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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello. To begin, I'd like to thank the USFS for providing a portal for the public to submit their input. I am also considerably thankful for the hard work, care, and love Forest Service personnel have done for more than a century for the land cherished and enjoyed by many.

I am writing in regard to the FSM 2355 directive. After reading it, I can see a lot of work and effort has gone into understanding climbing intricacies, climbing opportunities, and for climbing regulation on NFS and Wilderness land. Honestly, I do agree that is reasonable in its scope. Climbers, outdoorsmen & women, Rangers, and Supervisors mutually want to preserve the natural-quality of Wilderness areas, as well as other land that mutually sees our presence.

Although I am not well-versed in law and the writing of policies, climbers like myself are well-versed(so to speak) in climbing and in development of climbing routes and areas. We truly cherish and care for these piles of rock, as well as for the bolts installed in them that we entrust our lives to; for them to be in good up-to-date condition, and only in places where they are necessary.

I do not question the fact that Forest Service employees are underpaid, overworked, and told to make due with an already limited budget. I can empathize with such conditions being that I am an arborist in an area that faces similar struggles, after three entire towns/cities in my county have burned to the ground, and we desperately need forest management here too.

Now there will be an additional expectation for Forest Service Rangers and Supervisors to make a "climbing management plan", it's no question it will be another matter on your already full plate. And then the follow-up work involved with assessing submitted permits. It could seem like a lot, and maybe something to "place on the back burner" so to speak, or possibly disregard in favor of preserving the ultimate character of wilderness areas. Meanwhile, climbers will still visit and climb where they are allowed to, and there will be situations where fixed anchors & installations will require maintenance and/or necessary additions.

I hope there is sympathy and understanding on behalf of the Forest Service for climbers' situation, but also understanding for our concern regarding the FSM 2355 proposed directive.

To be blunt, the FSM 2355 looks nice on paper, yet there is strong concern about how well it will be implemented in a healthy functioning way where the Forest Service is pleased as well as the climbers enjoying Wilderness areas. Climbers and those that rely on fixed anchors are collectively concerned of "redtape" and "wait-times" ultimately resulting in a future "prohibition" of using/maintaining/installing fixed anchors. Within the prerogative that FS Rangers and Supervisors hold to determine if routes and their bolts will receive continued use, also lies the fear of their ultimate fate hinging on these individuals.

I'm pretty certain that many climbers will simply ignore the law if they don't see folks getting MRAs completed and permits granted fairly quickly.

My only real plea here is for the United States Forest Service, Regional Foresters, Forest Supervisors, and District Rangers to please please please work along with us climbers & climbing organizations to help streamline the processes. To see how we may be of more assistance, lighten your burden, and be a compliment to the positions & responsibilities you hold.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for taking care of such areas I have enjoyed as a young child. And thank you for your consideration of this climber and nature-loving individual.

Sincerely, M.C.