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Comments: With respect to the new policies regarding the evaluation and authorization procedures for fixed anchors and equipment in national park service wilderness areas I have the following comments.

-Fixed anchors and equipment are essential pieces of climbers' safety systems. These should not be prohibited installations under the Wilderness Act. Doing so goes against the interest of land managers and climbers by making climbing more dangerous. Existing climbing policies that allow for the use of fixed anchors will do more to protect wilderness character.

-It is not reasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance prohibiting wilderness climbing anchors when the precedent has allowed, managed, and authorized them for decades.

-Prohibiting fixed anchors will create significant safety issues. It is important that the climbing community have the ability to make decisions regarding safe anchor maintenance installation, replacement, and repair in the moment considering conditions on the wall. Prohibiting this action will create unsafe conditions resulting in increased accidents and rescues.

-Prohibiting fixed anchors obstructs appropriate exploration of wilderness areas.

-America has a rich climbing legacy. Prohibiting fixed anchors could erase some of America's most important contributions to climbing and remove our country from the stage of climbing achievements.

It is understood that climbers need to work with regulators and land managers and the vast majority of climbers care deeply about being responsible stewards of the land and respecting rules set in place. The bipartisan Protecting America's Rock Climbing Act and America's Outdoor Recreation Act moved through their respective committees with unanimous support in 2023. If this legislation passes, it would direct NPS, Bureau of Land Management, and USFS to write new national climbing management guidance that protects safe, sustainable access to Wilderness climbing.

Thank you for listening to public comments on this policy. I hope that USFS considers how the policy on fixed anchors will affect safety of the climbing community.