



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[A2407-014-004-065516; #O2509-014-004-125222]

Draft Policy and Guidance for Managing Recreational Climbing in BLM-managed Units of the National Wilderness Preservation System

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of policy and procedural guidance.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is issuing this Draft Statement of Policy to announce updated policy and procedural guidance for managing recreational climbing in BLM-managed units of the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). This draft guidance, proposed as an update to BLM Manual 6340 – Management of Designated Wilderness Areas, incorporates Congressional direction from the Protecting America’s Rock Climbing (PARC) Act, as included in section 122 of the Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act. The BLM is seeking public comment to inform the final guidance for inclusion in Manual 6340.

DATES: Send your comments on the draft policy and guidance on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]**. The BLM is not obligated to consider comments received after this date.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods. Please include the words “Draft Recreational Climbing in Wilderness Guidance” as an identifier in your message. See also discussion of Public Availability of Comments below.

To view a copy of the draft guidance and to submit comments electronically, go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search-box, enter the Docket number “BLM-2026-0034” and click the “Search” button. Click the "Comment Now!" button. Comments can also be mailed or hand delivered to: U.S. Department of the Interior, Director (630),

Bureau of Land Management, 1849 C St. NW, Room 5646, Washington DC 20240,

Attention: Draft Recreational Climbing in Wilderness Policy Guidance.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sean MacDougall, BLM Division of National Conservation Lands, email BLM_HQ_410_Wilderness@BLM.GOV, telephone: (970) 256-4934 for additional information.

Individuals in the United States who are deaf, blind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services for contacting Mr. MacDougall. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM has released updated policy and procedural guidance for managing recreational climbing in BLM-managed units of the NWPS. This draft guidance, proposed as an update to BLM Manual 6340 – Management of Designated Wilderness Areas, incorporates Congressional direction from the PARC Act, as included in section 122 of the EXPLORE Act (16 U.S.C. 8422). It recognizes recreational climbing—including the use, placement, and maintenance of fixed anchors—as an appropriate wilderness use when conducted in accordance with the Wilderness Act and other applicable laws; clarifies criteria for casual use; and outlines processes for authorizing activities that exceed casual-use thresholds, managing legacy routes and anchors, and addressing emergencies, fixed equipment, and commercial services. In accordance with 16 U.S.C. 8422(f), the BLM is seeking public comment to inform the final guidance for inclusion in Manual 6340.

Substantive edits to Manual 6340 related to section 122 of the EXPLORE Act include:

- Section 1.6.B.2.j, installations;
- Section 1.6.C.13.c.ix. Primitive recreation;

- Section 1.6.C.13.f. Recreational climbing activities in wilderness;
- Section 1.6.D.5.a. Wilderness Management Plans; Climbing Management Plans; and
- Glossary revisions for “anchor, permanent fixed,” “anchor temporary,” “clean climbing,” “fixed equipment,” and “installation”.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

(Authority: 16 U.S.C. 8422)

Carla M. Bock,

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National Conservation Lands and Community Partnerships.

[FR Doc. 2026-11950 Filed: 6/12/2026 8:45 am; Publication Date: 6/15/2026]