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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I learned to appreciate nature from the shoulders of my grandfather, during long walks through the woods behind his house. From those shoulders I gained a great appreciation for the natural world. We had many adventures together on public lands: camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, and repairing flat tires in the back country. As I have grown older, I have traded in hunting and off roading for backpacking, peak bagging, and rock climbing. I now bring my son along for these adventures in the hopes that he will develop his own love of the natural world.

I have taken those values with me in life, committing my career to habitat restoration and land management. I recognize the myriad impacts of humans on the landscape. There is always a cost for human presence on the landscape, and I believe our public agencies have done a good job keeping the many user groups impacts to a reasonable level.

That said, bolting rock climbs should not require an MSA. The Access Fund, American Safe Climbing Association, and local organizations like Climbing Resource Advocates for Greater Sacramento all take great care in managing climbing areas and minimizing impacts climbers have on resources. I personally never install bolts because as any good climber knows, finding routes is a highly specialized skill. Only the best and boldest members of our community are equipped to find routes on seemingly blank stretches of cliff face.

Rock climbing is one of the most primal and unconfined activities a person can engage in and when done right, fits quite well with the wilderness ethos. Keeping bolts out of wilderness will amount to massive losses of climbing areas because the proponents of increasing wilderness areas see the same beauty climbers do in the high and wild crags of our country. These places are worth protecting, and climbers are taking a lead in this regard. Eliminating bolts amounts to excluding a pre-existing user group that has learned to be a key player in protection of the environment and public lands.

Please reconsider this draconian approach to bolts in wilderness areas. Better protections of wilderness can be reached on a site-by-site basis with the input of local climbing access groups.

Thank you, Greg Webber.