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First name: Aspen

Last name: Hughes

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear USDA Forest Service,

First, thank you for all the hard work and dedicated your department has continued to do since it's creation. The access to national forests and USDA land is something that more and more people are treasuring every year, and the hard work you all put into it shows and is appreciated.

I would like to provide feedback on the following proposal to ensure that everyone has continued access to the forests and other USDA land for all of their favorite activities in the safest most equitable manner possible.

Fixed anchors are an essential part to climbing safety, they ensure a safe way for the climber to both know the route has ended and lower back to the ground. Without fixed anchors, what could have been a fairly safe climb can turn more dangerous, causing unnecessary risk and end up costing much more financial wise with a higher risk of a rescue being required. Additionally, the environmental impact and appearance of fixed anchors are both considerably less than with temporary anchors or slings.

Restricting any new establishment of new routes to a definition of "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness land without proper evidence or hypothesis that they are detrimental to the area is hypocritical. In the same way that hunters are allowed access to certain areas with restrictions and seasons, I believe climbing can also follow guidelines set by the forest service to ensure both stewardship of the land and equal use.

This policy of fixed anchors has been in practice for decades and can stand up to the test of time. Allowing fixed anchors reduces unnecessary risks for both the staff, visitors, and climbers.

Thank you for your consideration and time in this manner.