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First name: Adam

Last name: Block

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To the US Forest Service,

In 2003, when I was 22 years old, I was taken by a close friend to the first outdoor climbing area that I had been to. The person who took me, who already had 25 years climbing experience, wouldn't know that this would dramatically shape the course of my life from that day.

However, my story of personal growth, renewed connection with the natural world, and business entrepreneurship is not unique or surprising when you consider how impactful climbing is to so many people. Since that first experience on real rock, I have worked in a climbing gym, guided people on outdoor climbing adventures, and continue to incorporate climbing as an integral part of my life.

It is clear to us all, especially in the last 10-15 years, that climbing has become a serious mainstream activity that is here to stay. It has prompted an explosion of new business within the recreational and medical fields, and people of all ages are experiencing the rewarding and challenging benefits of this great sport.

However, this should not be looked upon with strict and targeted regulation that would drastically hinder the positive momentum this industry has brought to the world, as well as seriously compromise the safety for which climbers must rely upon. Rather, a deeper understanding of the current usage, maintenance and stewardship involved in these areas could create a better cohesive relationship between the millions of climbers in the U.S., and the agencies looking to govern the practices within.

To consider the complete removal of fixed anchors claiming they are prohibited "installations" would be to eliminate a key foundation to climber safety. As well as erase the very canvas to which the art of climbing rests upon. The use of these anchors has been in practice for more than 60 years. And the upkeep and transfer of knowledge to correctly use this equipment has been successfully managed by experienced climbers as well as associations that are committed to safety and stewardship within their respective areas. The need for fixed anchor management is essential, however this must be done without compromising the removal of existing climbing routes that for decades have proven to be safe and legitimate. In this way, the legacy of some of the greatest sport achievements in the world must be protected. And the managers of wilderness land must allow for continued exploration of vertical terrain, utilizing existing methods that truly stand for safety, and reflect the incalculable value the climbing industry represents for the world and the United States.