

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 18, 2026 12:46:08 PM
Last Modified: Friday, September 18, 2026 12:46:31 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:22
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 Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

On behalf of the Montana Wildlife Federation (MWF), who for 90 years has worked to protect Montana's fish and wildlife, public lands, clean waters, and fair-chase hunting and fishing heritage, please accept these comments regarding the proposed Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure.

First, we appreciate the Department's willingness to hear and react to public comment regarding the need to narrow the original geographic scope of the proposal, as reflected in Alternative B. However we again want to flag that the stated justifications for this closure may also be present to other, similar tributaries of the Bitterroot. If this is a safety and/or resource issue here at Mitchell Slough, we would expect it to be a safety and/or resource issue on other, similar stretches of the river as well. This deserves further consideration and discussion.

Second, we continue to be supportive of the stated goal of this proposal, as we agree that motorized use is seemingly inappropriate on the body of water in question. However, the stated justifications for these changes need clarity, as it remains unclear if the problem is resource, safety, or social in nature, or some combination. When it comes to restricted public access and enjoyment of our public waterways, compelling and transparent justifications are needed.

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

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, September 21, 2026 10:06:16 AM
Last Modified: Monday, September 21, 2026 10:50:51 AM
Time Spent: 00:44:35
IP Address: 66.62.121.96

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name:	Tom Hyde
City/Town:	Stevensville
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	tom@hydelaw.com

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

The Mitchell runs through our property and near our residence. I apploud and agree with the numerous comments in support of closing the Mitchell to motorixed watercraft.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 22, 2026 7:38:56 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 22, 2026 8:34:45 AM
Time Spent: 00:55:49
IP Address: 97.171.96.99

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

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

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

See attached file.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 22, 2026 9:27:55 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 22, 2026 10:23:19 AM
Time Spent: 00:55:23
IP Address: 15.181.16.168

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

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

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

My wife and I have lived on the banks of the Mitchell for 30+ years. The Mitchell is a narrow,shallow and winding stream it provides excellent habitat for trout and other aquatic species. The use of motorized watercraft is degrading the slough's ecosystem and its character as a low-impact recreational experience. The use of motorized boats hurts the habitat and is incompatible with all other types of recreational activities. I strongly urge you to stop the use of motorized boats on the mitchell

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 22, 2026 11:32:13 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 22, 2026 12:05:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:33:28
IP Address: 69.144.145.42

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name:	Will Israel
City/Town:	Helena
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	director@mogamt.org

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission
c/o Commission Liaison Jesse May
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

September 22, 2026

RE: Public Comment - Final Adoption, Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure October 14, 2026 Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

Dear Commissioners:

The Montana Outfitters and Guides Association (MOGA) submits the following comment in support of the final adoption of the year-round motorized watercraft closure on the Mitchell Slough channel of the Bitterroot River and its connected tributaries.

SUPPORT FOR FINAL ADOPTION

Mitchell Slough and its tributaries provide important habitat values that benefit the broader Bitterroot fishery. A year-round prohibition on motorized watercraft in these channels is a reasonable and targeted conservation measure. The Department appropriately narrowed the geographic scope of this closure in response to public comment requesting clearer boundaries, and the final rule reflects that responsiveness. MOGA supports adoption of ARM 12.11.610 as proposed.

We note that the rule preserves non-motorized access for waterfowl hunting and other uses on the main and side channels. That is the appropriate balance. Protecting sensitive channel habitat while maintaining fair access for hunters and anglers using non-motorized means reflects exactly the kind of targeted management MOGA supports.

MOGA encourages the Commission to adopt this closure as presented. We appreciate the Department's careful work in refining the rule language and its responsiveness to public input throughout this process.

Respectfully submitted,

Will Israel
Executive Director
Montana Outfitters and Guides Association
2021 11th Ave, Ste. 12, Helena, MT 59601
(406) 449-3578 office
director@mogamt.org

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 22, 2026 4:40:56 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 22, 2026 6:49:03 PM
Time Spent: 02:08:07
IP Address: 159.111.28.180

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

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

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

Please carefully consider the impacts of motorized watercraft on this small section of the river

Q3

Optional: Upload your comments

BRTU Mitchell Slough Motorized Use Comments.pdf (107.1KB)

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, September 23, 2026 8:53:16 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, September 23, 2026 8:55:50 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:33
IP Address: 140.248.20.214

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

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

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

Please go with Alternative A and no action on the case with the bitterroot river and Micheal's slough. This access is crucial for hunters and anglers, as with time there just becomes less and less possibly for access. Thank you

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, September 23, 2026 11:21:17 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, September 23, 2026 11:29:19 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:01
IP Address: 99.104.176.235

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name:	Christine Barber
City/Town:	Missoula
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	Christinebarber428@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

No action, keep open.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#9

COMPLETE

POOR QUALITY

Flagged for the following:

⚠gibberish

Collector:

Started:

Last Modified:

Time Spent:

IP Address:

Web Link 1 (Web Link)

Wednesday, September 23, 2026 4:35:06 PM

Wednesday, September 23, 2026 4:37:20 PM

00:02:14

35.150.71.159

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name:

City/Town:

State/Province:

Email Address:

Clayton Elliott

Butte

MT

clayton@basinstrategies.com

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

Please see attached for written comments submitted on behalf of Montana Trout Unlimited.

Q3

Optional: Upload your comments

2026-09-22_MitchellCommissionMTUComments FNL.pdf (144.6KB)

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, September 24, 2026 10:47:40 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 24, 2026 10:50:33 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:52
IP Address: 66.62.113.154

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Roy Fenster
City/Town: Stevensville
State/Province: MT

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

I fully support closure of all tributaries to the Bitterroot River to all motorized watercraft year-round.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#11

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, September 24, 2026 1:27:00 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 24, 2026 1:30:47 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:47
IP Address: 174.215.16.220

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

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

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

I call for no action. What evidence is available to show stream bed damage is occurring. The answer is none there have been no studies done here. Being in motorboats is safer. I've been hypothermic here wading never one in the boat. Have actual evidence before you start passing new laws.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, September 24, 2026 6:01:18 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 24, 2026 6:08:56 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:37
IP Address: 66.62.113.154

Page 1

Q1

Contact information

Name: Allison Devlin
State/Province: MT

Q2

Please comment on Decision on Final Adoption - Bitterroot River Motorized Watercraft Closure

Dear FWP Commissioners,

Thank you for putting forward the proposed MAR Notice No. 2026-80.1 year-round closure to motorized watercraft of Bitterroot River tributaries including the Mitchell Slough. I applaud the Commission for their support and duty to protect members of the public from reckless abusers of access, especially given concerns for safety in such narrow, twisty waterways. I also appreciate the comments from the Commission that, should this be adopted, the rules are effective immediately. Thank you for protecting our resources and recreational responsibility in our beautiful state.

Sincerely,
Allison Devlin

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Optional: Upload your comments
