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Comments: As an avid hiker, backpacker, rock climber, and wilderness supporter, I'm writing to oppose the changes to the FSM that would define climbing anchors as "installations" and potentially allowing for removal or lawsuits if they do not have an MRA.

Fixed anchors and equipment are a key piece of our safety system and should not be defined as or regulated as prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. I would like to see the USFS follow existing climbing policies that have allowed appropriate use of fixed anchors for more than a half century. I believe that will do more to protect Wilderness character while providing for primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing than the proposed regulations.

I also believe 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 or changing the regulations related to fixed anchors/equipment will create safety issues by imposing unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors, a responsibility undertaken by the climbing community. Safety decisions often must be made in the moment and any authorization process should not impede those decisions. Fixed anchor/equipment maintenance needs to be managed in a way that incentivizes safe replacement and does not risk the removal of climbing routes or unexpected "surprises" for climbers on those routes that could be life-threatening.

Prohibiting fixed anchors or equipment obstructs appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers need to allow climbers to explore our public lands in a way that permits in-the-moment decisions that are necessary when navigating complex vertical terrain.

Prohibiting fixed anchors and equipment will threaten America's historic climbing legacy and could erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy should also protect existing routes from removal or frivolous and expensive lawsuits.