

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/29/2024 6:54:23 PM

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Comments: I'm concerned by the new proposals put forth regarding fixed anchors. Fixed anchors are a necessary part of a climbing safety system. Climbers require these to safely explore wilderness areas. Fixed anchors have been allowed in wilderness areas for decades and encouraged scores of new climbers to discover the outdoors. Changing those rules not only endangers the safety of climbers but also limits the places available to climb to existing areas that may not support the increased traffic as the sport expands.

Fixed anchors that already exist in wilderness areas require maintenance and replacement in order to maintain their safe and functional use. To limit the ability to maintain existing anchors places an undue safety risk on climbers and first responders.

Climbers regularly explore new areas and ways through vertical terrain. Limiting their options to safely navigate such terrain puts undue risk and severely limits access to public lands.

We have a legacy of climbing in this country that dates back over a century. Failing to maintain existing infrastructure threatens to erase a part of that history and the legacy that climbing has created.

Climbers tend to be good stewards of the land and some of the fiercest advocates for preservation of the natural places. Limiting access to wilderness lands does a disservice both to the climbing community and to those that wish to raise awareness of the need to preserve wild spaces and the damaging effects of climate change.