

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/29/2023 5:48:32 PM

First name: Andrew

Last name: Weuling

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Preserving our wilderness areas is one the most important responsibilities our generation undertakes. The spirit of the wilderness act is to protect these sacred areas from those acting in bad faith, wishing to mangle the land for their own benefit. The self governing and conservation minded rock climbing community is not one of these aggressors. Strong ethics and dedicated members ensure wilderness areas are protected. Rock climbing has been deemed an appropriate use of wilderness areas time and time again and its community ensures these areas don't see extraordinary damage from the growing number of users visiting each year. Permanent gear is a very small part of this effort. Often in wilderness areas it is only used when no safe alternatives are available and in many cases takes pressure off other elements such as trees that would be harmed by cords and slings. The visual and environmental impact of bolts is non existent, especially compared to the thousands of miles of trails carved into wilderness landscapes. By deeming bolts illegal until proven otherwise all that will be accomplished is; climber safety will be jeopardized, damage will be incurred as bolts are removed, access will be cut off to the appropriate use of climbing, impacts to wilderness may be increased as parties are forced to sling trees and leave cordage, and impacts may be increased as serious accidents requiring search and rescue efforts increase. Please do not move forward with this proposal and instead collaborate with the climbing community and it's representatives to find solutions that are amicable to both parties.