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Comments: I'm reaching out about the draft policies that would prohibit fixed anchors in Wilderness areas, and to respectfully request that the policies be re-drafted in coordination with the Access Fund and other climber community representatives. As written the regulations will create safety issues for climbers, the vast majority of whom cherish and honor wild areas.

Climbing is our way of engaging with wilderness areas. We value natural areas and leave no trace ethics, much as many other communities who recreate in wilderness areas.

Without fixed anchors, my family wouldn't be able to climb. There are a few problems with the current proposal:

1) Climbing routes are set in the moment, requiring setters to make quick decisions. Requiring climbers to get specific approval for each bolt doesn't acknowledge the way that routes are set. As climbers, we understand that there are particular areas that are inappropriate for climbing routes, due to impacts to animals (ex: rapture closures) or the sacredness of a particular site to indigenous communities. Fixed anchors can coexist with respect for wildlife and indigenous communities. Please update the proposed approach so that the NPS/USFS offers general guidance without trying to manage "down in the weeds."

2) The current proposals create unnecessary obstacles to maintenance of preexisting fixed anchors. The climbing community actually coordinates most of this work itself. For example, our family values the safety of the climbing areas we visit, so we regularly donate to the American Safe Climbing Association to enable community volunteers to fix and replace anchors in a way that is aligned with the values of the particular location where the work is being performed. The proposals outlined would entirely stop this process, which means that I won't have assurance that I can safely climb in areas that have been so important to my family.

As a government employee, I understand the many demands on our government organizations and the challenge of trusting community members to implement regulatory processes. As with any recreational activity, there are occasionally bad actors who give everyone else a bad reputation. But it is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades. If you work with the main organizations representing the vast majority of climbers - the Access Fund, the American Safe Climbing Association, and the American Alpine Club - what you'll see is a culture that honors and cherishes wilderness areas, and minimizing human impact on those areas. Fixed anchors are a critical component of our sport, just as trails are important to backpackers and rods are critical to people who fish.

Thank you for your consideration.