

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/8/2024 7:30:41 PM

First name: Nicole

Last name: Schrad

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The role of fixed anchors in climbers' safety systems is paramount and not in violation of the Wilderness Act. Adhering to established climbing policies that have permitted the judicious use of fixed anchors for over fifty years is crucial in preserving Wilderness character while supporting primitive and unrestricted climbing experiences.

It's unjustifiable for federal agencies to introduce new guidelines that prohibit the use of climbing anchors in Wilderness areas when these agencies have historically sanctioned and managed fixed anchors for an extended period.

Banning fixed anchors could pose safety hazards by hindering the routine maintenance crucial for their safety. The climbing community bears the responsibility for this maintenance, and impeding this process could jeopardize critical safety decisions made in the moment. Management of fixed anchor maintenance should promote safe replacement without risking the removal of climbing routes.

Prohibiting fixed anchors impedes appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers should enable climbers to explore these spaces while allowing for necessary in-the-moment decisions essential for navigating complex vertical terrains.

Such prohibitions could jeopardize America's rich climbing heritage and potentially erase some of the world's most significant climbing accomplishments. Climbing management policies must safeguard existing routes from being removed.