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Comments: I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed limitations on bolting and the placement of fixed anchors on public lands managed by the US Forest Service. As an avid climber and a passionate advocate for responsible outdoor recreation, I believe that fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system and should not be considered prohibited installations under the Wilderness Act. I urge you to reconsider the proposed guidance policies and instead support the existing climbing policies that have allowed the judicious use of fixed anchors for over half a century.

First and foremost, it is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies that would outright prohibit Wilderness climbing anchors across the country. The US Forest Service has historically allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades, recognizing their importance in ensuring the safety of climbers. Disregarding this long-standing precedent would not only be inconsistent but also detrimental to the climbing community and the natural environment.

Prohibiting fixed anchors would create unnecessary safety issues by imposing obstacles to the regular maintenance of these anchors, a responsibility that the climbing community undertakes. Critical safety decisions often must be made in the moment, and any authorization process should not impede those decisions. It is essential to manage fixed anchor maintenance in a way that incentivizes safe anchor replacement and ensures the preservation of climbing routes. Restricting the maintenance process would compromise the safety of climbers and increase the risk of accidents.

In addition, prohibiting fixed anchors would obstruct the appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers should promote a climbing environment that allows climbers to make in-the-moment decisions when navigating complex vertical terrain. By limiting the use of fixed anchors, climbers would face unnecessary barriers in exploring and experiencing the natural challenges that Wilderness areas offer. We should encourage responsible exploration while respecting the intrinsic values of these areas.

Moreover, prohibiting fixed anchors would pose a significant threat to America's rich climbing legacy and the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy should prioritize the protection of existing routes from removal. These routes represent the history, skill, and passion of climbers who have contributed to the development and preservation of climbing as a sport. Disregarding this legacy would not only erode our climbing heritage but also deprive future generations of the opportunity to enjoy and learn from these remarkable achievements.

Lastly, I would like to address the restriction on the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands. This approach is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Instead, non-Wilderness climbing management policy should provide opportunities for the establishment of new anchors unless and until comprehensive analyses determine that climbing activities should be restricted to protect cultural and natural resources. A clear and enforceable policy will ensure that climbers can continue to explore and enjoy the diverse landscapes under the stewardship of the US Forest Service.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider the limitations on bolting and the placement of fixed anchors on public lands. It is crucial to support the existing climbing policies that have been successful for many years, preserving the safety of climbers while fostering a harmonious relationship with the natural environment. Maintaining climbers' access to fixed anchors will not only protect their safety but also preserve our climbing legacy and enable the future exploration of Wilderness areas.

Thank you for considering my objections. I kindly request that you carefully evaluate the potential impact of these guidance policies on climbers and the natural environment. Should you require any additional information or would like to further discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.