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First name: Andrew
Last name: Fitz
Organization:
Title:
Comments: I'm writing to express in the strongest possible terms my opposition to the proposed ban on climbing fixed anchors in designated wilderness areas. I have been an active climber for more than 40 years. I have climbed extensively in designated wilderness in Washington, Idaho, California, Arizona, and other states. Fixed anchors have been integral to my wilderness experience, both providing safety and allowing me to access some remarkable terrain that otherwise not protectable with removable protection. I am also a lawyer who practices environmental law. I see no legal basis for construing the Wilderness Act now-60 years after its passage in the same year I was born-to prohibit fixed anchors when they have been an accepted feature of wilderness my entire life span. You are effectively banning climbing in designated wilderness, something that runs contrary to the spirit and letter of the Wilderness Act and affects me on a deeply personal level. Please do not adopt this proposal.

In addition, the Forest Service proposal to limit fixed anchors in new route development across its system-regardless whether land is in wilderness status-is arbitrary in design (not rationally related to facts), unworkable from an implementation standpoint, and unenforceable in practice. It directly affects me as a climber, in the places I climb most. There is simply no sense in it unless it is intended as a step in the way to prohibit climbing altogether. Again, please do not adopt this proposal.