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Comments: As an avid climber, I don't believe the proposed policy change of prohibiting fixed bolts and anchors in the wilderness is beneficial to any parties involved. My primary reason for feeling this way is that it will result in increased risk for climbers who no longer have fixed hardware to assist in descent. The existing policies encouraging judicious use of fixed anchors keeps climbing routes much safer, while also maintaining a sufficient level of wilderness character.

If this bolt prohibition were in place throughout history, it would have prevent many of the groundbreaking climbs across the country from ever taking place. While that may not mean much to the general public, it means the world to the climbing community, who serve as stewards for many of these wilderness areas.

Climbers must have a certain agency to make decisions and weigh risks when they are exploring the wilderness. This involves using fixed anchors when necessary. Nobody wants to be forced to call for a rescue, when a simple bolted anchor would have solved the problem. I think climbers have as much right as anyone to have a voice in this discussion, and it is this climber's opinion that the minimal negative impact of bolts in the wilderness pales in comparison to the levels of safety and explorative opportunity that they provide.

Restricting new route establishment to "existing climbing opportunities" across the board is both unenforceable and misguided. These decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, and opportunities for new anchors should be maintained unless cultural or natural resources need to be protected.

Please reconsider the proposal to ban bolted hardware in wilderness areas. Thank you for your time.