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First name: Harrison

Last name: Laird

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I think the proposal on the table is overly broad in both banning fixed anchors and expanding the definition of fixed anchors to include things like slings and fixed gear. The current proposal would make thousands of existing routes all over the country (including my local wilderness area Linville Gorge) illegal. Is the forest service proposing that we pull all the bolts on Table Rock, Shortoff, Hawksbill, ect? Some of these bolts have been installed for over 50 years.

The current proposal would also have climbers doing their best to make good decisions for their own safety on the wrong side of the law. In the event weather moves in unexpectedly, as happens all the time in the mountains, climbers are forced to descend leaving gear in place. These climbers would be doing something illegal by taking care of their own safety.

A reasonable process for establishing a climber's experience and fitness to add new routes in the wilderness seems much more productive for preserving wilderness character than banning the practice entirely. Education and certification seems like a much better way to preserve wilderness character to me.

I think it's also really important to put in context the relatively small number of people engaged in wilderness climbing route development and the impact that these fixed anchors have. This is a relatively small number of people compared to the total user base and bolts have basically zero impact on the cliff once installed.