Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/29/2024 6:39:03 PM First name: Colin Last name: Pollard Organization:

## Title:

Comments: I am commenting today to urge the Forest Service to reconsider its proposed policy with regards to fixed anchor placement and approval. As a utilizer of the national forest for recreation, and occasional climbing, I have a vested interest in both preserving public land, and providing responsible guidance with regards to access and exploration. I see rock climbing, and specifically sport climbing - in most cases requiring fixed anchor installation - as a key aspect of exploration, and a valuable use of public land. Over the course of the last 50 years, many anchor installations have occurred in an ad hoc manner, where individuals have performed first ascents of routes, placed anchors as they saw fit, and maintained them as communities, all without oversite of the governing organizations of the land. In principle, this is a scary thought and seems ripe for abuse. However, when put into practice, it is not as much of a wild west as it seems on paper. Routes are almost entirely bolted and maintained by organizations that have intense passion for the upkeep and preservation of these lands. From my experience through the Wasatch front, these routes have been passion projects for environmentalists that take care of the land, and in my experience the odds of finding a questionable placement or reckless use of the land has been extremely low. The fact of the matter is that for years climbing and placement of fixed anchors has been an important part of public access, and has successfully self-regulated in a way that has yielded a good safety record, and fairly minimal abuse to the natural landscape. I would highly recommend retooling this proposal such that there are more general fixed anchor placement guidelines, but not go so far as to require a case by case approval of each route. Doing so will only impose a large onus on the Forest Service, and decrease accessibility and safety to the public.