

My husband and I have lived in the Middle Rattlesnake for over twenty three years. We have hiked every trail in the RNRA many times over the years and even made it to Stuart Peak.

Fred and I are long time members of Keep It Wild and The Rocky Mountaineers and were very active participants in the Proposed Land Management Plan for the Lolo National Forest 2005-2006.

I have been on the Steering Committee of the FOLP for over twenty years.

The following comments on the Lolo National Forest Proposed Action Plan, 2/1/24 are by Eileen Schwanemann

One size does not fit all. This same idea can apply to the different Recreation Areas in the Lolo National Forest (LNF). The Rattlesnake National Recreation Area (RNRA) is a very special area that was set up by the Rattlesnake Act of 1980. The present Management Area Plan in the RNRA needs to be maintained. This Plan provides a level of awareness for all types of recreation in the RNRA including hikers on their way into the Rattlesnake Wilderness. Both the 1986 Plan and the 2006 Proposed Land Management Plans do this. The Proposed Land Management Plan (2/1/24) would change MA ratings for the RNRA and these changes are unsuitable for the RNRA. There is presently a high level of adherence to the posted regulations (e.g. No E Bikes, dogs on leash until up to less crowded areas, no camping until past the three mile limit to name a few.) Most people that recreate within the RNRA respect this. Lolo National Forest Rangers and their staff have done a good job monitoring and if necessary enforcing the 'rules' over many years, dealing with the many changes in recreation use that have occurred. Those who go into the RNRA are made aware that they share this space with many different animals and multi types of recreation. Leave the present MA standards in the RNRA as they are. This will continue to foster responsible users of the RNRA and hopefully other National Forests.

Comments on Lolo Peak

The Carlton Ridge Research Area not only needs to be expanded more to the West (to include the Carlton Ridge Trail 1311 but protected as well (Recommended Wilderness). It is an essential "outdoor laboratory" for the future with much previous recorded data on alpine larch, western larch, natural hybrids, and whitebark pine. This area also supports many wildlife species and unique features found only here.

With respect to bicycles especially Mountain bikes on this is a very narrow and steep trail with limited view at switchbacks. It was set up and used mainly for hiking many years ago. There is a U Tube of a mountain biker up on Trail1311 which was submitted to the Lolo National Forest Supervisor. This use of Trail 1311 by a mountain bike rider clearly shows a real potential for very unsafe conditions that could occur with mixed use on this trail.