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Comments: I am writing in regarding to the proposal to disallow the establishment of new climbing routes in non-wilderness areas. As a long-time climber, I have significant concerns about this new proposed policy and believe that it serves neither the environment, nor the American people who recreate in these spaces.

The proposed policy would negate previous policy regarding climbing anchors and cause unnecessary confusion. Additionally the use of bolts can often DECREASE the impact on climbing areas. For example, without top anchors, climbers are forced to reach the top of the cliff and sling a tree or walk off the climb. This can damage trees at the top and increase erosion at the tops of cliffs. Prudent bolting is not only significantly safer, but can minimize these types of environmental harm.

Additionally, as a member of a wilderness search and rescue team, I also know of the environmental impact on wilderness rescues. Reasonable bolting keeps climbs safer, which leads to fewer rescues and less impact on the wilderness areas.

Finally, a change in policy would likely cause significant confusion among land-managers and climbers and threatens the rich history of climbing in the United States. Please continue to allow prudent bolting in non-wilderness areas.

Thank you,

Michael Foot