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Comments: I'm writing to suggest major changes to the draft policies on fixed rock climbing anchors in wilderness areas. Such anchors should be encouraged, in the interest of safety and sustainable use and preservation of our wilderness. Extreme cases of anchors that mar the visual appeal of such areas can be discouraged, but the anchors themselves should be supported, in their establishment and sustainment by the climbing community.

Existing climbing policies have served us well for half a century, balancing the value of such anchors in providing wilderness access, with sustainable limits on them. There is no reason for major changes to these policies which would endanger climbers and the public below, as well as reducing access to vertical terrain.

The community and the US Government have worked well together, with problems being vanishingly rare under the current system, which avoids needless bureaucracy and approvals. We in the community have established and largely observed appropriate ethics for installing anchors and using them in our climbing, making reasonable on-the-spot decisions constantly while we are engaged in our sport.

Our government's management policies should continue to protect existing climbing routes and allow appropriate exploration of new routes.