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Comments:

I am writing to express my concerns about the recent draft policies released by the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service, which propose to classify fixed anchors as "installations" under the Wilderness Act. This reclassification will impact both new and existing bolts, slings, and pitons in Wilderness Areas, essentially requiring individual review by land managers for each anchor.

I believe this approach could significantly hinder safe and responsible climbing in these areas. Fixed anchors are an integral part of climbing safety and have been used sustainably in wilderness climbing for decades. Treating them with the same level of scrutiny as more impactful structures like paved roads or buildings seems disproportionate and could negatively impact the climbing community's ability to safely navigate these areas.

Moreover, the lack of clarity in defining "climbing opportunities" in non-wilderness areas under the USFS proposal could lead to confusion and challenges for both land managers and climbers. This could inadvertently compromise safety and hinder the responsible exploration of these terrains.

I urge the NPS and USFS to consider the historical context and current safety needs of the climbing community in their decision-making process. It is essential to maintain a balance between preserving natural wilderness and allowing the climbing community to safely access and enjoy these public lands.

Thank you for considering my comments on this important matter.