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Comments: This proposal would overturn decades of precedent and go against the core values within the climbing community of leave no trace. Fixed anchors (specifically bolts) provide safe and less intrusive alternatives than what would occur if disallowed or removed. For example, community maintained and supported descent bolts (often funded by organizations like the Access Fund and American Safe Climbing Association) are minimally intrusive, invisible to the naked eye when viewed from further than a few feet away (and are often colored to match rock color) and less destructive than using trees (which was the prior standard). Furthermore, these fixed anchors provide critical and life saving options for Search and Rescue operations to assist both climbers and non climbers (hikers).

Fixed anchors on a climbing route have significantly less impact in a wilderness area than a trail. Trails are significantly more impactful with direct impact and vegetation, soil, landscape, and wildlife as well as human impacts from erosion and litter. Fixed anchors have zero impact on vegetation and wildlife, contribute no additional litter or erosion.

Furthermore, bipartisan efforts have shown strong support for climbing through Protecting America's Rock Climbing Act and America's Outdoor Recreation Act receiving unanimous support.

The climbing community is one that cherishes the wild nature of the outdoors and rigorously self-policies their actions and impacts. Already existing limits on placing bolts in wilderness areas by requiring only hand drilling bolt placements provides a significant burden encouraging only necessary fixed anchors to be placed rather than superfluous bolting.

This change would damage American climbing practices that to date have been in support of keeping America's most wild places wild.

Ben