



Superintendent  
Attention: Quartz Lake EA  
P.O. Box 128  
Glacier National Park  
West Glacier, MT 59936.

June 29, 2009

### **Proposed Changes to Fishing Regulations**

Dear Superintendent:

The Flathead Audubon Society (FAS) is a local, active group of people interested in sound stewardship and management of natural resources. Many of our members are regular users of Glacier National Park.

We have reviewed the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Large-Scale Removal of Lake Trout on Quartz Lake and submit the following comments.

FAS cannot support the Preferred Alternative as described in the EA for the reasons described below. FAS generally supports the preservation and management of native species but the EA does not adequately analyze and disclose the impacts to many points of concern. Without an adequate analysis and disclosure, it is not possible to judge whether the impacts to the wilderness and wildlife resources are an acceptable trade-off for the Proposed Alternative.

Both bald eagles and common loons are wildlife species of concern to FAS and neither species has any mitigation measures specified in the Preferred Alternative although both species are known to be susceptible to human and motorized activities. Specific mitigation measures need to be spelled out with details on when and where they are to be applied and who is responsible for carrying them out.

The issue of possibly building a boat house is glossed over without adequately analyzing the effects. Will a separate EA be required? If not, then who will decide whether to build a boathouse, and what criteria will be used?

Does this EA cover just a trial effort to determine if the proposed project can be successful to control lake trout or does it also include a continuing similar project for many years to come? It is not clear from the EA and the long-term effects to the wilderness character are understated if this is indeed a long-term project.

The analysis of the fish barrier construction/reconstruction is very skimpy. The multiple helicopter trips, source of materials, length and timing of construction activities, and sediment production from construction are either not mentioned at all or quickly passed over without thorough analysis. This whole aspect of the proposed project is barely mentioned in the description of the Proposed Action on pages 22-25 and no mitigation measures are described for this portion of the proposed project. An improved analysis of all aspects of this portion of the proposed project is needed to allow an informed decision.

The EA is largely devoted to discussing the use of a motorboat on the lake but appears to inadequately address both short-term and long-term effects to the wilderness character of the area and users of the area. The adverse impacts to the wilderness characters appear to be largely justified because they are “administrative” use as opposed to non-Park Service generated impacts.

FAS requests that a revised EA be prepared that addresses the points of concern discussed in our comments.

Thank you for your consideration.

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