Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/14/2024 11:06:57 PM First name: Dhane Last name: Knakkergaard Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for your time, and appreciate the opportunity for climbers to weigh in and be heard. I believe this wilderness bolting initiative has all the best intentions, but is sorely misguided and lacks a basic understanding of rock climbing while underplaying the more dire threats to our natural forests. Living in Maine, the White Mountain National Forest and the seven Wilderness areas therein have been instrumental in both my professional and personal life. It was guiding a backpacking trip through the Wild River Wilderness that I was first exposed to rock climbing and the gem that is the Wild River Crag. Bolted prior to the designation of this wilderness area, Wild River is a sport climbing crag unlike any other in the immediate. With tall walls on solid rock offering incredible movement and solitude, I ahve had some of my best summer days at this special place. However, due to its rock type, schist, traditional climbing is not an option at this wonderful destination. The bolts have been grandfathered in, and no additional route development has taken place since. The bolts, however, are aging, and are the only source of protection for all these routes. What is to happen when they fail? Can they be replaced? Will they keep popping off, sending climbers to the ground until no routes exist? This plan offers no solution and keeps responsible, trustworthy stewards from protecting these few resources. Bolts are neccesary in climbing and offer so much less impact that shelters, trails, blazes, and parking lots that service these areas. I respectfully disagree and voice my disapproval of this plan and share my own small, personal story of how this is important to me as a climber. Please seeek education and further input before enacting this.