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Title:

Comments: As an avid user of our country's amazing natural spaces and wilderness areas, I am extremely upset to hear of the proposals to ban protective climbing bolts from our wilderness areas. On a basic level, these bolts represent a minuscule level of impact to these areas while allowing for a completely unique type of experience for people. Though climbing has undoubtedly increased in popularity, climbers as a whole still represent a very small portion of users of these areas, and the culture around climbing encourages responsible and respectful use of our natural spaces. Fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety systems and are not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act, and it is completely unreasonable for decades of compliance and precedent to be changed in regards to such a small point of impact in our wilderness areas. Huge safety issues would arise by these limitations, as it would make maintenance and replacement of worn anchors impossible. Furthermore, restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable, and would only serve to create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. These prohibitions would threaten our country's rich climbing legacy that is admired globally, and has always been a part of people's enjoyment of our amazing wilderness areas. Climbing extends beyond the use of anchors, as it has been used by indigenous people in these lands for millennia to access homes and cultural areas. Please focus your time and energy towards issues that represent far greater negative impacts to these spaces, as climbers and their anchors are allies and advocates for the Wilderness Act, not its enemies.