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First name: Sarah

Last name: Britton

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I'm very concerned about the proposed Climbing Management Plan. I've been climbing for 10 years and climbing has always been an important part of my life, including my physical and mental health, my relationships, and my community. My primary concern is about safety. Permanent climbing gear is essential to the safety of outdoor climbing. There are many areas where "traditional" (removal) gear is not feasible due to the type of rock and thus people have bolted the rock. Of course, these bolts don't last forever and it is crucial that they are replaced and updated as needed. Climbing is such an important part of people's lives that people will continue to climb on these routes no matter what and if the gear is not regularly checked and updated it will become very, very dangerous. To not allow the update and replacement of permanent gear that is already established in climbing areas is a gross oversight of public safety that will undoubtedly result in tragic climbing accidents.

My secondary concern is about stifling the important role that outdoor climbing plays not only in people's lives but in protecting our outdoor recreation areas. National and local climbing organizations play pivotal roles in not just bolting but also stewardship. I have participated in activities such as trail maintenance, trash pick up, and graffiti removal. These are activities that have a positive influence on the broader community. Climbers take stewardship very seriously and thus developing climbing areas is not incompatible with wilderness areas. In fact, many important climbing areas were established in areas before they were designated as wilderness areas. It is important to keep this history in mind.

I think it is totally reasonable for climbers to work with national agencies to establish sensible bolting guidelines. But I think that the upkeep current bolted lines has to be allowed for the safety of everyone and for the continued enjoyment of the sport. Climbing is so important for so many people and the chance to climb outside in wilderness areas is so special that it inspires people to become stewards of that land, as evidenced by the numerous climbing organizations that do so.