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Title:

Comments: I begin climbing at 16 on a small little known bolted craig close to western carolina university, it was the first sport I was naturally gifted at. I'm now 42 so for more than 26 years now I've climbed-primarily outdoors. I've climbed top rope, sport and trad. I've climbed the most at table rock and the linville gorge. This proposal would be catastrophic to climbing at table rock nc, where most climbs are mixed (bolts and traditional gear). I've probably climbed jim dandy (5.4) more than a 100 times either leading or seconding and if the bolts are removed it goes from a safe first lead to an r/x route. I was brought into climbing with traditional nc values of leave it as the first accent party climbed it and bolts are for when gear isnt possible and bolts/fixed anchors make many climbs possible and safer. The amount of injuries and deaths will increase if this proposal is implemented as written. Bolts and fixed anchors arent the same as roads and with all due respect most rangers I've interacted with dont truly understand climbing or the different types of climbing and protection used. I cant speak for the usa as a whole but I can speak for nc in that we have countless climbers who have taken the time to learn to replace old hardware and minimize the impact of said placements. Most hardware isnt noticed by non climbers. Fixed anchors and bolts can actually minimize environmental impact because they reduce the use of trees and other vegetation as anchors. I just introduced my nephews (8 and 10) into outdoor climbing please reconsider a classification that will not only change climbing as I know it but will prevent my nephews and a whole new generation from being able to enjoy it with less risk. Climbing is inherently dangerous and there isnt a good reason to change it from dangerous to deadly. Most climbers take care to minimize their impacts and maintain the areas they frequent. Please leave climbing as it's been classified since the start and avoid using classifications that'll change for everyone and create an impossible task of locating and removing all the fixed hardware. The first picture is the start of the second pitch of jim dandy, the second is block route(3rd pitch of cave route). Both go from easy mixed climbs to dangerously runout without bolts.