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Comments: Hello,

I am writing to express my concern about your proposed policies regarding fixed anchors in Wilderness areas. While I agree that wilderness areas should be impacted as little as possible, I believe that the Wilderness we know now in the United States is a landscape defined by human interaction. While Wilderness areas serve as a refuge for flora and fauna, a natural experience for scientific discovery, and a comfort to the American mind, they are continually being impacted by human presence via climate change and its myriad of indirect consequences.

I believe that the sustainable exploration of Wilderness areas is integral to the fabric of this country and what it means to be an American: to be able to venture into wild places and to the top of vertical faces is to be free. These new policies would damage the rich history and relationship that climbers have with Wilderness areas and public land.

-Prohibiting fixed anchors would obstruct the most fundamental exploration of these areas and would damage the legacy of climbing in America.

-Prohibiting fixed anchors would also create unsafe conditions for climbers: fixed anchor maintenance needs to be supported and encouraged to avoid dangerous anchors being used and limit high-risk situations where climbers are forced into life-or-death scenarios due to missing or damaged fixed anchors.

Climbers have been exploring Wilderness areas with the aid of fixed anchors for decades and I believe that the use of fixed anchors aligns with the goal of the Wilderness Act. Multiple-use land management (including for outdoor recreation opportunities) has always been a part of our public lands and I believe that this is no different now; climbing and fixed anchors coexist with the character and quality of Wilderness areas now and will continue to do so.

Please consider altering the proposed policies to allow for ethical but unimpeded use of fixed anchors in Wilderness areas.

Thank you for your time.