

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/29/2024 9:30:48 PM

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Comments: I have significant concerns with the proposed legislation. This new interpretation of the Wilderness Act and the resulting proposed process for anchor approvals puts both the lives of climbers and the rich climbing legacy of the United States at risk.

I am a scientist working in the United States for the DOE, and I moved here from Canada to start my scientific career in part because of the amazing climbing culture in the United States. Many of my colleagues in the US national lab system made similar decisions (especially those at Los Alamos National Lab and Oak Ridge National Lab), and relocated to the US because of the ability to access amazing wilderness climbing areas.

The new bolting proposal will severely limit the ability for climbers to climb in an exploratory fashion, a longstanding tradition that is integral to the American climbing ethic. The climbing community has self-regulated bolting for decades, and the decision to place bolts is not taken lightly. When climbing in an exploratory fashion, one may assume that no bolts are needed due to the characteristics of a planned route, but find out mid-climb that one or more bolts are in fact critical to be able to complete a route safely. The proposed legislation will put climbers in a position where they must act illegally to protect themselves from serious injury, or take unacceptable risks in order to finish or descend from a route without bolts. Another area of concern pertains to retrobolting - the act of replacing old and dangerous bolts that are becoming a serious issue in many of America's most popular climbing areas. Even without this proposed legislation, the effort required to identify, purchase, approach, and replace aging hardware is considerable. The proposed legislation will further add to this problem and make climbing a more dangerous activity for even recreational climbers who stick to well-established and popular climbs.