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First name: Zachary

Last name: Novak

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

As a professional mountain guide, certified by the American mountain guides association, I am deeply concerned by the proposed ban on fixed anchors in wilderness.

The policy as recommended has clearly not undergone ample research into the potential ramifications it may create.

As climbers and guides we have relied on both existing fixed anchors, as well as the ability to establish new ones when conditions dictate. We are also actively cleaning up and removing fixed anchors that no longer serve a need.

Having an external policy such as this one will endanger climbers in wilderness areas and effectively cause them to break the law, turning upstanding citizens into criminals.

It is my recommendation that a comprehensive study be performed in collaboration with climbing and guiding organizations, such as the Access Fund, American Alpine Club, and the American Mountain Guides Association. Together, we can create a policy that is both environmentally sustainable, and supportive of the needs of climbers in Americas wilderness areas.

Until then, please refrain from enacting the currently proposed policies that would radically alter the longstanding status quo and endanger many people in the country.

Yours truly,

Zack Novak