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Comments: To whom it may concern.

I grew up in France, and came to Montana in 1992 to attend graduate school in wildlife biology at the University of Montana. One of the things that attracted me here was the wild, open spaces that are so limited in the old world.

I had been climbing in France, and continued in the US, also backpacking a lot on USFS land, which Montana is lucky to be very rich in. As I got more involved in climbing, friends and I created the Western Montana Climbers Coalition, of which I was president for several years.

So. Even though I love the concept of an 'unspoiled' wilderness, I struggle to understand the new 'no new anchors, no anchor replacement, climbing development limited to existing areas' policy. Judiciously placed anchors are crucial to providing safe climbing; and isn't the Forest Service mandated to provide recreation access? If we want the young generation involved in public land conservation, they need to relate to it. Climbing is becoming very popular, and for young people I believe that it is way more appealing than, say, backpacking. It can provide a first introduction to 'the great outdoors'.

Making new anchors illegal outside of 'existing climbing opportunities' is bound to lead to confusion, and while I wholeheartedly agree that bolted routes should not be developed willy nilly, without regards for natural and cultural resources conservation, climbing coalitions have been doing a great job at self policing.

I hope you take climbers comments like mine into account and amend/modify your policy, so that generations of future climbers may be able to enjoy recreating safely in the amazing wild open spaces of the United States!