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Comments: I've been rock climbing in non-wilderness areas since 1985. Over the last 39 years, I have experiences and memories that have shaped who I am as a person. As I get older, I hope to continue to absorb these experiences. Never in my 39 years of non-wilderness climbing have I felt that fixed hardware had a negative impact on the environment. In fact, the fixed hardware in these environments is often what allowed me to pass safely through otherwise extremely dangerous terrain. To me, these climbing experiences are equally as important as my schooling and what I learned from my parents. I learned how to assess and manage risk and how to learn from the environment in real-time. I also learned how to minimize my impact in non-wilderness areas by observing how earlier generations of climbers used a minimal amount of fixed hardware to ascend these vertical landscapes. I've shared these experiences with my own children and I've mentored many younger rock-climbers.

In many non-wilderness areas, there are rules and policies governing the installation of fixed hardware. These rules are often governed by the local climbing community and they ensure that excessive fixed hardware is not placed. I sit on the board of a committee called Action Committee for Eldorado in Eldorado Canyon State Park. This is a prime example of how climbers ensure that there are rules in place which protect the rich tradition of climbing while also providing for safe hardware installations to exist. Replacing fixed anchors is also done in a well-managed manner by a handful of climbers with the skills needed to replace the anchor. These techniques and skills ensure that the environment is very minimally impacted.

Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Many climbing LCO's, such as the Boulder Climbing Community or BCC, work closely with land managers to help them understand fixed hardware installations. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless and until analyses determine climbing should be restricted to protect cultural and natural resources.

Often times while climbing in non-wilderness areas, decisions need to be made in the moment to ensure a safe ascent or descent. Weather, rock-fall, and route-finding challenges can all contribute to a situation where you need fixed anchors to retreat safely. Regulations which would prohibit making these decisions would surely lead to unnecessarily dangerous outcomes, also potentially requiring a rescue that puts others at risk. Placing a single bolt by hand can take up to an hour of hard work, this fact alone limits how many fixed anchors are placed in wilderness areas. It's also a skill that a small percentage of climbers have developed in order to establish new routes. Very few climbers even own the equipment necessary to place a fixed anchor and even fewer will take this equipment with them on a normal climb.

Prohibiting fixed anchors in non-wilderness areas will also change the landscape of climbing history which has been established over decades and decades. History is a very important aspect of climbing and future generations of non-wilderness climbers would be severely impacted if this ban goes into effect. Now more than ever, we need to maintain the opportunity for climbers to experience climbing in non-wilderness areas.