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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear US Forest Service,

I am writing today as an active member and friend of the climbing community for the last 10 years, and as an AMGA certified professional rock and alpine climbing guide. I am passionate about both wilderness preservation, fostering a thriving ecosystem even with human impact, and supporting the endearing climbing community, which come hand in hand.

Your new proposed directives and policies regarding fixed climbing anchors are deeply concerning to my community and me personally. Prohibiting fixed anchors in the means your directive lays out is unreasonable, dangerous, and will negatively impact the goals of the park and forest service. Here's why:

The Wilderness Act does not prohibit the installation of fixed climbing anchors. If one presumes that the Wilderness Act prohibits the installation of fixed climbing anchors, they either deeply misunderstand what fixed climbing anchors are, or deeply misunderstand the Wilderness Act. Existing climbing policies will do and have done perfectly well to manage climbing and preserve the wilderness from any climbing impact, which is minimal.

Fixed anchors are an essential component of climbers safety systems. The climbing community appropriately and effectively self manages the installation of fixed anchors, and relies on anchors for their safety and survival. Your proposed policies to prohibit fixed anchors, or to manage the installation of fixed anchors will endanger climbers. Adding unnecessary bureaucratic steps to install fixed anchors will often put climbers, myself, and my close friends into dangerous and unsafe situations!

Further, your proposed policies obstruct the right of wilderness exploration and wilderness enjoyment of the community at large. It will negatively impact America's historic climbing legacy, and will have negative economic impacts for towns surrounding climbing areas and wilderness areas enjoyed by climbers.

Thus your proposed directives and policies to prohibit and minimize fixed climbing anchors are both unreasonable and dangerous. Please, let's reconsider your proposed policies and come to an agreed guidance that supports both of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Eli Spitulnik