



MONTANA FLYFISHING CONNECTION

South Fork of the Flathead River float trips in the Bob Marshall Wilderness

“Pre – booking letter”

Preface:

If you are considering a flyfishing trip into the Bob Marshall Wilderness I have a few thoughts for you to read, consider and understand before you move forward. A float trip through the Bob Marshall is one of the most spectacular trips that you could experience, possibly in the world and certainly the Lower 48 states. But there are a few things that you need to consider to make sure this trip is right for you.

History:

The Bob Marshall was the very first area designated as Wilderness after the 1964 Wilderness Act was passed by Congress. The “Flagship” of our nation’s Wilderness areas, the Bob was selected because of its remote and isolated nature. The South Fork of the Flathead flows through the very center of it.

Restrictions:

The designation of this land as “wilderness” restricts the actions of those who recreate within the boundaries. First and foremost, no motors of any kind are allowed and no wheels. So as far as transportation is concerned, even mountain bikes are banned from entering the wilderness. Everyone that enters must do so on foot, or with the assistance of horses and mules.

Although there are cases of backcountry airstrips that were grandfathered in (mostly in Idaho) there are no active airstrips in the Bob Marshall wilderness. The closest airstrip actually inside wilderness boundaries is in the nearby Great Bear Wilderness (part of the contiguous Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex) along the Middle Fork of the Flathead. **Flying into the Bob is not an option.**

Because of this, our operations are heavily dependent on the use of livestock. We ride in on horses, and all of the camp, food, and boats, etc. are brought in by the mules.

Trip Overview:

We enter the wilderness from several different trailheads, and run several different itineraries, but the bottom line is that we must travel between 25 – 30 miles to get to the point on the river that we can assemble boats and float.

**** From an outfitting perspective, every decision that we make is guided by *making the trip as safe, easy and luxurious as possible, and to maximize the fly fishing experience.* **However, from your perspective, you should be looking at this trip as *a wilderness flyfishing adventure with horseback riding, hiking and with an understanding that you will be entering true wilderness and that you will hopefully have experiences that are different from your life at home, and some of them may be difficult.*** (and oh yeah...the fishing happens to be spectacular!) ****

Although all of us are going into the South Fork first and foremost for the fish, there is a temptation to simply look at the horse riding portion of the trip as a means to an end. The reality is that they play a major role in the trip and we want you to enjoy that part as much as possible, too.

So, it is important to remember that over the course of 7 days you will be traveling roughly 70 miles by horse, foot and boat and you will have completely transected the Bob Marshall Wilderness from south to north.

It is our hope that at the end of those 7 days you will be pretty well worn out from 7 days in the wilderness and from catching hundreds of trout.

All that said; we are guided by this Mission statement:

“We are dedicated to bringing together the best mules, horses and tack; the most professional packers, wranglers and fly fishing guides; the finest and most customized equipment; and the most backcountry-river-trip-knowhow that has ever been assembled on the South Fork”

The results of these efforts... are the most ambitious, adventurous, safest and most fun flyfishing-focused trips into the Bob Marshall as possible.

If this sounds like your kind of trip, then we would love to share it with you.

Joe Sowerby

Owner/ Outfitter

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