

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/28/2024 2:22:21 PM

First name: Angela

Last name: Gerstner

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Fixed anchors are a crucial component of climbers' safety systems and are not considered prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. Adhering to established climbing policies, which have allowed the judicious use of fixed anchors for over fifty years, will better preserve the Wilderness character while accommodating primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing.

It is unreasonable for federal agencies to introduce new guidance policies nationwide that prohibit Wilderness climbing anchors, especially when they have sanctioned, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades.

The prohibition of fixed anchors poses safety concerns by creating unnecessary barriers to regular maintenance, a responsibility shouldered by the climbing community. Vital safety decisions often require immediate action, and any authorization process should not hinder these decisions. Managing fixed anchor maintenance should encourage safe replacements without risking the removal of climbing routes.

The prohibition of fixed anchors hampers the proper exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers should permit climbers to explore the Wilderness with the flexibility for in-the-moment decisions essential in navigating complex vertical terrain.

Banning fixed anchors jeopardizes America's rich climbing legacy and could erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy should prioritize the protection of existing routes from removal.