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Comments: As a Missoula resident and avid outdoor recreationalist, I visit the Lolo National Forest more than 100 days a year. I am particularly interested in opportunities associated expanding opportunities for winter recreation on the Lolo National Forest to accomodate both the growing populaiton of westner Montana and the negative effects that cliamte change is already causing to existing winter recreation opportunities. Below are opportunities I would like to see included in the upcoming Lolo NF Plan.

PATTEE CANYON is experiencing increased visitor use, especially in winter months. The current infrastructure does not meet the demand as stated in 3.2.8 of the Proposed Action. Improved and expanded parking infrastructure is needed as the demand for nordic skiing in Missoula continues to grow. We also recommend the inclusion of grooming for nordic skiing and trailhead access in higher elevation areas on the Dean Stone Ridge and Skyline Ridge 2127-1 Trailhead and USFS lands and roads to the west and southeast.

As climate change is warming our winters, the Missoula community is unable to access consistent nordic skiing at lower elevation locations around Missoula such as the local golf course. With this in mind, we recommend inclusion of grooming access on the Montana side of LOLO PASS, specifically expansion of groomed nordic ski trails between Lee Creek Campground and Lolo Pass.

Finally, to accommodate a growing population and use base, the Missoula Nordic Club is working with partners (including BLM and Nature Conservancy) to create new trails in teh Gold Creek drainage, east of Missoula. However, access to these trails requires road access up 1.7 miles of EAST FORK RATTLESNAKE/ FS 2112 ROAD from the intersection with Gold Creek Road. The community hopes the Forest Service will support the Missoula Nordic Club in establishing trail access in this area as a future climate-safe area for nordic skiing.

Thank you for your consideration and collaboration in developing the next Lolo National Forest Plan.