



Flathead National Forest

Media Release

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Contact: Denise Germann
(406) 758-5252
(406) 249-1714 cell

New River Regulations on North and Middle Forks of Flathead River

The Hungry Horse-Glacier View and Spotted Bear Ranger Districts of the Flathead National Forest are instituting new river regulations on the North and Middle Forks of the Flathead River, sections of the congressionally designated Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The new regulations are being implemented to address the growing sanitation issues along the river, as well as minimize fire scars and accumulating trash in fire rings. In addition, regulations were revised on stay limits, overnight use and campfire use at several developed river access sites.

The new resource protection regulations are specific for each fork of the Flathead River. In general, the regulations establish mandatory solid human waste containment along the river for overnight floater or river corridor users on a multi-day float or car camping where toilet facilities are not available. Fire pans or blankets will also be mandatory for floaters in the wilderness portion of the Middle Fork Flathead River to eliminate fire ring scars.

Human waste containment and use of fire pans or blankets **remains recommended** for floaters on the South Fork of the Flathead River.

Solid human waste self containment means using a washable, leak-proof, reusable toilet system or a disposal biodegradable bag toilet system that is approved for landfill disposal. The bags must be contained within a leak or spill proof container until they are properly disposed of. Either system

allows for the carry-out and disposal of solid human body waste in a responsible and lawful manner. The system must be adequate for the size of the group and length of trip. Dumping solid human waste on National Forest System lands or into a vault toilet is prohibited.

The self-contained toilet or disposable land-fill friendly bag systems are available at several local outdoor retail stores and on the internet. In addition, some river outfitter-guide companies are renting the toilet systems as an added service.

Hungry Horse – Glacier View Recreation Specialist Paula Peterson said, “We have received numerous complaints from the public regarding sanitation practices along the river. The North and Middle Fork Corridors of the Flathead River are such special places and we hope these new regulations, which are “Leave No Trace” practices, will help in maintaining the character of the river corridor and provide for an enjoyable experience for all.” Peterson continued to say that the public served by the river outfitter and guides have been using these toilet systems for more than ten years.

The new regulations will be posted at river access sites and is available by visiting any office of the Flathead National Forest Office or www.fs.fed.us/r1/Flathead. An updated and revised 3 Forks of the Flathead River Floating Guide will also include the new regulations, and accurate river locations and river flow information. It will be available for sale through the Glacier Association and available at all offices of the Flathead National Forest in the near future.

Please contact the Hungry Horse-Glacier View Ranger District at (406) 387-3800 or Spotted Bear Ranger District at (406) 758-5396 for more information.

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