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Comments: I'm writing in response to the draft policy.

I have hiked, scrambled and climbed in the outdoors ever since my youth in the early 1980s and have seen first hand the changes in climbing accessibility and safety culture. I have sometimes chafed at the decisions of climbing route developers in putting up bolt intensive climbs that were either an eyesore or messed up an otherwise traditionally protected beauty. I have also enjoyed the freedom to scale otherwise unprotectable cliffs on bolt intensive face climbs. I've also had the pleasure to climb some bolt intensive face climbs that weren't all that justifiable by wilderness standards but enjoyably deemphasized risk and the mental burden of placing protection. I'm somewhat conflicted.

I'm an advocate of a current policy that i believe is in place in several Wilderness Areas that I'm familiar with, which is to limiting bolting equipment to hand drilled holes and to leave it up to recreational climbers to decide what is reasonable in safety rigging. This seems to me to be a good barrier to entry in order to keep Wilderness Areas untrammled while allowing safety and encouraging judicious route development. I suspect there has been a problem with enforcement in some areas which is unfortunate.

I like most of the language I've read in the draft policy. However, I recognize that the language is vague enough and the management trends are such that I understand the fear of blanket bans of either climbing or bolting or both under the current language. Bans would be really unfortunate.

Sincerely,  
Dave Johnson  
Tucson, AZ