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Title:

Comments: There is no doubt that rock climbing has become a mainstream and important sport in the United States for people of all ages thanks to the long-standing allowance of bolting. I am 68 years old and started climbing when I turned 60. I dabbled in climbing in my younger years however the only way to climb was traditional climbing using pro gear, a highly specialized and more dangerous alternative with higher risk of serious injury, special knowledge and expensive equipment or top roping cliffs, if you could find access that required building anchors or using vegetations to provide an anchor for your rope. Over the years constant use of the trees and tops of cliffs were not always safe or friendly to the cliff tops.

With the advent of bolts and bolted anchors, rock climbing has been made more accessible and safer and an amazing way for people of all ages to enjoy the outdoors and reap the benefits of climbing. It's also better for the cliff tops and vegetation. Permanent anchors are placed in solid rock - not jammed in cracks with pro gear that can further increase the risk of rock fall and erosion.

In America, full of an unhealthy and overweight population and an overburdened healthcare (physical and mental health) system why you would want to prohibit, restrict and over regulate climbing in our National Parks, forests and wilderness areas is beyond me and for what purpose?

Climbing benefits our Musculoskeletal system, Cardiovascular system Balance and coordination and Flexibility not to mention mental health benefits of reducing depression and anxiety, and improving our problem-solving ability as we age.

My physical and mental health has improved significantly since I started climbing, a combination of the physical aspects and the healing ability of being in the great outdoors.

I truly don't understand the logic behind this proposed ban. I get that some of those who bolt rock and provide anchors are irresponsible. I agree that certain sites and areas should be respected and left alone. But the to propose to ban and possibly remove bolts and anchors that have long been allowed (and will create more danger and unsafe situations and deprive people of such a positive and beneficial recreational opportunity to help them cope makes no sense for me. And as far as calling a bolt or anchor an "installation" - bolts and anchors were never meant to be included under that definition.

In Southern Arizona, climbing is part of the community and the economy. Our local climbing organizations are good stewards of the land and work closely with the Forest service and NPS to use common sense and give back to the land through volunteerism, such as trash cleanup and trail maintenance. Our local climbing organization has worked with the Tohono - O'Odham Nation in Pima County to do trail maintenance on their land leading to their sacred Mountain Baboquivari. Maintaining the trail allows them to visit the top of the mountain and provides income because the hikers and climbers pay permit fees to camp. They have allowed bolting on the steeper faces.

Bolts on our crags blend in with the Rock face and are maintained for safety. Is an overburdened forest service and NPS staff really going to have time to approved anchor replacement.

For all of the above reasons, I oppose the proposed regulations for both the NFS and NPS. Thank you