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Comments: I am writing to add my voice to the opposition of any prohibition of bolts on the land you manage. I love climbing, I live in Alaska where there is fairly minimal established climbing, and most of our vacations involve going to places we can go climbing. The considered policy opens up risks that land managers could interpret bolts as prohibited, and that would negatively impact the experiences that we plan to have in the future on public lands.

Bolts (and other fixed anchors) are an essential part of modern climbing. Sometimes they allow me to access wild terrain that would otherwise be too dangerous. Even routes without bolts for protecting the route often have bolted anchors that offer safe descents. Fixed anchors are as critical to climbers as trails are to hikers, and I am very alarmed that their legitimacy is in question.

Banning additional bolts would stifle the expansion of the sport and over time increase crowding on existing routes. If there ever becomes a regulated process for vetting new bolts, replacing existing, aging, bolts should be exempt from it, as that is also critical for keeping climbers safe. Removal of existing bolts would be abhorrent, and create all kinds of conflicts, not to mention being dangerous and expensive.

I hope that my comments, along with the many other similar comments, help guide policy making to recognize that both climbing is a legitimate use of wilderness and that bolts are legitimate components of climbing.

Thank you,
Matt Callahan