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Comments: Dear United State Forest Service,

Please accept this comment as a response to the proposed project FSM 2355 Climbing Opportunities #ORMS-3524.

I am disappointed that the Forest Service is considering this proposal. The Wilderness Act prohibits "installations and structures", such as permanent fixed climbing anchors, in order to protect the areas' wild character. These anchors must not be allowed in Wilderness.

These prohibitions are strict, and cannot be overcome by a desire to facilitate or enhance a particular form of recreation. The narrow administrative exception for installations does not extend to the general public seeking to create developed recreational activities in Wilderness.

The Forest Service'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.*

Permanent fixed climbing anchors, like bolts and pitons permanently pounded into Wilderness rock faces, diminish an area's wild character. Not only are such installations lasting signs of human development, but they also attract and concentrate use- at great expense to native plants and animals for whom Wilderness is often a last, safe refuge.

There is no duty on your part to provide "opportunities for primitive recreation" in Wilderness. Wilderness, by its very existence, provides such opportunities-and your roll in that is to protect the Wilderness according to the provisions of the Wilderness Act to designed to safeguard these opportunities.

Climbing without permanent fixed anchors is generally compatible with wilderness preservation. The lack of fixed bolts or other permanently-installed protection will place some natural limits on who will be able to climb certain routes in Wilderness, which is as it should be. These limitations exist for all who venture into Wilderness and will temper the effects of the recent explosion of outdoor recreation uses in Wilderness. Those climbers seeking developed climbing opportunities can find ample permanently bolted climbs outside of Wilderness.

Wilderness is an endangered landscape. Less than 3 percent of land in the Lower 48 is protected as Wilderness, and it is under threat, including from rapidly escalating recreation pressures. 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.

Thank you for your attention.