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First name: Gerry

Last name: Chu

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed new guidance policies that aim to prohibit the use of fixed anchors for climbing. This move seems not only unreasonable but also counterproductive to the safety and management practices that have been in place for decades.

For many years, federal agencies have recognized, managed, and authorized the use of fixed anchors for climbing. This long-standing practice has allowed climbers to responsibly enjoy and explore National Forests without significant ecological disruption. The sudden shift in policy undermines the trust and cooperation established between climbers and land managers. It is vital to consider the historical context and the successful management of these practices to date, rather than implementing sweeping restrictions that disregard the established balance between recreational use and conservation.

The proposed restrictions on fixed anchors will inadvertently create significant safety hazards. Fixed anchors are crucial for the safety of climbers, and their regular maintenance is a responsibility diligently undertaken by the climbing community. The maintenance of these anchors is often time-sensitive and requires immediate action to ensure climber safety. Implementing an authorization process for the maintenance or replacement of these anchors could lead to dangerous delays, putting climbers at unnecessary risk. Furthermore, the removal or non-maintenance of these anchors could potentially lead to the closure of numerous climbing routes, further limiting safe and responsible access to these areas.

Thank you for considering my views on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Gerry Chu