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Organization: Black Hills Climbers Coalition

Title: Member at large

Comments: My name is Ron Yahne. I have been a climber for 52 years. I discovered climbing as a teenager by wandering in the Black Hills of South Dakota and scrambling up onto the many beautiful rocks in the wilderness. In those days there weren't many bolts or fixed hardware to be found and so consequently it was a very hazardous endeavor, we were never quite sure how we were going to get back down to the ground. Though what we were doing was dangerous it instilled in me a love and respect for the outdoors and I have devoted my life to protecting the wilderness areas where we climbed. I believe the vast majority of climbers feel the same sense of stewardship to the areas where they climb.

In order to safely get up and then down from the rocks it is often necessary to install fixed anchors into the rock. These anchors are small and unobtrusive and usually painted to further camouflage them. In the past sometimes inferior quality components were used and subsequently have become unsafe and need to be replaced, usually with stronger, long lasting components. This has always been done by climbers themselves as they understand what is needed to make a somewhat risky endeavor safer.

I am very concerned that proposed regulations will remove climbers ability to determine how to best protect themselves while recreating on public lands. I treasure the lifetime of memories I have of climbing all over this beautiful country and sincerely hope that freedom is not taken away from future generations of climbers.

Sincerely, Ron Yahne