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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am a rock climber (sport climbing) who has spent over two decades climbing on Coronado National Forest land, including the Catalina Mountains and Cochise Stronghold. I now climb with my husband and our two daughters. It is an absolute joy to introduce my kids to the sport of mountain climbing. We spend time outside as a family, practice a sport that keeps us healthy, and build character traits like courage, responsibility, communication and self-reliance. We also climb with friends. I love to see children on the rock. It's great for their physical health and builds character. Coming out of a pandemic, our kids (and adults) need as many opportunities as possible for group exercise in wilderness areas.

CASA and the local climbing community do a WONDERFUL job maintaining climbing areas locally. I have never run into trash or misuse of climbing areas. I have always felt safe on established routes in Southern Arizona, and have not seen any eyesores or dangerous gear placement. Members of the public like to watch us climb and ask about the sport. I feel that the climbing community are good stewards and contribute to the wilderness experience on National Forest lands.

I think that the efforts to organize the development of new climbing areas are helpful, but I am concerned that they will lead to the loss of climbing routes. Please do not prohibit fixed anchors (bolts). This would greatly limit climbing opportunities that our community really benefits from. Please do not mandate maintenance plans without providing adequate funds for them to be carried out.

Finally, I am concerned about the potential for these decisions being made only by Forest Service personnel who are not members of the climbing community. In my experience, Coronado National Forest Service personnel are more likely to restrict opportunities for recreation than to encourage them. Route development and maintenance decisions should be made by members of the climbing community - in Southern Arizona, this is CASA - with guidance from Forest Service personnel as appropriate. CASA are terrific stewards. They are generous and responsible in their efforts to create climbing opportunities for Southern Arizona residents and visitors.

Thank you for considering my comments.