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First name: Kevin

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear USFS representatives,

I am writing in strong opposition to the banning of climbing bolts in wilderness areas.

In no way have bolts ever detracted from the wilderness experience. Much to the opposite, they have protected me, my friends, and my family while enjoying and appreciating wilderness environments.

Any opposition to bolts or banning of bolts is gravely negligent and puts climbers' lives unnecessarily in greater danger. There are purists among the climbing community who argue for the non-existence of bolts, but these individuals are seriously mistaken. To put it simply, these individuals value "heroism" and "adventure" above human life. I have friends who have died on rock climbs who would still be alive to this day had there been one extra bolt in the place where they fell. I write this on their behalf and on the behalf of their families.

Traditional and removable protection fall far short of the protection of a bolt. A typical camming device (placed correctly) is rated to hold around 1000 lbs, which can be generated in a climbing fall. Camming devices also pull out of wet rock. A bolt will sustain over 2500 lbs and does not depend on the weather. The damage caused to the community by the death of a climber, combined with the damage to the environment caused by a high-angle rescue, far outweigh the minimal impacts that bolts have on the environment (namely, simply being visible, which can be reduced with camouflaging paint).

My mother would want there to be bolts on the rocks that I climb on. I hope that the USFS appreciates the lives of climbers as much as the dozens of parents who will pay the ultimate price of losing their children should climbing bolts be banned.

Thanks for your consideration and best wishes!

Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kevin Wagner

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