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Organization:

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Comments: My name is Alice Pugh and I have been climbing for almost 20 years of my life. Being able to safely climb in beautiful places has taught me how deeply to respect and cherish the wilderness. As a lifelong climber and a lover of wild places, I urge you to NOT to make fixed anchors (bolts, pitons, slings) prohibited in America's Wilderness areas. Fixed anchors are essential piece to climbers safety. Prohibiting fixed anchors will create safety issues by imposing unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors, a responsibility undertaken by the climbing community. I myself volunteer to help maintain local routes and climbing areas. Critical safety decisions often must be made in the moment and any authorization process should not impede those decisions. Fixed anchor maintenance needs to be managed in a way that incentivizes safe anchor replacement and does not risk the removal of climbing routes! Following existing climbing policies that allow judicious use of fixed anchors for more than a half century will do more to protect Wilderness character while providing for primitive and unconfined climbing. It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades. 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. 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.