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Comments: Fixed anchors represent a crucial element in the safety framework for climbers, and their installation is not prohibited as per the Wilderness Act. Adhering to established climbing policies that have permitted the judicious use of fixed anchors for over fifty years is a more effective approach to preserving Wilderness character while accommodating primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing experiences. It becomes unreasonable for federal agencies to introduce new guidance policies nationwide that restrict Wilderness climbing anchors, especially when these agencies have managed and authorized fixed anchors for decades.

The prohibition of fixed anchors introduces safety concerns by unnecessarily impeding the routine maintenance of these anchors, a responsibility that the climbing community actively undertakes. Vital safety decisions often require immediate attention, and any authorization process should not hinder these crucial decisions. The management of fixed anchor maintenance should incentivize safe replacement practices without jeopardizing climbing routes. Moreover, prohibiting fixed anchors hampers the appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas, limiting climbers' ability to make on-the-spot decisions essential when navigating intricate vertical terrains.

Additionally, restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is deemed unenforceable and risks causing confusion among land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should uphold opportunities for new anchors unless and until analyses determine that climbing should be restricted to protect cultural and natural resources. This approach ensures a balanced and informed decision-making process while maintaining the integrity of climbing activities. The prohibition of fixed anchors not only poses a threat to America's rich climbing legacy but also jeopardizes some of the world's most remarkable climbing achievements. Climbing management policies should prioritize the protection of existing routes from removal, ensuring the preservation of the sport's historical and cultural significance.