

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/3/2024 11:56:05 PM

First name: John

Last name: Doe

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Fixed anchors are essential for climbers' safety and are not prohibited by the Wilderness Act.

Adhering to longstanding climbing policies that allow judicious use of fixed anchors is crucial for preserving the character of Wilderness. Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and causes confusion among land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policies should preserve opportunities for new anchors unless analyses indicate a need to restrict climbing for the protection of cultural and natural resources. It is unreasonable for federal agencies to introduce new policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors nationwide, especially when they have managed and authorized fixed anchors for decades. Such prohibitions pose safety risks by hindering regular maintenance, a responsibility shouldered by the climbing community. Critical safety decisions often require immediate action, and any authorization process should not impede these decisions. Management of fixed anchor maintenance should prioritize safe replacement without risking the removal of climbing routes. Prohibiting fixed anchors obstructs the appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas, impeding climbers' ability to make in-the-moment decisions in complex vertical terrain. Furthermore, it jeopardizes America's climbing legacy and the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policies must safeguard existing routes from removal to ensure the preservation of our climbing heritage.