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Title:

Comments: As a Vermont-based, full-time climbing guide and small business owner, I am very concerned about the recent proposed changes about rock climbing anchors in Wilderness Areas and I'm writing in support of the allowing for continued bolting and bolting upgrades in our National Forests/Wilderness Areas.

Though Vermont doesn't have National Forests/Wilderness Areas that are popular climbing areas, due to the seasonal nature of Northeastern climbing (becoming more and more variable due to climate change), I often need to seek work in places where this bolting ban does indeed affect my income, such as the Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. And--much more important than that--the proposed bolting ban has potentially huge affects on my health, as I rely on those bolts for my safety. Not allowing for old bolts to be replaced is a significant safety hazard and the placement of new bolts in key areas can significantly increase climber safety. Couple that with the fact that, as a small business owner, I self-insure for health, and there is another added economic impact surrounding this issue of bolting.

Beyond my work as a climbing guide, I am also an avid climber, and often climb in National Parks. Please allow bolting and bolt replacement to continue on USFS lands, as has been the case throughout USFS history.