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Title:

Comments: I have enjoyed our wild places for most of my life. As we come to this opportunity to improve our legislation for current and future care of these natural resources, I believe it is critical to get it right.

First of all, it is important that access to these special places be available to all. I am already deeply concerned about the increasing cost to visit these natural places that belong to all of us. The entry fee to visit them already excludes many people.

During Covid, I understood the attempts to control access through timed entry and the like but I feel it is time for that program also to come to an end.

I recognize that our parks are currently over loved and that I contribute to that problem. The good news is that when I go to enjoy these wild places, I like to get up high and far from everyone. Sometimes I use fixed anchors to come back down safely.

I think about the Cables Route on Longs Peak, or Halfdome, or the summit of the Grand Teton. I wonder what will become of iconic hikes such as Angels Landing in Zion for instance. Without some sort of fixed anchors in places such as these, climbers will be leaving any number of different things, some safe, some not- sometimes in haste in order to get down from a storm.

It is far better to have these clutch points monitored by guides and mountaineering organizations. This will also cut down on the need and costs of rescues.

Here are several other important details that need some careful consideration.

It is important not to make laws that are difficult or impossible to enforce. Already, the people who look after our National Parks and National Forest lands are stretched to their limit, and they simply do not need more to do.

Fixed anchors are essential for safety and have been used for nearly 100 years.

Restricting fixed anchors impacts the access and is a safety concern for legitimate outdoor participants.

Parking lots, trails, picnic and camping areas, signage, boat rides, horse trails, mountain biking etc. Are permissible and could be argued to have a much higher impact on our wild places.

The use of fixed anchors also need not be a free for all either. In my judgement as a climber for over 30 years, it would be more cost effective, more appropriate and sustainable to have local climbing organizations and communities collectively decide what fixed anchors are necessary, need upgrading and maintaining.

Thank you for your time and efforts in protecting our wild spaces.