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Comments: Upon reading this document, I am concerned that the proposed policy could have unintended consequences that will decrease access to safe climbing within USFS lands. Most outdoor climbing routes depend on reliable fixed anchors, which require technical expertise to install and maintain. To date, the climbing community has proven to be the most reliable stewards of the gear they trust their life with. By adding a cumbersome approval process, FSM 2355 could block safe outdoor climbing routes from being created and maintained.

At its core, this document attempts to strike a balance between ecological concerns and essential climbing safety gear. There is no doubt that climbing is a "legitimate and appropriate use of wilderness", yet the wording of this policy restricts the development of fixed anchors to require park evaluations "as funding and resources allow". Does USFS truly have the resources and expertise to take on this task and its associated liability? My fear is that they do not, and the new MRA process will reduce the quality of life-critical safety gear. In my experience as the BACC Stewardship Director, the people who install fixed anchors understand the "wilderness qualities" described in FSM 2355 and work hard to preserve them. I implore the Forest Service to consider fixed anchor policies that permit timely and effective action - please do not add red tape to a process that our sport depends on.