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Comments: Thank you for allowing me to comment on these proposals. As many are aware, the Wilderness Act prohibits installations and structures like permanent fixed climbing anchors to protect the areas' wild character. Fixed climbing anchors must not be allowed in Wilderness. They do not belong in Wilderness as they are not a natural feature. The Wilderness Act's strict prohibitions, including its prohibition on installations, cannot be overcome by a desire to facilitate or enhance a particular form of recreation, and the narrow administrative exception for installations does not extend to the general public seeking to create developed recreational activities in Wilderness. Too many people want to turn our National Parks and Wildernesses into their playgrounds. These areas are home to many plants and animals who depend upon them for survival and protection.

Your agency's primary duty is to protect Wilderness in its natural, untrammeled state, and the Wilderness Act's ban on installations can only be overcome in rare administrative circumstances where the installation is necessary to protect Wilderness in its natural, untrammeled state. This does not apply for permanent climbing anchors. Furthermore, your agency has no duty to develop Wilderness to provide "opportunities for primitive recreation." Wilderness, by its very existence, provides these opportunities-you need only to protect the Wilderness according to the provisions of the Wilderness Act to safeguard the opportunity.

Climbing without permanent fixed anchors is generally compatible with wilderness preservation. While it may be true that fewer people will climb certain routes in Wilderness if they don't have fixed bolts or other permanently-installed protection, natural limits on use is a plus when it comes to wilderness protection, particularly with the recent explosion of outdoor recreation uses in Wilderness. For those climbers seeking developed climbing opportunities, there are ample permanently bolted climbs outside of Wilderness areas.

Wilderness is an increasingly endangered landscape. Less than three percent of land in the Lower 48 is protected as Wilderness, and it is under threat, including from rapidly escalating recreation pressures. Again, our National Wilderness areas are NOT playgrounds and recreation areas. Wilderness allows those able to participate a special and unique experience. We need to continue to revere, respect and preserve Wilderness.

Any specific proposals for permanent fixed anchor installations in Wilderness must be subjected to public notice and an opportunity for public comment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Responsible Americans must be able to respond to these detrimental plans encouraged by irresponsible climbers and the outdoor recreation industry.