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Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express concern for the new interpretation of climbing limitations. Climbing is a legitimate activity deemed by the Wilderness Act and also predates the act for generations in the USA. Responsible recreation is an appropriate use of these lands and climbing is one of those uses. Shifting from climbing being legitimate with limits on fixed anchors to climbing being looked at as illegitimate with exceptions for the activity is a grave shift in how this activity is viewed.

Not being able to make in the moment safety decisions about fixed anchors and having to get an MRA is an impractical, expensive, dangerous, and likely unenforceable process for climbing. The climbing community is in agreement that there should be limits to climbing on certain lands (not disturbing artifacts, staying away from wildlife, overuse of bolts, and not using power tools) are some examples. The extra humans the government will need to enforce these new interpretations is unrealistic when the land agencies already struggle with having enough time, money and people to manage their lands. It is also impractical for each land manager to come up with a unique usage plan for each area.

From a personal standpoint I have been climbing all over America for two decades. Some of the most magical and inspirational moments have come from the beauty and self-reliance of going up a vertical wall and communing with nature. I learn about myself and come back to the front country to reengage with life and work with more vigor. It is a spiritual experience to be on vertical terrain and interacting with the natural world in that way. Once I reach the top of these magical places, fixed anchors (in moderation) are used in the moment to navigate the terrain back down to safety. I always try to tread lightly and use the least amount of installations in order to safely return home and minimize the impact to these wild spaces.

I ask that you reconsider this new interpretation, invite the climbing community back into the conversation with collisions including the American Alpine Club and Access Fund to help draft a more reasonable plan that aligns with the Wilderness Act acknowledging that climbing is a legitimate use of the land.

Thank you for your time and openness to the public's thoughts.