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First name: Gene

Last name: Smith

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please do not pass legislation that would make it illegal to maintain and replace existing bolts and fixed anchors on established climbing routes in Wilderness lands. This will protect climber safety and prevent serious injury and death, and it will enable people to continue to enjoy Wilderness areas through safe climbing.

While I am mostly concerned about legislation that would prohibit maintenance and replacement of fixed hardware on existing climbing routes in Wilderness areas, please consider legislation that would provide regulations around the safe placement of bolts and fixed hardware on newly established climbing routes in Wilderness areas in way that promotes protection of Wilderness lands and environments and the safety of climbers.

Reasons:

1. Fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system and are not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. 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 climbing routes.
2. It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades.
3. Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless and until analyses determine climbing should be restricted to protect cultural and natural resources.