

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/3/2024 9:51:01 PM

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Comments: I am writing to urge the US Forest Service to protect sustainable Wilderness climbing. I have been climbing for 48 years and have climbed in many National Parks and Wilderness areas because I enjoy the scenery and solitude. I have never placed bolts in those areas but I sure appreciate the bolts that other climbers installed. Fixed anchors have allowed me to safely get to amazing places in Wilderness areas that are not accessible to most other people.

Fixed anchors have been a part of the public's enjoyment of Wilderness areas for many decades. To now disallow these anchors or require new restrictions would be a terrible mistake.

Climbers rely on fixed anchors to protect their lives. Local climbing organizations or even individual climbers inspect the anchors they are using and either fix problems or report problems for others to fix. New NP guidelines that would restrict bolt maintenance would be a danger to the climbing community.

Wilderness character includes untrammeled quality, undeveloped quality, and natural quality (Appendix B, p 13). Climbing anchors are a negligible part of the landscape, even less obtrusive than trail signs. Very few people who aren't climbers can even notice anchors from ground level. Compare climbing bolts with other problems the Wilderness areas have, including horseback riding or invasive plants and animals, which have a far greater negative impact on the park. I was backpacking in the Gila and the Pecos Wilderness areas in 2023 and free-roaming cattle are a major problem in both areas. I didn't see any climbing anchors in either place.