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First name: Mark

Last name: Starr

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Having grown up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, I spent my life admiring the Sandia mountains and recreating in the Sandia Wilderness. It wasn't until later in life that I discovered climbing which has contributed to improved mental health, physical health, interpersonal relationships, and general well-being. The Sandia Mountain Wilderness is where I spend the vast majority of my time outside rock climbing, and they will always hold a special place in my heart.

Rock climbing is perhaps one of the least impactful uses of wilderness land. Bolts and other fixed gear high up on a piece of rock are invisible to hikers - causing no visual impact (unlike the countless pieces of cement and construction trash I come across from old FS projects), and have no long-term detrimental impact to the ecosystem. A single bolt can mean the difference between a safe climb and a climb that would require rescue should the climber fall. Is one bolt more impactful than one rescue? Oftentimes rescuers will place multiple bolts in order to safely extract a patient - not to mention the impacts of off trail bushwhacking, helicopters in wilderness, and the danger faced by all the rescuers involved.

The hand-drill only rule for bolting in wilderness has shown to be enough to limit the development of routes with many bolts, while giving space for climbers to develop routes that are reasonably safe.

The Wilderness Act defines Wilderness, and right there it says that Wilderness: "(1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation".

Climbing is a primitive and unconfined type of recreation (with unmatched opportunities for solitude), and bolts are substantially unnoticeable (sometimes TOO unnoticeable when you're trying to find the next one...) See attached photo of one of my favorite climbs in the Sandia Mountain Wilderness, as viewed from the trail. See any bolts?

These pieces of fixed gear are critical to the safety of climbers and have never been considered an installation under the Wilderness Act. Banning replacement and placement of anchors will create more dangers for climbers. If a permit process is enacted without de-facto approval after a short period of time (15-20 days), it will effectively result in a ban due to the FS lack of budget and ability to timely address permits. This will only encourage rogue climbing and development.

Please do not continue with the outlined policies.