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Comments: As a long-time climber and recreator in our forests, I laud the sentiment behind the proposed bolting changes, however I am concerned with the execution and long-term outcome of such a ban.

As a former president of a climbing nonprofit dedicated to beautifying and maintaining public lands, I understand the deep seriousness of caretaking these incredible resources. I believe that the individuals who proposed banning future bolt installation are doing so out of a deep love for the land and a desire to see it protected. Unfortunately, my guess is that they have never had the opportunity to appreciate the beauty of the land as seen from several pitches up a stunning climbing route. There is a wildness and spirituality to pulling yourself by hands and feet into a place that very few humans have been before. This piece of climbing is often overlooked; the gratitude and awe of feeling your own precariousness, while being perfectly safe thanks to the carefully installed gear on your route.

It is my belief that use of the parks for such an activity perfectly fulfills the USFS's mission to "care for the land and serve people". If bolting is stopped in USFS, climbing will quickly become an unsafe endeavor. This seems like the opposite of care for a prominent user group.

With the increase of climbing's popularity in the last decade, it seems impossible to police the many would-be route builders and route-maintainers who recreate in these wild places. You may catch a few but you will not catch them all. If re-bolting is banned, the hardware in place will eventually decay and become dangerous. The USFS will face a much higher rate of rescues due to bolt-failure, leading to expense for the parks, and injury or fatality on the part of recreators.

Finally, I would ask any concerned parties to visit climbing locations and evaluate how much their enjoyment and education is limited by the appearance of a couple of 2" square pieces of metal far above eye level, or if indeed, they can even spot them. Instead, I believe they would witness a user group of climbers enjoying and inspiring future generations with their appreciation and joy in these wild places we all love.

Please stop and think. There is another way to protect these places. Restriction and bans are not it. I encourage you to open a discourse with the climbing community. Get to know who this law will affect. Understand why we love this sport so much. And include us in ways to protect our forests so that everyone can enjoy them forever.

Kristin Wenzel