

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/9/2024 5:06:44 PM

First name: Amanda

Last name: Forrest

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern:

The proposed regulation regarding fixed climbing anchors in wilderness areas should not be adopted. Reasons are as follows.

- 1) Fixed anchors are not installations. They are essential safety measures that have been used by climbers for more than half a century, predating and throughout the entire history of the Wilderness Act.
- 2) The passage of arbitrary prohibitions altering a long-standing usage pattern by a low-impact, human-powered user group is unreasonable. The use of fixed anchors for essential safety has been successfully managed and allowed for decades.
- 3) Prohibiting anchors creates a safety hazard. Climbers have long cared for community safety by inspecting the integrity of anchors, replacing where warranted to prevent injury or loss of life. This decision must be made in the moment, not by a laborious permitting system, lest someone be harmed in the interim.
- 4) Prohibiting anchors restricts reasonable wilderness exploration by limiting in-the-moment decisions made in complex vertical terrain.
- 5) An anchor prohibition damages America's rich climbing legacy, negatively impacting a user group who have been stalwart wilderness advocates and allies.
- 6) 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.

In conclusion, this proposed regulation is misguided and should not be adopted.

Sincerely,

Amanda Forrest