Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/29/2024 10:08:53 PM First name: Bowen Last name: Schwanke Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hey, I am a former climbing ranger for the Bighorn National Forest and current wilderness ranger for the Tongass National Forest, specifically the Tracy-Arm Fords Terror Wilderness. I am also a climber and advocate for our public lands. The bolt prohibition is misguided and will not help to preserve our public lands. Rock climbing is a recognized and accepted form of recreational activity under the wilderness act. A bolt does not impede Wilderness character when done properly it also always for safe climbing practices. I recognize that sport climbing practices when applied to Wilderness does not align with Wilderness character. However traditional forms of climbing, placing your own removable gear, is the cleanest form of climbing. Traditional climbing still needs the use of bolts when cracks aren't available and to allow for a safe decent when rappelling. Bolts are a sustainable form of climbing protection when compared to pitons and slings. Pitons degrade the rock overtime and need to be replaced much more frequently which in turn causes the degradation of the rock. Slings are an eye sore, climbers tend to add more slings then replace the old weathered sling, which eventually degrade and trash the wilderness. Bolts are superior in this respect. Please don't put a stop on bolts because it will cause even more degradation to Wilderness. I am a longtime climber and Wilderness ranger with the utmost respect for our public lands. If there is someone who understands this issue in depth, it is me. So I urge you to reconsider the bolt prohibition.