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Comments: My comments are in response to FSM 2355 Climbing Opportunities #ORMS-3524. I appreciate the proactive approach the NFS is taking to be responsible stewards of our public lands. I recognize the immense task that it is to take on such an important and vital role. It is imperative that we work to develop sound management practices that meet the mission of the NFS. My concern with the proposed approach to managing bolting and anchors is the ambiguity in some of the distinctions for wilderness vs. non-wilderness as well as the reliance on a climbing use management plan. To address the 2nd issue, I see the CMP is contingent upon there being "funding and resources" available for such a thing to happen. I'm concerned with the current workload NFS employees and administrators have along with budget constraints, that this additional burden will go undone or perhaps be done capriciously in order to check a box. As such, climbers would be left waiting or wondering the status of being able to develop new climbing areas or re-equip established routes with new hardware. During that possibly lengthy time, my concern lies with the safety of those climbers that depend on the anchors for their safety. If replacement was stalled, anchors could become unsuitable for use and cost a person their life due to catastrophic failure. That liability and burden is unsuitable for the NFS to take on, as there are 10s of thousands of anchors/bolts around the U.S. on USFS land, and just as many or more that could be installed.

In addition, the NFS obligation to meet its mission "to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations." need not only take into consideration the physical resource. The needs of our current generation also include connecting with nature, to remove themselves from their digitally tethered world and find peace, recovery, and meaning in the natural world. Data shows again and again the value to one's health and well-being as they interact with nature. In addition, allowing for continued development of climbing areas on NFS land creates more opportunities for climbers to explore new areas, connect to those areas, and become advocates for our public lands--while at the same time becoming healthier humans that are more resilient and capable. With the consistent growth we've seen in the U.S. for people engaging in rock climbing, we'll ultimately reduce the impact on climbing areas by offering climbers more total areas to climb at, thereby distributing their impacts across a greater span of areas. Placing a bolting ban on new area development will limit the growing number of climbers to a smaller number of crags, and those areas will likely then exceed their carrying capacity, creating a new and likely more complicated issue to deal with as land managers--such as permitting climbs, ticketing, supportive infrastructure (e.g. parking lots, bathrooms, SAR, etc...).

Thank you for your consideration.