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Comments: I am urging you to not pass the proposed Reference Manual 41: Wilderness Stewardship because the existing guidelines under the wilderness act that allow rock climbing and fixed anchors are reasonable. Fixed anchors, specifically bolted anchors, are very important for sustaining climbing activities for a few reasons. For one they are much safer than "removable" anchors such as nylon slings around trees, or rocks. Modern bolts are designed to sustain higher loads and are less susceptible to outside factors such as the sling slipping, or the tree branch breaking. Second, bolts are actually much less visible to the naked eye than other nylon climbing equipment that tends to be bright colors like purple, blue, yellow etc. However, to a non-climber who is experiencing the wilderness in a park, it is extremely difficult to see bolts on a rock face that are 100's of feet above them. In current protected wilderness areas that allow rock climbing, bolt placement is not out of control. Climbers actually do not want to place more bolts than are absolutely necessary because that is one of the core climbing values. Climbers know that when they go to attempt a wilderness-area climb that they need to be prepared to see less bolts, and potentially have to go further in between pieces of protection. This is a characteristic of many, many classic routes that no climber would want to change. Therefore, regulation and protection from "over-bolting" is already inherent to the climbing culture.

Additionally, establishing new routes on non-wilderness land should not be further restricted. Bolted anchors should be allowed, unless deemed the area needs to be protected due to cultural reasons.