

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/16/2024 11:54:52 PM

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Comments: While I deeply respect the need to create a plan to manage (and regulate) the placement of climbing anchors in Wilderness Areas the present plan is flawed. The history of climbing in America's wilderness long predates the creation of the Wilderness Act and most national parks. Climbing has been growing as a sport and the impact of climbers on wild landscapes has been growing too. However, the current plan will only serve to make climbing less safe and less accessible by restricting climbers' ability to protect themselves when they find inadequate fixed protection on popular routes. This will lead to accidents and haphazard, poorly placed fixed anchors that will quickly become a stain on the pristine mountain environment. It will also concentrate large quantities of people onto so-called 'safe' (well-equipped) routes. This impact will likely be immediate and significant with such routes becoming more crowded, more dangerous, and dirtier.

Rather than choosing abstinence (which will almost certainly not succeed), the Wilderness and National Forests would do much better to choose a harm-reduction approach. Instead of outlawing fixed protection and hamstringing climbers by forcing them to rely on a lengthy bureaucratic process to participate in an activity that is older than the bureaucracy itself, it would be wiser, more sustainable, and far more successful to work with climbers to equip popular routes in an intelligent, safe way that limits climber traffic, accidents and the need for improvised fixed rappel anchors or illegal bolts.

Activities like climbing are an integral part of why we preserved these lands in the first place. It embodies our collective spirit of exploration and adventure. Limiting climbers' ability to use them is anti-American. While climbers can and do have a significant impact on the areas they visit they also have a vested interest in stewardship and preservation of wild landscapes. Please revise this plan and work with us to create an effective strategy that climbers can live with. In its current state, it jeopardizes not only my livelihood as a mountain guide but my safety and very reason for being.