

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/4/2024 2:52:16 PM

First name: Valerie

Last name: Karr

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

I'm an avid outdoor enthusiast with 43 years of exploration of our protected lands under my belt. I have brought my children, my parents, and I have hiked, fished, and explored so many of the US National Parks and USFS lands. I buy the annual pass and we plan every summer holiday around how to best explore and enjoy our NPs. My children are both Junior Rangers and we explore all the parks have to offer. This included rock climbing. I've climbed all over the US, recently summiting the Grand Teton this summer (a lifetime goal of mine) and climbing in Yosemite and Acadia as well. It is my favorite way to escape the crowds of popular outdoor spaces and truly commune with nature. That experience sparks my desire to preserve our wild places. I'm writing today to ask that the USFS not prohibit fixed anchors. With direct experience, I have witnessed first hand how anchors maximize the safety of climbers and allow us to enjoy the parks with minimal impact. This gear is essential for ensuring the safety of climbers and as a single mom a key factor in the routes I choose to climb. Anchors have been used for decades and the climbing community has come together with the USFS with a joint commitment to safety and respect in the parks. I don't see how building stairs on a popular hiking trail is any less invasive then a small fixed anchor. Anchors are rarely place where the public can see anyways. Our rich climbing legacy is at risk and I fear the impact on climbing safety as well as our enjoyment of our outdoor spaces.

Thank you

Valerie Karr