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Comments: Hello,

I am writing to express my concern at the proposed policy that will classify climbing anchors as "prohibited installations."

The Wilderness Act established a means for protecting many of the US's most beautiful, historic and precious natural areas. Many of the best experiences of my 47 years have taken place in the Wilderness and would not be possible without the protection set up by the Act, including getting engaged to my wife and mother of our children. As a supporter of with Wilderness Act, I want to voice my objection to this new interpretation for the following reasons:

1. Rock climbing anchors are the tiniest modification of the natural environment. Their impact pales in comparison to the impact of other actions allowed in Wilderness areas, including human waste, trail building, and climate change. On the other hand, not allowing new anchors and not replacing aging ones will increase the risk of climbing in these areas, resulting in more rescues, and rescues have a huge impact, with cars, people helicopters and more.
2. An important aspect of Wilderness is to protect important historical attributes. Climbing and climbers have been important explorers, establishers and advocates for Wilderness. Their contribution cannot be understood. Therefore, protecting and maintaining climbing anchors will further the maintenance of this history.
3. Implementation of this modification will keep climbers from being able to pursue their favorite activity in these special places. The intention of the Wilderness is not to set up areas that exclude people, but to set up best practices where humans can interact with the natural environment in a way that preserves and reduces impact. Rock climbing in the Wilderness is the perfect fit for the original intention of the Act.

I propose the establishment of a panel that can review applications for the establishment of climbing anchors on a case by case basis. Guidelines could include the use of anchors only at established belay stations (not as a substitute for passive protection like "nuts" and "cams"), and replacement of old and dangerous bolts for newer, safer technology.

Thank you,

-Robert Buchwald