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First name: Evan

Last name: Belknap

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear USFS:

My name is Evan Belknap. I have been a rock climbing guide off and on in New Mexico for over a decade. I have spent innumerable hours in wilderness areas in the state guiding and honing my skills. I have put up first ascents in the state, being very mindful of my personal impact on to wildlife, rock, and other users. I only put in bolts where they are absolutely necessary to preserve my life and those who wish to try my routes. The bolts I have placed are camouflaged so that anyone who was not a climber would never, ever see them. I also respect and care for any closures due to falcon nesting or cultural importance, as do my friends and colleagues. I have worked for nearly every guiding company in NM. My bosses have been pioneers of climbing in the state, who have gone about putting in routes with great respect and care, and through their hard work and vision, NM has become an amazing state to be a recreational climber. Much of the climbing here is world class.

A bolting ban in wilderness is a disastrous concept for both guiding and the safe pursuit of being a recreational climber in NM. It puts our community, a very environmentally conscious group of people, at risk of personal harm. It also makes guiding, which is already a ridiculously dangerous profession, even more dangerous for guides.

Please do not do this!

All my best,

Evan Belknap