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Comments: Fixed anchors represent a crucial component of climbers' safety systems and are not classified as prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act. Adhering to established climbing policies that have permitted the judicious use of fixed anchors for over half a century is vital for safeguarding Wilderness character while facilitating primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing experiences.

It seems illogical for federal agencies to introduce new guidance policies across the nation that prohibit Wilderness climbing anchors, especially when these agencies have overseen, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for many decades. The proposed prohibition could lead to safety concerns by introducing unnecessary obstacles to the routine maintenance of fixed anchors—a responsibility that the climbing community has diligently shouldered. Critical safety decisions often require on-the-spot judgments, and any authorization process should not hinder these time-sensitive determinations. Managing fixed anchor maintenance should prioritize the promotion of safe anchor replacement and avoid the risk of removing established climbing routes.

Furthermore, a ban on fixed anchors could impede the appropriate exploration of Wilderness areas. Land managers should permit climbers to navigate these terrains with the flexibility to make in-the-moment decisions crucial for tackling complex vertical terrain.

The potential prohibition of fixed anchors not only jeopardizes the safety and exploration aspects but also poses a threat to America's rich climbing legacy. This policy change could erase some of the world's greatest climbing achievements, emphasizing the need for climbing management policies that protect existing routes from removal. It is crucial to strike a balance that preserves both safety and the climbing heritage deeply embedded in these Wilderness areas.