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Comments: Fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system and are not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. Following existing climbing policies that allow judicious use of fixed anchors for more than a half century will do more to protect Wilderness character while providing for primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing.

CLIMBERS IN THE US ARE WELL KNOWN TO STRICTLY SELF-POLICE TO KEEP THE IMPACT OF THIS USER GROUP TO A MINIMUM. CLIMBERS HAVE THE LOWEST IMPACT OF ANY USER GROUP. IT TAKES A LOT OF WORK FOR ANYONE, EVEN A CLIMBER, TO SEE A FIXED ANCHOR ANYWHERE. NO OTHER USER GROUP CAN CLAIM THAT LOW OF AN IMPACT. EVEN IF IT WAS SOMEHOW ENFORCEABLE, THE DIRECTIVE WILL HAVE NO IMPACT ON WILDERNESS CHARACTER. IT JUST SERVES TO ALIENATE AND CRIMINALIZE PEOPLE FOR PLACING ANCHORS WHERE THEY ARE NECESSARY TO PASS OVER THE TERRAIN WITH SOME MINIMAL MEASURE OF SAFETY. THESE ARE PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY WHO DO MORE THAN 95% OF PEOPLE TO PROTECT THE WILDERNESS, IN OUR DAY TO DAY ACTS AND THE CAUSES WE CONTRIBUTE TO. WE CLEAN UP AFTER ALL THE OTHER USER GROUPS. WE GENERATE TOURISM DOLLARS IN RESPECTFUL, SUSTAINABLE WAYS. PEOPLE ARE NOT GOING TO STOP CLIMBING. THIS DIRECTIVE, AS WRITTEN, AND IF IT CAN SOMEHOW BE ENFORCED, WILL TURN DOCTORS AND LAWYERS AND POLICE OFFICERS AND FIRE FIGHTERS INTO CRIMINALS FOR CLIMBING IN THE WAY THAT CLIMBING HAS BEEN DONE FOREVER. WHO IS EVEN COMPLAINING ABOUT THE BOLTS THAT NOBODY CAN EVEN FIND?!

It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will create safety issues by imposing unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors, a responsibility undertaken by the climbing community. Critical safety decisions often must be made in the moment and any authorization process should not impede those decisions. Fixed anchor maintenance needs to be managed in a way that incentivizes safe anchor replacement and does not risk the removal of climbing routes.

Prohibiting fixed anchors obstructs appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers need to allow climbers to explore Wilderness in a way that permits in-the-moment decisions that are necessary when navigating complex vertical terrain.

IMAGINE YOU ARE TRYING TO REACH THE TOP OF A VERTICAL PATH AND YOU HAVE TO STOP AND CONSIDER PERMITTING ISSUES BEFORE DECIDING IF YOU CAN USE THE LIFE SAVING EQUIPMENT DESIGNED FOR THIS OVER CENTURIES OF EXPERIENCE AND DEBATE, BECAUSE IF YOU USE IT YOU MIGHT BE CONVICTED OF A CRIME AND LOSE YOUR CAREER AND YOUR LIFE MIGHT FALL APART, BUT IF YOU DON'T USE IT YOU ARE BASICALLY FREE SOLOING AND YOU WILL DIE IF YOU FALL.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will threaten America's rich climbing legacy and could erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy needs to protect existing routes from removal.

IMAGINE THERE WAS A DIRECTIVE TO PROHIBIT TRAIL SIGNS AND PICTURE THE OUTRAGE. KEEP IN MIND, CLIMBERS DON'T EVEN HAVE ANY EQUIVALENT - WE DON'T HAVE TRAIL SIGNS! THE FIXED ANCHORS (THAT NOBODY CAN EVEN FIND) ARE OUR GUIDEPOSTS A LOT OF TIMES! NOT ONLY ARE YOU TRYING TO TAKE AWAY LIFESAVING EQUIPMENT THAT HAS BEEN USED FOR CENTURIES, YOU

ARE GOING TO GET PEOPLE LOST! THIS IS GOING TO RESULT IN FAR MORE SEARCH AND RESCUES. CLIMBERS ALMOST ALWAYS SELF RESCUE BECAUSE IT IS FASTER AND SAFER, BUT WE NEED FIXED ANCHORS TO DO THAT, AND RESCUERS NEED FIXED ANCHORS TO PERFORM RESCUES.

Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless and until analyses determine climbing should be restricted to protect cultural and natural resources.