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First name: Gregory

Last name: Swift

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I've been a rock climber for 40 of my 71 years. I've especially enjoyed climbing in wilderness areas--especially near home, where I've installed a total of about 20 bolts and a few pitons in wilderness (including a few replacements of dangerous old rusty equipment), on widely dispersed routes in three very separate locations. I am certain that my activities have been consistent with the spirit of this sentence in your proposed rules, with which I agree:

"The placement of a fixed anchor or fixed equipment does not necessarily impair the future enjoyment of wilderness or violate the Wilderness Act, but the establishment of bolt-intensive climbing opportunities may be incompatible with the preservation of wilderness character."

In particular, all but four of my bolts are invisible to hikers on the ground---even using binoculars. I did this deliberately, out of respect for the right of hikers and hunters to enjoy the wilderness in their own ways, without being reminded of other humans' presence.

I don't think "invisible from the ground" should be a hard-and-fast rule, but it might be something that local managers could take into consideration if/when they consider fixed hardware on a case-by-case basis.

Pitons are almost always hard to see from the ground, because they are tucked into cracks. Bolt hangers on slabs can be hidden by matching their color to the rock, and/or by mounting them on slabs that tilt slightly up. For rappel anchors, chains are usually less visible than tangles of slings.

Enjoying wilderness climbing has been one of the highlights of my entire life. I hope your rules let future climbers get similar enjoyment.

Drilling without motorized equipment is slow and difficult, so it helps make climbers think very carefully about what they're doing when installing fixed protection. Please preserve that rule.