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Comments: Fixed anchors are essential to the safety of climbers on many of the Nation's most magnificent routes. There is often no other way to descend complex vertical terrain than off of a few fixed bolts set the length of a rappel. The exploration, admiration of beauty, and full immersion of oneself in nature is best exemplified by climbers. I understand the prohibition of bolt heavy sport routes, but the occasional anchor placed on the backside of a climb, most often invisible to all but those who utilize the anchor, is a necessary for the safety of climbers. It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will create safety issues by imposing unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors, a responsibility undertaken by the climbing community. Critical safety decisions often must be made in the moment and any authorization process should not impede those decisions. Fixed anchor maintenance needs to be managed in a way that incentivizes safe anchor replacement and does not risk the removal of climbing routes.

Prohibiting fixed anchors obstructs appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers need to allow climbers to explore Wilderness in a way that permits in-the-moment decisions that are necessary when navigating complex vertical terrain.