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First name: Elinor

Last name: Angel

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello, I'm a climber from North Carolina and someone who has spent a lot of time recreating in National Forests, National Parks and BLM land. I've thruhiked a couple of long trails passing through public lands, climbed, kayaked and camped at a lot of places around this country. I take both safety and environmental impact seriously. My entry into climbing has been slow, starting with indoor climbing and slowly working into outdoor adventures. I've hired guides and gone with experienced friends. I'm grateful to have these experiences. There is a large boom in indoor climbing which is spilling over into outdoor climbing so I understand the need to take our impact on the environment seriously.

With that in mind, I have some suggestions:

Fixed anchors are essential to safe climbing, not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. Existing climbing policies allow for use of fixed anchors as needed for safety. These anchors are not conspicuous. I was a backpacker and hiker for years in wilderness areas that allow these anchors, like Linville Gorge. I did not notice them and I believe their continued use is in keeping with a wilderness. The Carolina Climber's Coalition in my area recommends that anchors equipment be painted to match the color of the rock. This could be a good suggestion for future fixed anchor replacement.

I have met a few of the dedicated climbers who maintain the fixed anchors in popular NC climbing locations. You might find them volunteering on a Saturday to hang off a cliff for hours replacing bolts, even using a hand drill in wilderness areas prohibiting power tools. This is not easy work. Requiring existing fixed anchors to go through a review before replacement puts additional obstacles on an already difficult job done by volunteers. I suggest that if reviews on fixed anchors are needed, that replacement projects be allowed to continue while those reviews are taking place. To do otherwise would be putting climbers at risk on rusty old bolts. Also, authorization processes should not get in the way of safety decisions that route maintainers need to make while replacing bolts.

Prohibiting fixed anchors obstructs appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers need to allow climbers to explore Wilderness in a way that permits in-the-moment decisions that are necessary when navigating complex vertical terrain.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will threaten America's rich climbing legacy and could erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy needs to protect existing routes from removal.

Fixed anchors are used for research and ecological study. I remember an article a few years ago about a student from a local university that used her climbing knowledge to study the lichen that were growing on the side of Table Rock. She would have used the fixed anchors to aid her.

It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades. I do not believe that there should be no oversight of climbing and bolt replacement. I do believe it should be managed in a way to not impede the safety of climbers and their continued access to established routes. New routes should be reviewed. I also believe that the guidelines and plans for future management of climbing should be developed with input and assistance from climbing organizations like the Access Fund, the American Alpine Club and local groups like the Carolina Climber's Coalition. These people have the expertise and knowledge about bolt replacement and route development and they have been taking on this responsibility of this work for years.

I look forward to climbing in some of the beautiful wilderness areas across this country. There's just something

special about the view from the top of a climb.