Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2024 9:01:45 PM First name: Donald Last name: DeBlieux Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to provide comments on the proposal to prohibit fixed climbing anchors in wilderness areas. I have been a rock climber for over 40 years and fixed anchors have been a critical to my enjoyment and safety while climbing. Climbing has been recognized as legitimate use of wilderness areas and banning fixed anchors will essentially make climbing impossible in many of our most iconic climbing areas many of which I have climbed in such as Yosemite and Joshua Tree. Climbing and fixed anchors have been managed effectively by the climbing community and land managers for decades. This new proposal seems, to me, to be an answer in search of a problem. I live in Utah and climb in the Wasatch Mountains. Many of my favorite climbing areas such as Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons have thousands of climbing routes in areas deemed by the USFS to be wilderness, yet these are located close to busy roads in areas visited by millions annually. A few small pieces of metal hidden on the cliffs do not detract from the recreational experiences of the non-climbing visitors. In my experience, climbers are some of the best environmental stewards and making it more difficult for us to pursue climbing would be detrimental to the protection and management of our public lands. Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comment.