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Comments: Fixed anchors are a critical component of climbers' safety system. They are not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act and have been in use for more than 50 years. Following existing climbing policies that allow for use of fixed anchors placed by hand is a negligible impact that will protect Wilderness character while providing for primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing.

It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will create safety issues by imposing unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors, a responsibility undertaken by the climbing community. Climbers will have to choose between being safe and breaking the law, an impossible decision that will have other ramifications like increased search and rescue calls and enforcement and management responsibilities beyond the budget and time of the NFS. Climbers have a large, positive economic impact similar to other tourists like hikers. Prohibiting fixed anchors will result in decreased revenue for communities surrounding NFS lands. Fixed anchor maintenance needs to be managed in a way that incentivizes safe anchor replacement and does not risk the removal of climbing routes.

Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless and until analyses determine climbing development should be restricted, on a case-by-case basis for climbing areas, to protect cultural and natural resources.