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Comments: I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent proposals to prohibit fixed climbing anchors within designated Wilderness areas under the Wilderness Act. Fixed anchors play an essential role in ensuring the safety of climbers and have been utilized responsibly for over half a century in accordance with existing climbing policies.

It is my belief that adhering to the established climbing policies that have allowed for the judicious use of fixed anchors for such an extended period is the most effective means of safeguarding the character of our Wilderness areas while also accommodating the needs of primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing enthusiasts.

It appears unreasonable for federal agencies to consider the implementation of new guidance policies that would categorically prohibit the use of fixed anchors for climbing across the country. Federal agencies have historically permitted, managed, and authorized the use of fixed anchors for climbing purposes, demonstrating their understanding of the importance of this practice.

One significant concern arising from the prohibition of fixed anchors is the potential creation of safety hazards. Such a prohibition would impose unwarranted impediments to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors, a responsibility that has been undertaken responsibly by the climbing community. In many instances, crucial safety decisions must be made in the moment, and any authorization process should not hinder these decisions. Fixed anchor maintenance should be managed in a manner that encourages the safe replacement of anchors and does not put climbing routes at risk of removal.

Additionally, prohibiting fixed anchors would obstruct appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers should allow climbers to explore these areas in a way that permits in-the-moment decisions necessary for navigating complex vertical terrain safely.

Lastly, I would like to emphasize that prohibiting fixed anchors may pose a significant threat to America's rich climbing legacy and could potentially erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. It is imperative that climbing management policy prioritizes the protection of existing climbing routes from removal.

I respectfully urge you to reconsider any proposals to prohibit fixed climbing anchors within Wilderness areas and instead continue to support the responsible and safe use of this essential equipment by climbers. This approach not only maintains the safety of climbers but also preserves the integrity of our Wilderness areas.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.