

June 16, 2017

Ms. Megan Gibson
Gallatin County Planner
311 W. Main St. # 108
Bozeman, MT 59715

Dear Ms. Gibson,

The Madison River Foundation in Ennis, Montana is opposed to the proposal to allow sea planes to operate out of Hebgen Lake. Our major concern is the high potential for the spread of aquatic invasive species which would affect the natural balance as well as the economics of the area.

Invasive species cause a loss in biodiversity of native plants and animals because they multiply rapidly and take over. With the recent discovery of zebra mussels in Montana lakes, we cannot afford the risk of the spread of these mussels or any other invasive species into Hebgen Lake. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is working diligently to prevent the spread of invasives on the ground with boat inspections, hot water cleaning stations and signage at fishing access sites. Their *Clean, Drain & Dry* campaign will not work for sea planes. They will be unable to enforce sea plane inspections at this point in time.

There are other concerns associated with sea planes as well. The potential for an ecological disaster associated with petroleum is one. Not only will there be more truck traffic to supply fuel for sea planes, but the planes themselves could have a spill or crash which would release gallons of fuel into the water. Cleaning up petroleum is difficult in any ecosystem but would be even harder in Hebgen Lake where access is limited.

Hebgen Lake is part of the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem, a place like none other in the world. The wildlife here are especially sensitive to noise, light and other impacts of man. We must not allow sea planes in this delicate area for the benefit of our moose, bear, bison, trout, birds... the list goes on and on.

The Madison River Foundation encourages you to disallow sea planes on Hebgen Lake. Our unique ecosystem demands protection.

Sincerely yours,

Liz Davis

Liz Davis
Executive Director