Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/28/2024 4:39:09 PM First name: Frank Last name: Madden Organization:

## Title:

Comments: I've recently made time to learn more about this new initiative for protecting the lands maintained by the National Forest Service. I sat in on a zoom conference held by the Access Fund as well as attending a local meeting on the topic during my stay this winter in Flagstaff. I learned a great deal and although I'm a firm believer of conservation and management of these natural resources for the public to continue to use for so many more years to come, I feel the steps that are being taken may be going to far. In a time where we need to be encouraging more and more people, adults, and especially young kids to get outdoors to lead healthier more active lives, this new policy will stand in the way of that. Hindering or making illegal the use of permanent anchor equipment is devasting to the activity of sport rock climbing. The easiest and lowest entry fee into the world of rock climbing itself. The way most new climbers start. This activity gets more people outdoors than fishing at this point. "Although I do love me some fishing." Sport climbing is one of the fastest growing sports in the country, and this policy stands to potentially cripple that important growth. I do feel the need to have better management and even certain regulations to help this activity continue to grow, but this new policy is detrimental to the outdoor enjoyment of so many people. If they can't get into the outdoors to learn more about how amazing it is and gain a love for protecting it, then far less people will even be out there to enjoy it in the first place. It seems backwards to me. The banning of anchors/bolts, just seems wrong. And it seems like a wrong direction for the National Forest Service to be moving in. And honestly it could lead to some potentially life threatening situations for climbers. We can all learn to use the land together and share the wonderful outdoor resources without the banning of fixed hardware, better management and conservation, yes. Absolutely! But banning. Sounds like another round of prohibition, and that didn't work out very well either.