

## SJ28 FINDINGS

Oxford Languages dictionary: "Finding: A conclusion reached as a result of an inquiry, investigation, or trial."

### SJ28: STUDY OF FLATHEAD RIVER EROSION

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That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to review issues of erosion along the Flathead River, including:

- (1) compiling existing data on the causes and impacts of erosion on the Flathead River;
- (2) determining the impacts of recreational boat use to streambanks on the lower Flathead River and how to lessen those impacts; and
- (3) examining information gaps and collecting additional data, as necessary.

### DRAFT FINDINGS

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1. Erosion on the lower 21 miles of the Flathead River entering into Flathead Lake is a long-standing issue.
2. Sources of erosion include inundation, wind-driven waves, spring runoff, boat wakes, and artificially managed lake levels.
3. Property owners have lost riverfront property due to eroding riverbanks, which results in stabilization efforts, such as bank armor, channel structures or bioengineering.
4. Boat traffic on this stretch of the Flathead River has increased over time.
5. Boater conflicts on Montana's lakes and rivers typically drive regulations and restrictions, which may be authorized by the Legislature of the Fish and Wildlife Commission.
6. Property owners alongside other Montana rivers and lakes, such as the Missouri River and Lake Helena, experience erosion from similar causes.