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Comments: Hello,

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I am a 26 year old women from Salt Lake City, UT, and rock climbing has been an integral part of my life for the last 14 years.

While I agree that the impact of climbers in wilderness areas has grown immensely in recent years, banning the existence and maintenance (without approval) of fixed gear in these regions will severely increase the danger of rock climbing and undermines decades of precedent which have permitted such fixtures. Fixed anchors and bolts are essential parts of rock climbing, and in many cases are necessary for a safe descent and/or are necessary for the route's existence. These fixtures also require routine maintenance, and a failure to do this in appropriate time will put many people's lives in danger. In addition, these "installations" are physically small and have a minimal impact on the surroundings- far less than the impact of hikers, mountain bikers, and other outdoor recreators. Rock climbers' largest impact in wilderness areas is not what we leave on the walls, but the amount of people participating in the sport and walking around on their way to and from the rock itself. Instead of banning the placement of fixed gear, I suggest that more regulations are enforced in order to limit the number of climbers.

Furthermore, allowing fixed gear to exist only if it has passed inspection and deemed "minimal" will create a bottleneck of requests unable to be answered, which unfairly prevents our right to wilderness exploration. This is also a highly subjective topic that has no clear answer, one that the climbing community itself cannot agree upon.

In short, making fixed gear illegal will severely increase the danger of a sport that many people enjoy, and it will destroy routes that hold great cultural significance in the climbing community. Please consider other options of regulating climbers' impacts in federal land instead. Climbing is a huge part of my life and the lives of many others, and this regulation would severely impact my ability to participate in an activity I love.

Thanks again for your time.

Elise