

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2024 10:00:49 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I started climbing in 1966 in the Wasatch Mountains and I continue to climb regularly. I've climbed extensively throughout the West, and I'm especially familiar with Bridger-Teton, Shoshone, Sawtooth, Challis, Wasatch, and Inyo National Forests. I've done many climbs in legislated Wilderness Areas, in lands administered as Wilderness and in National Parks. Additionally, I've established many new routes, particularly the Wind River Mountains and Grand Teton National Park.

Because of climbing, I've come to value natural areas above all others, and I spend a lot of time in National Forests, pursuing both climbing and non-climbing activities. I am a long-time member of conservation organizations such as Save Our Canyons. I am very familiar with the public lands and all the issues involved with the proposed regulation of fixed anchors.

I'm concerned that the proposed regulations represent a dramatic shift in policy to address a problem that hardly exists. I see no need or benefit resulting from the proposed regulations. Fixed anchors have been used in forests and parks for many decades and their impact has been minimal. Additionally, they have prevented accidents by providing a relatively safe path away from dangerous terrain, and a means of escape in an emergency. And fixed anchors have prevented resource degradation by providing a means to keep people on solid rocky terrain, away from vegetation and easily erodible soil.

I have no desire to see bolt-intensive sport climbing venues appear in Wilderness Areas, I don't think the proposed regulations are the proper way to prevent them. Regulations that define all fixed anchors as illegal installations do not address the issue of intensive bolting, but instead seriously inhibit the type climbing and anchors that have been common in our Wilderness Areas since long before the passage of the Wilderness Act. The proposed regulations are inefficient and miss the mark and would be very difficult to enforce. Climbing and climbing anchors are already subjected to reasonable oversight.

Any new regulations to manage fixed anchors should maintain the decades-old status quo wherein the placement of fixed anchors is allowed. The proposed regulations in question here are bad ones and should not be adopted.