river to year round fishing instead of the Montana General Season. This was heavily supported by a group of individuals that claimed they were being displaced from accessing the Madison River during the summer. I would suggest you take a survey of the license plates in April at Reynold's Pass FAS, they aren't the displaced "locals", they are out of staters and folks from outside of the Madison County immediate area. With the current proposals from George Grant Trout Unlimited, once again we have a special interest group trying to bend the rules to a publicly accessible river strictly to limit the access to another group, that they see as a 'problem'. Please stop kowtowing to folks that hardly spend any time on the Madison! I would also like to see the Madison Fishing regulations changed back to Montana General Season to protect the fishery.
4. I do not support limiting only the commercial users on the Madison River. There are many days throughout the summer on the Madison, that the recreational floaters outnumber the guided float trips. Recreational floaters need to be part of the solution and part of the program. Any rules for future limits or allocation must include both recreational users and commercial users, I support this proposal.

I hope I have not taken up too much of your time voicing my concerns. Any changes made to access on the Madison River will have enormous effect on the enjoyment that many thousands of people have experiencing this very unique ecosystem, not to mention the livelihoods of another several thousand people.

We, Outfitters and Guides want to be part of this Madison River Recreational Use Plan process, as we should, so that we can continue to protect this resource.

Sincerely,  
Alice H. Owsley

Alice Owsley

MT Outfitter #9435  
Riverside Anglers, Inc.  
PO Box 474  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758  
[trout@riversideanglers.com](mailto:trout@riversideanglers.com)  
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406-640-1698

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**From:** [dimorris222@gmail.com](mailto:dimorris222@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 11:29:53 PM

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Name: Diana Morris  
City: West Yellowstone

I am writing in concern to the proposed changes on the Madison River, especially Rule 2. To those unfamiliar with the upper Madison, it reads as just one float are that will be "rested" one day a week. However, I believe it will have the reverse effect from that which is intended. Closing Lyons Bridge to Palisades on Sundays to commercial use, this rule as written will ban commercial float trips on many other popular float sections of the river like Lyons Bridge to Windy Point, Lyons Bridge to Palisades, Lyons Bridge to Ruby Creek, Lyons Bridge to Mcatee Bridge, Windy Point to Palisades, Windy Point to Ruby Creek, Windy Point to Mcatee Bridge, Windy Point to Storey Ditch, Raynold's Pass to Windy Point, Pine Butte to Windy Point, Pine Butte to Palisades. That is ELEVEN different floats that could be eliminated to outfitters! ELEVEN! The closure of all of these sections will force ALL guided float trips into Palisades and downstream, where there are lower fish counts per mile than the upper stretches. This will increase fishing pressure in the lower Madison upstream of Ennis. The increased pressure could cause irreparable damage. The concentration of guided trips will also result in overcrowding of the river downstream of Palisades on Sundays. This is the exact opposite of "rest and rotation".

Another issue I have with the proposed changes, is that they are all aimed at outfitters. I believe in order to protect the Madison, the general public needs to take some responsibility. If an outfitter is restricted, then the public floaters need to have restrictions as well. The outfitters and guides are the best policemen on the river. They are also teaching ethical ways to catch, land, and release fish. They know the importance of "clean, drain, dry" in order to protect Montana's streams from invasive aquatic species. They protect the river because they care to preserve their favorite hobby. They want to enjoy it on their days off. They also protect it because their livelihood depends on it! It is their lifeblood. They need the Madison in order to pay their bills. Please don't punish them because it is the "easy way" to restrict the Madison!

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Adam Knoff](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison management plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 10:20:09 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am a fishing guide in Bozeman and frequently work and play on the entire length of the Madison river from Yellowstone to headwaters. I know there are many opinions circulating about what direction this management plan should take to best preserve the longevity and health of this amazing watershed and fishery, so here is mine.

My two biggest concerns are rest and rotation and banning boats in the current walk wade sections. Rest and rotation simply consolidates too many users into the sections available and realistically does more harm than good. If someone hires a guide, why should they be limited to where they can fish? Guided guests make up approximately 15% of the user days on the Madison, so limiting that user group sounds arbitrary. The experience of people paying to use the Madison is critical to livelihoods, sustainability and longevity to those who rely on this river. Crowding more people into smaller spaces will only push the true problem from one corner of the room to the next, never truly solving it while at the same time decreasing the experience of the customers many people rely on to make a living. It is a very tricky problem indeed, but rest and rotation isn't the answer.

Secondly, I would like to express my true concern about eliminating boats in the walk wade sections. This is, in a sense, worse than rest and rotation. I use these sections as much as any guide or independent fisherman I know. The overall pressure in these zones pales in comparison to those of the float zones. Eliminating boat access to these sections would only push more boat traffic into the float zones and congest things further while eliminating access to a far less pressured section of river. I honestly can not understand how this measure helps anything.

There are other pressing issues concerning the management of this river but these two mean the most to me. I hope whoever decides the final outcome will be thoughtful, honest and fair.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Adam Knoff

**From:** [filteau.matthew@gmail.com](mailto:filteau.matthew@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 9:42:56 PM

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Dear FWP,

As a public landowner, professional fishing guide, and conservationist, I support setting limits on commercial fishing trips on the Madison River. However, if you are going to limit guided trips, you should also set limits on recreational anglers as well—Clients using guides only comprise 15% of Madison River fishing days.

I vehemently oppose rest in rotation.

Rest and rotation will create crowding, and crowding solves nothing. I support opening up the entire river to float fishing. This will maximize river mileage and spread anglers out reducing crowding. Opening up the river will reduce crowding. Let me say one more time: Opening up more river to boat anglers will reduce crowding—this is common sense. Thus, I oppose the proposal to ban boats in the 19 miles of river currently designated as float-in angling access. By banning boats from sections of the Madison River you are Privatizing those sections of the river for wealthy property owners.

Thank you,

Matt Filteau

Public land owner, professional fishing guide, conservationist

**From:** [thecrazyswedefan@gmail.com](mailto:thecrazyswedefan@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 9:11:09 PM

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Name: Kevin Mueller

City: Cameron

Let me start off by saying I am a lover of this river and have fished it for the past 17 years of my life and for the past three years I have put over 180 days of personal use on this river alone. I hope to continue to fish this river till the day I die. I am a landowner at 3 Dollar Bridge one of the highest talking points on the river and yes my land touches the highwater mark. That being said some of the things you are proposing will make that not happen and will ruin the ecosystem which is the most important thing of all, destroy the community, ruin the economics of the entire valley. The subjects I will be touching on are rest and rotation, banning of boats, a limit for the amount of guides, a madison river stamp, and lastly an evaluation plan as the ecosystem of the river is most important.

Let's start by talking about rest and rotation and what it will do to the ecosystem and the crowding. Firstly if you close large sections of the river which in turn forcing the guides to only have about 2 different floats to choose from for the day. This causes a much higher level of stress on the fish then is currently there thus causing mass death which will happen in the first 3 years of the new rules. Thus causing you guys to enforce and create entirely new set of rules again and this will take decades to repair the ecosystem. A great example caused by nature and man is whirling disease. The only difference this time is that it will be entirely caused by mankind's poor management. I assume you only want to do this once and not twice because you guys made some poor decisions. Then you have the problem of same amount of people in less space causing damage to the surrounding area trying to escape the large crowds by getting creative whether it is taking risks of trespassing above high water marks or they will say in the river and year round a wade crushing all important bugs, plants, and most importantly fish nest or in other words redds causing the death rate of fish to be extremely high before they are even born. At the same time more people confined to a smaller space are more likely to litter which will increase as if one person does it then more people do it and then it is a landside of litter. The damage will cost jobs if the river starts to lose its credit of being a blue ribbon trout stream because of statements like poor management by the state, litter is everywhere, and the ecosystem is ruined. All will come true if we continue on your current path. At the same time we have no management for this current valley. If you think Oh no worries FWP Enforcer can handle it, NO I'm here to tell you he can't because he is 1 man for all madison county making these rules null because they are unenforceable. If you were to just allow fishing from a boat from Hebgan Dam to the Missouri river you would benefit the most from that. As it stands right now I rarely, by rare I mean 1 a week, see boat traffic in the wade only sections even during our salmon fly hatch which is our busiest time of the year. This would allow everyone to have a great variety of sections to fish, allow space to keep the crowding down, thus keeping the damage to the ecosystem to a minimum, as then you wouldn't have everyone fighting to catch the same fish in the same area at the same time you have a win because you now don't have a rule that is need to been enforced thus leaving FWP Enforcer to attend to true crises.

◆ I support your decision to limit the amount of guides. I would like to see it go back to 2015 numbers if possible. ◆ Reducing the number you would reduce the wear on the ecosystem allowing it flourish. A flourishing place becomes a destination spot that more people would love to travel to. You would have protected the guides' lively hoods, the river they depend on, and cause a demand for them that they can charge more for and get their clients more bang for

their buck because the river is flourishing.

Lastly we need you guys to do a true evaluation of the river. FWP has fish numbers but that isn't enough. We need to know how many people fish this river a year, how many days they really do and what times of day they do. I can tell you right now from what i can watch from my house the masses all concentrate on 9 am- 5pm. I have spent plenty of time watching the sunset by myself at one of the most crowded sections of the river alone because of the timing.◆ This river is only crowded from 9 am - 5 pm and after that it is a ghost town. The wade sections cause mass confusion because fishermen think that is the only place they can wade. I have spent plenty of time in the float fish sections alone all day because it wasn't labeled WADE ONLY. I have never been checked for my fishing licence in my seventeen years. How do you expect to enforce rules if you are already lacking on checking one of the most basic of rules, being if I have had a fishing licence. How do you expect that all your evaluations to now have been accurate if I have never been included in them? How are your evaluation to be accurate if the people creating these rules have never fished the Madison? How do you plan to enforce new rules when you can even enforce the wade section?◆ How can you enforce new rules that will ruin the ecosystem and guides unwilling to ruin the ecosystem so they break them? Is your plan to ruin the Madison valley?

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [rwhite2317@gmail.com](mailto:rwhite2317@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 9:01:44 PM

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Name: Rebecca White

City: Ennis

My name is Rebecca White, and I was raised in the Madison Valley. I strongly oppose the current proposal from FWP regarding how to regulate the Madison River. Proposing to close the wade sections to all public float access will undoubtedly be devastating to all types of fisherman. In addition to that, the current proposal of "rest and rotation" will strip away all individuals rights from accessing this section of public land. "Rest and rotation" of the declared sections is also a gross contradiction to the problem it claims to solve, because it will only instigate additional crowing on a smaller section of river. Lastly, the current proposal is unfairly prejudice against smaller and new outfitting businesses. Again, hurting the well being of the Ennis community and the surrounding area at large.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [terrymiddleton54@gmail.com](mailto:terrymiddleton54@gmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 8:03:25 PM

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Name: Terry Middleton

City: Gladstone, MO

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rules for Madison River recreational management.

The most important issue to me is walk/wade only access from Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge. I am opposed to both New Rule III and New Rule V. While the strangely worded current regulation requiring no "fishing while floating" has technically allowed boat access to this stretch of water, the spirit and tradition of the Quake to Lyons walk/wade stretch was maintained by all for many years. Until recently, it was very uncommon to see an individual angler or a guide with clients floating this stretch of river. The makeup of the river in this area and the way the fish tend to hold tight to the banks make it uniquely suited to walk/wade fishing. However, as commercial use has increased, I am seeing more and more guide boats above Lyons Bridge. There are also more personal watercraft being used. I enjoy walking the river looking for rising fish. I tend to walk quite a ways from parking areas in order to maintain a courteous distance between myself and other walk/wade anglers and to try to find a little solitude. It is very discouraging to walk a half mile upstream only to find that a boat has floated down and just pulled over to the bank I was planning to fish. I am asking that as a part of any recreation plan for the Madison River, the Quake Lake to Lyons Bridge section of the river be designated as true walk/wade only fishing (currently defined as no float fishing in the regs) for those of us that enjoy that type of fishing. Boats (commercial/private drift boats, rafts or personal watercraft) should not be allowed for access or for fishing from.

There has been a lot of talk about the difficulty of accessing some of the Quake to Lyons section of river by foot. A lot of it centers on claims that landowners in this stretch try to prevent legal access to the river. The Stream Access Law has been upheld by the Montana State Supreme Court on many occasions and is established law. Any problems with access due to landowners is a law enforcement issue that needs to be addressed by the county Sheriff ? not by river management rules. The other issue often raised is the distance one might have to walk to access some of the river in this section. While it is true that you can't just park your car anywhere along the river and fish within fifty feet, this section easily offers the most walk-in accessibility of any part of the river. Several bridges allow access to both sides of the river and there are numerous public land accesses. I am blessed with the good health to be able to walk as far as required to fish wherever I want to in the Quake to Lyons section of the Madison. Someday that won't be the case and I will happily turn it over to a younger generation and be content utilizing the nice boardwalk at Three Dollar Bridge. There is value in maintaining varying degrees of ease of access to our outdoor resources. I view it similar to having areas of the national forest that don't allow ATVs for access. Not everyone is able to use the more remote areas but that is OK.

As for the other proposed rules, I am in favor of New Rule I, the commercial use cap, but would ask that consideration be given to capping at an even lower level than 2019 levels. The process for this management plan started several years ago when it was recognized that use was already too high.

I am also in favor of New Rule XVI requiring a Madison River use stamp and reporting on river use. While free is always good, I would not be opposed to a modest fee to help cover costs of data collection and analysis.

I am generally opposed to any rules that include rest/rotation or certain types of access on certain days of the week. I think these types of regulations are confusing and do nothing to reduce the overall pressure on the river. In terms of the proposed rules for commercial permits, my only concern is that you never allow permits to be monetized or transferred for pay. I don't see a problem with letting the outfitters participate in determining how to divide things up as long as the total trips are capped at a number that keeps the fishery healthy.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment and I trust that your final decisions will be in the best interest of the Madison River and its wild trout.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.

**From:** [Finn Histon](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Petition  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 7:48:01 PM

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Hi

I'm a resident of Ennis Montana and call the Madison River my home. I am an avid angler on this river and would like to share my opinion. My main argument is regarding rest and rotation for certain sections of the river. I believe this will be very problematic, I do not think it will be beneficial for the sustainability of the fishery and create many other issues regarding crowding. Also I think the walk wade sections should stay as is, restricting boat access would be ridiculous. Another problem that should be more heavily addressed is keeping fish, if we want this river to fish well for generations to come this is a very simple act to put in place.

**From:** [Robert Foster](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Rotation  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 7:38:54 PM

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Hi,  
I'm a resident of Ennis, I fish the Madison at least 100 days a year. Bottom line Rest and rotation is a bad idea on the Madison and will only cause more problems that it aims to solve.

Thanks You,  
Robert Foster



**From:** [Jim Wilson](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
**Cc:** [FWP Commission](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] SAVE THE MADISON RIVER FROM OVERCROWDING!!!  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 6:13:32 PM

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October 30, 2020

Dear Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commission,

I am writing today to request that you do the right thing to protect the Madison River by instituting restrictions that will limit commercial use, which continues to increase each year to the detriment of the fishery and the surrounding ecosystem.

As a Madison Valley homeowner, I have personally witnessed obscene numbers of daily commercial fly-fishing boat trips down the Madison that make the river look more like a Disneyland ride than the internationally renowned, blue-ribbon trout stream it has been known to be.

For years there has been an escalating war between conservationists who continue to sound the alarm about damage being done to the river and its ecosystem, and commercial interests who see the river as theirs for the purpose of profit. These same commercial interests are the ones who say the river is in great shape and no restrictions are needed, despite the absolutely outrageous number of more than 200,000 angler days in a single season.

FWP data released this spring shows the river is in decline, with fish counts in some areas down 40 percent, and the Commission has already heard from thousands of Montanans who have voiced their concerns and agree that restrictions are needed. It is the Commission's duty to protect the Madison River, and that protection is needed now, not years from now. To that end, I support the following:

- 1) A cap on commercial use on the river. The 2019 level of 13,909 guided trips is too high and unsustainable. Reduce the number of guided trips to the average numbers between the years 2010 and 2016.
- 2) Enforce Wade-Only restrictions seven days a week in Wade-Only sections. That means absolutely NO fishing boats between the outlet of Quake Lake and Lyons Bridge, and between Ennis and Ennis Lake. Close the loophole created by commercial guides who currently float into wade-only sections, unload their clients and claim these are wade fishermen. They're not. Wade fishermen deserve the solitude they seek when they make the effort to walk into wade-only sections. They shouldn't have to deal with the onslaught of obnoxious guides who think nothing about crowding out wade fishermen by floating in, parking their boats just feet away, and carrying on with their clients. The amount of social conflict in these sections continues to increase along with the number of guided trips. This must be stopped. **CLOSE THE LOOPHOLE!! NO FISHING BOATS IN WADE ONLY SECTIONS.**
- 3) No monetization of commercial permits. They are not owned by guides or outfitters; they belong to the state and the citizens of Montana, and are available for LEASE, not ownership. Just look at what happened on the Big Hole and Beaverhead rivers. Permits were monetized and now big out-of-state outfitters own them, to the detriment of local Montanans who can no longer obtain them.
- 4) Block development below Greycliff. This stretch of river must remain primitive for future generations. There aren't many places where one can enjoy the wildness of Montana's rivers anymore. This is one of those remaining unspoiled areas. It must be protected.

I do not support any rest and rotation schedules. It's tough enough for people to know the rules without adding another layer of confusion about which day they can fish where, and if that is permitted from a boat or only on foot. Please simplify the rules, don't confuse them.

It is abundantly clear the Madison River is the most used and overfished river in the state. Without protection, this fishery will continue to decline until it is destroyed, which will in turn destroy countless livelihoods that depend on it, not just commercial outfitters and guides. Do the right thing and please put in place restrictions that will save this fishery, not just appease the self-interests of a select group of business interests.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Jim Wilson  
Ennis

**From:** [madco@madisoncountymt.gov](mailto:madco@madisoncountymt.gov)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 5:49:20 PM

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Name: Madison County Board of Commissioners  
City: Virginia City, Montana  
October 30, 2020

The Madison County Board of Commissioners (Board) has concerns about the Madison River Regulations as proposed in the draft ARM and EA. The Board has a responsibility to Madison County residents, business owners, and recreationists/tourists to make the best decisions for the overall good of Madison County and the Madison River. By this time, you and the Commission are well aware of the financial impacts made by the users of the Madison River to the businesses and families throughout Madison County, so the Board will not belabor those statistics.

One concern is that the proposed regulations are directed solely, as FWP has indicated, at those commercial outfitters who represent approximately only 15% of the users. Therefore, the proposed no cost, no limit stamp is appropriate to assist in collecting accurate data on the extent and growth of non-commercial use on the river. Since commercial users already extensively track their use, this stamp is a duplication in determining commercial use. This non-commercial data will require more than one season to collect and evaluate, so it is logical to delay regulations until such time.

Any commercial cap will be used as a model for other river systems in the future. Putting a cap on commercial use needs further consideration. Future conversations with outfitters and guides are needed to determine a possible cap based on 2018, 2019, or 2020 use as a basis for historic use. This possible cap needs to be done in as simple a manner as possible, without producing a tangled web of heavy administrative burdens and costs. Care, diligence, and additional time are needed to get it right for the good of all.

Rest and rotation cannot be an option. FWP data confirms that option will only increase crowding. The crowding issue is predominately at public Fishing Access Sites. Therefore, pending funding source solutions, programs such as FAS Ambassadors is a step in the right direction to solve at least one issue.

Reducing any access in the current walk/wade areas is a reduction in public access. The Board continues to support stream access.

In conclusion, it is of utmost concern to protect the Madison River. The Board understands FWP Commission's task of balancing scientific facts, river and fishery health, and public interests. Some regulation on the river is inevitable and it is impossible to try to solve all problems. Thank you for taking these possible regulations seriously. Yours and our constituents will endure the decisions.

Respectfully,

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Dan Allhands, Chair Ronald E. Nye James P. Hart  
Board of Commissioners  
Madison County

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.



**From:** [Ryan Weiss](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA Comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 5:20:02 PM

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Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
1420 East Sixth Avenue  
P.O. Box 200701  
Helena, MT 59620-0701

October 30, 2020

Re: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA

Dear Fish and Wildlife Commissioners:

Thank you for addressing Madison River recreational use and providing an opportunity for public comment. As an avid fisherman who float-fishes the river with my family in the summer during peak use, and walks-and-wades the river during the spring and fall when there are less recreationists, I have experienced the Madison River over the course of the seasons and the associated ebbs and flows of user frequencies and use.

I commend the Department and Commission on continued commitment to formulating a river recreational use plan and associated rulemaking. Utilizing fisheries biology and environmental sciences combined with economics and social science to study the issue and inform management decisions to best protect the resource for present and future generations is paramount to any sound river recreational management plan. Setting limits on river use, requiring a no-cost, no-limit stamp for angling and river recreational use to collect data and evaluate results after one year, are progress towards a well-conceived Madison River recreational management plan.

In general, I agree with the proposed rules. I am concerned however, that rules II, III, and V will have adverse impacts on stream access, commercial users, public anglers and recreationists; and therefore I oppose them. Below are my specific concerns for your consideration on rules II, III, and V:

- Rule II. Rest and rotation will crowd commercial users by eliminating the opportunity to float-fish several reaches in the uppermost Madison River corridor that are both popular and that have multiple, well-designed and well-utilized fishing access sites (FASs); particularly when use is highest. I oppose adoption of rule II.
- Rules III and V. Removing boats and float-in access from the walk-and-wade reaches of the upper Madison River effectively restricts or eliminates stream access to a significant portion of those reaches. If adopted, this rule would eliminate boat-access float-in wade anglers, thereby crowding wade-only use at and near FASs in those reaches and further crowd river reaches that boat and float fishing is allowed. I oppose adoption of rules III and V.

If rules II, III and V are adopted as-is, they will have the opposite effect of their intent, and further exacerbate the issue rulemaking is attempting to address over the long-term. I oppose rules II, III and V and encourage the Department and Commission to take an adaptive and science-based approach to managing recreational use on the Madison River to maintain the integrity of Montana's fisheries, watersheds and water quality; stream access; and recreation-based economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the access, use and management of the Madison River.

Sincerely,  
Ryan

Ryan Weiss  
1225 Highland St.  
Helena, MT 59601

**From:** [matthew.carey](mailto:matthew.carey)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 3:32:36 PM

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Dear Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks:

My name is Matthew Carey and an Outfitter and current SRP holder on the Madison River.

**New Rules I, VI and VIII-Commercial Use Cap and Flex Trips:**

I support capping commercial use and issuing individual outfitter per, it's based on historical use. I support using either 2019 or 2020 to determine ones historical use. I support the use of "Flex Trips". I do think it will be hard for any outfitter to manage right to their cap. This would at least allow a small amount of flexibility.

**New Rule II-Rest and Rotation of Commercial Use:**

This simply will not work on the Madison River. In fact I believe this will only make crowding worse in certain sections on the river. This river simply does not have the floatable river mileage that perhaps the Big Hole does where this plan seems to work. Another reason this plan has worked on other rivers is that it was put in place years ago BEFORE crowding was an issue. In today's Montana and the popularity of the Madison rest and rotation is just a bad idea. It will not spread people out it will only make crowding in social conflict worse in the open stretches.

**New Rules III and V-Walk/Wade Sections**

I think we should keep these sections status quo or adopting the FOAM proposal in New Rule V.

The GGTU proposal to eliminate boats in this section a few days a week is a bad idea and a slippery slope to go down. What makes Montana great and better than some surrounding states is public access on rivers and being able to float navigable rivers. Adopting this plan would create opportunities for other rivers to take away float sections. I don't think we want to go down that path. There are plenty of wade opportunities on the Madison but eliminating boats for access in this section will just make other sections more crowded. Not to mention much of this stretch is not accessible to the wade angler. You pretty much need a boat to access it.

**New Rule IV-Limiting Development on Lower Madison**

I don't even understand this one and believe it should be removed from consideration. This is not a heavily used stretch of river and how is this stretch considered to be anymore "primitive" than the rest of the river? If anything should be considered on the lower river it is the massive growth of splash and giggle floaters in the summertime.

**New Rules VII and IX-Transferability of Permits**

Transferability of allocated trips and permits must be allowed and enabled to the greatest extent allowable under current law. This ensures a path to entry for new outfitters and will create the most sustainable and desirable business environment for the outfitters. This will also ensure the highest quality economic benefit of the river to local communities that depend on outfitting and fishing.

**New Rules XI, XII, XIII, VIV and XV-Application, Fees and ongoing SRP Management:**

I support all these proposed administrative rules.

**New Rule XVI-Madison River Use Stamp:**

This may be good start but more needs to be done manage non-commercial use which is the largest and fastest growing segment on the Madison River

I would like to thank you for your time and considering my comments!

Matthew Carey  
Trouts N' At Outfitters

From: [John Herzer](#)  
To: [FWP Madison River COM](#)  
Cc: [Terri Raugland](#); [Matthew Churchman](#); [Josh McKown](#)  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Rules  
Date: Friday, October 30, 2020 3:21:20 PM

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Attn: FWP Commissioners

Please include our comments when considering a decision regarding the two petition proposals outlining Madison River Recreation.

In short; we strenuously object to the George Grant TU Chapter's proposal of "Rest and Rotation".

Rationale:

In order to limit crowding ALL users need to be limited, period.

Use is use, a hook is a hook, and a boat is a boat. The idea of limiting and or moving a particular user group while affording the largest segment of use to grow unimpeded is not only unfair but fails to attain the goal of lessening crowding.

Unfortunately, making decisions that are politically expedient fail to change the problem facing not only the Madison but many other rivers across Montana. It's easy to single out guides as the bane of anglers wanting river use to revert back to 1980. Guided and unguided angler use is upward trending across the board. It's time for the Commission to muster the political will to *limit everyone*. The GGTU rest and rotation suggested does literally nothing to curb crowding but rather just moves commercial use around thereby furthering crowding. In addition to consolidating crowding on the Madison the adverse effects of this decision will be seen on other area rivers that can't handle the increased use. Namely, the Boulder and Stillwater. Trust, if guides can't take their clients on a river or section they will just move to a different launch. Guaranteed they aren't canceling those folks.

It's been said that the sitting commissioners see this decision as their legacy. If you really want a living legacy that will protect not only the Madison but all Montana Rivers do this - appoint a River Czar that can actually look at river recreation holistically rather than the haphazard single river approach utilized to date. It's too easy to appease certain groups (typically adjacent landowners and area residents) while forgetting that *you are representing all users* - both in state and non-residents. It's easy to look at what was used on the Big Hole, Beaverhead and West Fork Bitterroot instead of understanding that simply because these restrictions were put in place on those waters doesn't mean they work on all rivers; or work at all for that matter.

We are growing weary of restrictions that purport to be in the interest of minimizing crowding yet do little to that end.

Closing:

We hope the sitting commissioners will soundly reject a habitat/fisheries organization proposal on river recreation. GGTU is simply out of their lane here. Do the right thing - don't default to what's easy or expedient.

Thanks for your consideration,  
John Herzer & Terri Raugland (owners)  
Matthew Churchman (manger Msla), Josh McKown (manger Pburg)  
Blackfoot River Outfitters, Missoula  
Flint Creek Outdoors, Philipsburg

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John Herzer  
Blackfoot River Outfitters, Inc.  
275 North Russell Street  
Missoula, MT 59801  
Phone: 406-542-7411  
[www.blackfootriver.com](http://www.blackfootriver.com) [[blackfootriver.com](http://blackfootriver.com)]

**From:** [Stewart Lewis](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison River Recreation Plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 2:34:08 PM

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Stewart Lewis, I have been living in the Madison Valley for 10 years and have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to guide the Madison for the last 6 years. I am currently employed by the Madison Double R lodge.

While I generally oppose ANY regulation that is going to be thrust on the Madison I understand there must be cooperation on both sides of the argument. I would like it to be known that I absolutely OPPOSE any sort of Rest and Rotation plan or restricted stretches of the Madison. I believe that these proposed ideas do nothing but exacerbate the "problem" of overcrowding by focussing more boats into more confined areas. Additionally, it is well known that the stretches of the Madison that are being subject to boat restrictions are only feasibly accessed by the use of watercraft. By limiting watercraft access approximately 10 -12 precious miles of the Madison will be unavailable to the general public and to individuals who require watercraft to maneuver around the river.

Furthermore, I ask the committee to consider using either 2019, 2020, or 2021 to be attached to an outfitters SRP permit. By allowing outfitters to use either 2019, 2020 or 2021 we will avoid unintended economic hardship on businesses and their families who rely on the outfitting industry in South West Montana. Please make sure that outfitters are allowed to choose between 2019, 2020, or 2021 for their year of record on the Madison.

Perhaps the only piece of the recreation plan that I support is limiting the amount of launches per outfitter to 3 per launch site. I do believe that this will relieve some pressure on heavily used access points such as Lyons Bridge and Varney Bridge.

In summary, I ask the committee to carefully consider the lasting effects that this proposed plan could and will have on South West Montana. I believe that regulation is a slippery slope that could have many unintended consequences and potentially would not even solve the problem of "overcrowding". Change is difficult, especially in Montana. But, it's hard to imagine that all that much really needs to change when the river's health is excellent and you're one of two boats on a Saturday from Pal to Mac (actually happened this summer 2020).

Respectfully,

Stewart Lewis  
Guide #23990

**From:** [Neil Laskowski](#)  
**To:** [FWP Madison River.COM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Madison plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 1:58:59 PM

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Dear Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission,

My name is Neil Laskowski. I currently spent many days a year recreating and working on the Madison river. I wanted to give some comments about the proposed plans. The Madison is a special river but does have a crowding issue. I think the worst way we can help fix this problem is confine the fisherman into a smaller section. Rest and rotation makes options more limited and will make each section of river seem even more busy. Banning the wade only sections is one of the worst ideas I've heard too. These are the least crowded sections and some of the only places that you can escape the crowds of the Madison on. Getting rid of these areas for floating will make the Madison feel even smaller and more cramped. I do think capping the number of guides at the current numbers seems like a good solution. Please take these into consideration as the Madison is a special place to many but cannot handle additional crowds and won't be the same river if you aren't allowed to float to the least crowded parts of the river.

Thanks,

Neil Laskowski

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [wingnut67@hotmail.com](mailto:wingnut67@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [FWP.Madison.River.COM](http://FWP.Madison.River.COM)  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 1:26:55 PM

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Name: Stephen Hughes

City: Missoula

October 30th, 12:20 pm

I am a long time fisherman on the Madison (27 years) and feel that the suggestions (Rules V through XVI) make the most sense to balance the commercial and recreational interests. I am definitely against the rest and rotation section since it limits commercial fishing during key hatches on the weekends. I would also think the walk/wade sections should stay as they are as well.

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This e-mail was generated from the 'Madison River Recreational Management Proposed Rules and EA' Public Notice Web Page.