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Comments: My name is Ethan Pringle, and I am a professional climber with almost 30 years of outdoor climbing experience.

The sport of rock climbing saved my life. I don't know where I would be without it, but it would surely be somewhere much darker and more isolated. And I know I'm not the only one who feels that way.

Climbing is a worldwide community. If ropes are the thread that binds the fabric of that community together, then bolts and fixed anchors are the stitches. Without bolts and fixed anchors, climbers would only have access to a very, very small percentage of the climbs they currently have access to. Many of the climbing areas in the United States are in wilderness. If the use of bolts were restricted even further than they already are, or removed in these areas, the climbing community would suffer a loss it would never recover from- the stitching would unravel.

I know people, mostly non-climbers, are worried about the impact bolts have on the natural environment. I fully understand and appreciate people's worry about impact. But, 99.99999 % of climbers are extremely careful and thoughtful about where they place bolts, and how. We try to limit the visibility of them, to an extent that they are almost impossible to see from the ground in most places, especially if you aren't looking, (which most non-climbers aren't).

My opinion is that bolts and fixed anchors aren't really an eyesore. I'm not just saying this as a climber who doesn't want the further restriction or removal of them in wilderness, but as a steward of the natural environments I recreate and spend time in. If people think they are unsightly, let's see some examples. Let's see the number of complaints about it per year in wilderness. I'd be willing to bet that there are 10,000X the number of complaints per year about traffic and construction noise than there are about the impact or unsightliness of fixed anchors. I'm all for using bolts sparingly, but banning them entirely or removing them is unnecessarily radical, and will be an enormous detriment to millions of outdoor recreators in wilderness.

PLEASE revise your climbing guidance to reflect the practice and precedent of the last 60+ years-that fixed anchors for climbing can be used, replaced, and maintained in designated Wilderness areas.

Thank you for your consideration.