

VERTICAL **TIMES**

THE NATIONAL PUBLICATION OF THE ACCESS FUND



POWERED BY CLIMBERS



THE ACCESS FUND
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SUMMER 2008 • Volume 81

introduction

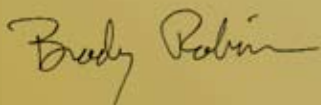
New for 2008, each issue of the *Vertical Times* has a specific theme. Last spring we focused on raptors. In this issue, we pause to reflect on some of our long running access issues and answer the question, “what ever happened to...?”

The Access Fund works on some issues which span many years, and while they may fade out of the public eye, they haven't fallen from our view. I remember reading about fixed anchors in wilderness shortly after I first joined the Access Fund in 1995. The issue remains unresolved in many parts of the country, even though the Access Fund has been working on it nonstop. Fixed anchors in wilderness, copper mining on the public lands which once hosted the Phoenix Bouldering Contest, recreational use fees, paternalistic regulations which inhibit access – these are just a few of the issues which have been a part of our work plan for years now.

Victory can be hard to quantify. It may come in bits and pieces, when the net advances outweigh the net setbacks. This is the nature of our work. Much of it goes unnoticed. Sometimes it tries our patience. But it is our job to persevere and continue fighting the important battles, especially those which could set precedent or have nationwide significance. Consistency and persistence are two of our greatest assets which often pay off in the end.

I hope this issue of the *Vertical Times* helps to clarify these complex access issues and puts our ongoing action alerts and updates into context. When you're done reading it, why don't you pass it along to that friend of yours who never seems to get around to joining that Access Fund?

Thanks and happy climbing,



Brady Robinson





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Titanic, The Needles, CA
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Annual Report Snapshot

Last year, the Access Fund's 17th, was a year of change and progress. We enjoyed a 5% growth in membership, the addition of eight new Local Climbing Organizations and an increased number of Adopt-a-Crag events. We maintained our top four star rating with Charity Navigator, with 78% of your contributions going directly to programs which support our mission. We gave away thousands of dollars to local climbing organizations to support grassroots initiatives and launched a new national competition aimed to get young people out of the gym and into the outdoors on stewardship projects. We organized and hosted a National Climbing Management Summit and worked to keep climbing areas open throughout the country.

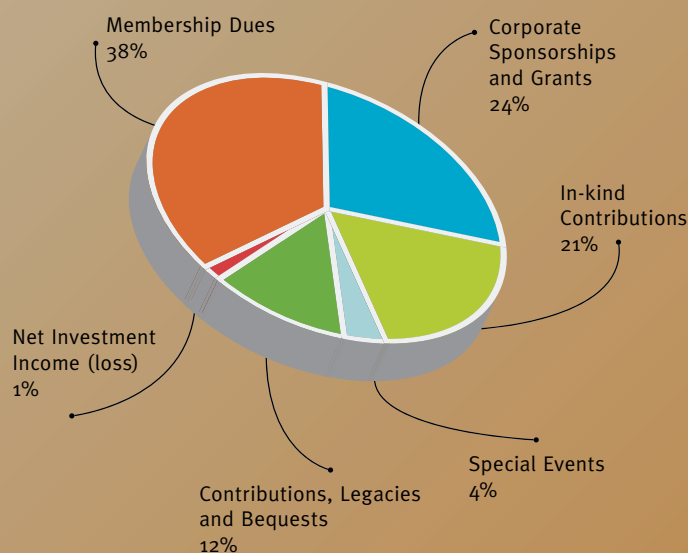
2007 saw the transition of a number of staff at the Access Fund. I am happy to report that as of January 2008 we are fully staffed with an exceptionally strong team. There is a lot of new energy and enthusiasm in our office. I am confident the new team will build upon our past success and make the Access Fund even more effective.

Climbing continues to grow in the US, with more and more climbers visiting the most popular areas. Land development, underfunded federal agencies and conflicting management priorities continue to threaten climbing access across the country. Clearly we still have a lot of work before us.

Looking ahead, we will continue to expand our current stewardship projects, membership, policy work and grassroots network of local climbing organizations. We will work with our partners in the Outdoor Alliance to protect Roadless areas and advocate for common sense reforms to hard rock mining laws. Additionally, the board has adopted a two year plan to enhance the Access Fund's ability to support land acquisitions.

We'd like to thank all of you, our members and corporate partners, RCs, LCOs and friends who have supported our work this year. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without your commitment and generosity.

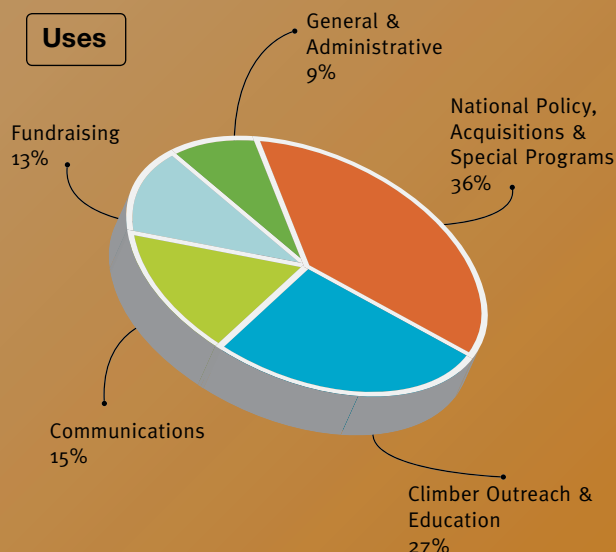
Sources



Dan Nordstrom

Brady Robinson

Uses



2007 Financial Report: The Numbers

2007 was a strong and stable year for the Access Fund, thanks to the generosity of our members and partners.

With their support, we were able to direct \$903,217 to program services, including \$309,933 to climber outreach and education, \$421,489 to policy and advocacy, and \$171,795 to our publications. We maintained our 4-star Charity Navigator rating with 79% of total operating expenses going to programs that directly benefit the climbing community.

Individual, foundation, and organizational support accounted for \$925,841 of our income, while grants and corporate sponsors donated \$303,586.

We could not continue to be this effective without the ongoing commitment of the entire climbing community.

SUPPORT	Total
Membership Dues	470,515
Corporate Sponsorships and Grants	303,586
In-kind Contributions	258,824
Special Events	51,776
Contributions, Legacies and Bequests	144,726
Net Investment Income (loss)	11,679
Other Income	4,477
Total support	1,245,583

FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES	
National Policy, Acquisitions & Special Programs	421,489
Climber Outreach & Education	309,933
Communications	171,795
Fundraising	143,812
General & Administrative	103,261
Total functional expenses	1,150,290

To see the full annual report, go to: www.accessfund.org/ar

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO...?

Over the years there have been a number of access issues that, for reason or another, have stood out in the press. Some of these stories may seem to have faded away. Some of these stories are confusing and you'd like them to fade away. And some of these stories reemerge every few months or years after you thought the issue was put to bed. One thing that we know well at the Access Fund is that issues rarely ever go away forever and victories rarely have a finite finish line.

The following pages address a few of these stories that have been biting at the Access Fund's heels for a while and answers the question *what ever happened to...*

[Have We Fixed Fixed Anchors in the Wilderness Yet?]

In the fall of 1997, the climbing community was abuzz with discussions of the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS) ban on fixed anchors in the wilderness. The ban prohibited the placement of all fixed anchors in USFS wilderness areas, including the replacement of existing anchors. This proposal threatened to end new route development and the upkeep of existing routes in some of the country's most historic climbing areas, including Tahquitz Rock in California and Cirque of the Towers in Wyoming. The Access Fund also feared that the USFS ban would affect how the National Park Service (NPS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regulated fixed anchors in wilderness areas under their management, such as Yosemite, Arches, Joshua Tree and Red Rocks.

In response to pressure from the Access Fund and other interested parties, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), which oversees the USFS, rescinded the fixed anchor prohibition in 1998. In a press conference at the August 1998 Outdoor Retailer tradeshow, the USDA announced that it would form a rulemaking committee to guide the USFS policy on fixed anchors in the wilderness.

The BLM is the only land management agency to formally publish a position on fixed anchors in wilderness areas

In the March 2001 issue of *Vertical Times*, Access Fund founder and honorary board member Armando Menocal wrote an opinion piece about his experience at the Fixed Anchors in the Wilderness Negotiated Rulemaking Committee. The committee proposal acknowledged fixed anchors—placed by hand—as legitimate “tools of last resort” for wilderness climbers and authorized land managers to require proper authorization for placing fixed anchors, but the USFS failed to adopt the rule endorsed by nearly all committee participants including the Access


Fund, the Sierra Club, the National Parks Conservation Association, and Wilderness Society.

Now, seven years later, despite countless hours of Access Fund work, neither the NPS nor the USFS have yet to formalize a policy on fixed anchors in the wilderness. The issue is back at the policy forefront, though, in an upcoming BLM Wilderness Plan for Red Rocks outside Las Vegas, Nevada that addresses the issue of fixed anchors for the first time in a Wilderness Plan.

The BLM is the only land management agency to formally publish a position on fixed anchors in wilderness areas. In March 2007, the BLM released an instruction memo that clarifies BLM policy regarding fixed anchor management and reaffirms the authority of the BLM to manage climbing in wilderness areas, including establishing restrictions or conditions for climbing.

The BLM policy recognizes that climbing is a legitimate and appropriate use of BLM Wilderness Areas and states that climbers may not use power drills to place fixed anchors in non-emergency situations. Climbers may use hand drills to place fixed anchors in wilderness so long as the climbing does not cause unacceptable impacts on wilderness values. The manager of local BLM field units may require climbers to get a permit (or other authorization) to replace or remove an existing fixed anchor or place a new fixed anchor and local managers may strive for low densities of climbing routes.

Currently, the BLM is in the process of drafting its Wilderness Management Plan for Red Rocks, which accounts for the vast majority of BLM-managed wilderness climbing. The preliminary proposed plan released in May 2007 allows for the limited use of new fixed anchors and would manage the placement of fixed anchors through a two-tiered route permitting and quota system.

A high-angle photograph of a person climbing a steep, reddish-brown rock face. The climber is positioned in the upper right quadrant, wearing a red shirt and dark shorts, and is secured by a rope that runs vertically down the rock. The rock surface is textured with various cracks and mineral deposits. The background is a blurred, lighter-colored rock face.

The first tier permit would apply to routes with three or fewer fixed anchors per pitch (including belay and rappel anchors) and would require a two week agency review with no public comment. Proposed routes with more than three fixed anchors per pitch would require a second tier permit. Only five second tier permit applications would be considered by the BLM per month and would be subject to public review.

Additionally, quotas on the total number of fixed anchors that can be placed (through the permitting system) would be set for the individual canyons at Red Rocks. No additional fixed anchors would be permitted once the quotas are met.

Now, seven years later, despite countless hours of Access Fund work, neither the NPS nor the USFS have yet to formalize a policy on fixed anchors in the wilderness.

The Access Fund and its affiliate the Las Vegas Climbers Liaison Council (LVCLC) submitted comments on the preliminary proposal. The Access Fund expressed concerns over the BLM's capacity to effectively manage and enforce the permit process, and whether the fixed anchor quota and permitting system would actually preserve wilderness values.

The Access Fund expects that the BLM will release the draft Wilderness Management Plan in late 2008 or early 2009, at which time there will be another comment period. In the meantime, it is imperative that climbers respect the BLM's interim wilderness fixed anchor ban at Red Rocks.

In the next few years both the NPS and USFS could institute service-wide regulations that govern the use and placement of fixed anchors. The BLM's Red Rocks plan could be used as a model for broader policies so it is important that climbers stay involved. Stay tuned for Access Fund action alerts announcing the next phase of planning at Red Rocks. The Access Fund will continue to meet with all the federal land management agencies to ensure that future fixed anchor policies are reasonable and that wilderness plans focus on preserving wilderness values, not just setting arbitrary bolt quotas that have little to no relationship to resource protection. **-AF**

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO...?

[What Ever Happened to the Issue of Recreation Fees?]

Access Fund members may recall a member survey in early 2008 that asked your opinion of “paying-to-play” on public lands. The Access Fund has long represented the voice of climbers in debates over whether federal land management agencies should have the authority to charge access fees to recreate on public land. This issue of recreation fees (“rec fees” or “pay-to-play”) on public lands has a heated history pitting public land managers against climbers and other public land users.

Climbers are not categorically opposed to user fees, but we worry about access and sustainability of the climbing resource.

It all started with the fee-charging authority under the Land and Water Conservation Act (established in the mid-1960s), then the controversial 1996 Fee Demo Program that greatly expanded the locations where land managers could charge fees. In 2004, the Federal Lands Recreation and Enhancement Act (nicknamed the Recreation Access Tax or “RAT” by opponents), was included as a rider on an omnibus spending bill to replace Fee Demo. RAT essentially made permanent the sweeping fee authority of Fee Demo.

The Access Fund’s stand on rec fees is two sided. The Access Fund supports use fees on public lands in situations where services are provided or agency budgets are substantially burdened by recreational access and use. However, the Access Fund opposes charging recreational use fees for access to wilderness areas and other backcountry sites where administrative support is neither required nor desired by recreationists and where recreational impacts do not significantly impose on agency budgets or degrade the environment. In other words, there should be no “pay-to-play” where “playing” causes little or no impact and costs the agencies nothing. The Access Fund also opposes such fees when inequitably applied to climbers and other wilderness and backcountry users (like charging at backcountry “bottlenecks” where only climbers travel).

Where is this issue now? In 2007, Montana’s Senator Baucus introduced the Fee Repeal and Expanded Access Act (a.k.a., “RAT Repeal”) that would restore the fee structure that existed before 1996, meaning only the National Park Service would be allowed to charge entrance fees, eliminating entrance fees for the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and Fish and Wildlife Service. Despite new support from a few Western senators, this bill has a long way to go and currently languishes in Congress with only three co-sponsors.

This is a constantly evolving issue that the Access Fund monitors on behalf of our members and climbers across the country. All of our advocacy work is rooted in the best interests of climbers and the rec use survey in early 2008 helps guide our policy work. Here’s a recap of the rec fee survey.

Four hundred Access Fund members completed the brief survey, many of whom provided detailed comments. More than 80% of respondents felt that the issue of user fees on public lands was important enough to justify the Access Fund focusing significant resources on the topic.

All of our advocacy work is rooted in the best interests of climbers and the rec use survey in early 2008 helps guide our policy work.

WHO CAN CHARGE?

When asked which federal agencies should have authority to charge visitors entering the lands that they manage, a slight majority of respondents favored National Parks charging fees while most opposed fees on USFS and BLM lands. However, the majority felt that fee-charging authority should depend on several variables, such as the degree of user impacts, if services are provided or improvements have been made to the site, whether fees are retained for continued protection of the site (as opposed to building new infrastructure), and the ecological sensitivity of the area.

WHAT ACTIVITIES?

When asked if federal agencies should be authorized to charge fees for particular activities, respondents generally favored fees for front-country camping, off-road vehicle use, hunting and fishing, and guided recreation. Most survey takers opposed fees for backcountry camping, paddling, hiking, climbing, bouldering, backcountry skiing, and mountaineering. Most respondents felt that fees should be charged for those activities that caused more impact, required increased agency management, or depended on facilities.

WHICH LOCATIONS?

When asked if mandatory fees are acceptable at specific locations, most survey respondents felt that fees should be charged at campgrounds and motorized use areas, but not at trailheads or low-use areas. Although facilities and services provided seemed to be the deciding factor for whether certain locations should require fees, survey-takers were split on whether toilets should induce fees. Sixty percent agreed that fees should be spent in the same location where they are collected.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

When asked how recreation on federal lands should be funded, answers broke down this way:

- 91.1%** - Federal taxes
- 78.3%** - Through fees charged for extractive use of public lands such as mining, oil drilling, and logging
- 62.5%** - Through philanthropic giving by foundations, individuals, and/or non-profits
- 54.6%** - Through onsite user fees
- 13.0%** - Through corporate, for-profit management
- 10.2%** - Through a tax on outdoor equipment

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

The general thread on rec fees from the climbing community is that climbers are not categorically opposed to user fees, but we worry about access (where less affluent people are squeezed out) and sustainability of the climbing resource. Climbers want a reasonable balance with other interested, non-climber users, but many also realize that given the potential for resource impacts and the demands on land management agencies, the prospect of fees for climbers is simply a reality, and, in many cases, appropriate.

But many climbers think that fees are not always the right way to go; there should be no fees where climber impact is minimal and/or climbers can be reasonably counted on to self-manage.

The Access Fund will continue to monitor legislation affecting climbing access and advocate for appropriate user fees, as well as oppose fees that are unwarranted or unfairly target climbers. This survey helps inform us how best to represent the voice of the climbing community. We'll let you know when the next round of fee legislation gains momentum. For more information, contact jason@accessfund.org. **-AF**



WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO...?

[Whatever Happened to Arizona's Oak Flat?]

The Access Fund has talked about Oak Flat a lot over the last five years and many members are tired of hearing about our work there. Others don't agree with or understand the position we've taken. Others are still just plain confused about what Oak Flat is all about and why we think it's worth the fight. Of all the issues the Access Fund has tackled in recent years, this is by far the most faceted and confusing. Here is a rundown of our work and where we stand now.

First, Oak Flat is still there in part because climbers stood up and decided to fight a multi-billion dollar, multi-national mining company head on.

It was back in 2004 that the Access Fund first caught wind of a proposal to trade the federal public land at Oak Flat, Arizona (longtime home to the Phoenix Bouldering Contest and host to hundreds of roped sport climbs and thousands of boulder problems) to Resolution Copper Company (RCC) so they could tap into a massive copper deposit located thousands of feet underground. To get to these riches RCC proposed a "block-cave mine" that would access the ore from underneath and eventually—by nature of the mining technique—cause the surface of Oak Flat to collapse hundreds of feet, destroying all the climbing and other recreational resources. Nearby Devil's Canyon could also be harmed and affects could stretch as far as the iconic Apache Leap that towers over the town of Superior.

Oak Flat is still there in part because climbers stood up and decided to fight a multi-billion dollar, multi-national mining company head on.

The Access Fund moved quickly to form the Friends of Queen Creek (FoQC) as a local voice to work in tandem with other Arizona advocates, such as the Arizona Mountaineering Club, to ensure that climbers would be at the table. Within a few months the Access Fund and FoQC met with a wide array of Arizona climbers; RCC and their lobbyists (including Andy Wiessner, son of climbing legend Fritz Wiessner); the Arizona governor's office; local city and county governments;

several advocacy groups, from the Sierra Club and Earthworks to the Audubon Society and The Nature Conservancy; and the Arizona Congressional delegation, including the sponsors of the land exchange bill US Senator Jon Kyl and the now-indicted US Representative Rick Renzi.

Collectively, we sought answers to climbers' questions and concerns and worked to form a strategy that best reflected the wishes of the local Arizona climbing community to preserve as much climbing as possible. One controversial proposal was "replacing" Oak Flat with a remote peak called Tam O'Shanter that promised outstanding quartzite cragging and bouldering an hour and a half further from Phoenix than Oak Flat. Also known as Tamo, the area is on public land but lacks an access road.

The Access Fund and FoQC rejected the notion that you could simply trade one climbing area for another and ignore the unique characteristics that define our favorite places. But a few folks made the argument that if we're going to lose out to a multi-billion dollar, multi-national mining corporation, let's make a deal to get a great new area at Tamo, sign an agreement with RCC to maintain climbing access to RCC's privately-owned Queen Creek and surrender Oak Flat to the mine. However, the vast majority of Arizona climbers wanted to continue climbing at RCC's privately-owned Queen Creek and also wanted to save Oak Flat forever.

With the land exchange seemingly imminent, many in the Arizona environmental community, such as Audubon Society and The Nature Conservancy, endorsed the land exchange bill because RCC offered them prime real estate to compliment their current landholdings in the early stages. In 2006, the Access Fund negotiated with RCC to license climbing access to the Queen Creek parcels with a provision to also allow access to Oak Flat for as long as possible if and when RCC obtained it from the federal government. The Access Fund also issued a letter to Arizona's state legislature supporting the creation of Tam O'Shanter State Park.

Then, despite widespread support, the land exchange bill never came to a vote and the 2006 shift from a Republican to Democratic Congress meant that all the momentum for transferring Oak Flat to RCC began to disappear. Even Arizona's governor—a previous supporter of the land exchange—came out in opposition to the deal because the state was going to have to incur the costs of maintaining a road to Tamo, as well as maintaining the park.

Whether Oak Flat gets mined and what Arizona climbers get in return may be decided in the next year

Now Arizona's Native American community—largely absent when the first land exchange bill was working its way through Congress—has come forward to directly oppose the bill because of cultural resources that would be impacted and has refused to speak with RCC or negotiate with Congress on the matter. Suddenly, Oak Flat's imminent transfer doesn't look so imminent and Tamo is "off the table."

Responding to the changing landscape, in late 2007 the central Arizona climbing community reorganized with an even more representative group of climbing advocates. The Queen Creek Coalition (QCC) (www.queencreekcoalition.com), comprised of the Arizona Mountaineering Club, Friends of Queen Creek, local climbing gym owners, guidebook writers, and unaffiliated climbers, formed to represent the climbing community. QCC is made up of climbers who know the Queen Creek area well; several members of the board have climbed in the area for nearly 20 years and have established many of the routes and boulder problems in the canyon. QCC's goal is to preserve the climbing in and around Queen Creek Canyon and to find ways to develop new climbing opportunities in the region as a way of compensating climbers for climbing that will be lost or jeopardized by RCC's large-scale mining operation—if the land exchange bill ever makes it through Congress. QCC is interested in protecting as much climbing as it can, including Queen Creek and Oak Flat, and, if possible, opening access to Tamo.

To accomplish this mission the QCC has held several public meetings, discussed issues of concern with RCC, and lobbied the Arizona Congressional delegation through Access Fund representatives in Washington, DC. Whether Oak Flat gets mined and what Arizona climbers get in return may be decided in the next year if RCC succeeds in getting their land exchange passed, which may prove tricky given the short legislative calendar and the many non-controversial bills queued up in front of the Oak Flat proposal. Then again, we've been saying that for five years now.

In the meantime, the Access Fund will continue to work for the interests of central Arizona climbers to preserve as much climbing in the Land of the Sun as possible. For more information, contact jason@accessfund.org. **-AF**

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO...?

[Climbing Through Red Tape: Beacons on Mt. Hood]

In May 2007, after several high-profile rescues, the Oregon House of Representatives voted to require the use of emergency locator beacons by climbers above 10,000 feet on Mt. Hood. The Access Fund joined the Mountain Rescue Association and Portland Mountain Rescue in opposing a mandatory use of these simple, one-way devices.

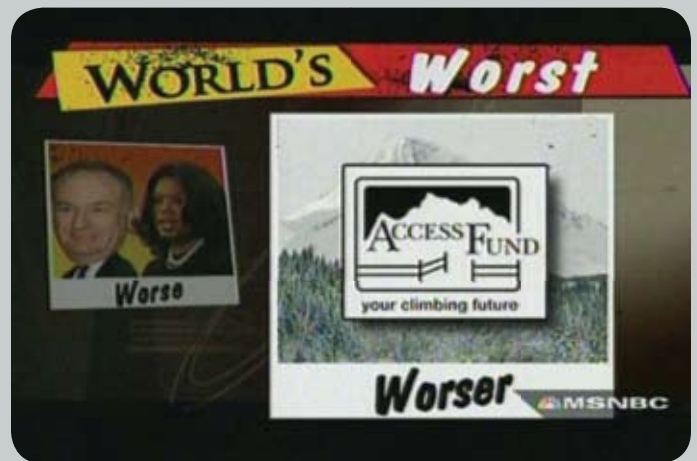
The Access Fund opposed the bill because it was a knee-jerk, paternalistic regulation that would not prevent climbers from being injured or killed in climbing related accidents. The bill simply added a layer of red-tape to climbing a mountain and at worst could actually give less experienced climbers a sense of false security when presented with conditions out of their control (such as the fast-moving weather systems of the Pacific Northwest).

While the regulations at Mt Hood do not diminish the need for good judgment, they do cloud the climbing experience with a maze of red tape

The Access Fund's testimony in opposition to the bill brought unprecedented mainstream media attention and the curious honor of "Worst Person in the World" by MSNBC's "Countdown with Keith Oberman" show.

The Access Fund worked on the issue for several months. After passing the Oregon House of Representatives, the beacon bill failed to emerge from committee in the Oregon Senate, sparing climbers the burden and expense of using locator beacons for the 2007-2008 Mt. Hood season.

The Access Fund advocates on behalf of climbers with a firm understanding of self regulation and personal responsibility. Part of the satisfaction we experience when climbing, especially alpine climbing, comes from the feeling of self-reliance it requires. The Access Fund continues to monitor the situation and is waiting to see if the bill will reemerge in the future. **-AF**



House Natural Resources Committee Passes National Parks Centennial Fund Act

On May 7, 2008, the House Natural Resources Committee passed H.R. 3094, *the National Park Centennial Fund Act* with support of Democrats and Republicans. Soon, it will be taken up by the full House and a companion bill has already started through the Senate.

The National Park System--"America's best idea"--will turn 100 years old in 2016. By passing *the National Parks Centennial Fund Act* out of committee, the House is taking a bold step toward legislation that will help get rangers out from behind their desks, reduce the park system's environmental footprint, protect cultural resources, and enhance human-powered recreation opportunities.

The Access Fund applauds the House Natural Resources Committee's action on H.R. 3094 and looks forward to supporting this bill in Congress and seeing it become law in the near future.

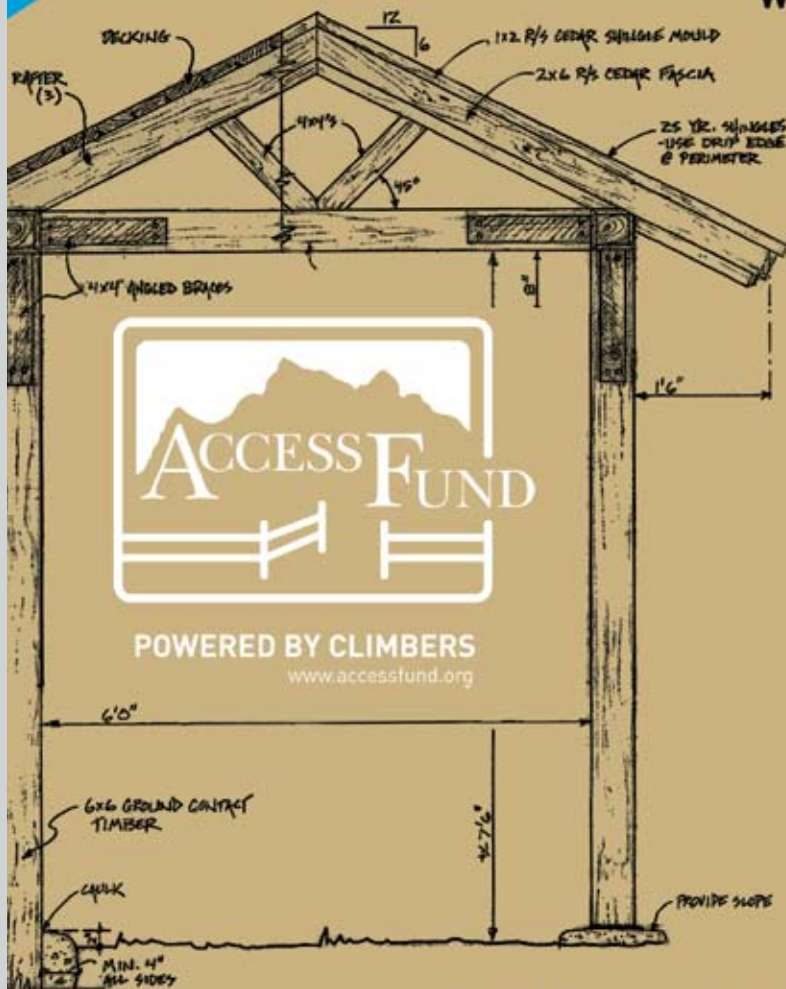
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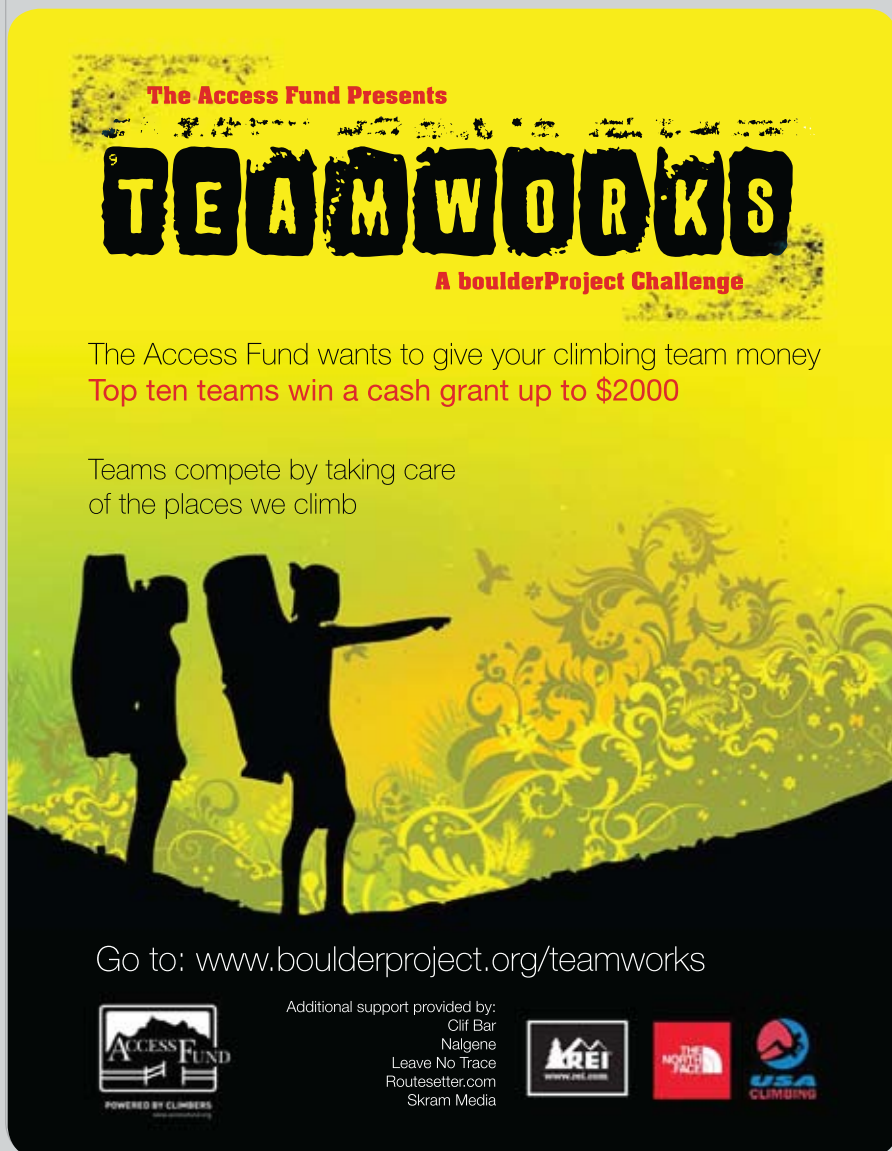
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ADOPT-A-CRAG AND TEAMWORKS

Are you hosting an Adopt-a-Crag this year? If so, contact your local climbing gym to see if they are involved with the Access Fund's TeamWorks program. You may find willing and eager youth volunteers.

TeamWorks is an exciting program that, with the cooperation of team coaches, allows indoor, youth, climbing gym teams to earn points for participating in Access Fund Adopt-a-Crag events. As a reward for their stewardship efforts in taking care of the places we all play, the 10 teams with the most points will win cash grants between \$250 and \$2,000 for their youth programs.

If your local gym doesn't know about this program yet, please help them out. Send them this link:
www.boulderproject.org/teamworks



The Access Fund Presents

TEAMWORKS

A boulderProject Challenge





The Access Fund wants to give your climbing team money
Top ten teams win a cash grant up to \$2000

Teams compete by taking care
of the places we climb

Go to: www.boulderproject.org/teamworks

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POWERED BY CLIMBERS

Jim Thornburg

Photographer, Climber, Belayer to the Stars

Whether he's shooting with his Canon EOS 5D or climbing, the California native Jim Thornburg (jimthornburg.com), 43, is at home at the crags. Thornburg first hit the rocks at 17 and has since combined stone and photography into his life's work, traveling the globe. For Thornburg, the easy part is snapping the picture; the hard part is everything else.

The first photo I ever sold was of Jim Karn (the Chris Sharma of the late 1980's) on King of Rap, at Smith Rock. I took it paparazzi-style, and I think it was in the 1989 Chouinard catalog.

I had a clunky Pentax K-1000 I used for many years. I had an intuitive relationship with that camera's light meter and always got the exposure perfect. Of course that doesn't matter nowadays with digital. It used to be such a thrill (or disappointment) to get your film back from processing, and still nothing compares to a Velvia transparency under a good loupe—light and life come out of a slide in a way I can't replicate on a computer screen.

I belayed Chris Sharma on his first attempt on Realization. I also belayed Ron Kauk on a near miss on Magic Line. Belayer to the stars...sigh.

The divisions that used to separate trad, sport, and mountain climbing are becoming less and less defined. Today's climber understands it's all part of the same pond: a skinny boulderer pushing standards in a gym sends out ripples that eventually make it to the mountains.

The climbing life and my life were one and the same 25 years ago. When you're young and trying to figure out who you are, it's easy to fall in love with climbing. Back then, the life was living out of a Toyota pickup and wearing white painter's pants. Doing runout climbs in Tuolumne and free-soloing cracks were the highest things you could aspire to—it was dangerous, incredibly romantic, and very alluring. I can relate to today's version of the climbing life—it's really not that different—but I can't live it anymore. I guess you could say I'm having the classic midlife post-climbing identity crisis. I want to know who I am outside of climbing.

Interview courtesy of Climbing Magazine.

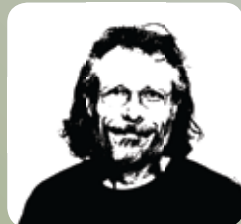
Mango, New River Gorge,
WV | © Jim Thornburg



2007 Member Profile:

Paul Diefenderfer - a.k.a. Dief

Profession: Owner of Phoenix Rock Gym, Desert Rat Forge, and Rope Guy Extraordinaire



Local climbing area: Pinnacle Peak, McDowell Mountains, and Queen Creek Canyon, Arizona

Climbing history: I started climbing in 1975 with an Arizona Mountaineering Club rock climbing class. I've been hooked ever since. I climb around the western U.S. and get out once a week to the local crags.

How long have you been a member of the Access Fund: I got involved with the Access Fund when they were breaking away from the American Alpine Club. I served on the board of directors from 1991 to 2000.

Crags are a limited and precious resource. No crags—no climbing.

Why do you support the Access Fund: I saw local crags lost to development and didn't want to lose any more. Crags are a limited and precious resource. No crags—no climbing. The Access Fund is fighting the good fight to keep crags open. I think about it this way—I pay to see movies and go out to dinner so being a monthly donor of the AF is a no-brainer.

How have you seen the Access Fund at work in your climbing community: They have kept the Forest Service from removing bolts in the Superstitions, helped with re-opening Pinnacle Peak, and are currently fighting to save access to Queen Creek Canyon.

In your opinion, what aspect of the Access Fund's work is the most vital: They provide support and guidance in our local grassroots efforts, as well as deal with national policy that affects all of our climbing areas.

Each year 15,000+ Access Fund members, friends, corporate partners, and volunteers give their time and financial support to keep climbing areas open and to conserve the climbing environment. The impact of each of these individuals and groups can be seen at climbing areas throughout the country. We want to thank you for your support.

As you're planning your support for 2008, listed below are three ways you can help make a difference today.

- Become a monthly donor. Give a little each month to make a bigger impact.
- Give a memorial gift in memory of a friend or family member. Memorialize that person's love for climbing and their interest in keeping climbing areas open.
- Check with your employer to see if you are eligible for your company's matching gift program. Many companies will match your charitable contributions to select organizations.

Support in any capacity is greatly appreciated. For more information on ways to support the work of the Access Fund, visit our website at: www.accessfund.org or contact our Development Director, Jason Smith at: smith@accessfund.org or (303) 545-6772 x113.

HAS YOUR ADDRESS CHANGED?

Let us know—email us at addresschange@accessfund.org

YOU DON'T GET E-NEWS?

Sign up for the monthly email that keeps you up to date on issues that affect your climbing future.
www.accessfund.org/enews

Access Fund Corporate Partners 2008

These partners are businesses that put their money where their mouth is to support the future of climbing. Please consider the important contribution these partners make to your climbing future. They support the Access Fund and you. We encourage you to support them.

TITANIUM — \$50,000+

Haynes and Boone LLP - 2003

DIAMOND PLUS — \$20,000+

Black Diamond Equipment - 1991

Eastern Mountain Sports - 1993

REI - 1991

DIAMOND MEDIA — \$20,000+

Alpinist - 2003

Backpacker Magazine - 2004

Climbing - 1991

Rock & Ice - 1993

Urban Climber Magazine - 2004

PLATINUM PLUS — \$15,000+

Mountain Gear - 1995

Petzl/Charlet Moser - 1991

prAna - 1995

PLATINUM — \$10,000+

CLIF Bar - 1995

The North Face - 1995

GOLD PLUS — \$7,500+

Archer Law Offices P.C. - 2003

ASHA Carpets - 2007

Boulder Rock Club &

Colorado Mountain School - 1996

GORE-TEX® products - 1991

Mountain Khakis - 2006

Nalgene - 1992

Outdoor Research - 1999

Touchstone Climbing Inc. - 1998

Trango USA &

Stonewear Designs - 1992

GOLD — \$5,000+

American Bouldering Series - 2000

Big Up Productions - 2003

Campmor - 1991

La Sportiva - 1994

New England Ropes/Maxim - 1992

Patagonia - 1992

SCARPA North America - 2006

SmartWool - 2008

The Spot Bouldering Gym - 2003

SILVER — \$2,500+

All Terrain - 2003

Arc'teryx - 1998

Blue Ridge Mountain Sports - 2007

BlueWater - 1992

Boston Rock Gym - 2006

FalconGuides - 1998

Gregory Mountain Products - 1993

Mammut USA - 1991

Marmot - 1999

Metolius - 1991

Misty Mountain Threadworks - 1994

Mountain Hardwear - 1996

MSR/Therm-a-Rest/Platypus - 1995

New Belgium Brewing Co. - 2000

Sterling Rope - 1994

MAJOR — \$1,000+

bluetrope consulting - 2003

CAMP USA - 2004

Cloudveil - 1998

Crazy Creek Products - 1992

EVOLVE Sports - 2006

Exum Mountain Guides - 2005

Flannel Design - 2001

Mad Rock - 2007

Montrail - 2002

Native Eyewear - 2007

Osprey - 2003

Outdoor Retailer - 1991

Phoenix Rock Gym - 1997

Planet Granite Climbing Gyms - 2004

RESTOP - 2006

ROCK'n & JAM'n - 2007

Royal Robbins - 1992

SuperTopo.com - 2003

Trailspace.com - 2007

Treasure Mountain Inn - 2006

Vertical World - 2006

Weathered Stone - 1999

Yates Gear - 1993

YourClimbing.com - 2006

CONTRIBUTING — \$500+

Advanced Base Camp - 1992

Alpine Ascents International - 1998

Ascent Adventure Consultants

LLC - 2008

Avery Brewing Company - 1998

Eagle Creek - 2005

Eastern Sierras Medicus

Excalibur DMM/Wild Country - 1995

Fox Mountain Guides &

Climbing School - 2005

GearEXPRESS.com - 2003

Higher Ground Roasters - 2003

Julbo - 2005

JustRopes.com - 2004

Mountain Madness - 2007

Mountain Tools - 1991

Mountaineers Books - 1992

NEice.com - 2005

Nicos - 1997

Pacific Edge Climbing Gym - 1995

PMI - 1991

Real Cheap Sports - 2003

Rock and Snow, Inc. - 2003

Schwartz Communications,

Inc. - 2003

Sickle Climbing - 2001

Smith Optics - 2007

Stone Age Climbing - 1997

Tom K. Michael, D.D.S., P.S. - 2000

Travel Country Outdoors - 2002

Untraditional Marketing - 2007

Vasque - 2001

Wenger - 2008

MEDIA PARTNERS

Andrew Burr Photography - 2006

Andrew Kornylak Photography - 2006

Andrew Querner Photography - 2006

ASANA PackWorks - 2005

Aurora Photos - 2007

Brian Solano BS Productions - 2007

Camp4.com - 2002

Corey Rich Photography - 2002

CragCam Productions - 2006

Dan Bailey Photography - 2002

Dawn Kish Photography - 2007

DrTopo.com - 2003

Emilie Lee - 2006

Eric Draper Photography - 2007

GetBeta.com - 2004

Griz Guides - 2006

Harrison Shull Photography - 2006

Integrity 7 Productions - 2004

Jay Beyer - 2008

Jeremy Collins - 2007

Jonathan Copp - 2006

John Evans Photo - 2007

Jim Thornburg - 2008

Keith Ladzinski - 2006

Kevsteele Photography - 2008

Lenticular Pictures - 2005

Michael Clark Photography - 2004

Mike Tea Illustration and

Design - 2006

Momentum Media - 2007

N'East Magazine - 2006

Nathan Welton Photography - 2005

OC Green Guide - 2008

Patitucci Photo - 2003

Pixel Print Graphics - 2007

Rockclimbing.com - 2006

Second Chance Films - 2004

Sender Films - 2005

Sharpend Publishing - 2004

She Sends - 2004

Simon Carter: Onsite

Photography - 2007

SNEWS - 2002

Stark Contrast Photography - 2005

summitjournal.com - 2006

Thoos - 2006

Tom Frost - 2007

Verde PR & Consulting - 2003



The North Face has been a high level Access Fund Corporate Partner since 1995. This year, they've stepped up their level of support to help fund TeamWorks, the Access Fund's new youth stewardship competition.

The Access Fund and The North Face share a handful of the top climbing athletes in the country. Emily Harrington, Renan Ozturk, Lisa Rands, Matt Segal, Mark Synnott, and Heidi Wirtz are all active Access Fund Ambassadors and they wouldn't be able to do what they do for the Access Fund if The North Face didn't support them.

The North Face is always looking for creative ways to support the Access Fund above and beyond their yearly financial contribution. From fundraising at events to supplying product as membership incentives to now supporting TeamWorks, The North Face truly understands the importance of keeping climbing areas open and conserving the climbing environment.

EVOLV ROCK SHOE BENEFITS ACCESS FUND

Evolv QUEST-AF 1% of all sales go to the Access Fund.
Go To: www.evolverocksports.com/QUEST-AF.htm



Vertical Times Photos Prompt Readers' Response

After our Winter Vertical Times hit mailboxes last month, several readers contacted Access Fund about two photos, including the cover image, that show climbers lounging in El Capitan meadow. The readers were concerned that the climbers in the photos were disobeying Yosemite National Park (YNP) regulations that prohibit camping in El Capitan meadow.

The Access Fund agrees that these photos could reasonably cause our readers confusion and wants to set the record straight: the Access Fund fully supports the YNP regulations that prohibit camping in the meadow. The Access Fund spoke with photographer Kevin Steele, who explained that the photos were shot as climbers observed El Cap and watched the full moon rise. Though they appeared to be bivying, they were not.

Thanks to all of the readers who contacted us. We appreciate hearing from you.



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GET 20% OFF



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local climbing organizations and affiliates

A local climbing organization (LCO) is an organization, association, or access committee working primarily or exclusively to keep climbing areas open, conserve the climbing environment, and promote responsible climbing. LCOs are the liaison between the climbing community and their local landmanagers and landowners. Affiliates (*) are LCOs who have joined the Access Fund Affiliate Program. If you are an LCO listed below and not an Access Fund Affiliate, please contact Charlie Boas, Grassroots Coordinator, at 303.545.6772 x105 or charlie@accessfund.org.

Alabama

Southeastern Climbers Coalition*

Arkansas

Arkansas Climbers' Coalition*
Southeastern Climbers Coalition*

Arizona

Arizona Mountaineering Club*
Friends of Queen Creek*
Northern Arizona Climbers Coalition*
Prescott Climbers Coalition*

California

Allied Climbers of San Diego*
Cragmont Climbing Club
Eastern Sierra Climbers Coalition*
Friends of Joshua Tree*
Friends of Pinnacles
Friends of Williamson Rock*
Southern Sierra Climbers Association*
Yosemite Climbing Association*

Colorado

4 Corners Climbing Coalition*
Access Colorado*
Action Committee for Eldorado*
Colorado Springs Climbers Alliance*
Flatirons Climbing Council*
Roaring Fork Climbers Coalition*

Connecticut

Ragged Mountain Foundation*

DC

Mid-Atlantic Climbers*

Georgia

Southeastern Climbers Coalition*

Iowa

Eastern Iowa Climbers Coalition*

Idaho

Boise Climbers Alliance*
Kootenai Climbers*

Illinois

Chicago Mountaineering Club*
Illinois Climbers Association*

Kentucky

Friends of Muir Valley*
Red River Gorge Climbers Coalition*
Southeastern Climbers Coalition*

Massachusetts

Appalachian Mountain Club
-Boston Chapter*
Western Massachusetts Climbers Coalition*

Maryland

Mid-Atlantic Climbers*

Michigan

Grand Ledges Climbers Coalition

Minnesota

Minnesota Climbers Association*

Missouri

Climbers Alliance of Mid-Missouri*
Kansas City Climbing Club*

Montana

Bitterroot Climbers' Coalition*
Southwest Montana Climbers Coalition

North Carolina

Boone Climbers Coalition*
Carolina Climbers Coalition*
Pisgah Climbers Association*

Southeastern Climbers Coalition*

New Hampshire

Rumney Climbers Association*

New Jersey

Access NJ*

New Mexico

CRAG-New Mexico*

Nevada

Las Vegas Climbers Liaison Council*

New York

Adirondack Mountaineering Coalition*
Gunks Climbers Coalition*

Ohio

Ohio Climbers Association*

Oklahoma

Chandler Park Climbers Coalition*
Wichita Mountains Climbers Coalition*

Oregon

AAC - Oregon Section, Access Committee*
Madrone Wall Preservation Committee*
Mazamas
Smith Rock Group*

Pennsylvania

Climbing Conservancy of Central Pennsylvania*

South Carolina

Carolina Climbers Coalition*
Pisgah Climbers Association*
Southeastern Climbers Coalition*

South Dakota

Black Hills Climbers Coalition*

Tennessee

Southeastern Climbers Coalition*

Texas

Central Texas Mountaineers*
Climbers of Hueco Tanks*
Concho Valley Climbers Association*
Texas Mountaineers

Utah

Friends of Indian Creek*
Moab Area Climbers' Alliance
Northern Utah Climbers Coalition
Salt Lake Climbers Alliance*
Southern Utah Climbers' Coalition

Virginia

Friends of Great Falls Coalition*
Shenandoah National Park Climbers Alliance

Vermont

CRAG-VT*
Northeastern Vermont Climber's Alliance

Washington

Washington Climbers Coalition*

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Outdoor Access*

West Virginia

Coopers Rock Regional Climbing Coalition*
New River Alliance of Climbers*
Southeastern Climbers Coalition*

Canada

Climbers Access Society of British Columbia*

» To contact your local LCO or to view a LCO website go to: www.accessfund.org/partners/affiliates.php

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