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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello, my name is James Sparks. I grew up in western North Carolina and have appreciated the wilderness areas of Linville Gorge and Shining Rock. I have spent so much time in these places, and I am in a professional position now where I am able to educate people about the importance of preserving these special areas. Rock Climbing is an activity that keeps me coming back to Linville Gorge season after season. I feel that myself and other climbers are some of the most respectful visitors of Linville Gorge. The climbing community attracts many different types of people, and I think this allows education about conservation to spread to a larger audience.

I think the ideas proposed in this document threaten climbing in Linville Gorge. And with climbing becoming so popular, I think this threatens the safety of newer climbers pushing into the unknown. Climbers need bolted anchors as part of our safety systems for so many reasons, for example, a quick decent when a storm rolls in. We need to be able to maintain existing anchors by replacing them which the climbing community is happy to do. This act would not allow us to do this and would make existing anchors eventually unsafe. Thank you for hearing our concerns.