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First name: Neil

Last name: Kauffman

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support legal placement of hand-drilled anchors and protection bolts in wilderness, which is the current Federal policy. Existing fixed anchors should not be restricted in any way. I am against the requirements for permits for new routes. However, if a permit for a new route must be issued in certain rare and sensitive areas, it cannot require an exact fixed hardware count because this information is impossible to know in advance.

As I currently understand, the new policies would classify fixed anchors as "prohibited installations" in Wilderness areas. This new classification would apply to both new and existing anchors. This would threaten the existence of fixed protection on routes that have been enjoyed by climbers for decades and obstruct climbers' ability to replace bolts when they become unsafe. **ROCK CLIMBING IS CURRENTLY DESIGNATED AS AN ACCEPTED USE OF WILDERNESS UNDER THE ACT.**

This creates not only safety concerns but will also lead to resource degradation as more climbers seek out natural features like trees for anchoring in the absence of reliable anchors that are typically placed well away from vegetation features in clean sections of rock.

While I don't totally oppose guidance on fixed anchor placement in wilderness areas, the FS directives are unreasonable. They are unenforceable, will create more problems than they solve, and will deeply impact safety for climbers and accelerate impacts on wilderness resources, not reduce them.

For these reasons, the proposed directive must not be put into place, and would be best altered to incorporate better strategies that give climbers a voice in ongoing management.