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Comments: I want to express my high level of concern about the draft policies that would make fixed anchors prohibited. As an avid climber for the past 15 years, I have found great joy and solace in the experience of climbing in nature. So much work has been done up until now to manage and facilitate these pieces of hardware that are so essential to the safety of climbers of today and tomorrow. I believe it is not prudent for federal agencies to create new guidance policies prohibiting Wilderness climbing anchors across the country when they have allowed, managed, and authorized fixed anchors for decades. At a minimum, this will create future issues in the safety of climbing as maintenance and replacement of anchors are required to ensure they are in good condition. Critical safety decisions must often be made quickly 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 climbing routes.

In particular, regarding your proposal, I firmly believe restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-wilderness lands is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless and until analyses determine climbing should be restricted to protect cultural and natural resources. I appreciate your consideration of my comments and want to close by just reminding you that fixed anchors are an essential piece of climbers' safety system and are not prohibited "installations" under the Wilderness Act.