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Comments: The USFS should not attempt to ban fixed anchors from Wilderness Areas. Permitting new installations seems reasonable, but the application process should be made as easy as possible, and new installations should be automatically approved unless there is a clear and pressing need to prohibit individual installations.

In many cases, fixed anchors substantially improve the safety of climbing activities (especially in rappel anchors). The removal of fixed anchors by from wilderness areas by other federal agencies (NPS) in the past has lead, indirectly, to climber deaths (for example, the removal of bolts from the west ridge of Forbidden Peak in North Cascades National Park; following that removal, the improvised rappel anchor replacing those bolts failed, killing at least on climber).

The idea that a few bolts somewhere on an alpine climb constitute a disruption of wilderness while a maintained trail cut through the same wilderness does not is absurd. USFS should aspire to consistency in its policies regardless of the type of recreation it is regulating. An example of this might be requiring fixed anchors to be hand-drilled in wilderness areas, much the same as requiring trail building and maintenance crews to use only hand tools.