



Source: Megan Yost

VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY

Devils Head Recreation Area

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Agency collaboration with stakeholders
- Interdisciplinary management solutions
- Implementation through NEPA process

FACTS

1 of 4 historic fire viewing towers on CO's Front Range; continuous operation since 1912

75 mi of views from the peak of Devils Head

SUMMARY

Nestled in Colorado's Rampart Range, Devils Head Recreation Area is managed by the U.S. Forest Service in the Pike-San Isabel National Forests, South Platte Ranger District. Open seasonally from May to October, its main attraction is a 1.5-mile hiking trail leading to a historic fire lookout tower, one of the last four original structures of its kind in Colorado. With an elevation gain of 865 feet, the trail offers both a physical challenge and stunning views. Beyond its historical significance, Devils Head plays a crucial role in U.S. Forest Service fire protection efforts, strategically spotting fires up to 75 miles away. Popular among outdoor enthusiasts, it offers a range of activities, including popular rock climbing destinations, making it a versatile destination for adventure and relaxation in Colorado's natural beauty.

MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES

The Devils Head Recreation Area Strategy includes an adaptive management toolkit to address increasing visitor use. The U.S. Forest Service, with support from the NPS River, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, collaborated with the stakeholders to develop desired conditions for visitor experiences, natural and cultural resource management, and visitor safety. An interdisciplinary team, with stakeholder input, identified key resource and experiential indicators and management strategies for the Devil's Head Recreation Area. In the coming years, the Forest Service will implement actions to move the area toward desired conditions, including the appropriate level of environmental analysis per the National Environmental Policy Act.

MORE INFORMATION

[Devils Head Area Recreation Strategy](#)