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First name: Miranda

Last name: Seixas

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I want to first start off by thanking you for acknowledging that climbing is an incredibly important way of interacting with National Forest land in the US. The climbing communities that I have been a part of value protection of natural spaces even more than getting that one hard move in a climb, and with the implementation of your draft policies, this would enable us to continue to be avid voices in protecting National Forest. I do believe that nothing can compare to the beautiful protected land that we have in the USA. I worked a summer on the White River National Forest and engaged in the land through work but also through personal recreation, including climbing. Being active on the land with a hobby like climbing allows for a humbling peace of mind that I think makes all who experience it better for it. Access to these spaces is not something to be taken for granted, and each time I am in a National Forest I am grateful for the work of those that have protected it. I believe that the climbing community will be the biggest advocates for the protection of these spaces. Please think about expanding and clarifying language around maintenance of fixed anchors and climbing development plans, as continued care and maintenance to a climbing area are what make it safe and enjoyable -- bringing in people who will then learn to care for the land and protect its wildness.

I support the recognition that climbing is an appropriate Wilderness activity and that fixed anchors, critical pieces of the climbing safety system, are allowable in Wilderness. I also support provisions to allow climbers to place or replace fixed anchors without authorization in the event of an emergency. I appreciate that the policy protects existing climbing routes that were developed before the PARC Act was passed into law. Legacy Wilderness climbs should remain available in order to preserve America's rich climbing legacy.

Please improve policies to expedite timely replacement of fixed anchors in order to avoid unnecessary barriers to climber safety. New routes can enhance the climbing experience and should be allowed on National Forest lands, consistent with existing regulations, even where no climbing management plan has been adopted. Please provide a clear path for new route exploration at areas that lack plans that specifically address climbing.