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First name: Alyssa

Last name: Toombs

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to oppose the prohibition of fixed anchors in Wilderness areas on behalf of the climbing community of which I am a member. Rock climbing has been a transformative activity in my life, and in the life of so many others I know of, and accessibility of the sport into the outdoors is the most treasured aspect of the experience.

The climbing community advocates for the protection of the natural resource that is our amazing rock faces and the surrounding ecosystems. By encouraging and maintaining a strong climbing community, we maintain the energy to keep fighting for protections of these spaces, and grow the number of people who recognize the importance of these spaces.

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.

Climbing outside is one of the best ways I experience the outdoors, but the loss of robust anchor maintenance or the loss of anchored routes will mean the loss of opportunity for myself and others like me - not the "hardcore climbers" who set records, but the ones who climb for fun and experience, and who cannot "traditional climb" by setting our own anchors, will lose out on access to safe and reliable 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.

I do not wish to impede the protection of Wilderness areas, and do not wish to voice negativity to the proposed policies as a whole. I hope you can find a way to keep safety anchors as a part of these areas so that we can continue to maintain and experience these spaces in a safe and respectful way.