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Comments: As the popularity of wilderness climbing routes continues to rise, restricting the use and installation of pitons, bolts, slings, and other fixed hardware could pose a serious threat to public safety. The aging hardware on these routes already contributes to a decrease in safety, leading to more accidents and placing additional strain on volunteer Search and Rescue (SAR) organizations that are already stretched thin.

The language in the new directives lacks clarity on whether volunteer SAR members would be authorized to place and identify the locations for emergency rescue bolts. This ambiguity could have significant implications for emergency response and rescue efforts.

It's essential to recognize that bolts and fixed rappel stations play a crucial role in preventing resource degradation in delicate alpine environments. The proposed directive FSM 2355, if implemented, may inadvertently encourage the development of risky new routes, further complicating the safety landscape.

One major concern is that FSM 2355 doesn't outline a plan to support increased staffing for the documentation of existing hardware and the enforcement of these regulations. This lack of support could lead to difficulties in maintaining and enforcing safety standards across climbing routes.

Moreover, many climbing routes necessitate some form of rappelling, making it imperative to consider the practical implications of the proposed directive on this widely used technique. Overall, a comprehensive approach that addresses safety concerns while considering the practicalities of enforcement and support for SAR organizations is crucial in ensuring the continued enjoyment of wilderness climbing routes.