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Title:

Comments: I am writing to ask that this document does not pass.

I am personally a rock climber in Southern Arizona and I have also climbed across the United States, including in Yosemite National Park. Rock climbing is a vital sport and banning bolts and other hardware will ultimately destroy rock climbing as we know it. The benefits to allowing bolts and bolting far outweigh the consequences. Here are some major reasons that rock climbing bolts should be permitted:

-Climbing communities care about the environment! Climbers are often the biggest supporters of Leave No Trace ideology. I will pack out any trash I see when I'm out climbing and I try to teach this mindset to others I meet in the wilderness. Unlike your average tourist or day hiker, climbers take the care of the environment very seriously because we want the outdoors to stay as pristine and cared-for so that we can continue to use the space for decades to come.

-CASA, our southern Arizona climbing organization, hosts frequent trail clean ups also for the purposes of system trail maintenance, climbing area erosion control work, litter cleanup, graffiti removal, fixed anchor maintenance, and raptor monitoring.

-Climbing has brought a lot of awareness to national parks and other forest areas through examples such as the film Free Solo. The added awareness has likely brought a lot of additional funding to the parks. Climbers also tend to donate their own money to parks (myself included). By alienating climbers, it would cut off outdoor enthusiasts who want to donate their money to good causes.

-A personal reason I am writing is that my fiance has a climbing related local business that he built from scratch. If the bolting practice is banned there could be a great decrease in climbers in general, which would impact our livelihood. There are many people such as mountain guides, shoe resolvers, gear shops, coaches, etc, who make a living in the outdoors. We are nature lovers and local business owners who want to protect our lands while having a career doing the things we love. This bolt ban could cause local community businesses to fail, which would be heartbreaking.

-Fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system and are not prohibited "installations" under the 1964 Wilderness Act. Following existing climbing policies that allow judicious use of fixed anchors for more than a half century will do more to protect Wilderness and Park character while providing for primitive and unconfined Wilderness climbing. It is unreasonable for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness and National Park climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades.

Prohibiting fixed anchors will create safety issues by imposing unnecessary obstacles to the regular maintenance of fixed anchors, a responsibility undertaken by the climbing community. Critical safety decisions often must be made in the moment and any authorization process should not impede those decisions. Fixed anchor maintenance needs to be managed in a way that incentivizes safe anchor replacement and does not risk the removal of a climbing route.