

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2024 5:20:13 PM

First name: Brian

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: All,

I am contacting you today to comment about the proposed fixed anchor ban. I am an American tax payer, and an avid outdoorsman who engages in a number of types of outdoor recreation, including, Fly fishing, backpacking, hunting, alpine climbing, sport climbing, trad climbing, snowboarding, mountain biking, and gravel biking. The diversity of my recreation I believe gives me a well-rounded view of the purposes and value of wilderness in the United States, and it is therefore my opinion that the reasoning behind this bolt ban is beyond absurd.

To begin, fixed anchors are essential pieces of a climbers' safety system, and cannot be considered prohibited installation under the wilderness act, additionally climbing policies has allowed judicious use of fixed anchors for more than a half century and will continue to protect Wilderness character while providing for primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing.

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.

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.

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.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will threaten America's rich climbing legacy and could erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy needs to protect existing routes from removal.

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.

Additionally, it seems rather obvious to me that this proposal will be met with such fierce opposition that climbers will likely continue to bolt, but without oversight. Requiring them to keep there climbing confidential, and possibly further endangering their lives.

Thanks,

Dillon