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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for extending the public comment period, and for all you and other gov't agencies do to maintain, protect, and manage our public lands.

I have been climbing since I was in my early 20s, growing up with the forests of the Appalachia but new to the sandstone and granite formations of Tennessee and north Georgia. I also, at that time, had the great luck to be within 'striking distance' of the amazing and impressive Red River Gorge and New River Gorge. These were formative years for me as a young adult, and I eventually learned about proper camping etiquette, how to be respectful of other users, as well as Leave No Trace. It is not hyperbole to say rock climbing and these trips to nationally- and state-managed parks, wilderness areas, and the like changed the trajectory of my life and helped shape who I am, how I live, and my values.

Now I call Tucson home and I get to be continually amazed by the mountain ranges of the west. I have been privileged to climb in the Catalinas as my 'home crag' for almost a decade. I have also traveled across the west to climb in extensively in Utah and Wyoming, as well as some climbing in New Mexico and Montana. I have seen well-managed as well as poorly-managed state and national park lands; I understand why it's important know the land we are on and who manages it (USFS, NPS, BLM, state trust land, private inholdings in these spaces, private property outright) so we can navigate respectfully and mindfully to get to the beautiful places in this country.

I work for a local climbing gym and we run a guide service; we have a good relationship with our local managers and have had one for decades now. My partner and I are involved with the local climbing organization, and do regular work replacing old and dangerous anchors in our climbing areas, where folks have been putting up climbs since the 70s. We have met with local USFS and NPS rangers in regards to our local areas and had incredibly honest, helpful, and progressive discussion about our use of public lands. THAT is the solution, slow and tedious though it may seem. This proposal, on the other hand, would crush our local climbing community's ability to keep track of and maintain old hardware, and in turn endanger all of the users who have flocked here for decades: local climbers, folks from Phoenix and Flagstaff, as well as all the snowbirds and travelers who come to southern Arizona in the fall and winter months to enjoy these lands

I understand the desire for management for recreation on our public lands, but I also know how overwhelmed and understaffed most government agencies in these roles currently are - and have consistently been. A blanket proposal like this simply does not make sense, just as a 'one size fits all' approach never works anywhere else. This proposal does not align with longstanding previous interpretations of climbing anchors and equipment. Furthermore, it will eradicate thoughtful practices and policies that make sense for the area that are the result of DECADES hard work and communications between land managers and their respective climbing communities (as well as local climbing organizations).

Last - and most important, I would argue - this proposal seems completely infeasible to enact on many levels. Funding and staffing with any real effectiveness are not addressed in any way.

I will refrain from copy-pasting talking points from my local climbing organization, although I agree with all of them, as they are sensible and salient to this discussion.

Thank you for taking the time to read through. I am happy to speak with anyone, as well as volunteer my time to communicate with and help our local land managers keep America's National Parks, Forests, and Wilderness areas accessible, enjoyable, beautiful, and protected!