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Comments: I am 53 years old and have been climbing for 30 plus years, many of my trips have been in Wilderness. I believe it is important to allow and protect the use, placement and maintenance of bolts and fixed anchors by climbers in wilderness areas for the following reasons.

HISTORIC PRECEDENCE

Many bolts, fixed anchors and routes in what is now called Wilderness, predate Wilderness designation. This alone should provide an historic precedence for bolts and fixed anchors in Wilderness.

VISUAL IMPACT

Bolts, which are hand drilled in Wilderness areas are typically placed sparingly due to the difficulty and amount of work this requires. Because they are placed sparingly and off trail, they are very difficult for the nonclimber to locate, creating a very minimal visual impact.

SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Bolts provide safe passage through sections of rock that have inadequate placements for traditional (nuts and camming devices) gear during ascent. And, they can take the place of slings around trees and rocks which can more easily damage the resource.

WASTING HUMAN RESOURCES AND TAXPAYER DOLLARS

Our public agencies and public servants that protect our Wilderness areas are already underfunded and stretched thin. The addition of more policies and more enforcement of policies will be a waste of tax payer dollars and a stress on the understaffed workforce.

CONCLUSION

The proposed policies to limit bolting and fixed anchors should be rejected. The legislation proposed to protect the legal and conditional use, placement and maintenance of bolts and other fixed anchors should be enacted. This will give the rich climbing history in Wilderness areas protection and historic precedence it deserves. It will also allow for safe passage in the steep terrain of wilderness exploration, while helping to minimize resource and visual impacts. It will keep from wasting taxpayer dollars and government resources. And, will ultimately keep climbers as Wilderness advocates and supporters.

Thank you for your consideration,

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