



## Flathead National Forest

## Media Release

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### **River Enthusiasts Reminded to be Prepared**

### **Three Forks of the Flathead River Float Guide Available**

As summer begins, all river enthusiasts are reminded to be prepared, wear required life jackets, know your abilities, have the proper safety gear on board and know how to use the gear, and treat the river with respect. Those planning to float the three forks of the Flathead River are encouraged to obtain an updated Forest Service publication, Three Forks of the Flathead Float Guide, for information on new river regulations, accurate river locations and river flow information, and historical interpretive information of the area. The waterproof guide is an excellent resource for anyone recreating on the Flathead River and is available for sale through the Glacier Association and is available at any Flathead National Forest Office

The Flathead River System has some outstanding qualities, including 219 miles of the river that are congressionally designated as a Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The North Fork, Middle Fork and South Fork sections of the Flathead River have different origins and personalities, and each river offers opportunities for a variety of recreational opportunities.

Last year new river regulations were implemented on the North and Middle Forks of the Flathead River by the Flathead National Forest. The new regulations were 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 are 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.

The new regulations are posted at river access sites and are available by visiting any office of the Flathead National Forest Office or [www.fs.fed.us/r1/Flathead](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/Flathead). For more information about recreating on the Flathead River, contact the Hungry Horse-Glacier View Ranger District at (406) 387-3800 or the Spotted Bear Ranger District at (406) 758-5376.

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