

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 2:10:14 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 3:04:49 PM
Time Spent: 00:54:34
IP Address: 15.181.21.4

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Name: | Jim Johnston |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | jjohn1950@aol.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I have lived on the bank of the Mitchell slough for 30 years. It is vital trout spawning habitat, as such it is a very important resource for the bitterroot river. Over the past 3 years I have seen motorboats and jet boats travel up and down the Mitchell at very high speed (as fast as 20 mph) . The slough depth in spots behind my house is no more than 10"; the width is as narrow as 14'. The use of motorized watercraft in these conditions is clearly not safe. Also of vital importance is the destruction of brown trout redds and all other habitat on the stream bed. The closure of motorized use on the Mitchell and other similar waterways is essential for the future health of the bitterroot river system.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 3:04:00 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 3:07:27 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:27
IP Address: 65.132.165.41

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Name: | H |
| City/Town: | Lewis |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | hlewis@icloud.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Please disallow motorized craft ... bad for wildlife. Thanks

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 3:43:35 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 3:51:28 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:52
IP Address: 47.198.58.146

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Name: | David Ferrie |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | djferrie@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I live on the Bitterroot river, the section of proposed motorized closure. I support closure of motorized vessels. They do damage to stream bottom, and are disrupting fish patterns and Waterfowl. Part of the main stem and the Mitchell Slough run along my property. Owned for 27 years, I have seen damage.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#4

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 8:16:49 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:55
IP Address: 38.141.44.5

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Zach
City/Town: Stevensville
State/Province: MT
Email Address: zachpolanski@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Shutting down access to motorized boats on the arm of the bitterroot would be a disgrace. This would be a win for private land owners and deny us the public access to areas we never could get to again. This would make it so the rich landowners win the battle again. The public should be able to use motorized boats in these arms of the river.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#5

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 8:36:25 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:57
IP Address: 146.75.175.33

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Tyler Hettman
City/Town: Lolo
State/Province: MT
Email Address: tylerchadhettman@icloud.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

DO NOT CLOSE THE BITTERROOT TO JET BOATING AND MOTOR USE. These landowners want to shut off all access and shut out hunters and anglers from the public waters and claim them for themselves!

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#6

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 8:38:15 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 8:43:29 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:14
IP Address: 104.28.48.77

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Adam hettman
City/Town: Stevensville
State/Province: MT
Email Address: adamhettman@icloud.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

This is an unlawful amendment to the already very restrictive set of rules that go with the bitterroot river. Mainly landowners are pushing this to restrict sportsman access to remote areas of the river. Please do not allow landowners to further reduce our already reduced public land access.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#7

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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 8:49:32 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:11
IP Address: 184.166.80.101

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | George Hettman |
| City/Town: | Missoula |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | starrental@bresnan.net |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Do NOT CLOSE!

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 8:50:58 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:26
IP Address: 174.201.28.121

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Keith Wiegers
City/Town: Stevensville
State/Province: MT
Email Address: wiegerskeith@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

No jet boats should be allowed in Mitchell slough.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:06:28 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:33
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Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Name: | Shay |
| City/Town: | Missoula |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | 406smc@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Do not close the Bitterroot River to motorized use.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:11:42 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:13:02 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:20
IP Address: 74.244.109.175

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Carl Young
City/Town: Three Forks
State/Province: MT
Email Address: lilcyoung999@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Highly oppose. Closing the river to boats during waterfowl will limit access to mostly the wealthy landowners along the river, who are mostly not friendly to waterfowl hunters accessing it.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#11

COMPLETE

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Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:26:14 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:29:17 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:02
IP Address: 174.234.2.124

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Q1 **Respondent skipped this question**

Contact information

Q2
Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

That is public waters for everyone to enjoy. Not just people with money to close it for there personal hunting grounds.

Q3 **Respondent skipped this question**

Optional: Upload your comments

#12

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:29:59 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:31
IP Address: 174.218.166.221

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | Jake Stair |
| City/Town: | Butte |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | jake.stair@outlook.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I support Alternative B. A motorized use closure from October-January would restrict public access for duck hunting on the Bitterroot River. If people were actually worried about native fish and habitat, it would be a year round ban and not just during duck season. This is just to stop duck hunters from enjoying public waterways.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#13

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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:30:03 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:44
IP Address: 67.58.226.100

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Andrew Marshall
City/Town: Missoula
State/Province: MT
Email Address: sagafanta@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am a local hunter and angler who enjoys fishing and duck hunting on Mitchell's Slough despite repeated issues with landowners heckling me despite my polite and responsible behavior (this is not always the case and I have good relationships with some land owners). While I do not use a jet boat on these tributaries, I believe that acquiescing to their petty grievances and moving to reduce access is a slippery slope. I request that FWP study the impact of jet boats on this particular fishery before limiting their use.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#14

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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:33:43 AM
Time Spent: 00:10:23
IP Address: 174.215.18.197

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Name: | Jarred Mackey |
| City/Town: | Great Falls |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | jarred.a.mackey@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

This would close off access to public hunting lands during waterfowl season. I'm against that in whole. If you must limit. Then either limiting to no wake or a speed limit. But still.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#15

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:34:21 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:21
IP Address: 174.215.16.235

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Name: | Sam mckeeth |
| City/Town: | Ulm |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | sammckeeth@yahoo.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Closures of this nature set a dangerous precedent that goes against the spirit of Montanas stream access laws. The overwhelming resistance to the quiet waters initiative in 2016 showed that the general public is not in favor of this sort of restriction. Please do not enact this closure.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#16

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:35:47 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:38
IP Address: 174.234.8.249

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: **matt**
City/Town: **plattes**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **mattplattes@yahoo.com**

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

The current law should stay the same. No changes!!!!

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#17

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:34:12 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:37:49 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:36
IP Address: 35.150.98.114

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: David Ward
City/Town: Hamilton
State/Province: MT
Email Address: dward0451@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am the president of Bitterroot Trout Unlimited. Our organization opposes the use of motorized watercraft in this section of the river. The water is relatively shallow and these boats can do great harm to Redds in the river which diminishes the viability of the fishery.
David Ward

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#18

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:28:22 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:37:50 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:27
IP Address: 74.254.4.130

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Name: | Dylan |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | dylan.a.janes@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Do not close motor use in the Bitterroot. It limits fishing and hunting access along the Bitterroot River. Access is already limited and continuing to restrict is only taking away from the local residents. You started off your reasoning for this closure by saying multiple land owners have called in. It sounds like you are taking the side of a few land owners rather than protecting our right as Montana citizens to access our public land. It is very upsetting that the land owners can dictate which public land we can access.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#19

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:33:17 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:40:18 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:00
IP Address: 74.244.109.176

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | Roger Schutz |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | rogerjschutz@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Do NOT deny access by jet boat between woodside and Stevensville bridge. There are VERY few individuals running motorized boats in this area and they likely hurt the habitat less that the massive herds of elk crossing the waterways on a daily basis. Closing this area serves a few wealthy landowners that on an almost daily basis harass or interrupt those who do run boats up Mitchell Slough to hunt and fish.
Roger Schutz

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#20

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:43:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:37
IP Address: 98.97.114.29

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Trevor Peterson
City/Town: HELENA
State/Province: MT
Email Address: trevor@rockymountainsaltco.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Totally against this as it is a direct attack on waterfowl hunters and restricting our abilities and access.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#21

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 9:57:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:29
IP Address: 63.64.37.131

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Eric Lane
City/Town: Livingston
State/Province: MT
Email Address: lane1ea@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I'd prefer the channels to remain open to jet boating, at least during duck hunting seasons. Limiting access via jet boating will only increase the likelihood that these channels be deemed non-navigable, and thus be shut down from public access in the future. The landowners complaining about noise should not factor into public access conversations. I think that these sorts of restrictions are usually negative for the average sportsman and license holder.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#22

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:04:45 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:35
IP Address: 174.220.143.201

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Wil Allen
City/Town: Butte
State/Province: MT
Email Address: wil-allen@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Vote on alternative B. Landowners are likely, causing more damage through irrigation than any jet boat would be causing. You could make the argument that sportsman using jet boat respect the landscape far more than the general public. if you're willing to be in a jet boat on a river in late fall early winter, you're likely a hard-working serious sportsman.

These aren't the type of people that are going to destroy the landscape because they want to ensure that they can come back every year to pursue their quarry.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#23

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:04:49 AM
Time Spent: 00:16:15
IP Address: 174.218.167.159

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Name: | Case Ostrom |
| City/Town: | Corvallis |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | caseo@me.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am writing in opposition to the proposed year-round closure of motorized use on tributaries to the Bitterroot River between Woodside Crossing FAS and John and Nancy Owen FAS.

I make my living as a fishing guide on these waters. My livelihood depends directly on the health of native fish populations, particularly Westslope cutthroat trout. Because of that, I take habitat protection seriously and fully support science-based conservation measures when they are justified.

In this case, however, the proposed closure appears to be driven not by demonstrated ecological harm, but by pressure from adjacent landowners seeking to limit public recreational access. There has been no clear evidence presented showing that jet boating on these tributaries causes significant or lasting damage to native fish populations or their habitat.

The only commonly cited concern—disturbance of spawning redds—primarily applies to brown trout, which are not native to this system. Using non-native species impacts as the basis for sweeping, year-round access restrictions undermines the stated conservation rationale and raises serious questions about intent.

If the goal were truly habitat protection, a more targeted, science-driven approach would be appropriate—such as seasonal closures during sensitive spawning windows, or site-specific restrictions where documented impacts exist. A blanket, year-round ban is disproportionate and unnecessarily restricts lawful public use of navigable waters held in trust for all Montanans.

The fact that these regulations are being initiated in response to landowner complaints, rather than requests from fisheries biologists or conservation organizations, further suggests that this proposal is less about protecting fish and more about restricting access for the general public.

Montana's rivers are a shared resource. Decisions that limit public access should be based on clear data, transparent reasoning, and demonstrable conservation benefit—not private interests.

I respectfully urge Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks to reject this proposal in its current form and instead pursue balanced, evidence-based management that protects native fish while preserving fair and reasonable public access.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#24

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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:06:38 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:28
IP Address: 174.218.175.142

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | David Foltz |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | foltzdavidmt@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Closing it for motorized use only to appease rich landowners? What else is going to be restricted on public waters in the near future? Sad to see this is even up for a vote in our bitterroot valley...

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#25

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:07:36 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:09:21 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:45
IP Address: 184.166.92.93

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Name: | Jenny Hettman |
| City/Town: | Lolo |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | jhettman@live.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

NO! Montana residents need access to the river. Landowners do not own the river too.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#26

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:41:59 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:45:15 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:15
IP Address: 174.218.164.210

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Ben Montgomery
City/Town: Polson
State/Province: MT
Email Address: flyfishing101@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am against closure of this waterway to jet oats during waterfowl season. A short term closure will do nothing to improve habitat and this recommendation is obviously based solely on complaints from wealthy private landowners in order to continue privatizing public resources! Shame on the commission for considering this.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#27

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:47:50 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:35
IP Address: 97.171.25.198

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | Kevin Martin |
| City/Town: | Shepherd |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | kmartin72406@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

This would be in direct violation of our Hunting right this has nothing to do with habitat and everything to do with a couple of land owners in that area trying to year after year shut down hunting and even fishing on what they think is their property. I do not support shutting down motorized watercraft access to this stretch of the river.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#28

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 11:19:00 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 11:22:32 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:32
IP Address: 184.167.210.92

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Name: | Logan reich |
| City/Town: | Butte |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | loganreich.87@gmail |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I think this is a hideous decision based solely on the beliefs and interest of the ultra wealthy rich that owned an acquired land along the banks of the bitter River. This is no way shape or form provides a positive impact to the general public of Montana outdoorsman who have worked very hard to acquire these jet boats you speak of that cost upwards of \$100,000 It is all right as public land owners of Montana to be able to take our boats where we want when we want as we please it's not up to the soul discretion of the ultra wealthy rich landowners who have moved here from out of state being there the only ones of Ability to afford such high quality. I DO NOT SUPPORT THE CLOSURE

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#29

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 11:05:25 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 11:25:03 AM
Time Spent: 00:19:38
IP Address: 173.40.205.34

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Name: | Caleb Dotson |
| City/Town: | Missoula |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | caleldotson@yahoo.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Please deny this proposal. Reasonable access (moterized boating) on a public waterway should not be denied to appease private landowners.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#30

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 11:33:50 AM
Time Spent: 00:24:58
IP Address: 184.177.128.62

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Name: | Robert Colman |
| City/Town: | Ketchum |
| State/Province: | ID |
| Email Address: | bcolman@colman-partners.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am a property owner in Stevensville . The Mitchell Ditch runs through the property and I strongly oppose allowing motorized watercraft on any tributary of the Bitterroot river for the protection of fish habitat and protection of water fowl. Such a change would dramatically alter the environment for wildlife we so much enjoy in Montana. We need to protect the land, food availability, and spawning areas if we are to maintain any wildlife. Hunters and fishermen can access tributaries on foot or rafts without upsetting the wildlife habitat.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#31

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 11:27:41 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 11:41:42 AM
Time Spent: 00:14:01
IP Address: 159.112.96.191

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Name: | Neal Cote |
| City/Town: | Missoula |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | mrpikemt1@yahoo.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am in favor of this proposal. The small group of people that have chosen to use motor boats to access places that are really too small for them have created a problem. Those individuals are very rude and disrespectful to both other hunters and anglers as well as causing conflict with land owners. They also disrupt hard to reach places that ducks and geese need to rest and get away from hunting pressure. I would actually go further as to close the entire Bitterroot River to all motorized boats. They disrupt nighttime roosts and make the birds leave the river to go to private property where they stay and provide no opportunities to public land hunters. I would hope that this could be used by FWP to open up a dialogue with land owners along Mitchell Slough and the entire river to discuss access that would benefit both them and the public.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#32

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:03:53 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:47
IP Address: 174.234.3.41

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Name: | Jeff Faycosh |
| City/Town: | Miles City |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | jfsheep58@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Seems like overkill by banning all motorized vessels all year for fairly long length of river. Doesnt seem like multi use of a resource. I am against it, no scientific basis for the rule.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#33

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 11:41:44 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:06:03 PM
Time Spent: 00:24:18
IP Address: 99.140.156.26

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Name: | Christine Barber |
| City/Town: | Missoula |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | christine.hettman@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Please do not close the river to motorized use because of rich land owners. Passing this restriction will set precedents to continue limiting the access to public lands. Let's keep Montana accessible for our hunters and anglers. Don't let rich land owners make rules because they don't like sharing public land and waterways. Hunting and fishing is a way of life here and shouldn't be controlled by money and greed.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#34

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 11:57:33 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:16:18 PM
Time Spent: 00:18:44
IP Address: 47.45.198.58

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Name: | Colton Chenault |
| City/Town: | Missoula |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | colton.chenault@yahoo.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I believe that this closure is unfair to the public that use this area during duck season. This closer will make Mitchell slough and many of the other tributaries that many of us hunt inaccessible without land owner permission. This is just another instance of the rich taking away public access to hunting land. The complaints that fwp is getting about people using boats in these tributaries come from people that live along these areas and want to keep them to themselves. I hope that this closer does not go into affect and take away access to hunting areas that many public land hunters love and would be deeply saddened by losing.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#35

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:17:33 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:18:59 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:25
IP Address: 76.75.9.246

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Name: | Ethan Blase |
| City/Town: | Ennis |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | ethan.blaze1@icloud.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I own a jet boat and would be disappointed with the loss of hunting waterfowl from my boat on the bitter root river.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#36

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:21:05 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:30:16 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:11
IP Address: 99.140.156.26

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | Zach Barber |
| City/Town: | Missoula |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | zbarber30552@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Do not shut down motors!!!

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#37

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:35:16 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:43:46 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:29
IP Address: 74.244.108.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Name: | Tyler Johnston MD |
| City/Town: | Lolo |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | tjohnst@bgsu.edu |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

The landscape of the Bitterroot Valley has rapidly changed, public access to hunting, especially waterfowl hunting is very limited.

Restricting access in this manner would continue to negatively impact the valley, especially river access for its hunting community.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#38

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:52:58 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 12:57:00 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:01
IP Address: 99.140.157.237

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Tom gagnon
City/Town: Missoula
State/Province: MT
Email Address: tgagnonmt86@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am commenting against any measure to block/ban the use of motors in Mitchell slough. Wealthy landowners are fighting tooth and nail doing everything they can both legally and illegally to keep the public from utilizing this public waterway. The public wouldn't even need motors to access their right to waterfowl hunt (and fish) below the high water mark if it wasn't for the series of hot fences installed to prevent downstream access.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#39

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 1:07:22 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 1:11:01 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:39
IP Address: 74.244.109.176

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Shari Schutz
City/Town: Stevensville
State/Province: MT
Email Address: srschutz@msn.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am opposed to closing the Bitterroot River for motorized use between Woodside and Owen's.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#40

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 1:11:25 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 1:22:27 PM
Time Spent: 00:11:01
IP Address: 174.220.145.59

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Michael Clingan
City/Town: Toston
State/Province: MT
Email Address: montanaoutdoorimagery@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

This proposed rule change negatively effects waterfowl hunting opportunities and virtually gives private landowners exclusive access to public waters, a dangerous trend running rampant in a state that has always valued public access to public resources. I implore the commission to decline this proposed resolution.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#41

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 2:37:27 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 2:38:51 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:23
IP Address: 174.220.191.213

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Name: | Kevin Howie |
| City/Town: | Billings |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | khowie@bighornwireline.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I'm against the closure

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#42

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 3:37:45 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 3:43:37 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:52
IP Address: 69.145.20.81

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Name: | Clayton King |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | pinyapper9@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

NO!

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#43

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 4:11:32 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 4:16:12 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:39
IP Address: 162.248.140.93

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | Bob Farrell |
| City/Town: | Billings |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | mtgreenheads@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I oppose this proposal to close tributaries to motorized use year-round. A blanket closure unnecessarily limits hunter and angler access and restricts lawful public use of shared waters.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#44

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 7:15:38 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 7:28:29 PM
Time Spent: 00:12:51
IP Address: 174.220.148.223

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Name: | Joshua Rokosch |
| City/Town: | Hamilton |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | rokoschj@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

The origin of complaints is referencing motorized use on the Mitchell Slough. The wording in the ARM language would not pertain to the Mitchell Slough as it was ruled under Supreme Court a side channel of the Bitterroot River. However, regulating side channels as their own entity sets a complex and poor precedent for watershed management. The management should pertain to sections of the watershed as a whole. Ex. No motorized use upstream of Florence bridge as well as no motorized use in tributaries of the Bitterroot River. I am all for limiting or restricting use of motorized craft on the Bitterroot River but the wording needs to be amended in the ARM language. The Bitterroot River is a dynamic watershed with new channel shifts each year. Trying to regulate channels of the river independently is a poor management practice and a slippery slope for privatization of public waterways. Simply restrict the motorized use on the river using a proper section landmark. Ex. Stevensville Bridge FAS or Florence Bridge FAS. Several years back the regulations included no motorized use upstream of Florence Bridge. That is what should have stayed in place

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#45

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 7:25:39 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 7:28:56 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:16
IP Address: 174.220.133.10

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Name: | Lane kosena |
| City/Town: | Helena |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | lkosena1@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I really think it's dangerous to close off water ways that a legal use of boat (Jett boats) can get to. It kills the hope fore the working man and its unacceptable . Just because someone with more money than me can buy the land doesn't mean they get every right to the waterway. I hope you take this into consideration. Have a blessed day!

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#46

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 8:30:50 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 8:33:39 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:49
IP Address: 174.227.52.83

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | Clay Umland |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | umlandclay27@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I vote against this new law.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#47

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:04:50 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:11:24 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:34
IP Address: 69.145.38.160

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Name: | James Adair |
| City/Town: | Florence |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | jamesadair406@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I oppose limiting jet boat access on the tributaries of the Bitterroot River. The proposal relies on broad claims of safety and habitat concerns without presenting site-specific data showing that current jet boat use is causing measurable harm. Jet boats have operated on these waters for decades and are designed specifically for shallow, fast-moving rivers with minimal impact when used responsibly. A year-round closure would unnecessarily restrict long-standing public access to navigable waters and unfairly penalize responsible users based on complaints rather than documented evidence. Targeted enforcement of existing laws and education would be a more balanced approach than an outright prohibition.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#48

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 23, 2026 5:49:38 AM
Last Modified: Friday, January 23, 2026 5:51:37 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:58
IP Address: 63.97.8.89

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Name: | Matthew Liedtka |
| City/Town: | Bozeman |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | matthewliedtka@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

People only want to shut down motor use on the Bitterroot River to limit access to locals to preserve the land and water for billionaires to use when they fly in, it's there "money-maker". When we enjoy the use of motors to access these spots they will do anything in their power to keep it to themselves. They go to the extent of putting fences up, and cutting trees to block the stream, that prevents recreation on Mitchell's Slough. I've experienced first hand dealing with these landowners, they all share the same mindset of "I own the water", and you can definitely tell that they will do anything to keep us out. Such as using vulgar language and threats to intimidate us. In conclusion, I think the use of motors on the Bitterroot river should be allowed during hunting season, and even should be considered being open during spring runoff. To back this new notion, through many years of experience there are no people on the river during these times, and it gives boat recreation no limitation to only the fall and Introduces another river activity when the river blows out when all other recreation gets put to a hold.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#49

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 23, 2026 6:34:04 AM
Last Modified: Friday, January 23, 2026 6:40:30 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:25
IP Address: 146.75.249.11

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Name: | Christopher Cassone |
| City/Town: | Darby |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | christophercassone@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I have ran motorized boats on the bitterroot before, and find that it is one of the few ways you can get to landlocked pieces of water for waterfowl hunting. If there were more restrictions on motorized access, there would just be more power towards landowners who try to lock sections of the river down for their own benefit, providing no resources for the waterfowl hunters who are already limited on river bottom public land. I am currently active duty military, and would hate to come back home to more closed off areas than there already is. Please take into consideration the hunters that are putting time and money into conservation.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#50

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 23, 2026 2:53:05 PM
Last Modified: Friday, January 23, 2026 3:48:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:55:53
IP Address: 108.174.113.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Jeanie Newsom
City/Town: Stevensville
State/Province: MT
Email Address: newsom_gurlz@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am against the closure of 20hp moters that are currently allowed Oct 1-Jan 31 and have been without any environmental affects for years on braids of Bitterroot such as Mitchell channel which is part of Bitterroot River in itself Closing this down is denying duck hunters access ... unacceptable ! It would cause duck hunters to wade up the Maine entrance of Mitchell channel by Stevensville Bridge which would require wading as there is no high water mark and wading is a big concern that does more harm than a small moter! Wading up small muddy channels causes a huge environmental impact ! It kicks up sediments that increase water turbidity , blocks sunlight and smothers aquatic bugs , fish , covers and or smashes stream bed eco system! Wading can erode banks causing widening and shallowing of the water way ! Wading would do way more harm to a channel bed than a small boat raised off the bottom of the substrate ! Beginning of main entrance is gravel that after a mile or so is deep sediment and dug out big holes from wealthy land owners not to mention you can only take a 20 hp up stream only a few miles of the 16 mile channel due to landowners falling trees across the channel! I propose not giving these land owners the right to take away our rights as sportsman ! It boils down to rich landowners that don't want hunting or fishing period , they want it for themselves only ! I've been harassed multiple times by Seibels ranch hand ! Once floating down in a raft with my nephew! Got yelled at and followed in a pickup to every fishing hole along way then he preceeded to get out and stand on his bridge and yell obscenities and tell us good luck getting over his log jam that he created and this year about a mile and a half up from Maine channel entrance he drives up with headlights blinding us at 5:45 and asks if we're gonna follow the rules etc etc just pure harassment and to drive ducks out ! They harass people all the time and nothing gets done They fall big trees and put rocks in the channel! They bait ducks for there own hunting privileges! They string fences on and on and never have to answer to any charges! I'm writing all this in hopes you see the bigger picture here ... This isn't about managing habitat it's about taking rights away from families that enjoy our rights to recreate while following all laws and to take these rts away is unfair and wrong all because people with money want control ! I propose that the laws remain the same as there is no real argument why they shouldn't ! Deep consideration of what I have proposed is greatly appreciated!

Thanks for your time
 Jeanie Newsom

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#51

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 23, 2026 8:55:09 PM
Last Modified: Friday, January 23, 2026 9:04:46 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:37
IP Address: 97.245.230.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Name: | Zack Smith |
| City/Town: | Missoula |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | zack.smith.0520@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

The proposal, to me, seems unclear. Is FWP proposing to close the Bitterroot to motorized use because of private landowner pressure? Is FWP proposing to close it because it's "unsafe"? Or is FWP proposing to close it for the health of the fishery? These are three different reasons all with unique arguments.

Closing the Bitterroot to motorized access because of private landowner pressure.. I mean it wouldn't necessarily be new for a few rich folks to get their way over what the people want. Distasteful and not in the ethos of a government entity? Sure. Out of the ordinary? Well...

Closing motorized access because it's unsafe? How do you go about defining "unsafe"? Furthermore, each individual has their own risk tolerance and to tell someone what their's should be arguably infringes on their liberty.

The health of the fishery seems to be the only argument that has any teeth. Even still, I would like to see some science to back this claim.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#52

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 24, 2026 11:34:32 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 24, 2026 11:36:44 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:12
IP Address: 209.215.92.141

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Name: | Dooley |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | dooleyhid@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am a user of the stream access laws and I oppose with you guys trying to close it as it is a run off of the bitterroot river so there for should get treated the same.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#53

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 24, 2026 1:18:38 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 24, 2026 1:27:23 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:44
IP Address: 174.198.134.167

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Name: | Nate Klose |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | nathanaelklose@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am against the closure of use of motorized boats on Mitchell Slew and all other tributaries of the Bitterrot River during waterfowl season. I use a motorized boat to access Mitchell slew and other tributaries of the Bitterroot River for waterfowl hunting. By denying me my right to use a motorized boat for access you are denying not only me, but all other hunters and the public the right to access public lands.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#54

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Saturday, January 24, 2026 2:37:34 PM
Time Spent: 00:15:27
IP Address: 38.141.44.5

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Name: | Don Polanski |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | dpjw99@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am opposed to prohibiting motorized boating on Mitchell Slough. Montana State Supreme Court determined Mitchell Slough is open to recreation under the stream access law. A decision local landowners did not agree with. This is another attempt by the local landowners to restrict access. Montana FWP Commission should be listening to the many and not a few high-net-worth individuals who don't like the public recreating in their backyard.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#55

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Sunday, January 25, 2026 12:52:19 PM
Time Spent: 00:14:12
IP Address: 66.62.93.65

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Name: | Marshall Bloom |
| City/Town: | Hamilton |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | drtrout@mtbloom.net |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Having read the documents and being familiar with the waters in question, I urge the Commission to enter rulemaking and incorporate the closure into the ARMS.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Marshall Bloom

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#56

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, January 25, 2026 4:16:17 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, January 25, 2026 4:29:14 PM
Time Spent: 00:12:57
IP Address: 47.37.49.230

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Name: | Jeff huff |
| City/Town: | Hamilton |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | huffhunt@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

This closure is yet another example of fish and wildlife caving to big money land owners that want nothing more but to keep the regular public waterways to themselves. It's amazing to me that these people are allowed to harass hunters and fishermen, and nothing happens to them . Yet they're complaining enough and will get their way. Duck hunting opportunities are slowly dwindling in the bitterroot, piece by piece and FWP wants to further crowd hunters into a smaller area .
Very sad day if FWP caves to what amounts to one landowner !

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#57

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 8:28:13 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 8:31:55 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:41
IP Address: 64.31.36.211

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Bob Miller
City/Town: Hamilton
State/Province: MT
Email Address: bobnsylmiller@msn.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Without any question there should be no motorized vessels allowed in this section or for that matter from Missoula to the headwaters. The river is too small and motorized vessels put lives at risk.
Thanks

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#58

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 8:29:48 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 8:45:32 AM
Time Spent: 00:15:43
IP Address: 108.174.112.2

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | Aaron Lloyd |
| City/Town: | Victor |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | aaronlloyd90@yahoo.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Strongly disagree with this proposal. Public waterways should be kept open. If these landowners around the sloughs want a private game and fish preserve they shouldn't have bought land on the waterways where all should have the right to hunt and fish while respecting the land on which they boat through. As far as damage to the river bed goes, there is far more damage coming from the grazing of cattle and other livestock in and around the sloughs and tributaries. This is just another group of disgruntled wealthy landowners that wish to keep out the public on what they deem as their private 'domain'. These waterways need to be preserved for our future generations.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#59

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 8:38:57 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 8:47:50 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:53
IP Address: 108.174.112.2

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Matthew
City/Town: Corvallis
State/Province: MT
Email Address: Jonesmatthew505@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I don't think closing any water to the public is right. You have all the rich people moving here buying land and trying to say the own it. That's not right don't close the water for fishing and hunting to your god given rights

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#60

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:08:28 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:17:33 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:04
IP Address: 97.171.104.231

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Name: | Thomas Puchlerz |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | tgpuchlerz@aol.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Please see uploaded comments

Q3

Optional: Upload your comments

Bitterroot%20Motorized%20Use%20Comments%20Puchlerz.docx (7.8KB)

#61

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:28:21 AM
Time Spent: 00:12:00
IP Address: 63.153.109.240

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Jack C Mauer
City/Town: Victor
State/Province: MT
Email Address: banjojack@wapiti-waters.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I think its important to close the Bitterroot River to motorized use once and for all. The so called Duck Hunter provision which allows motorized use is being abused by a few . Access on the Bitterroot River are numerous with exception below Florence

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#62

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 9:39:07 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:31:06 AM
Time Spent: 00:51:58
IP Address: 157.131.66.226

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Name: | Trevor Hall |
| City/Town: | Corvallis |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | allsvns@att.net |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Thank you for your time and listening to my concerns.

Your interoffice memorandum in paragraph one states that Montana Fish and Wildlife (MFW) views motorized use of tributaries to the Bitterroot River between Woodside Crossing Fishing Access Site (FAS) and John and Nancy Owen FAS as being unsafe and potentially damaging to habitat for native fish. The language concerning safety is portrayed as fact. Potentially damaging is a term that indicates there is a lack of research - that it's "possible". The conclusion lacks specific data concerning boating accidents, reports of unsafe behavior, and the impacts of boating upon fish.

Montana, as a state, averages 6-7 boating accidents per year. Through research, I was only able to find data related to raft type accidents and over the last five years, according to my research, the Bitterroot river hasn't exceeded more than two fatal accidents per year. Again, those were rafting accidents.

According to research, trout populations on the Bitterroot are categorized as stable and/or abundant depending on specific sections of river. According to the state's data, angling pressure, catch and release stress, and environmental factors such as drought are listed as contributors to population decline. On the MFW website, there isn't any trout survey data listed for Mitchell slough. How can the organization conclusively state that use of jetboats will be damaging to fish habitat if the state isn't conducting any research on trout populations on Mitchell slough?

This rule modification is stimulated by NIMBYISM. Wealthy landowners, who have a historical track record of attempting to prohibit public use of Mitchell Slough, have pressured MFW into closing Mitchell slough. If this rule passes, I fear these same interest groups will continue their efforts to block all use of Mitchell slough, make the waterway private, and eliminate opportunity for Montanan's to enjoy this waterway. This will impact my family and friends who lawfully use this waterway. These are generations of people who have historically used the waterway, with jetboats, to hunt and fish. These are families who are getting their children outside and engaging them in productive, conservation based activities, instead of handing those same children a game controller or phone as a source of entertainment.

MFW has taken a shotgun approach to resolve an unsubstantiated issue brought forward by wealthy politicians, financiers, and others, when a more precise response is more appropriate. If there are a few bad apples using the tributary, why wasn't enforcement action taken against them alone? Did MFW entertain the idea of allowing only a certain amount of users on Mitchell Slough via a permitting process such as other states have done?

Montana has strong stream access laws that ensures outdoor enthusiasts are allowed to enjoy state waterways. Your headliner reads, "The outdoors is in us all." This rule changes that motto to: "The outdoors is only for a few of us." This rule change will drastically effect my family, other Montanans, and visitors to the valley. Please reject the rule change and thank you again for your time.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#63

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:38:14 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:43:53 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:38
IP Address: 99.196.129.67

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Name: | Eddie Olwell |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | eddie@fishseddyo.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I move that Fish and Wildlife Commission approve the request to initiate rulemaking to amend the ARM as presented by FWP.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#64

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:04:47 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:47:43 AM
Time Spent: 00:42:55
IP Address: 108.174.119.12

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Name: | Alex Hibala |
| City/Town: | Hamilton |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | mtheadwaters20@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Members of the FWP Commission,

I am writing to express my full support of the proposed rule to restrict motorized craft on Bitterroot tributaries year-round. As an angler and hunter I cherish the tenants of the stream access law in Montana however the use of motorized craft in smaller tributary systems should not be allowed. In addition to noise nuisance and the possible use of firearms closer to residential areas along these tributaries, use of motors cannot help but disturb aquatic insect populations and trout spawning habitat far beyond that of walk & wade-in access.

I hope the commission approves the proposed rule to prohibit motorized use on tributaries. If it is possible for the Commission to expand the range of this closure beyond the currently proposed limits I would be in support of that as well.

-A.H.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#65

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:58:35 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 11:11:41 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:06
IP Address: 74.244.109.55

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: **Lane Blackwood**
City/Town: **Corvallis**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **lane.blackwood@gmail.com**

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

As an outdoorsman and someone who cares about conservation throughout the bitterroot valley and the state of Montana, I think this is a positive proposal. The state of the Bitterroot River is in decline and anything we can do to help protect it, will add up for future generations. With the amount of time I spend on the Bitterroot River safety is a huge concern as well. Most people can't row the Bitterroot River, so why is it a good idea to allow people run motor/ jet boats on it. I think there shouldn't be motorized boats allow on the Bitterroot River from the the mouth of it all the way to the confluence of the east and west fork. Thank you for your time and hard work.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#66

COMPLETE

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Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 12:12:01 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 12:28:23 PM
Time Spent: 00:16:21
IP Address: 174.220.139.23

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Name: | Ken Buhler |
| City/Town: | Hamilton |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | kbuhler@ravallielectric.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

There isn't enough people that are using motorized boats on the bitterroot to be wasting your time with this change. I recommend that it be left as is. We don't need to be losing access to our river however that looks. Thanks
Ken Buhler

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#67

COMPLETE

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Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 3:04:57 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 3:13:33 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:35
IP Address: 76.21.25.206

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Name: | Larry Mindel |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | larrym@sausalitolarry.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Please read my attached document with my opinion. Thank you.

Q3

Optional: Upload your comments

Bitterroot%20River.docx (14.1KB)

#68

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 1:59:01 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 3:32:34 PM
Time Spent: 01:33:32
IP Address: 98.151.102.222

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Name: | THOMAS HYDE |
| City/Town: | STEVENSVILLE |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | tom@hydelaw.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I agree with FWP's propoed amendment to close the use of any motorized watercraft on all tributaries, and natural streams, sloughs, and channels flowing into the Bitterroot River between the Woodside Crossing Fishing Access Site and the John and Nancy Owen Fishing Access for the reasons in the attached document Prohibiting Motorized Watercraft on Bitterroot River Tributaries.

Q3

Optional: Upload your comments

Prohibiting%20Motorized%20Watercraft%20on%20Bitterroot%20River%20Tributaries.docx (18.2KB)

#69

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 4:37:02 PM
Time Spent: 07:16:16
IP Address: 69.145.40.200

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Name: | Kevin Farron |
| City/Town: | Missoula |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | kevin@mtwf.org |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

On behalf of the Montana Wildlife Federation (MWF), Montana's oldest and largest hunter and angler-based conservation group, please accept these comments in support of the proposal to initiate rulemaking to amend the ARM re: Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure.

The water bodies in question are accessible via non-motorized watercraft and/or walk and wade thanks to our state's stream access law. Until very recently, this has been sufficient for sportsmen and women. Now, however, we're seeing jet-powered outboards and long, horizontal-shaft propellers thrust motorized vehicles into reaches of our tributaries where we never imagined (or intended) motorized use would occur.

We support public access and want to see sustainable, fair-chase hunting and fishing opportunities maximized in Montana. But our natural resources must come first. With these new forms of motorized use, we are primarily concerned with the negative impacts they will have on the fragile riparian areas, stream banks, and spawning gravels and redds. There are other, valid concerns of deteriorating user experiences for other, existing recreational users too, not to mention the safety worries of allowing fast-speed watercraft to operate in such shallow and narrow bodies of water.

Trout and trout fishing in the lower Bitterroot face a plethora of issues, as seen by declining trout numbers, drought, lower flows, higher temps, and corresponding earlier and longer Hoot-Owl restrictions, etc. Many of these issues are challenging and not easily solved. However, mindfully regulated motorized use is one area of impact that we can and should control for the benefit of our trout fisheries.

We ask the Commission to adopt Alternative A to initiate rulemaking to amend the ARM to address user conflict and habitat concerns along tributaries of the Bitterroot River, though we ask that the Commission carefully consider the depth and breadth of this rulemaking proposal to ensure that the rules discussed don't end up being too narrow (or too broad). For example, without clearly defining the mainstem of the Bitterroot, the mentioned "sloughs and channels" may inadvertently include unintended water bodies in this regulation. Conversely, limiting this rulemaking to just the area between the Woodside Crossing Fishing Access Site and the John and Nancy Owen Fishing Access Site may fail to include other tributaries to the Bitterroot that should also be considered.

Thank you for the considerations and the opportunity to comment.

-Kevin Farron, Conservation Director, Montana Wildlife Federation

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#70

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:49:25 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 4:48:43 PM
Time Spent: 05:59:17
IP Address: 38.141.45.15

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | Roy Fenster |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | royfenster@hotmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Commissioners,

I would like to make a public comment in support of the proposed Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure. I live and work near a tributary to the Bitterroot River, and have a great appreciation for the habitat that tributaries provide for fish, particularly sensitive and critical spawning habitat.

Tributaries to the Bitterroot River typically have very different characteristics from the main stem of the river, and are simply not waterways suitable for motorized craft. Depths of six inches or less are common in reaches where spawning habitat exists. Tributaries are typically much narrower than the main stem of the river, and wakes from motorized craft are often cast directly into the bank from only a few feet away. All of this causes completely unnecessary erosion and disruption to already sensitive areas.

The dates when a motorized boat can currently be operated on the Bitterroot River directly overlap with brown trout and whitefish spawning seasons. The immediate destruction of newly laid fish eggs, long-term damage to gravel bed spawning habitat for all trout species, and bank erosion from wakes by motorized watercraft when operated in shallow, narrow tributaries is unacceptable.

During the instances where I have witnessed motorized watercraft attempt to operate on a tributary, I have observed boats grounding out in shallow riffles, wash from propulsion of both jet and propeller craft disturbing spawning areas and gravel beds, and wakes from boats being operated at higher speed being cast directly into the banks. I have also seen motorized boats sliding around tight corners in narrow channels in what I consider to be a reckless manner.

Current regulations support the short-term sporadic recreation of a few disrespectful individuals to use motorized watercraft in sensitive habitats, resulting in long-term habitat damage. Resource-based regulations, such as no motorized watercraft allowed in tributaries, are necessary to prevent destruction of natural resources by irresponsible users. Most sportsmen with a true appreciation for the outdoors can self-regulate to protect natural resources, but unfortunately not all can. When the irresponsible recreational use of a few individuals can have such a large impact on habitat and therefore the general public, that is when regulation needs to change. Please support our Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks in their proposal to close tributaries of the Bitterroot River for motorized watercraft use year-round.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#71

COMPLETE

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Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 4:51:48 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 4:56:25 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:37
IP Address: 104.28.124.136

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Ken Siebel
City/Town: Stevensville
State/Province: MT
Email Address: kensiebel@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I support the proposed Bitterroot River motorized use closure. Tributaries to the Bitterroot River provide habitat that is critical for the fishery resource and I support protecting that resource. Motorized boats have extensive negative impacts on sensitive spawning areas. Please support the FWP proposal to close tributaries of the Bitterroot River for motorized watercraft use year round.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#72

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 5:01:51 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 5:05:30 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:39
IP Address: 38.141.45.15

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Judy Siebel
City/Town: Stevensville
State/Province: MT
Email Address: judysiebel@me.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Please support closing tributaries to the Bitterroot River to motorized use. Tributaries to the Bitterroot River provide habitat, such as spawning areas, that are critical for the fishery and I support protecting that resource. Please support the FWP proposal to close tributaries of the Bitterroot River to motorboats year-round.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#73

COMPLETE

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Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 5:52:15 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 5:59:01 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:46
IP Address: 146.75.234.49

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Name: | Joy Pettijohn |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | joy.pettijohn@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Motorized boats with inboard or outboard engines have very little effect on the trout environment. Disabling hunter access would be the start of private land owners land locking their own "hunting preserves" off for themselves. This is the reason people complain about not enough public land in Montana. While there is public land, greedy land owners and hunt clubs make it unreasonably hard to get into. Would be a shame to see the bitterroot turn into one of those rivers.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#74

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 4:55:20 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 7:06:37 PM
Time Spent: 02:11:17
IP Address: 38.141.45.15

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Name: | Allison Devlin |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | devlin.allison@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Dear FWP Commission,

I applaud FWP for presenting this rule change for the closure to motorized watercraft use along the tributaries, channels, sloughs of the mainstem of the Bitterroot River. We the public entrust FWP to protect and ensure responsible recreation of Montana's beautiful lands and waters.

The majority of the recreating public are passionate stewards of our natural resources. I am grateful that, by prioritizing consistent concerns for public safety and protection of habitat and wildlife, FWP is guarding against the selfish actions of a reckless few.

Thank you, again, on behalf of our community of stakeholders (residents, recreationists, and the voiceless wildlife), for your continued protection of our resources and public enjoyment.

Sincerely,
Allison Devlin

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#75

COMPLETE

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Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 8:04:10 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:30
IP Address: 108.174.122.219

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Marcus Grossi
City/Town: Corvallis
State/Province: MT
Email Address: marcgross87.mg@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I respectfully oppose the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission's proposal to close tributaries of the Bitterroot River to motorized use year-round.

My family and I regularly use small motorized boats to access these tributaries for fishing and hunting, and these trips are some of the most meaningful time I spend with my kids. Being able to take them safely by boat allows us to reach quieter stretches of river, teach them respect for wildlife and habitat, and pass down Montana's outdoor traditions. A year-round closure would take away one of the few practical ways for families like mine to enjoy these waters together, especially when covering longer distances or navigating currents that aren't safe or realistic for children in non-motorized craft.

I support protecting fish habitat and public safety, but a permanent, year-round closure is too broad. There is no clear, site-specific evidence showing that responsible motorized use is causing serious harm in these tributaries. More targeted options—like seasonal restrictions during spawning, no-wake zones, or better enforcement—would address concerns without eliminating access.

Motorized boats also matter for families, older residents, and people with mobility limitations. A full closure would exclude many responsible users and push more people into fewer access points elsewhere.

Montana's rivers are public resources, and decisions should reflect the broader public interest—not just complaints from nearby landowners. A balanced approach with real public input would better serve both conservation and community needs.

For these reasons, I urge the Commission to deny the current proposal and instead pursue a more limited, data-driven solution that protects habitat while preserving reasonable motorized access.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#76

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 11:06:59 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 11:09:48 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:49
IP Address: 74.244.108.33

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Name: | Mark Liedtka |
| City/Town: | Stevensville |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | mliedtka@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am against the proposed changes that FWP is recommending for the motorized use of the Bitterroot River. This proposal only benefits a few landowners at the sacrifice of the public sportsman and will limit access to the lower section of the Mitchell branch of the Bitterroot River. The language is vague and lacks specific details

Currently, tributaries and creeks are closed to motorized use year-round. Why is this language included in the proposed changes? For instance, there are numerous sloughs or channels/branches of the main river. Does this apply to all of them or is this ruling specifically targeting the Mitchell branch of the Bitterroot River?

The river changes year by year and channels/branches are constantly being formed. How is the general public going to know what is opened and closed in the future if this proposal is passed?

Just to be clear, the Mitchell branch of the Bitterroot River is not a tributary. It is one of the main branches of the Bitterroot River.

In this proposal, FWP states their view that motorized use is unsafe and potentially damaging to habitat.

Where is the evidence or how has it been determined to be unsafe? Are there documented accidents that include motorized watercraft?

Current regulations limit motorized watercraft to 20 Hp. A jon boat with 20 hp jet doesn't go faster than approximately 15 mph loaded with 2 hunters and duck decoys going upstream. How does FWP consider this to be unsafe?

FWP also states that current practices are potentially damaging to the habitat. How has this been determined? A jetboat operates on the top 2 inches of the water column. Therefore, there is minimal disturbance and does not damage or disturb the stream bed. In my opinion, wading fishermen walking on the streambed cause more damage than a jetboat. If motorized use is banned, we will be walking up the channel making contact with the streambed with every footstep. How is that going to be less damaging to native fish? I have counted over 9 places that have vehicle crossings on the Mitchell Channel between Stevensville and Bell Crossing. Is that not damaging to fish habitat?

There is also constant dredging on the channel and excavation modifications to the streambank by the landowners causing silting and debris. Is this not a concern?

Historically, jet boat usage on Mitchell branch has only occurred in the lower section where it returns to the main Bitterroot River at Stevensville.

The section I access is up from the main river 1 ½ miles, beyond that, there are man made waterfalls and fences obstructing the ability to go any further. The Mitchell branch forks twice and gets smaller in regards to waterflow and I would support restrictions placed on that section.

I would like to propose you keep the first 1 ½ miles of the Mitchell branch of the Bitterroot River open to motorized watercraft under the same regulations as the main Bitterroot River. This section of the river has the waterflow, depth, and width to support safe motorized use without damage to the streambed. This section has excellent waterfowl hunting and should be accessed by all, including hunters with physical limitations.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion as a user of the Bitterroot River.

Mark Liedtka

Q3

Optional: Upload your comments

FWP%20Bitterroot%20proposals%20response.docx (15.3KB)

#77

COMPLETE

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Last Modified: Monday, January 26, 2026 11:19:50 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:37
IP Address: 74.244.108.33

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Julia Liedtka
City/Town: Stevensville
State/Province: MT
Email Address: jdliedtka@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am against the proposed changes to the Bitterroot River motorized use access. The language is unclear about what will be included. If this proposal is approved, it will limit the access to many for the benefit of a handful of landowners. I also believe that this change may set precedent and have repercussions throughout the state.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#78

COMPLETE

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Started: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 6:25:13 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 6:27:47 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:34
IP Address: 99.17.231.44

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Name: | Tim Matson |
| City/Town: | Napa |
| State/Province: | CA |
| Email Address: | matson19@yahoo.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

These public water ways should be accessible to all. With no closures. Do not turn Montana into California

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#79

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 12:23:40 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 9:21:49 AM
Time Spent: 20:58:09
IP Address: 146.75.203.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Name: | Matt Gordon |
| City/Town: | Hamilton |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | mwginmt@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I support this closure and related ARM amendment.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#80

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 9:18:56 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 9:21:54 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:57
IP Address: 149.40.62.77

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Steve Davis
City/Town: Hamilton
State/Province: MT
Email Address: sapphire@bitterrootcasters.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I oppose motorized watercraft on the Bitterroot River. They disturb fish habitat and spawning beds.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#81

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 9:06:27 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 9:50:37 AM
Time Spent: 00:44:09
IP Address: 47.45.219.150

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Noelle Coley
City/Town: Missoula
State/Province: MT
Email Address: noelle@blackfootriver.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Tributaries and sloughs along the Bitterroot River are critical fish habitat, serving as spawning areas, nursery waters for juvenile trout, and essential refuge during periods of high or low flow. The mid-river reaches of the Bitterroot are where we see most of the river's healthy, large brown trout, and these fish rely heavily on connected tributaries, side channels and sloughs during the fall into winter months when they move to spawn. Over the past two years, prolonged low water conditions and elevated summer water temperatures have already placed significant stress on the trout population, shrinking available habitat and increasing mortality, particularly for eggs, fry, and juvenile fish. These shallow, slow-moving waters are especially vulnerable, and disturbance from motorized use can compound these impacts by scouring gravel, damaging or crushing redds, and suspending fine sediments that reduce oxygen flow to developing eggs, while repeated traffic accelerates bank erosion and displaces juvenile fish from critical cover. Having managed Blackfoot River Outfitters for the past 6 years and working directly with a Missoula outfitter of 30 years, I have seen firsthand how these impacts translate into reduced recruitment and noticeable declines in trout populations over time. For these reasons, I support the closure of all motorized use in tributaries and sloughs, and particularly in Mitchell Slough, which is one of the Bitterroot's most important spawning and rearing corridors. There is growing concern that Mitchell Slough, based on the 2008 Montana Supreme Court ruling, has been classified as a side channel, which is where much of the concern originates. In my opinion, the Administrative Rules of Montana should explicitly reference Mitchell Slough to ensure it receives the protections necessary to sustain a healthy trout population. At the same time, it is vital that these waters remain open to the public under Montana's Stream Access Law, ensuring continued access for people who love, care for, and responsibly enjoy them for activities such as fishing and duck hunting while protecting the long-term health of the resource itself.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#82

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 10:47:11 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 11:04:25 AM
Time Spent: 00:17:13
IP Address: 69.144.222.10

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Dan Kimzey
City/Town: Hamilton
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Email Address: dankimzey1@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Dear FWP Commission - I fully support the proposed rule change preventing motorized use on Bitterroot River tributaries between Woodside and Stevensville. My only concern is that this rule could be interpreted to leave the many other tributaries/natural streams/sloughs/channels outside of the Woodside to Stevensville stretch open to motorized use.

I would like to see the proposed rule amended from (2) All tributaries, and natural streams, sloughs, and channels flowing into the Bitterroot River between the Woodside Crossing Fishing Access Site and the John and Nancy Owen Fishing Access Site are closed to the use of any motorized watercraft to

"(2) All tributaries, and natural streams, sloughs, and channels flowing into the Bitterroot River are closed to the use of any motorized watercraft."

Further, I would like the commission to consider a change for subsection 1 as well, from the current (1) Bitterroot River is closed to use of any motorized watercraft except any motorized watercraft powered by 20 horsepower or less are permitted from October 1 through January 31 from the headwaters of the Bitterroot River to the confluence with the Clark Fork River to "(1) Bitterroot River is closed to use of any motorized watercraft from the headwaters of the Bitterroot River to the confluence with the Clark Fork River".

These change reflect clarity and a common sense approach to this beloved, heavily-used resource, which sees so much recreational pressure that motorized use - even limited to October to January - has a massive negative impact that is absolutely unnecessary as there are many other more suitable streams and lakes open to such use.

Thank you for the work you do, and for your consideration of this matter.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#83

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 11:13:25 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 11:17:57 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:32
IP Address: 69.144.149.116

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Kevin Shulund
City/Town: Lolo
State/Province: MT
Email Address: kkshulund@msn.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Strongly oppose the use of motorized boats on the tributaries of the Bitterroot. These tributaries are too important to spawning fish to have jet boats running over them.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#84

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 26, 2026 11:12:52 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 12:49:29 PM
Time Spent: Over a day
IP Address: 143.105.111.104

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Ben Lamb
City/Town: Helena
State/Province: MT
Email Address: b.lamb@montconservationsociety.org

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

On behalf of the Montana Conservation Society, please accept these comments on the proposed changes to MAR 12.11.610 – Bitterroot River.

We support the proposed rule to close tributaries, natural streams and channels flowing into the Bitterroot River between the Woodside Crossing FAS and the John & Nancy Owen FAS to the use of motorized watercraft. We believe that this change will improve not only rearing habitat for trout, but also create a better recreational experience for anglers, floaters and hunters utilizing those areas. Maintaining motorized recreation on the main channel also helps ensure that all recreationists have opportunities while also protecting the natural habitats and quiet recreation that Montanans appreciate. Thank you for taking the time to look into this effort, and offering a sensible adjustment to help both wildlife and quiet recreation.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#85

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 1:15:36 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 1:16:48 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:12
IP Address: 192.100.54.3

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Name: | CLAYTON ELLIOTT |
| City/Town: | BUTTE |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | clayton.umich@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written public comment on this matter. Please find those comments from Montana Trout Unlimited attached.

Q3

Optional: Upload your comments

2026-1-22%20MTU_FWCommBRMotorizedLetter_FNL.pdf (133.8KB)

#86

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 11:57:30 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 1:34:29 PM
Time Spent: 01:36:58
IP Address: 98.127.123.118

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Micah Fields
City/Town: Helena
State/Province: MT
Email Address: micahbfields@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

On behalf of the Montana Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers and our roughly 2,500 dues-paying members, please consider supporting the proposal to initiate rulemaking to amend the ARM in closing the Bitterroot River's tributaries to motorized use between Woodside Crossing FAS and John and Nancy Owen FAS. The Bitterroot River's tributaries contain crucial spawning habitat for trout species integral to a healthy fishery and sizable tourism and recreation industry. Jet-boating—particularly in the shallow water zones of tributaries—disrupts viable spawning grounds and has a direct impact on recruitment of native trout populations. Additionally, the increase in jet boat recreation within the confines of tributaries adversely affects the experience for an overwhelming majority of users who frequent the Bitterroot River to wade-fish or float. While maintaining public access to these tributaries should be upheld under Montana's stream access law, this proposal to initiate rulemaking to amend the ARM is a step toward further protecting the fishery and reducing impact by restricting use to wading or operating vessels under human power. In the best interest of the health and future of Montana's native fish and the Bitterroot River system, we urge you to support this proposal.

Sincerely,

Micah Fields, Helena Board Member (volunteer)
The Montana Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#87

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 4:13:45 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 4:37:03 PM
Time Spent: 00:23:17
IP Address: 66.62.124.74

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Michael Howell
City/Town: Hamilton
State/Province: MT
Email Address: bitterrootriverprotection@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

January 23, 2026

RE: Administrative Rules of Montana 12.11.610 (2) Bitterroot River

To FWP Commission:

The Bitterroot River Protection Association would like to make the following recommendation regarding the changes proposed by Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks to Administrative Rules of Montana 12.11.610 (2) Bitterroot River.

The proposed rule reads as follows:

All tributaries, and natural streams, sloughs, and channels flowing into the Bitterroot River between the Woodside Crossing Fishing Access Site and the John and Nancy Owen Fishing Access Site are closed to the use of any motorized watercraft.

While we are in agreement with the intentions of the proposed rule, that is protecting the environmental integrity and health of the fisheries, we believe the wording could be improved in a way that adds clarity and enforceability to the new rule. As it reads now it is a bit vague in that it closes "channels flowing into the Bitterroot River" to the use of any motorized watercraft.

The Bitterroot River is a braided river meaning that in places it has multiple channels. If one comes to a fork in the river how is one to determine which one is flowing into the other, that is which one is open and which one is closed? If the aim is to close shallow 'side-channels' but leave the 'mainstem' open, it would be a judgement call that might be difficult to make on any given year.

This might be addressed by designating a mainstem and placing signage at the mouth of the closed channels. The signage could be changed if the river should shift from running mainly in one channel to the other as it does historically.

Our suggested changes would be:

All tributaries, and natural streams, sloughs, and side-channels flowing into the mainstem of the Bitterroot River between the Woodside Crossing Fishing Access Site and the John and Nancy Owen Fishing Access Site are closed to the use of any motorized watercraft.

Montana DEQ has adopted the Bitterroot River Nutrient Protection Plan which identifies the mainstem between Corvallis and Stevensville.

Thanks for considering our comments.

Michael Howell, Executive Director
Bitterroot River Protection Association
(406)239-4838.

Q3

Optional: Upload your comments

FWP%20Commission%20BR%20Motorized%20Use%20comment.docx (169.3KB)

#88

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 8:16:11 PM
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Time Spent: 00:05:04
IP Address: 108.174.113.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Name: | Brett Landwehr |
| City/Town: | Jordan |
| State/Province: | MT |
| Email Address: | landwehroutfitters@gmail.com |

Q2

Please comment on Rulemaking - Bitterroot River Motorized Use Closure

I am a guide in eastern Mt that hunts the bitterroot personally for myself occasionally! I am totally against taking away the rights to run a 20 hp moter in side channels on the Bitterroot river ! Mostly duck hunters will be stripped of there rights to enjoy the out doors ! It needs to remain the same as it's always been ! Thank you
Brett Lanwehr ...Landwehr Outfitters

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments
