

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/24/2024 6:58:53 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

It is extremely pertinent that fixed anchors are allowed for climbers, as prohibiting them will create safety issues, erase rich climbing history, and ruin climbing culture.

There are several types of climbing: multi-pitch, sport, big wall, aid, and top rope, just to name a few. All of these climbs very frequently require the use of fixed anchors in order to be successfully completed in a safe manner. To remove them would almost guarantee injury or death to most climbers who would attempt these routes.

Furthermore, the United States of America has a rich climbing history and culture that has existed for decades solely because of fixed anchors. America has many innovative and historic climbs that require fixed anchors: El Capitan, which is home to some of the most innovative routes of all time; The Diamond, located on the huge climbing and hiking attraction, Long's Peak; and Moonlight Buttress, just to name a few. That does not even mention the thousands - if not, tens of thousands - of other routes throughout the country that climbers of all levels would be able to safely attempt only if fixed anchors are present. There are hundreds of thousands of people, both in America and outside of it, who visit just to climb many of these routes. Prohibiting fixed anchors would erase many of these historic routes and destroy a huge part of American climbing culture. Furthermore, it would diminish tourist rates and, hence, revenue for many of the towns that surround these historic climbing areas.

As a climber, I find that respecting and preserving the environment is of the utmost importance to what I do and love. There are hundreds of thousands of other climbers and climbing organizations who feel similarly. In fact, the American Alpine Club has made preserving the environment the main focus of their policy, focusing on goals such as protecting public lands, ensuring lands are open for human-powered recreation, safeguarding fragile mountain and climbing environments, and combating climate change. They have realized that "[t]he future of climbing, and all outdoor recreation, depends on a bounty of healthy open spaces and the ability to visit and enjoy them," and have even written an official policy strategy document that outlines how they plan to protect the environment so that they can, in turn, ensure the "future of climbing." (All of this information can be accessed on their website here: <https://americanalpineclub.org/conservation>) The Access Fund shares a similar vision, which is for climbers to "get inspired to protect and care for the places [they] climb". They also advocate for public lands, build trails, and build climbing areas. (All of this information can be accessed on their website here: <https://www.accessfund.org/our-work>)

Why work against climbers and huge climbing organizations when we desire to protect the very nature that we love exploring and climbing? Instead, why not work with us in order to make dreams of preserving the environment, such as those of the American Alpine Club and The Access Fund, a reality? If fixed anchors are a concern to the environment, then we should find an alternative solution by proposing better standards and/or implementing stricter enforcement as opposed to completely banning them; moreover, the rock climbing community should have a voice in what the standards are for safe and responsible environmental impact while climbing, as well as how these standards should be enforced. Prohibiting all fixed anchors would deny many Americans the life, liberty, and happiness that we find in climbing.

Thank you for reading this message. I hope that you will consider stopping the prohibition of fixed anchors.

Sincerely,

Miranda Schreiber