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Comments: To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the proposed prohibition on fixed anchors in Wilderness climbing areas. Having been a climber for 10 years, I've witnessed firsthand the positive impact climbing has on individuals and our nation as a whole. Rock climbing has been more than just a hobby for me; it's been a source of joy, discipline, and a boost to my mental and physical health, and I have seen that impact on many others that partake in this activity.

For this amazing pursuit to continue, it's important that fixed anchors remain a part of wilderness areas. Fixed anchors are well-established devices that protect climbs during ascent of otherwise unsafe expanses of rock, and as points of protection for safe belays and for safe escapes (rappelling). They have been used for half a century or more. Prohibiting fixed anchors or removing already existing anchors will create serious safety issues to climbers AND to the rescue squads dispatched in an emergency (at which point the rescue squads will be forced to create fixed anchors for safety reasons).

Limiting the creation of new climbing routes to only "existing climbing opportunities" outside Wilderness areas is unenforceable. It may cause confusion for both land managers and climbers. The policy for managing climbing in non-Wilderness areas should maintain allowance of new anchors unless and until further information show that climbing restrictions are necessary to safeguard cultural and natural resources.

Prohibition of fixed anchors will threaten America's rich climbing legacy and will also prevent future generations from being able to enjoy and recreate on our vast and wonderful wilderness areas. I urge you reconsider the ban on fixed anchors.

Thank you for your consideration.