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Comments: Bolting in Wilderness Areas

I am a life-long climber, hiker, and wilderness user. I grew up in Colorado and New Mexico, exploring wilderness areas routinely. I oppose the elimination and further restriction of fixed anchors in wilderness areas.

Climbers are an important part of the wilderness user population and many of us are also hikers, hunters, and fisherman. These user groups have co-existed for a long time, everyone working to be stewards of our precious natural resources.

Specific reasons for maintaining the existing policies:

1. Fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system. Further restrictions will make it less safe and increase burden on government agencies for rescues and body recoveries.
2. 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
3. Prohibiting fixed anchors obstructs appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Trails reduce human impact to wilderness by focusing our impacts in specific areas. Many hunters routinely use horses to access wilderness areas, which has impacts to the trails and environment. Fixed anchors enable less damage to trees by similarly focusing rope work to anchors instead of trees. The impact of fixed anchors is less than horse travel into the wilderness. Climbers should have the same accommodations as other user groups.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Neil Soice