Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/4/2024 9:16:07 PM First name: Kingsley Last name: Rodriguez Organization:

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Comments: One of the greatest freedoms of American recreation has come from adventurers seeking challenge through the sport of climbing. America has defined itself globally through our amazing access and sense of individual responsibility when it comes to managing climbing within wilderness areas. As a demographic, climbers are one of the most vocal and active in protecting and advocating for our national parks and wilderness areas. In the spirit of experiencing "wilderness," climbing can be managed properly by coloring bolts and anchors to match rock quality in order to preserve the visual integrity for other people wishing to experience wilderness areas in their own right as US citizens. Climbing in and of itself is an experience of wilderness, and has inspired so many to recreate safely and sustainably. Take the Indian creek climbing area for example - over the years, dedicated climbers like Karl Kelley and Devin Finucane have worked so hard to establish pit toilets, camping areas, and ethical guidelines in guide books, all within a grassroots movement to support recreation and preserve wilderness in areas such as canyon lands, which has a rich past of Pueblo Indian culture. Climbers here have removed routes next to petroglyphs and actively encourage others to respect the ethic that has been established over decades of grassroots climbing. To relinquish a sport so rich and synonymous with the freedoms of being an American citizen, to a governmental institution is extremely shortsighted. An act like this will only encourage further conflict between DOI and climbing public, leading to a vast overspending of tax dollars and putting the lives of climbers at risk that will choose to bolt routes regardless of policy. The sustainable solution centers around conversations and ethical guidelines between wilderness land and climbers. Bolts and anchors must be colored, designated trails must be built or destroyed. Leave no trace principles must be upheld. Perhaps even expanding the Yosemite permit system to other climbing areas may be possible. To simply jump straight into removing a vast amount of iconic climbing routes, the life's work of many dedicated climbers and outdoor enthusiasts, is not only unnecessary but wildly impractical. The proper step is to increase regulation and oversight of climbing areas and routes. Climbing is an integral part of American outdoor culture. Many victories were won in world war 2 through the 10th mountain division, a group made up of many rag tag, rough and tumble, dirtbag climbers. The widespread climbing ethic of fun, responsibility, sustainability, and access is a core value and one that augments Americans. This policy would handicap that, deeply impacting the quality of life of millions of climbers around the globe that flock to our great country to climb in our pristine wilderness areas, and learn of our responsible ethic through the love of our lands. Not only is this policy anti-climbing, it is antiamerican, and anti-human. I deeply oppose this policy and encourage more dialogue between climbing and outdoor access organizations like Accessfund and Patagonia Climbing.