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Comments: This policy proposal seems to shut the door on bolting in wilderness areas by classifying bolts as installations, letting district rangers and forest supervisors who may or may not have any exposure to climbing, bolting or climbing ethics make decisions on bolting or bolt replacement, and requiring all existing bolts undergo a review to determine if they are required for recreation- if and when resources are allocated to perform such a review.

I recreate and climb extensively in the Sawtooth Wilderness Area. Bolting -let alone the potential for excessive bolting- should be considered by any reasonable person, the least important consideration for the area as far as human impact is concerned. Hikers, backpackers, stock users, and the Forest Service for that matter all exert a far greater impact on this wilderness than properly installed bolts (drilled by hand, durable and camouflaged hardware, minimal use). Human and stock waste, foot and stock bridges (often with treated wood), trail networks, signage, trampled tent sites, food wastes, etc.

Climbers have certainly loved parts of the Sawtooths to death, namely the Elephants Perch. For me, the Forest Service has two choices. Disperse users across more of the range and reduce their impact by lowering density or limit use through permitting. I'd rather the former but I'd understand if the latter policy was imposed. What I do not agree with is certain users being restricted (which is exactly what a bolt ban does) while other users (hikers, backpackers, stock users) are given free rein (i.e. not even required to pack out human waste). How about a little equanimity.

Finally, besides the Perch, there are many climbs in the Sawtooths from which you cannot "walk off". Do wilderness managers really prefer the current practice of leaving trash in the form of cord and webbing as rappel anchors over safer, less obtrusive bolts? The bolt ban in the Sawtooths is making climbing and, more importantly, descending from climbs less safe and increasing the risk of accidents, all while failing to prevent the proliferation of unsightly tat anchors anyway.

Could we please have a reasonable bolting policy? Something akin to the City of Rocks, where a climber can apply to bolt in an area and, if they receive permission, bolt at their own discretion. Minimum standards could be established for the quality of hardware and a requirement that bolts only be used when natural features offering protection are not available. I think you'll find with the effort required to apply for permits and drill by hand, that bolting will remain relatively rare in the Sawtooths and probably in many other wilderness areas as well.