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Comments: Attempting to limit the creation of new routes exclusively to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is impractical and has the potential to generate confusion among both land managers and climbers. The climbing management policy for non-Wilderness areas should sustain opportunities for new anchors unless analyses conclusively indicate that climbing must be restricted to safeguard cultural and natural resources.

Fixed anchors play a crucial role in ensuring the safety of climbers and are not considered prohibited "installations" according to the Wilderness Act. Adhering to established climbing policies that have permitted the judicious use of fixed anchors for over fifty years will contribute significantly to preserving Wilderness character while accommodating primitive and unrestricted Wilderness climbing.

The creation of new guidance policies by federal agencies, across the nation, that prohibit Wilderness climbing anchors is unjustifiable, especially considering the longstanding allowance, management, and authorization of fixed anchors for decades.

The prohibition of fixed anchors poses safety concerns by introducing unnecessary hurdles to the routine maintenance of these anchors, a responsibility shouldered by the climbing community. Vital safety decisions often require immediate action, and any authorization process should not impede such decisions. Managing fixed anchor maintenance should encourage safe replacements and prevent the removal of climbing routes.

The prohibition of fixed anchors hinders the appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers should permit climbers to explore Wilderness with the flexibility needed for in-the-moment decisions when navigating intricate vertical terrain.

A ban on fixed anchors jeopardizes America's rich climbing legacy and has the potential to erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy should prioritize protecting existing routes from removal.