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Comments: I am writing because I want you to revise your climbing guidance to reflect the practice and precedent of the last 60+ years-that fixed anchors for climbing can be used, replaced, and maintained in designated national wilderness and national forest areas.

I grew up in California and have lived in Connecticut and now Illinois. I have had the good fortune to climb, hike, and explore our national parks, forests, and wilderness areas across the entire country. In the past few years alone, I've hiked among California Redwoods, explored Rocky Mountain National Park, bikepacked from Banff back into Montana, climbed in upstate New York, bikepacked in New Hampshire, canoed and camped along the Connecticut, and climbed in southern Illinois.... and more. Some of these are areas that your proposed policy would affect.

As a climber, I want to ensure the safe and responsible use of fixed anchors in our national wilderness areas and national forests remains available to the climbing community. I respect and advocate for the responsible use of Wilderness areas and believe that fixed anchors can be a component of a sustainable Wilderness experience. Indeed, recent partnerships between climbers and federal agencies in key places such as southern Illinois and Yosemite, suggest we can find ways to do this.

Since childhood I have also been a member of a number of environmental organizations and have researched, published, and taught on environmental politics. So I also appreciate the concerns many express about causing damage to our wilderness areas and the philosophical perspective many have of preserving spaces as untouched by humans. I would be in favor of providing processes that allow for limits on a case-by-case basis, so long as there are also processes that allow for appeals to such limits. But I think the proposed policies are too extreme and in the long run could be a threat to the very thing some may seek to protect. Climbing-and many other human-powered forms of exploration or our natural world-are a profound way that we foster a connection to nature. Those connections play an important role in encouraging a desire to maintain and continue the protection of these areas.

So, please revise your climbing guidance in a way that enables the continued safe and responsible use of fixed anchors, reflecting the long history of precedent that we have.