

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/17/2024 9:09:47 PM

First name: Maggie

Last name: Steakley

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing today in regards to the updated wilderness climbing bolting proposals (FSM 2355 Climbing Opportunities #ORMS-3524 and Evaluation and Authorization Procedures for Fixed Anchors and Fixed Equipment in National Park Service Wilderness Areas).

I think these proposed policies are not the correct choice for how to manage wilderness lands for climbing in the US. Fixed anchors are a vital piece of the safety system for climbers recreating on federal government lands. Climbing has been a central part of America's outdoor heritage for generations, and fixed anchors have been allowed during that time. Some of the most famous climbing routes in the US relied on fixed anchors for their first (and all subsequent) ascents. It doesn't make sense to prohibit wilderness climbing anchors now when they have already been successfully managed for decades. Prohibiting these anchors will not stop recreation, but it will create significant safety issues and limit appropriate exploration of our wilderness lands. The fixed anchor policy as described will damage America's climbing heritage and create a management/enforcement nightmare. I encourage your agency to find alternative ways to regulate fixed anchors that does not disrupt the role of climbing as an appropriate use of America's wilderness lands.