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First name: Laurelyn

Last name: Sayah

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I urge the USFS to not ban fixed anchors in the wilderness as has been proposed, and to instead engage the climbing community (great starting points are the Access Fund and American Alpine Club) to help find the best solutions for particular identified problems. Climbers know the details of climbing better than anyone, are by the nature of their sport creative problem solvers, and are usually passionate stewards of the wilderness and environmental places where they recreate. Let's work together to correctly identify problems, opportunities, and best practices. I believe that banning fixed anchor maintenance and development would denigrate optimal visitor enjoyment of public lands, and therefore also our national culture and future, in addition to the more serious potential of causing major safety issues.

I could write volumes, and many people have, regarding how climbing helps individuals become the best versions of themselves, heal in various ways, grow community, exalt human capabilities, and strengthen our nation... but instead i will cut to the chase and just proclaim that i believe it does. I will share that i have witnessed several species of primates clearly participate in social climbing activities similar to human climbing (without specialized equipment of course), and I believe that climbing is a natural and beneficial way for humans to move with our planet. Humans also climb, or move with all our limbs, before we learn to walk, it is just very low angle and referred to as crawling. I hold that climbing is an important aspect of a vibrant life with liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and thus an appropriate use of our public lands.

I am an experienced mountaineer in all forms of the art including climbing rocks, ice and snow. The inspiration to volunteer as a Firefighter/EMT for the past 22 years grew out of my mountaineering ethic and a love for my country, which also grew from experiencing the country through climbing in our majestic landscapes. If i had not first become a climber, i would not have become an emergency responder either. I am a supporter of both the Access Fund and the AAC, and available to give more detail on my experiences and help find the best solutions in any way that i can. Thank you