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First name: Erica

Last name: Trebesch

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

Please continue to allow fixed hardware for rock climbing on our public lands, in wilderness areas, in National Parks, and throughout the Forest Service lands.

Rock climbing is a well-accepted and celebrated activity on National Forests, with routes established well before the 1964 Wilderness Act. Numerous National Forests and National Parks celebrates rock climbing on their websites.

Fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system and are not prohibited "installations" under the 1964 Wilderness Act. Following existing climbing policies that allow judicious use of fixed anchors for more than a half century will do more to protect Wilderness and Park character while providing for primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing.

It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness and National Park climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will create safety issues by imposing unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors, a responsibility undertaken by the climbing community. Critical safety decisions often must be made in the moment and any authorization process should not impede those decisions. Fixed anchor maintenance needs to be managed in a way that incentivizes safe anchor replacement and does not risk the removal of a climbing route.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will threaten America's rich climbing legacy and could erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy needs to protect existing routes from removal, and support expeditious maintenance of fixed anchors.

USFS and NPS locations need to begin or continue working with the local climbing community as an essential part in maintaining climber safety and promoting outdoor recreation.

The climbing community, on local levels throughout the United States, and nationally as a collective, have been effectively collaborating with the various National Forest and National Parks for decades to improve public lands and steward climbing areas via dozens of volunteer efforts including trail maintenance, climbing area erosion control work, litter cleanup, graffiti removal, fixed anchor maintenance, and raptor monitoring.

It is my belief, that rock climbers as a collective are not only great stewards of public lands, but I also feel we are the best of any user group at giving back our time and money to preserve and better the areas we frequent.

USFS and NPS locations need to begin or continue working with the local climbing community as an essential part in maintaining climber safety and promoting outdoor recreation.

Thank you and please continue to work with climbers so that we can continue to safely recreate on our public lands.