Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/22/2023 2:43:05 PM
First name: Dylan
Last name: Sheedy
Organization:
Title:
Comments: Hello,

I am an avid recreational climber from North Carolina and I urge you to reconsider the language and policy in the proposed ban on fixed anchors in wilderness areas.

Fixed anchors such as bolts and pitons allow safe, responsible recreation and climbing in scenarios where removable equipment are not possible to place or unreliable/unsafe to use. There is a strong ethic in the climbing community against placing new bolts, and bolts are often used only when required for safety and security. This must be allowed to continue without a restrictively burdensome process to gain approval for bolt replacement or new bolting additions where necessary. Bolt replacement and inspection is a vital part of maintaining safety and allowing responsible recreational exploration of Americas wilderness areas. It is unreasonable for new legislation to all of a sudden restrict bolted anchors when they have been used and maintained for decades before without restriction.

Climbing has a strong ethic and deep heritage in this country. It is the source of much economic stimulus to regions of the country that might otherwise lack economic drivers. It is a fulfilling activity that allows deep connection with the land, inspires advocacy and reverence for natural spaces, and requires appropriate use of fixed hardware to be performed safely and responsibly. Please consider changing the language in the proposed legislation to reflect my concerns and the concerns of the larger community on the issues referenced above.

Additionally, Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless and until analyses determine climbing should be restricted to protect cultural and natural resources.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dylan Sheedy