

# PROTECTING AMERICA'S NATIONAL FORESTS: SAVING THE LAST WILD 30%

OUTDOOR  ALLIANCE

Of the lands represented in our National Forests, 18% is protected as designated Wilderness and 51% is open to drilling, logging and mining. The fate of the remaining 31% of wild intact forest - known as Roadless Areas - remains uncertain. Given the challenges the Forest Service faces in maintaining a road network of over 380,000 miles, we do not need to build new roads in areas that do not currently have them. Roadless Areas provide a host of ecosystem services including clean drinking water and refugia for many imperiled species, but they also contain extremely high value recreational opportunities. Approximately 85% of the revenue generated from National Forests comes from recreational activities.

The time to protect these areas is now and we have a unique opportunity to help make protection of these places a reality. The Roadless Area Conservation Act introduced in Congress specifically states that these areas "provide unparalleled opportunities for hiking, camping, picnicking, wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, canoeing, mountain-biking, and similar activities." Now, more than ever, these wild, roadless forests need the help of those who enjoy them most - outdoor recreation enthusiasts.

## CLIMBING

The Bitterroots, Montana's largest mountain range, includes many alpine summits between Lolo Pass and Lost Trail Pass. Canyons in this section contain some of the best high-quality multi-pitch granite rock climbing in the region. Unspoiled backcountry climbing areas in the Bitterroot Range that allow climbers to experience the scenic attributes of Roadless Areas include:

- Blodgett Canyon, which hosts some of the area's most famous multi-pitch routes up to 1000 feet tall on, for example, Flathead Buttress and Shoshone Spire.
- Kootenai Canyon, which holds some of Montana's most difficult sport and traditional climbing up to 5.13+.
- Other climbing areas include Mill Creek, Fred Burr Canyon, Roaring Lion Creek, and Lost Horse Creek which boasts both outstanding bouldering and some of the state's best long traditional crack climbing.



*Legendary climbing destination  
Flathead Buttress in Blodgett Canyon*

## HIKING

Hiking opportunities in Roadless Areas are incredibly numerous and include sections of our nation's iconic trails such as the Appalachian, Continental Divide, and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails. Because Roadless Areas often represent the interface between more developed recreation areas and remote wilderness areas, they offer accessible opportunities for solitude and scenic landscapes.

*Wild Iris flowers bloom on the Continental Divide Trail,  
Rio Grande National Forest, Colorado*



## MOUNTAIN BIKING

The Maah Daah Hey Trail follows the Little Missouri blending difficult climbs up the bentonite buttes, with challenging downhills. Beautiful vistas of the river-cut valley abound. The trail provides 96-mile of singletrack riding in the most picturesque part of western North Dakota through Roadless Areas in the Little Missouri National Grasslands. The Maah Daah Hey is a true shared-use trail, enjoyed by hikers, equestrians and cyclists, and is one of the jewels of North Dakota open space.

*Montana's Whitefish Mountains in the Flathead National Forest. Photo by Aaron Teasdale*



*Snow capped Idaho peaks make a pristine winter recreation area.*

## WINTERSPORTS

Roadless lands in central Idaho provide high quality winter recreation opportunities and important wildlife habitat during all seasons. A few examples of Roadless Areas in Idaho frequented by backcountry skiers, snowshoers and other quiet winter enthusiasts include:

- Grimes Pass Roadless Area with great terrain around Pilot and Freeman Peaks
- Ten Mile Roadless Area with great views of the Payette River Valley and the Sawtooth Mountains
- Red Mountain Roadless Area with excellent southern aspects good for late winter and spring skiing
- Snow Bank Roadless Area with steep terrain overlooking Long Valley
- Steele Mountain Roadless Area with steep couloirs providing a wide range of skiing and climbing opportunities.

## PADDLING

Rivers offer a unique way to experience Roadless Areas by water, the original highways used to explore our country. Today Roadless Areas preserve landscapes that represent a vestige of our national heritage.

- The Allegheny National Forest has small but significant Roadless Areas along the Allegheny and Clarion Wild and Scenic Rivers that provide family-oriented recreation suitable for novices.
- The West Virginia Highlands include the headwaters of the Cheat and Potomac rivers with whitewater runs like Tea Creek, Gandy Creek, Williams River, Seneca Creek, Red Creek, Shavers and Gladys Forks of the Cheat, Cranberry River, and Red Run.
- Sierra Classics like Generation Gap and Giant Gap on the North Fork American and the Devil's Canyon on the Middle Fork Feather flow through remote Roadless Areas.



*Enjoying paddling opportunities in the Roadless Areas within the West Virginia Highlands*

## ABOUT THE OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

The mission of the Outdoor Alliance "to ensure the conservation and stewardship of our nation's land and waters through the promotion of sustainable, human-powered recreation." Millions of people love to hike, paddle, climb, ski and mountain bike. We know our land and water first hand, and care deeply about passing our outdoor heritage to future generations. Outdoor Alliance gives these people a voice in Washington, D.C.



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