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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is John Miller and I am writing about the issue of keeping fixed climbing anchors out of wilderness areas. While I understand that rock climbing is a favorite past time of many who enjoy the outdoors in general and preserved wilderness regions in particular, it is important that we do our utmost to preserve the pristine nature of these protected wild areas. Accomplishing this level of preservation is incompatible with the use of fixed climbing anchors.

The Wilderness Act prohibits installations and structures like permanent fixed climbing anchors in order to protect the areas' wild character. Fixed climbing anchors must not be allowed in Wilderness. 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.

I respect the desire of climbers to enjoy the outdoors, but not at the cost of preserving wilderness as it is meant to exist without human interference. Agencies have no duty to develop Wilderness to provide "opportunities for primitive recreation." Wilderness, by its very existence, provides these opportunities-the agencies 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 not a bad thing when it comes to wilderness protection, particularly with the recent explosion of outdoor recreation uses in Wilderness.

Thank you for your time and consideration.