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Organization:

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Comments: Dear United States Forest Service,

I trust this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed prohibition of fixed anchors in wilderness areas, as outlined in recent guidance policies. Fixed anchors serve as a crucial component of climbers' safety systems and, according to the Wilderness Act, are not considered prohibited "installations."

Adhering to established climbing policies that have permitted the judicious use of fixed anchors for over half a century is vital for preserving the Wilderness character. It is unreasonable for federal agencies to introduce new guidance policies that would restrict Wilderness climbing anchors nationwide, especially considering their decades-long acceptance, management, and authorization.

The prohibition of fixed anchors poses potential safety hazards by hindering routine maintenance, a responsibility diligently undertaken by the climbing community. Safety decisions often require swift action, and any authorization process should not impede these critical choices.

Managing fixed anchor maintenance should prioritize safe replacement, ensuring climbing routes remain intact. Furthermore, prohibiting fixed anchors hampers the appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers should allow climbers the flexibility to make in-the-moment decisions essential for navigating complex vertical terrain.

The proposed prohibition not only jeopardizes America's rich climbing legacy but also risks erasing some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policies must safeguard existing routes from removal and support the continuation of this storied tradition.

I urge you to reconsider the proposed prohibition and instead promote policies that align with established practices, ensuring the safety of climbers while preserving the integrity of Wilderness areas. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mike Calabro