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Comments: I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed regulations regarding bolting climbing routes for several compelling reasons. As an avid climber and advocate for responsible outdoor recreation, I am deeply concerned about the potential negative impacts that these regulations could have on climbers' safety, wilderness character, and the vibrant climbing community.

First and foremost, fixed anchors are an essential component of climbers' safety systems and are not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. For over half a century, existing climbing policies have recognized the judicious use of fixed anchors as necessary for ensuring the safety of climbers while preserving wilderness character. These policies strike a delicate balance between facilitating primitive and unconfined wilderness climbing experiences and protecting the integrity of our wilderness areas.

It is unreasonable for federal agencies to introduce new guidance policies that would prohibit wilderness climbing anchors across the country. For decades, these agencies have successfully managed and authorized fixed anchors, acknowledging their importance in facilitating safe and enjoyable climbing experiences. Implementing sweeping prohibitions on fixed anchors would not only undermine decades of established practice but also create unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of climbing routes.

Prohibiting fixed anchors poses significant safety concerns by hindering the regular maintenance and replacement of aging anchors. Climbing communities take responsibility for maintaining fixed anchors, making critical safety decisions in real-time situations. Any authorization process that impedes these decisions jeopardizes the safety of climbers and the integrity of climbing routes. We must manage fixed anchor maintenance in a manner that incentivizes safe replacement practices and ensures the preservation of climbing routes.

Moreover, prohibiting fixed anchors restricts climbers' ability to appropriately explore wilderness areas. Climbers rely on fixed anchors to navigate complex vertical terrain safely. Land managers must allow climbers the flexibility to make in-the-moment decisions necessary for safe exploration, ensuring that climbers can continue to enjoy the wilderness responsibly.

Additionally, prohibiting fixed anchors jeopardizes America's rich climbing legacy and risks erasing some of the world's greatest climbing achievements. Climbing management policy must protect existing routes from removal, preserving the historical and cultural significance of climbing areas for future generations.

Finally, restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-wilderness lands is impractical and unenforceable. This approach will only create confusion among land managers and climbers, stifling the development of new climbing opportunities. Non-wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless rigorous analyses determine otherwise, ensuring that climbers can continue to explore and enjoy climbing areas responsibly.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider the proposed regulations regarding bolting climbing routes and instead prioritize policies that uphold climbers' safety, preserve wilderness character, and support the vibrant climbing community. By maintaining existing climbing policies that have proven effective for decades, we can ensure the continued enjoyment of our wilderness areas while safeguarding America's climbing legacy.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your thoughtful consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,
Jeremy