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Comments: I write to NPS as a climber of 7 years who has enjoyed priceless experiences in America's wilderness areas aided by the use of fixed anchors. Climbers do not always use fixed anchors, as many prefer to use removable, traditional gear where possible (such as in crack systems). But almost all of the greatest climbs in America's wilderness areas rely on at least some fixed anchors to protect sections of climbs where traditional protection is impossible, to create safe anchor points, and to provide for safe retreat.

Making it harder to replace existing bolts will unnecessarily put climbers in danger without doing anything to preserve the wilderness character of existing climbs. Bolts need regular replacement, particularly on popular routes. A new bolt is more aesthetically pleasing than an old, rusted bolt.

For new climbs, prohibiting bolt installation will hinder the development of new climbing in America's wilderness areas. Wilderness are meant for exploration, and climbing is a low impact way to explore wilderness areas. Almost all bolts are either far away from established trails or high off the ground, where only climbers will see them. If the purpose of this rule is to reduce the visual impact of bolts for non climbers, then there are surely more targeted ways to do this (and an overly broad rule will struggle to withstand judicial review).

Thank you for your work to protect America's climbing. Please consider protecting the use of fixed anchors in America's Wilderness.