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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Subject: Preserving Access to Fixed Bolt Anchors for Rock Climbing in Wilderness Areas

Dear US Forest Service,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed prohibition on fixed bolt anchors for rock climbing in wilderness areas. As a youth climate activist who values the importance of wilderness protection, I understand the need to strike a balance between conservation efforts and recreational activities. However, the potential ban on fixed bolt anchors raises significant issues that warrant careful consideration.

Rock climbing serves as an invaluable outlet for individuals to connect with the natural world, fostering a deep appreciation for our wilderness areas and promoting a sense of adventure. Fixed bolt anchors are essential for ensuring the safety of climbers and maintaining the integrity of the climbing environment. Prohibiting their use would not only make climbing more difficult but also significantly increase the associated costs, making this rewarding activity less accessible to many citizens, particularly those with limited financial means.

Decades of precedent have established fixed bolt anchors as an accepted and necessary tool for safe and responsible climbing. Changing this longstanding practice could disrupt the established norms of the climbing community and potentially lead to unsafe climbing practices as individuals seek alternative, less secure methods.

Moreover, the proposed prohibition would impede anchor maintenance, posing a serious risk to the safety of climbers. Regular inspection and upkeep of fixed bolt anchors are vital for preventing accidents and ensuring a safe climbing experience. Restricting access to these maintenance activities could compromise the safety of climbers and undermine the responsible stewardship of our wilderness areas.

I urge the National Parks Service to consider the long-term implications of such a prohibition and work collaboratively with the climbing community to find alternative solutions that address conservation concerns while maintaining access to safe and responsible climbing. Balancing the preservation of our wilderness areas with the accessibility of recreational activities is crucial, especially for younger generations who seek to engage with and protect our natural spaces.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I hope that, as stewards of our nation's parks, you will prioritize a thoughtful and inclusive approach that preserves the benefits of climbing while safeguarding our wilderness areas for future generations.

Sincerely,

Thomas Cooper

A Climber, Environmentalist, and Citizen