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Comments: I am opposed to several sections of the "Evaluation and Authorization Procedures for Fixed Anchors and Fixed Equipment in National Park Service Wilderness Areas." Primarily, I take issue with the interpretation that fixed anchors fall under the statement of "anything made by humans that is not intended for human occupation and is left unattended or left behind when the installer leaves the wilderness." If fixed climbing anchors are grouped into this category, then surely trails, benches, and any signage left behind would need to be removed. That is an absurd interpretation! I would challenge any non climber to even find a fixed anchor in any wilderness area that I have climbed in. The climbing community has always done a pretty good job policing itself in terms of allowing fixed anchors in wilderness areas, with minimizing fixed anchors being the desired outcome.

The suggestion put forward in this document that all fixed anchors should undergo a review process and that some routes could be closed and the anchors removed is counterproductive. Removal can sometimes do more harm than good to the rock. Furthermore, the NPS does not have the resources to evaluate anchors on existing routes, let alone go through the process of removing them. It makes far more sense to work directly with climbers to safely maintain existing routes while putting in place a public process for replacing old hardware and installing necessary new hardware that is essential to a wilderness climbing experience.

Lastly, as I just suggested, the process for determining the replacement of and maintenance of fixed anchors in wilderness areas needs to be public and not determined by the whims of the Forest Supervisor or Park Ranger alone. These decisions need to be made by a council made up of volunteers from all stakeholders including the superintendent. This model has worked very well in my local climbing areas. Wilderness areas are public and should not be ruled by a military style structure.

Fixed anchors and the climbing that they facilitate are 100% compatible with the intent of the Wilderness Act and should not be reclassified as installations that are in violation of the Wilderness Act. This is a misguided interpretation and ignores decades of precedent.