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First name: Lisa

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear US Forest Service,

I have been an avid rock climber for the last 33 years, and I am concerned about the changes that are being considered regarding fixed anchors in America's wilderness lands. Climbing has allowed me as a recreational user to enjoy and explore our national parks and wilderness lands.

Fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system. They are used to protect climbers both during the ascent of the rock for safe belays and for safe retreats off the route. They have been used for more than a half century and have not been prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. Prohibiting fixed anchors or removing already existing anchors will create serious safety issues for climbers. Removing these anchors takes away the ability for climbers to explore Wilderness areas safely.

I understand the concerns with the recent increase in climbers and the increased existence of bolt-protected routes, but the answer is not to ban it all together. There can be compromises made to reduce the impact on our natural resources without a rule that entirely bans climbing and fixed anchors. I believe with the input of the Access Fund and climbers; we can come to a reasonable agreement that allows fixed anchors and a climbing management policy that protects existing routes from removal.

I hope you will consider my comments and work with the Access Fund and climbers to protect America's rich climbing legacy.