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Comments: My interpretation of the Wilderness Act relevant to the placement of fixed anchors in Wilderness aligns with the new proposals by the NPS and USFS, that the placement of such devices "must be necessary to enhance or preserve wilderness character".

The placement and potential accumulation of fixed hardware within Wilderness environments can adversely affect elements of wilderness character, specifically naturalness and outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Additionally, the placement of fixed anchors and associated impacts (i.e., noise disturbances to wildlife during installation, potential increases in visitor use in affected areas, visual resources effects), have the potential to directly and cumulatively affect other resources present within designated Wilderness. Additionally, fixed hardware within Wilderness clearly qualifies as "an imprint of man" and conflicts with core elements of the Wilderness Act.

Just because people want to visit certain canyon environments within Wilderness does not necessitate that managing agencies authorize the placement of fixed anchors or other hardware solely to accommodate human use.