

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/22/2024 10:25:26 AM

First name: Kyle

Last name: Gordon

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Esteemed Stewards of Our National Forests,

Let's be abundantly clear: Fixed protection in rock climbing is as vital as oxygen is to life. Without it, the practice of rock climbing becomes not just impractical, but virtually impossible. It's like asking a fish to survive out of water or a bird to fly without wings. Climbing routes, which have been a source of challenge, joy, and accomplishment for countless enthusiasts, will become inaccessible relics, unreachable and untouchable.

From an environmental standpoint, fixed protection is the cornerstone of sustainable climbing practices. It allows for minimal impact on the natural environment, focusing wear and tear on established routes rather than dispersing it unpredictably. Without it, we risk causing irreparable damage as climbers may resort to more harmful practices in an effort to pursue their passion.

This proposed rule would not just be a blow to the climbing community; it would be a blow to the spirit of exploration and adventure that is a hallmark of our relationship with the great outdoors. Climbing teaches us about resilience, respect for nature, and the joy of challenging our limits. To strip away the means to safely engage in this pursuit is to deny a fundamental expression of human connection to nature.

This proposal is also RACIST. Non-white climbers have less resources to obtain and experience with traditional climbing gear which will be required when bolts become challenging to place and maintain. Your new rules will effectively exclude black, brown and indigenous people from recreating in vertical environments, thus creating segregated outdoor spaces.

In conclusion, I urge you, with the utmost gravity and concern, to reconsider this proposal. The ramifications of banning fixed protection are far-reaching and devastating. Preserve the integrity of rock climbing. Uphold our right to safely and responsibly enjoy the vertical wilderness that is an integral part of our national heritage.

With deep concern and unshakeable conviction,
Kyle Gordon