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Comments: As a climber of over fifty years, I am appalled by the proposed policy of banning, and removing, fixed anchors from climbs within our National Parks, Forests, and Wilderness areas. This draconian proposal will effectively eliminate most of the existing climbs, many of which number among the most iconic in the world. This policy will also prevent the establishment of virtually any new climbs in the future. The proposed changes also single out climbers, who have a long history of exemplary environmental ethics, from other park visitors. Is it the intention of the NPS and the USFS to also eliminate trail signs, registers, and wilderness sanitary facilities? It is difficult to see any difference in impact fixed climbing anchors present that isn't also present in many other wilderness accommodations we all take for granted. Is it the intention of the Yosemite park service to remove the cables from Half Dome? After all, these are nothing more than fixed anchors on a rock climb.

If you prohibit fixed anchors, it will ironically only impact climbers themselves, as they are the only visitors who actually encounter them. Unless the NPS and the USFS actually outlaw climbing itself, the outcome of this terrible policy is predictably bad. People are not going to stop climbing these famous routes. Instead, they will place and remove all anchors, including bolts, with each and every ascent. That would be an unfortunate outcome indeed. I implore the responsible authorities to reconsider this deeply flawed policy change.

Mike Heintz