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Comments: I have been rock climbing and occasionally putting up new rock climbing routes for about 30 years. In that time I've seen the popularity of rock climbing greatly increase and the safety greatly improve. I believe those two factors go hand-in-hand. An important factor in the improvement of rock climbing safety is due to improvements in the quality and placement of fixed anchors. This has occurred thanks to improvements in the quality of the anchors themselves, better knowledge in the climbing community about how to properly place anchors, and the efforts of thousands of climbers both individually and in groups like climbing clubs, organizations, collectives, and larger national groups such as the American Safe Climbing Association.

Placing and maintaining fixed anchors is absolutely critical to the safety of rock climbing.

More than that, I would add that it has been my experience that rock climbers are generally good stewards of the areas in which they climb. They generally happily contribute to caring for the land and the trails we use, and trying to clean and maintain the areas where they climb.

Climbers also make a positive economic contribution that is probably underestimated. Climbers contribute economically to their local climbing gyms which have sprung up and grown in popularity all over the country. But climbers also contribute to the economies of regions which are dependent on tourism, often by showing up at times of the year which are "out of season" for most tourists but perfect season for rock climbing.

I could go on and on about the positives associated with rock climbing.

I believe it would be a huge mistake to prohibit climbing or the use of fixed climbing anchors. In my experience there is no negative environmental impact due to fixed climbing anchors. But banning fixed anchors, or making it more difficult to place and maintain fixed anchors, comes at a huge cost to climbers and their safety. I encourage you to please leave the decisions about placing and maintaining fixed anchors up to the climbers themselves, who are currently doing a good job of placing and maintaining the anchors which their lives depend upon.