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Comments: I am writing to strenuously object to the proposed new rules prohibiting fixed anchors in Wilderness areas. Fixed anchors are an essential component in safe rock climbing and really present the safest, least impactful way to climb. If fixed anchors are prohibited, climbers will get injured and die at a higher rate due to anchor failure, because anchoring to a tree or with a piece of removable gear in the wall is not nearly as secure as a bolt.

Additionally, as the NPS and USFS have been supporting and maintaining these anchors for decades, establishing a precedent and expectation within the climbing community. NPS And USFS should continue following their existing rules which allow judicious placement and use of fixed anchors as it has for over half a century.

Preventing new anchor placements is like preventing any new safe hiking areas in wilderness areas. Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless and until analyses determine climbing should be restricted to protect cultural and natural resources.

Finally, if fixed anchors are prohibited, many of the classic and legendary routes located in wilderness area will become much too dangerous to climb. I, personally, have been climbing for 4 years now, but I do not climb on ropes routes unless there is a fixed anchor present. I am an active, strong, young person with an intermediate level of climbing knowledge and I deserve to be able to safely climb routes in Wilderness areas. This casts a heavy threat to America's rich climbing legacy and reduces accessibility of climbing significantly. I can't say it enough; fixed anchors are absolutely essential for safe climbing and it would be a terrible mistake to prohibit them.