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Comments: The practice of bolting in canyoning has proven to be a valuable and sustainable approach in our interactions with the unique landscapes under the management of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Bolting has demonstrated its effectiveness in minimizing environmental impact, enhancing safety, and promoting an inclusive and accessible outdoor experience for a diverse range of enthusiasts.

Bolting, when done thoughtfully and responsibly, has played a crucial role in reducing the ecological footprint on our natural resources. In contrast to alternative methods, bolts provide a durable and non-intrusive solution that safeguards fragile surfaces, prevents erosion, and minimizes the visual impact on the pristine environments we aim to protect.

Moreover, bolts significantly contribute to the safety of canyoning activities. In aquatic canyons, where careful risk management is paramount, well-placed bolts facilitate precise rope setting, aid communication, and reduce the likelihood of accidents, thereby minimizing the potential need for rescue operations.

Canyoning, as an inclusive and immersive sport, benefits from the accessibility that bolts provide. Fixed anchors enable a broader demographic, including those new to outdoor activities, to partake in the experience without necessitating elite athletic prowess. This inclusivity aligns with the USFS's commitment to offering opportunities for diverse groups to engage with and appreciate the public lands under its stewardship.

The USFS Minimum Requirements Decision Guide underscores the importance of protecting and perpetuating wilderness character while providing opportunities for recreation. Bolting aligns with these objectives by offering a safe and sustainable means for the public to experience and connect with the natural beauty of our wilderness areas.

Recognizing the unique challenges presented by high-travel canyons, we advocate for a collaborative approach, where land managers work closely with the canyoning community. By fostering partnerships and leveraging the expertise within the canyoning community, the USFS can make well-informed decisions that align with the overarching goals of the Wilderness Act.

In conclusion, we urge the USFS to continue permitting bolting in canyoning activities, recognizing its positive contributions to environmental sustainability, safety, and the accessibility of our public lands. This approach ensures that the agency can uphold its commitment to preserving wilderness character while facilitating responsible and inclusive recreational opportunities for all.