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Comments: Outdoor recreation on public lands is one of the things that has made America such a pioneer and destination in adventure sports like rock climbing. Participating in outdoor sports with a passionate community is one of the best ways to enjoy those public lands. Climbing has been an important part of how I got where I am today, and the same is true for many people that I know. A ban on climbing anchors in the wilderness will greatly set back one of the fastest growing and most conscionable user groups in the outdoors.

The climbing community is famous for goodwill, responsible use, and holding each other accountable. We have always been able to manage the development of new climbing areas safely and efficiently, often working in partnership with land management agencies or private individuals. By implementing a ban on fixed anchors, agencies will create safety issues when people arrive at locations that are presumed to have equipment for them to use. Not to mention that retroactively and imprudently removing bolts from wilderness areas would go against the very language that was written into the Wilderness Act. Bolts are not a prohibited installation and climbing requires no mechanized transport, it is simply a pure way to explore the mountains we are lucky to live near. Anchors used in creating climbing routes are discreet and robust, requiring little maintenance, and are almost invisible to an observer. And in areas where issues exist, like white chalk on red rock, climbers are happy to comply and adapt to using red chalk.

I've had the pleasure of working for the USFS on Mt Adams, where we patrolled the climbing route and maintained the trail to the summit. Working in wilderness areas and deciding how to enforce rules was a tricky part of being out in the field, but ultimately these areas are maintained to be used for recreation. Climbing has a long history in the US, and to ignore all that history would be a travesty. Management agencies should seek to work with climbers and allow for in-the-moment safety decisions that support placing bolts and other anchors in wilderness areas rather than a lengthy and bureaucratic approval process. Climbers are passionate about protecting the land they recreate on and support working with managers to determine new climbing sites that might see heavy traffic, or pitching in with trail maintenance and clean up as necessary.