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Comments: I am writing to share my perspectives on the Lolo National Forest Plan Revision, particularly in relation to the Heart Lake Loop, Cube Iron Roadless Complex, and the Carlton Ridge to Mill Creek area on Lolo Peak. As an enthusiastic mountain biker and a member of MTB Missoula, I have a profound appreciation for the Lolo National Forest's unique landscapes and the recreational opportunities they offer.

Heart Lake Loop, Stateline Trail:

I am opposed to the proposed action to designate the trails around Heart Lake as Recommended Wilderness without a provision for a non-motorized travel corridor. My personal experiences in this area have been incredibly meaningful, offering a rare blend of challenge, solitude, and connection with the natural world. The compatibility of mountain biking with conservation goals is evidenced by the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest's draft plan, which suggests that bike access on the Stateline Trail is feasible. I urge the Lolo National Forest to consider a similar approach to allow mountain biking around Heart Lake, thus preserving this cherished high-alpine ride.

Cube Iron Roadless Complex:

I fully support the recommendation for a backcountry designation in the Cube Iron area, which would preserve its primitive character while permitting bike access. This decision exemplifies a commendable balance between protecting the environment and accommodating sustainable recreational use, ensuring that future generations can experience the wilderness in a responsible manner.

Carlton Ridge to Mill Creek on Lolo Peak:

I also wish to express my strong support for the proposed action regarding Carlton Ridge to Mill Creek on Lolo Peak. This proposal wisely does not extend the Recommended Wilderness designation as far as these trails, recognizing their value as one of the premier backcountry rides in the vicinity of Missoula. The availability of such high-quality outdoor recreation options close to urban areas is essential for fostering a community that values and actively participates in conservation efforts. Preserving access to these trails supports not only the physical and mental well-being of local residents but also underscores the importance of balanced land management practices that respect both nature and recreation.

The management of the Lolo National Forest holds significant implications for the community and the environment alike. By advocating for policies that both protect natural habitats and allow for their responsible enjoyment, we can ensure the sustainable use of these precious resources. I appreciate the effort and consideration the Forest Service has dedicated to involving stakeholders in this process and look forward to seeing a final plan that reflects our shared commitment to conservation and outdoor recreation.

Thank you for your attention to these matters and for the opportunity to contribute to the dialogue on the future of the Lolo National Forest.