

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2024 8:06:54 PM

First name: Patrick

Last name: McHugh

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern,

I am writing to oppose the proposed guidelines for fixed anchor management. In general, I believe the proposal is too restrictive. This will unnecessarily discourage exploration and enjoyment of our wilderness areas.

Fixed anchors are necessary to protect the climbers exploring and enjoying these areas. Although the proposal does not ban fixed anchors entirely, the review process under consideration will effectively prohibit any meaningful installation and maintenance of anchors. Land managers are already stretched thin, and do not have the resources to maintain or expand our current levels of climbing access.

I sympathize with land managers who are the professional (and sometimes voluntary) stewards of these areas. I understand that there are sometimes problems associated with fixed anchors in wilderness areas. I support some regulation of climbing access, especially in cases where the land needs to be protected for cultural or environmental reasons. However, serious consideration should be given to recreational interest. Climbing can be a transformational activity, and tends to increase the climber's respect and appreciation for their surrounding environment. Many of our wilderness' most devoted stewards are climbers. Please consider a less restrictive policy that allows more liberal use of fixed anchors.

Thanks for your consideration,
Patrick McHugh (Salt Lake City)