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Comments: The NPS prohibition against fixed anchors goes against climbing traditions, generates more waste and eyesores (webbing used to temporary rappel anchors), and creates unsafe conditions on climbs that are increasingly becoming more crowded.

Bolts are a part of climbing, period. They are a modern safety device that is used in fixed anchors, rappel stations, and provide protection on routes. They are inherent to modern climbing and have largely replaced psuedo-fixed gear, like pitons. When placed correctly by knowledgeable climbers (like guides and trained members of the climbing community), they can increase climber safety, minimize impact (trees aren't used as anchors), reduce descent times (which also increases climber safety), and reduce runouts.

Bolted routes (e.g., sport routes) rely on bolts for protection throughout the climb. Our national parks and forests have a long-standing tradition of climbing, including sport climbs (e.g., Yosemite, Zion, Joshua Tree, and many others). Not allowing bolts will limit route development. Allowing route development is important to help advanced the sport and spread out users to more areas.

The MRA guidance does not include consulting with climbers as a user group to discuss the land manager will decide how and where bolts can be placed. There is no mention of funding this project. It is not believable that an already underfunded land manager can implement this plan in a timely fashion. Timeliness is critical if the land manager is going to review every bolt prior to placing it. Not replacing bolts or creating fixed anchors where they should exist creates a safety hazard to climbers. Additionally, climbers (not land managers) are historically responsible for making decisions about fixed anchors as it is their safety on the line.

I urge the National Forest Service to reject the proposed plan that would ban route development, damage existing historical routes, and significantly decrease climber safety.