

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/24/2024 5:48:19 PM

First name: Ziad

Last name: Shahin

Organization:

Title:

Comments: It is my hope that these policies regarding the regulation of rock climbing in national park space is voted down.

Rock climbing has long been a foundational pillar of the use of the natural space in the United States and has been essential in not only broadening national awareness of these spaces but also solidifying these spaces as part of the identity of the United States. While the placement of bolts and fixed anchors does represent an impact on the natural landscape, there is no activity which involves the interaction of humans and nature that does not impact the natural landscape. Hikers and backpackers require trails dug, rocks and earth moved, fire rings placed, safety cables placed (Half Dome, Angel's Landing, etc.); mountain bikers require similar trail systems, fishermen and women pull animals from their habitat, leave fishing line and lures, and often necessitate the delivery of fish to alpine water bodies. This said humans who go to the outdoors can act as stewards of the nature in which they are enjoying in ways which can be equal or greater than the impact they create. It is essential for the preservation of our natural space that we encourage safe and productive recreation of our natural spaces as rock climbing does. As such the proposals here represent a major safety issue which will create undo risk to rock climbers attempting to safely recreate in the parks. It limits the ability of climbers to explore and in fact penalizes exploration. It creates an unnecessary burden for land managers to make appropriate case-by-case decisions on climbing's impact on specific areas. Finally the language suggests removal of existing hardware which could eliminate historic climbing routes and areas which are a major part of the history of the national park system and would increase traffic on existing routes creating further natural impact.