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First name: Sierra

Last name: Melanson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed policy to prohibit fixed anchors in Wilderness areas. This policy, if implemented, could have detrimental effects on the climbing community and the preservation of climbing opportunities. I urge the U.S. Forest Service to reconsider this proposal for the following reasons:

Enforceability and Confusion:

Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and may create confusion among land managers and climbers. A more flexible approach is needed to ensure that new opportunities for climbing anchors are maintained unless analyses determine otherwise.

Historical Precedent and Responsible Climbing:

The existing climbing management policy, which has allowed the establishment of new routes, has been effective in balancing the needs of climbers with the protection of cultural and natural resources. It is crucial to continue supporting responsible climbing practices and maintaining opportunities for new anchors.

I urge the U.S. Forest Service to reconsider the proposed restrictions on the establishment of new climbing routes and to engage in meaningful collaboration with the climbing community to develop policies that balance the interests of climbers with the protection of natural and cultural resources.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.