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Comments: Advocating for the Continued Use of Fixed Anchors in Wilderness Climbing:

Fixed anchors constitute a vital element of climbers' safety systems and are not deemed "installations" contrary to the Wilderness Act. Adhering to established climbing policies that have permitted the judicious use of fixed anchors for over fifty years is a proactive measure to safeguard Wilderness character while facilitating primitive and unconfined climbing experiences.

Federal agencies should refrain from introducing new guidance policies that bar Wilderness climbing anchors nationwide. The longstanding practice of allowing, managing, and authorizing fixed anchors for decades underscores the impracticality of imposing such restrictions.

The prohibition of fixed anchors raises safety concerns by creating unnecessary barriers to the regular maintenance of these anchors, a responsibility shouldered by the climbing community. Critical safety decisions often require immediate action, and any authorization process should not impede these decisions. Managing fixed anchor maintenance should encourage safe replacements without jeopardizing climbing routes.

The ban on fixed anchors hinders the proper exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers should permit climbers to explore these areas in a manner that allows for in-the-moment decisions crucial in navigating complex vertical terrain.

Prohibiting fixed anchors poses a threat to America's rich climbing legacy and could erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policies should prioritize the protection of existing routes from removal, ensuring the preservation of climbing history and accomplishments.