

We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.



IPWA Volunteers/Members/Friends:

Please **TAKE ACTION TODAY** and tell the USFS that the IP/JP Wilderness Areas should be designated as **"NOT SUITABLE"** for recreational shooting!

[Say "NO" to designating the wilderness as suitable for recreational shooting \(at this Sport Shooting Partners link\)!](#)

ISSUE

The USFS has proposed designating the IP/JP Wilderness Areas as **"SUITABLE"** for recreational shooting.

IPWA Volunteers, Members, and Friends:

The USFS is proposing to designate the Indian Peaks (IP) and James Peak (JP) Wilderness Areas as 'suitable' for recreational shooting. **Your IPWA Board is in unanimous opposition to this designation.**

It is important to note that the IPWA Board is not opposed to the legitimate use of the IP/JP Wilderness Areas for hunting, nor the 2nd amendment right to bear arms. Hunting in the wilderness has been allowed as part of the original 1964 Wilderness Act and the IPWA Board fully supports this position. It is the specific promotion and designation of the IP/JP Wilderness Area as suitable for recreational shooting that we oppose.

Please click on the link below TODAY to enter your comments and voice your opposition to this designation:

[Say NO to designating the wilderness as suitable for recreational shooting \(at this Sport Shooting Partners link\)!](#)

BACKGROUND

The USFS has been working since 2013 to propose solutions to the challenges of 'recreational sport shooting' (RSS) on public lands and specifically challenges with

managing RSS on the Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forest. The USFS has been working with Boulder, Clear Creek, Gilpin and Larimer counties, and the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (known as the **Northern Front Range Sport Shooting Management Partnership** or **'Partnership'** or **'Sport Shooting Partners'**) to develop possible management strategies for RSS in these two national forests. The strategies include identifying those lands that may be suitable/not suitable for RSS, along with identifying locations that would be conducive to building developed shooting ranges.

This Partnership provided an original recommendation on lands to designate as suitable/not suitable for RSS in 2015. At that time, the original proposal designated both the IP/JP Wilderness Areas as 'suitable' for RSS. Your IPWA Board was in unanimous opposition to this designation. We shared our concerns with the USFS with the hope that these lands would be designated as 'not suitable' for RSS.

Since 2015, the Partnership created additional proposals and recommendations and recently presented four RSS alternatives in public sessions. The four alternatives are posted on the web site below. Three of the alternatives designate the IP/JP Wilderness Areas as 'suitable' for RSS. The only alternative that does not is the alternative that does not provide for dispersed shooting anywhere on the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests.

These four proposals were presented and discussed at a recent meeting at the Boulder County Courthouse (attended by volunteers of the IPWA). ***When asked why the USFS was designating these lands as 'suitable' for recreational shooting – which appears completely contrary to concerns for citizen safety along with wilderness character challenges – the response from the USFS representative was that “we do not view recreational shooting as incompatible with the concept of wilderness.”***

The IPWA Board respectively disagrees with this assertion.

[Recreational Sport Shooting Partnership Web Site and Proposals](#)

Recreational Sport Shooting Defined and Challenges

One of the challenges that the IPWA Board sees with the USFS position is the lack of clarity around the definition of Recreational Sport Shooting. The IPWA is not clear on the specific definition that the USFS intends with the use of this terminology and believes that further defining RSS may be of benefit to the public. The Sportsmen Heritage Act of 2012 (H.R 4089), Section 103(4) defines recreational shooting as 'any form of sport, training, competition, or pastime, whether formal or informal, that involves the discharge of a rifle, handgun, or shotgun, or the use of a bow and arrow.' This definition would appear to include hunting (which the IPWA Board agrees with) along with shooting ranges, informal target practice, and war reenactments both formal and informal (which the IPWA Board opposes).

IPWA BOARD POSITION

The Board of the IPWA is in unanimous opposition to designating any areas of the IP/JP Wilderness Areas as 'Suitable' for RSS. Furthermore, the Board believes that these lands should be specifically designated as 'Not Suitable' for RSS for the following reasons:

Public Safety – RSS in the wilderness is contrary to public safety needs.

We believe allowing RSS in the wilderness is contrary to public safety needs. The Partnership themselves recognize that Colorado's population has been increasing by

100,000 annually, with 80% of the growth in the Front Range. Furthermore, the IP/JP Wilderness by the USFS own statistics is one of the top five visited wilderness areas in the country. Over the past two years, the IPWA has made contact with on average 35,000 members of the public while performing our wilderness patrols in these two wilderness areas. Furthermore, by having the USFS actively designate these lands as suitable for RSS, we fear that recreational shooters will gravitate to these lands as other forest service lands are closed to recreational shooting and individuals are displaced to lands that are designated as suitable for RSS. *The IPWA Board believes allowing RSS in these lands with such a high use by the public will result in tragedy.*

Wilderness Character – RSS in the wilderness is contrary to the USFS definition of wilderness character.

The USFS own web site ([USFS Wilderness Definition](#)) states that “Commonly understood policies for wilderness management include...area is managed for primitive and unconfined recreation with outstanding opportunities for solitude.” Clearly, the sound of individuals shooting at targets in the wilderness can carry a great distance, thereby significantly diminishing the opportunities for solitude sought by other members of the public. Our own organization has assisted the USFS in performing wilderness solitude monitoring, with individuals collecting information on the sounds of airplanes flying over wilderness areas and making note how often flights occur. Imagine recreational shooting taking place just down the trail and the negative impact on the wilderness characteristic of solitude.

USFS management guidelines – RSS in the wilderness is contrary to the USFS own guidelines.

The USFS Manual (FSM 2300 – Recreation, Wilderness, and Related Resource Management) defines how the USFS should interpret legislation in managing public lands. Section 2320 of this manual defines guidelines for Wilderness Management. Specifically, Section 2320.2 "Objectives" states that the USFS should...."Protect and perpetuate wilderness character and public values including... opportunities for solitude..." *The IPWA Board believes that RSS in the IP/JP Wilderness Areas is contrary to this objective.*

Section 2320.3 +Policy" states that the USF should “Where there are alternatives among management decisions, wilderness values shall dominate over all other regulations except where limited by the Wilderness Act..” *The IPWA Board believes that RSS in the IP/JP Wilderness Areas is contrary to this policy.*

Section 2320.6 "Wilderness Management Model and the Wilderness Act" states that “Where a choice must be made between wilderness values and visitor or any other activity, preserving the wilderness resource is the overriding value.” *The IPWA Board believes that RSS in the IP/JP Wilderness in contradictory to this model*

CALL TO ACTION - TODAY!:

PLEASE VOICE YOUR CONCERNS TODAY BY CLICKING ON THE LINK BELOW AND TELLING THE USFS THAT YOU ARE OPPOSED TO DESIGNATING THE IP/JP WILDERNESS AREAS AS SUITABLE FOR RECREATIONAL SHOOTING!

[I am opposed to designating the Indian Peaks and James Peak Wilderness Areas as suitable for recreational shooting \(at this Sports Shooting Partners link\)](#)

Thank you!

Again, thank you for the fantastic year! As always, reach out to us with any questions, comments, or thoughts on how we can make our organization an even better one. As a 501(c)3 non-profit volunteer organization, we rely on members, volunteers, local businesses, and grants for 100% of our funding needs. **We are also a 100% volunteer managed organization with no paid staff positions.** All funding we receive goes directly to our programs and operations. Any financial assistance is greatly appreciated!

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