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Comments: I am writing to express my concerns about the recent proposals to ban permanent bolts and fixed anchors in wilderness areas for rock climbing. As a member of the climbing community, I understand and respect the importance of preserving the natural beauty and integrity of our wilderness areas. However, I believe that an outright ban on permanent bolts could significantly compromise climber safety and inadvertently lead to increased environmental impact.

Fixed anchors are essential for the safety of climbers, particularly in challenging and remote routes where natural protections are insufficient. The absence of these anchors could lead to an increase in climbing accidents and rescues, posing a risk not only to climbers but also to rescue personnel.

Furthermore, fixed anchors can actually help minimize environmental impact. By providing defined routes, they can reduce the need for climbers to create new paths or disturb pristine areas. The absence of these anchors might lead to more off-trail movement, exacerbating soil erosion and vegetation damage.

I urge the National Park Service to consider a policy that balances the need for environmental conservation with the safety needs of the climbing community. This could include a system where the placement of new anchors is carefully regulated and reviewed, with input from experienced climbers and environmental experts. Such a collaborative approach could ensure that climbing remains a safe and sustainable activity in our national parks.

Thank you for considering my viewpoint on this important issue.