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Comments: My name is Aaron Stromberg.

I am an active outdoorsman, and wilderness advocate who is very proud of our National Forests, Parks, and Wilderness. I deeply believe the protection of our land for the preservation of nature and enjoyment of the people is one of America's greatest ideas.

With this in mind I write to you because I strongly disagree with the proposed climbing management guidance. What you have proposed will make climbing in the wilderness significantly more dangerous, damage the historical significance of climbing in America, and is unreasonable for the Forest Service to manage.

Climbing pushes you physically, and mentally. Climbing in the outdoors grows you spiritually. I have struggled on the sides of cliffs while storms came in, and I have watched in awe while the sun rises. Through climbing I have frozen my fingers to the bone, and I have cried tears of joy after succeeding in a long term project. I have experienced failure, pain, joy, success, and wonder because of climbing. I hope future generations can share the same experience, but am fearful that the management you propose will create more dangerous situations, and encourage illegal behavior.

Below are comments that I and many other climbers share.

Fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system and are not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. Following existing climbing policies that allow judicious use of fixed anchors for more than a half century will do more to protect Wilderness character while providing for primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing.

It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will create safety issues by imposing unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors, a responsibility undertaken by the climbing community. Critical safety decisions often must be made in the moment and any authorization process should not impede those decisions. Fixed anchor maintenance needs to be managed in a way that incentivizes safe anchor replacement and does not risk the removal of climbing routes.

Prohibiting fixed anchors obstructs appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers need to allow climbers to explore Wilderness in a way that permits in-the-moment decisions that are necessary when navigating complex vertical terrain.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will threaten America's rich climbing legacy and could erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy needs to protect existing routes from removal.

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.