

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/31/2024 1:23:12 AM

First name: Sam

Last name: Untersee

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I spend a lot of my free time climbing on public lands and in Wilderness areas. some of my fondest memories are from the Wind River Range. I think this prohibition so to speak on fixed anchors is an overstep that ultimately will lead to confusion, safety issues, and less folks enjoying our public lands in the way that I and many others before me have. Fixed anchors have been judiciously managed in Wilderness areas for a over half a century and as far as I am aware have not caused any issues. Increasing the management of them as such will lead to unaware climbers potentially having to rappel on bad gear that is no longer allowed to be maintained or replaced. It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades. I understand that Wilderness areas are "untrammelled by man" where "man himself is just a visitor who does not remain" but how much impact do a few bolts on existing lines here and there affect the ecosystem beyond the impact that the occasional trail sign and bridge have? Additionally the restriction upon "fixed" gear such as a sling or bail nut or cam could lead to parties who should be bailing for their safety not being able to. Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless and until analyses determine climbing should be restricted to protect cultural and natural resources. I am all for minimizing my impact in Wilderness Areas but this conversation could lead to a significant hit to the history of climbing in the US with the erasure of existing lines, create barriers to maintenance of said existing lines, and confusion about the legality of bailing off routes. Please consider the comments you are receiving and do not take action to could lead to less appropriate enjoyment of our public lands.