

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/3/2024 8:55:15 PM

First name: Annette

Last name: Guo

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I hope this letter finds you well. I'm writing to express my concerns about the recently proposed policy on wilderness climbing and to urge you to reconsider its implications.

Climbing isn't just a pastime for me; it's a passion that connects me to nature and our cultural heritage. I share the environmental concerns voiced by the Access Fund and understand the impact climbing can have on our surroundings. However, the proposed policy seems overly rigid and risks alienating the very community it aims to regulate.

There is a close tie between climbing's rich history and the use of fixed anchors, especially bolts. These anchors are more than practical tools that keep people safe; they help create the climbs that are a vital part of our climbing legacy, contributing to the cultural fabric of our community. The climbs in wilderness areas have played a significant role in shaping the history of climbing...there are not many that are not located in such areas. I am particularly worried that the new policies may compromise the safety of climbers and the integrity of fixed anchors, especially in traditional climbs. Though I understand sport climbs have more of a footprint, I do still think that losing access to them would be a detriment to the climbing community.

While I understand the need for environmental preservation, the proposed regulations seem excessively stringent. Strict rules often lead to non-compliance, proving impractical or impossible to follow. I implore you to consider a balanced approach, one that addresses concerns without stifling the passion and dedication climbers bring to their craft.

A more practical alternative could involve collaboration with existing governing bodies in popular climbing destinations, like Yosemite and Joshua Tree, which have successfully regulated climbing activities. Additionally, reservation systems, such as those in Red Rocks and Yosemite, offer a viable solution without burdening climbers with intricate paperwork for each piece of hardware.

My primary concern lies in the bureaucratic hurdles introduced by the proposed policy. Navigating complex paperwork for individual pieces of hardware seems unrealistic and could discourage participation in regulated activities, leading to the unintended consequence of losing valuable climbing areas.

In conclusion, I appeal to your sense of fairness and practicality. Let's work towards a solution that addresses environmental concerns while preserving the essence of climbing. Collaborating with existing governing bodies and implementing proven reservation systems can provide a more effective and practical approach to regulation. I appreciate your time and consideration of these crucial matters.

Thank you for your service, and I look forward to a thoughtful resolution that benefits both our natural treasures and the vibrant climbing community.

Sincerely,
Annette Guo