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Comments: I'd like to offer my own feedback and thoughts as to the impact of the above proposal and how the change in classification would impact those involved in the caving community of which I am an active member. Bolts are a critical component in safe, modern cave exploration and scientific cave study. Minimization of human impact on these fragile environments that we want to keep for future generations, cave stewardship, is one of the key tenets of modern caving: bolting and safe anchors help minimize impact by keeping people off of delicate surfaces and rock, guiding those who are heading through passages away from delicate formations and off surfaces that could be damaged by human interaction. Not having these options available could damage fragile environments and limit the scientific study and research of these unique environments.

From my personal experience, I've seen numerous locations and situations where bolts were the only practical solution for exploration of cavern systems: the use of natural anchors were impractical or impossible (because no such available anchor points existed) or such placements were unsafe and risky, offering a threat to the safety of those using the systems; this would be even more of a concern if issues arose and a rescue of one of the team were necessary: rescues in cave environments require complicated movements and depending on the situation may have need of multiple anchors. In such circumstances where lives are at risk bolts are truly the only option available to ensure that the rescue is successful and lives are saved; because bolts are often the safest option available for anchors primarily relying on bolts will limit risks that could necessitate the mounting of a rescue.

A question also arises as to what types of bolting solutions are considered fixed installations in terms of this administrative rule change: bolts themselves may be removed and therefore are can be considered only truly temporary installations. In addition there exist minimal-impact removable anchors (including v-threads, removable bolts) that do not create environmental damage like pitons -- it would be best to get clarification if these ought to apply to the rule-change or if they are considered distinctly separate anchor solutions.