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First name: Casey

Last name: Turner

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear USFS Liaison,

As a long time climber, mountaineer, and outdoor enthusiast I am writing to address my concerns in the upcoming legislation for anchor initiatives and bolts in wilderness and non-wilderness climbing areas across the country.

Here are a few points, I would like to bring for discussion:

*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.

Within my local climbing area, climbing advocates work together with various land manager groups to maintain safe and accessible climbing areas with minimal impact to the climbing area. This includes working with USFS, DNR, and Fish and Wildlife authorities.

*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.

Local climbing areas and states have organizations that fund anchor replacement initiatives to improve overall climbing safety throughout their area. Members of these organizations at times will replace an anchor as they find unsafe anchors as anchors age over time. Through the years material science and use of improved anchors has changed.

*Prohibiting fixed anchors obstructs appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers need to allow climbers to explore Wilderness in a way that permits in-the-moment decisions that are necessary when navigating complex vertical terrain.

*Fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system and are not prohibited "installations" under the 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 character while providing for primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing.

Thank you for your time in this very important land use matter. Please help us continue to climb, recreate, and explore these areas in a safe and sustainable manner.

Casey Turner