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Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

As a climber for the last 35 years, I have come to appreciate the existence of fixed anchors in both wilderness and non-wilderness settings.

Fixed anchors are an essential piece of of the safety system for climbing. They are not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. Fixed anchors have been used in climbing in the United States for approximately 100 years, and climbing was a well-known activity in wilderness areas at the time the Act was passed. Many new wilderness areas have been designated with full knowledge of the presence of climbing and fixed anchors within wilderness boundaries. Fixed anchors were not a factor in the passage of the Act nor were they in subsequent designations of areas where climbing is a major form of recreation such as the Rocky Mountain National Park and Yosemite Wilderness Areas. 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.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will create safety issues by imposing unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors. This maintenance is done by the climbing community voluntarily. Critical safety decisions often must be made in the moment and any authorization process would impede those decisions. Fixed anchor maintenance needs to be managed in a way that allows for safe anchor replacement and does not involve the removal of existing climbing routes.