

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/31/2024 4:53:40 AM

First name: Stephen

Last name: Anderjack

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I hope this message finds you well. We are writing to bring to your attention a matter of great concern for the climbing community - a proposed policy that could have significant implications for rock climbing enthusiasts across the nation. The National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service are considering a new policy that would ban the use of bolts in rock climbing, a decision that threatens the very essence of our cherished outdoor activities.

Rock climbing has been a cherished and time-honored tradition in our national parks and forests, providing individuals with a unique opportunity to connect with nature and challenge themselves physically and mentally. The proposed ban on bolts, however, would severely restrict the freedom and accessibility that climbers have enjoyed for decades.

Here are some key reasons why we urge you to reconsider and oppose the proposed ban on bolts:

Preserving Climbing Traditions:

Rock climbing has been an integral part of the outdoor experience for generations. The use of bolts has allowed climbers to explore and enjoy routes that would otherwise be inaccessible, contributing to the rich tapestry of climbing traditions. Banning bolts would disregard the historical significance of climbing in these natural settings.

Minimal Environmental Impact:

The climbing community is committed to minimizing its environmental footprint. Modern bolt technology and installation techniques have evolved to ensure minimal impact on the natural landscape. Advances in materials and methods have allowed for secure anchors without causing harm to the surrounding environment.

Maintaining Safety Standards:

Bolts play a crucial role in ensuring the safety of climbers. They provide reliable anchors, particularly in areas where natural protection is limited. Banning bolts could compromise the safety of climbers, leading to an increase in accidents and injuries. It is essential to strike a balance between preservation and safety.

Economic Impact on Local Communities:

Rock climbing is not only a recreational activity but also a significant economic driver for local communities surrounding national parks and forests. Climbers contribute to the local economy through tourism, outdoor gear purchases, and accommodations. Restricting climbing opportunities may have unintended economic consequences for these communities.

Collaborative Decision-Making:

We believe that a more collaborative approach involving climbers, environmentalists, and park management is necessary to find a balanced solution. The climbing community is willing to work together to establish guidelines that address environmental concerns while allowing for the continued enjoyment of these outdoor spaces.

In conclusion, we implore you to reconsider the proposed ban on bolts for rock climbing in national parks and forests. By engaging in open dialogue and collaboration, we can find solutions that preserve the integrity of our natural spaces while allowing future generations to experience the thrill and beauty of rock climbing.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We trust that, together, we can strike a balance that ensures the sustainability of climbing in our nation's cherished outdoor spaces.