Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2024 6:24:44 PM

First name: TYLER Last name: BARNES

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a climber, people often ask me about the safety aspect of what I do. I tell them all about the many measures we take to mitigate the inherent risks of climbing. A major aspect of climbing safety are fixed anchors. For over half a century fixed anchors have been used to facilitate Wilderness climbing as intended by the Wilderness act. It would be unreasonable for federal agencies to turn back time and create new policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors when the current policy has served us so well for so long. What's more, prohibiting such anchors would be a major safety issue by creating needless obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors. Management of fixed anchors should be done in a way that incentivizes safe maintenance and preservation of climbing routes. In practice, climbing is filled with in-the-moment decisions that are inherent to so many outdoor pursuits-land managers need to understand this (I think most already do) and work with climbers to enhance exploration of Wilderness areas. Looking to the future, new routes are an important part of our community. Maintaining opportunities for new anchors, barring the presence of cultural and natural resources, is necessary for any climbing management policy. Restricting such activities is not only unenforceable, it will create confusion between land managers and climbers. Prohibiting fixed anchors in Wilderness areas threatens the rich history of climbing in our country and raises substantial safety concern for the future of climbing.