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Comments: Dear USFS,

For my whole life, I have loved and been extremely grateful for the beautiful parks and land we have in our country and for all the work done to protect them for future generations. For this reason, it makes me very sad to see that there's been a proposal from the USFS to prohibit fixed climbing anchors. I believe this is a bad idea for a number of reasons, and I sincerely think there are much better ways to protect the environment while still allowing for recreation and appreciation for our natural resources.

We are very fortunate to have such a strong climbing legacy in America, with amazing world-class climbing areas such as Yosemite, Red Rocks, Red River Gorge, Joshua Tree, Zion, and with local significance to me, Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons. It seems unreasonable to me that climbing with fixed anchors has been allowed in all these areas and throughout the U.S. for decades, but now it will suddenly be prohibited. Having these fixed anchors available has been paramount to amazing climbing achievements in America and has been central to the development of climbing as a sport worldwide as well. Some of the most famous routes in America will never be able to be climbed again if this policy is enacted.

On top of severely damaging climbing's legacy in America, this policy will also make climbing so much more unsafe. Without being able to maintain fixed anchors and make quick decisions regarding fixed anchors, there will certainly be anchors that won't be properly maintained in a timely manner and will result in injury and even death. Fixed anchors are an essential piece of protection for climbing and have revolutionized what people are able to climb safely. So many more accidents and deaths will certainly occur because of this policy.

Finally, fixed anchors provide a way for people to explore and appreciate the natural environment in an appropriate manner, and I feel that prohibiting them is essentially prohibiting ways for people to connect with the natural world. I believe that climbing often brings drastically increased environmental appreciation, spirituality, and environmental activism, and so by limiting the ways people can climb you are limiting opportunities for people to connect with something as fundamental as nature.

I sincerely believe that the harm caused through this policy by directly attacking climbing legacy, safety, and connection with nature will far outweigh any benefits of this policy. Fixed anchors are truly an essential piece of climbing equipment and climbing in America will truly suffer as a result of this policy.

Sincerely,

Kaiden Hinds