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Comments: Dear US Forest Service,

Climbing is a sport that heavily relies on self-reliance, and it allows people to experience nature in a way that cannot be achieved by walking on a trail. I want to share why I believe having fixed gear is not incompatible with wilderness areas and why prohibiting fixed gear can actually lead to more damage to natural environments.

Having safe, well-maintained fixed gear for climbing is analogous to having designated hiking trails. Prohibiting fixed anchors encourages climbers to rappel off of trees and bushes which can destroy vegetation.

Fixed anchors are also essential for climbers' safety. The proposed directives will also make existing routes more hazardous by discouraging maintenance of bolts and anchors. This will lead to many more injuries and accidents in the wilderness.

Bolts are small and usually placed in areas far away from non-climbers. Many anchors are colored and textured to match the rock.

The climbing community cares deeply about preserving the natural environment and giving other people the ability to enjoy the outdoor spaces. Working together to protect the wilderness while allowing responsible recreation will be more effective than strict prohibitions.

Thank you for taking the time to read our feedback.