

Responses to Survey - Board of Outfitters

Total licensee responses:* 26 (1 answered only a few questions)

<p>Highest Compliment</p>	<p>Ability to monitor on behalf of licensees - 4 Ability to keep profession from criticism because of bad actors - 3 Other: - Centralized source for information regarding requirements and regulations. - They have done a pretty good job with enforcement on bad actors. They are starting to streamline their paperwork with a little common sense. -- Most of this board's employees understand many of the complications of this board and are typically as helpful as they can be!</p>
<p>Biggest Complaint</p>	<p>Licensing fees too high - 10 Licensing renewal timelines too strict - 1 Other: -The board takes an adversarial attitude toward outfitters. --The board, and even more so, the Administrative Staff, never seem to be working WITH you but always AGAINST you. -- -The Board of Outfitters has been very unpleasant to deal with in the past. They were rude and clueless to the needs of a reputable, profitable outfitting business. They are quick to raise fees and create regulations that hamper running a good business. -Unlicensed outfitting goes on relatively unchecked. -Huge roadblock to an outfitters ability to serve the public -Bureaucracy; too many rules and extra paper work -- L-1 Forms not needed. -- Way too much paperwork to satisfy them. -Inconsistent with other governing agencies ie. Dept of Labor and Industry, US Coast Guard. -Outfitter license price is too high relative to other industries with greater income. -- Outfitters are required to do the Board of Outfitters statistical work which is quite complicated. The information needed to fill out these stat sheets is already supplied in the extensive logs we are required to turn in at the end of every year. We are Outfitters not Statisticians! We do not appreciate being threatened by the board that if the overwhelming statistical information we put together for them is inaccurate, we could face a fine or disciplinary action against us!!!! Again, the information is already provided in the Outfitter Logs! If the bureaucracies want statistical information from these forms, they should compile it themselves or pay someone else to do it. NOT MY JOB! I should send a bill for my statistical work this year!!!!!! This Outfitter would request that the parties reviewing these surveys please take a look at the Board of Outfitters hunting and especially the fishing stat use sheets along with 50 pages of outfitter logs and try to complete this statistical rubics cube! --The fees just serve to administer the programs, there is no "added Value" in the process. --Too many rules. Creating new regs and fees which then incurs higher costs. --Services continue to decline while fees continue to increase. Unnecessary restrictions & paperwork biggest frustration. Too many people on the board, too much overhead, too much cost for what work is done. -- I feel the board is a waste of time and money. -- The Board of Outfitters is redundant. The Board should be part of the FW&P for both enforcement and regulation. I have never seen a compliance officer in 15 years of working in the industry.</p>
<p>Reasons the board is important: -- Some department needs to issue the outfitting licenses each year. The FWP did an excellent job with enforcement in the outfitting business when they handled that. As in creation of all government agencies, the Board of Outfitters did a nice job in the beginning, but soon created their own world with no regard to the outfitting business. There is no consideration for business profitability or operating a good reputable outfitting business. They make false accusations and threats, they create mass paperwork to justify their jobs at our costs, and do not care about the implications of their actions on the outfitting industry. They have become very self-serving. -- Regulation of our business practices legitimizes our profession and keeps unlicensed individuals from taking business from the state.</p>	

Other comments on board: - I have been an outfitter for about 35 years and this board is the worst thing that ever happened to outfitting. They have done everything in their power to block our ability to serve the public. Going into the past and retroactively changing things is insane. Cancelling this board would be a huge benefit to the public. -- Not important, impotent. No enforcement of unlicensed guiding. No return for the money I spend each year. No promotion, no enforcement, no reason to exist.-- It only limits competition. -- The information-gathering process by our state agencies is over done! Stick to licensing professionals within the industry by higher standards of testing instead of an open book test. Compiling other peoples' bookwork is ruining hard working folks' Christmas! - In response to complaint filing: I would be nervous of reprisals [retaliation?]from the MBO administration should I file a customer complaint. -- I self-reported an error on my end and it was dismissed but I still had to make the trip to Helena. -- The MBO has taken on a new direction over the past few years that really does not reflect what this board should be doing...licensing and pursuing unlicensed outfitting. More and more paperwork...less and less work in the field. Licensing happens online which was suppose to streamline the process and trim cost...however fees were increased again this year. -- The MBO has laid off their investigators and has become a paper-pushing board. The FWP does the law enforcement, so give the MBO the task of licensing only and downsize this ridiculous bureaucracy. -- I believe individuals who are not a state resident should have to pay more to be licensed in this state. -- We do need a regulatory board that adopts rules, enforces rules and keeps the industry fair and competitive. My biggest complaint with the board is that it is a separate entity that makes for more bureaucratic red tape that is not necessary. The Board should be under the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks who manages the rest of the state's resources. The board does not have the resources or personnel to effectively manage the compliance issues. The board could be much more efficient under the roof of FWP because manpower is already in place.

Public Health -	Public Welfare - 2	Public Safety - 3	None of these - 15	All or combination - 4
Scope of Practice:	Too Narrow - 3	Too Broad - 5		Just Right - 9

Problems with own or other professions' scope of practice - No: 22 Yes with own = 2
Comments: -- Some parts are too narrow and the constant rule changes make following all of the excessive regulations difficult. --We need to be left alone to run these businesses as needed. The Board of Outfitters is way out of bounds with some of their regulations and fees.

What laws/regulations have caused the most problems? - Net client hunter use -- The 100 mile rule - which is now eliminated. NCHU restricts how we can operate our business on private property. Guide/hunter ratio is difficult to adopt a blanket number as it varies by terrain, circumstances, and other predators in the area. -- The net client hunter use has been a nightmare. They carry this to an insane level and than go back and retroactively change what they did. We do what they say and then they go back and change history. No other group of people would put up with the things we have to. Can you imagine the accountants or the lawyers putting up with being told they have to buy the right to serve each customer and they can only have so many customers then going back and after buying that right and having them take it away. -- NCHU for hunting and Beaverhead Bighole for fishing. It is getting where the average Montanan cannot get in the guiding or outfitting business without a huge amount of \$\$\$. What a shame on all of us to limit small business when this state is hurting. -- "Net Client Hunter Use" and the accompanying regulations is absurd in MT. -- NCHU's - net client hunting use - we are restricted to certain hunting client numbers by this law. If we have cancellations it changes everything, if we try to expand and buy NCHU's, then they have to be verified each year or we lose them. They are very expensive to buy, and the Board of Outfitters is clueless to the ups and downs of business and client numbers. Also they have been very poor at keeping records of past paperwork they required us to send in. -- Increasing expenses. Complicated and confusing renewal practices. -- Other than stat use sheets the Board of Outfitters has made it very cumbersome for a new guide application! -- The restrictive mileage radius in which hunting outfitters may operate is cumbersome and limits the area in which I can hunt migratory birds, I believe the intent of this rule was for big game hunting. Licensing issues! The online licensing has allowed guides to obtain licenses without an outfitter's signature after they have received their initial license. This has made the guides feel like they can act as an outfitter because they can have more direct interaction with the board and thus feel free to act as an outfitter. -- Getting guides licensed in a timely manner without encumbering red tape. -- The separation of enforcement duties between the Board of Outfitters and MT FWP becomes confusing for licensees and enforcement.

What laws/regulations have caused the most problems? (continued) -- "Board of Outfitters". -- Logs, but they are necessary and I agree with them.-- Extra paper work, too many rules, and high fees. Taking away the outfitter sponsored ta. (?) -- The use of L-Forms. -- Fees and the time involved in complying with their paperwork. They have required us to do operations plans, NCHU plans, etc, which cost us a lot of time and money. Then a year or two later we are asked to chance everything or lose it, which again costs us time and money. It is a lose/lose situation for all. They require too much paperwork and records for outfitters. They require us to run the statistics to summarize their records. Outfitters do more paperwork and have higher fees and more insurance than most other boards. Look at Wyoming's Board of Outfitters - they do it right. -- Not only do they license me, and charge an outrageous fee, but require that my employees (guides) be licensed as well. I am professional enough to regulate my own employees. And if I weren't, I would be out of business, customers do not respond well, nor do they return to a poorly run business. We don't need to police ourselves, we need policing on those who don't license themselves, their guides, don't pay insurance, work comp. But how do we find them? Without a license or operating plan, the Board of Outfitters is only interested in bothering those who are licensed, and pay the high fees so that we can be policed by our own. -- Non-resident big game hunting license. -- It is never ending with this board. --The legislature has treated my profession/occupation as though it was a criminal enterprise and consistently done everything possible to make it difficult to make a living as an outfitter. Restricting the number of non-resident licenses and charging outrageous fees for nonresident hunters are examples.

Consumer complaint filed?	No - 23
Nonlicensee comments (8 out of state)	Saying Board of Outfitters: Necessary for Public Health - 5, Public Safety - 11 , Public Welfare - 4 All or a combination - 25

Fine/Disciplinary Action = 6 Screening Panel = 5 Actions: Probation = 4 Fine = 6 Warning = 1 Dismissed = 2
1 current/former board member