

Comments on FAA 8690: I have lived in or adjacent to Glacier National Park for 36 years. Since the 1980s, commercial helicopter scenic tours over Glacier have increased in number and duration to the point where solitude and natural quiet now are nearly impossible to find on flying days. These flights hover near wildlife and destroy the national park experience for the vast majority of visitors. Air tours by fixed-wing aircraft are much less intrusive and more easily regulated. The current helicopter companies operating out of West Glacier blatantly disregard the current FAA altitude advisory on a daily basis. They have demonstrated an unwillingness to fly responsibly. Commercial tours by helicopter should not be allowed over national parks.

I urge the FAA to adopt the proposed 5,000 ft AGL for the triggering altitude for the air tour management planning process. Existing studies on resource and visitor impacts, gathered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Fish and Wildlife Service, should be relied upon for impact evaluation. The FAA should defer to the NPS in evaluating the seriousness of these impacts. I further urge the FAA to enforce the "no new entrants" clause of the National Parks Air Tour Management Act while plans are being completed. Existing operators that failed to notify the FAA of over-park operations, required by the Act, should immediately be banned from further operation over parks.

Most importantly, please define precisely the planning process and time table by which air tour management plans for each park will be developed.

Respectfully, Patricia McClelland