

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/5/2024 1:50:16 PM

First name: James

Last name: Perkins

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello USFS,

I am taking the time to write this statement as someone who cares deeply for our shared outdoor spaces and the areas that our Wilderness Act protects. Since our inception, the United States has been a leader amongst the countries of the world in conserving public land for our future generations to explore, grow, and love. It is this public land that allows us to see past lines drawn between us and act as one in these shared spaces.

While the proposals of changes to the interpretation of the Wilderness Act are made from a place of looking to protect these places, they would in fact be going against nearly 60 years of policy and practice. The fixed anchors present on our rocks allow for the safe exploration of these wild spaces. That spirit of exploration is as true as the spirits that led us to this continent and to explore its western expanses.

Climbers and explorers of mountains have always been the champions of these public spaces in regards to their protection and conservation. While we are grateful that there is conversation regarding future practices in wilderness spaces, there is concern that new interpretations of the wilderness act may result in increased unnecessary danger for the ones who keep the spirit of adventure and exploration alive.

Please consider listening to the voices of leadership in our great climbing community that desire not to end making changes all together but rather make changes and updates that consider the safety and fostering of the true American spirit of exploration.

Sincerely,

James Perkins