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First name: George

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello to whom it may concern,

I am reaching out as a lifelong climber and devoted environmentalist who has benefitted and been kept safe by fixed anchors in wilderness areas across many states. The members of the climbing community are responsible stewards of the wilderness. We love and protect it and the vast majority of us follow Leave No Trace rules. Fixed bolts and anchors are non intrusive to their surroundings, do not damage plant or animal life, and are almost invisible to the untrained eye. Removing them will nearly guarantee an increase in accidents in the backcountry-- accidents that we do not have the search and rescue infrastructure to sustain, particularly in light of climbing's growing popularity. Allowing small numbers of fixed bolts will help keep tens of thousands of climbers safe as they recreate in wilderness areas and to date the bolts have not caused issues. Please keep this beautiful tradition of American climbing alive. One solution would be to allow the climbing community to govern bolting via the Access Fund or partnerships with local climbing organizations. Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

Sincerely, George E. Baker Jr.