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Comments: I am writing to express my deep concern about the potential prohibition of fixed climbing protection. I deeply cherish climbing: it's been a profound way for me to appreciate our country's landscapes and meet wonderful people. Because of that, I want to make sure that climbers can continue to minimize risks to themselves and the environment with modern techniques and equipment. Fixed anchors have long been an integral component of climbers' safety systems, and I believe that prohibitions would not only compromise safety but also contradict the principles outlined in the Wilderness Act. I implore you to reconsider any inclination towards restricting fixed anchors, as doing so may have far-reaching consequences for the climbing community and the essence of wilderness areas.

Firstly, it is crucial to emphasize that fixed anchors are not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. The use of fixed anchors has been guided by existing climbing policies for over half a century, demonstrating their compatibility with the preservation of Wilderness character. Adhering to established policies that allow for the judicious use of fixed anchors is not only a reasonable approach but also one that aligns with the long-standing traditions of responsible climbing. Leave No Trace principles are deeply rooted in climbing culture- climbers value stewardship of the wilderness and have no intention of altering the character of the environments they enjoy.

As far as safety is concerned, fixed anchors need regular maintenance-a responsibility taken on by the climbing community. Federal agencies have historically permitted, managed, and authorized such anchors for decades. Implementing sweeping prohibitions could create burdensome obstacles. Safety decisions often require immediate action, and any authorization process should not impede the timely replacement of fixed anchors, which is essential for the well-being of climbers.

Furthermore, the prohibition of fixed anchors may obstruct appropriate exploration of wilderness areas. Climbers should be permitted to make in-the-moment decisions when navigating complex vertical terrain, fostering a sense of adventure and exploration. Restricting this freedom may compromise the essence of wilderness areas and limit the ability of climbers to fully engage with the natural environment.

Lastly, it is essential to recognize the potential threat to America's rich climbing legacy and the risk of erasing some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policies should aim to protect existing routes from removal, preserving the history and cultural significance of these climbing areas.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider any plans to prohibit fixed climbing protection. The judicious use of fixed anchors is not only consistent with existing policies but also essential for the safety of climbers and the preservation of Wilderness character. By working collaboratively with the climbing community, we can find solutions that balance the need for safety with the desire to explore and appreciate the beauty of our Wilderness areas.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I trust that you will consider the long-term impact of any decisions on the climbing community and the integrity of our Wilderness areas.