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Comments: The Wilderness Act is about protecting the wild and undisturbed nature of designated areas. It strictly forbids the installation of structures such as permanent fixed climbing anchors. Such a prohibition supersedes any desire to facilitate or enhance a particular form of recreation, and the narrow administrative exception for installations, namely, that such an installation be necessary to preserve the area itself, does not extend to any attempt to create or facility recreational activities like climbing in Wilderness. 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, a natural limit on use the use of Wilderness is actually a good thing, and keeps the Wilderness from being overused and degraded. Meanwhile, for those climbers seeking developed climbing opportunities, there are ample permanently bolted climbs outside of Wilderness.

Given that less than 3 percent of the land in the continental United States is protected as Wilderness, given that that area is under threat from increased usage and escalating recreation pressures, your agency's focus must be on preserving Wilderness area for the lasting enjoyment of all Americans into the future, and not the immediate use by a specific segment of enthusiasts like climbers.

Additionally, 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.