

Glenda Wiles

From: Robin <robincham@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 6, 2015 10:19 AM
To: Glenda Wiles; Russell Parks
Subject: Bitterroot Floodplain amendments - comment

The Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana, FOAM, welcomes this opportunity to comment on the possibility of amending the Bitterroot Floodplain regulation.

We are a business association with some 750 outfitter and guide members, 170+ members of which operate small businesses in the Bitterroot / Missoula area that rely on the quality recreation opportunities the Bitterroot river provides.

We urge the Ravalli County Commissioners to carefully consider any amendments to the current B'root Floodplain regulations.

Why?

Simply put, the B'root river floodplain is a very dynamic system of stream, streambanks along the flood fringe, and multiple topographic and geographic features within the floodplain itself. The frequent annual changes in the stream braids resulting from runoff should discourage the commissioners from allowing any development within the flood fringe.

Considering development within the changeable and unstable flood fringe is hopeful at best and irresponsible at worst. We can imagine multiple scenarios where structures, fencing, or foundations could be flooded, shifted, or destroyed after any one of several braids moves from place to place within the flood fringe or floodway.

Thinking a development plan of any kind can be drawn within such flood areas is like using a snake as a straightedge - nearly impossible, given the geomorphological adjustments typical of a stream like the Bitterroot. Neat lines on a plat do not translate well onto actual flood fringes.

Worse, should development be allowed and our reasonable predictions occur, the Commission may well be requested to allow rip-rap construction to "protect" the unwise development, resulting in channelized sections of the rivers that only encourage downstream flooding and more rapid destabilization of the flood plain.

Please reject regulation amendments allowing development of any kind within the B'root flood fringe.

Thank you for your consideration.

Robin Cunningham
Executive Director
FOAM