





"Unless both sides win, no agreement can be permanent."

- Jimmy Carter

recently attended the dedication ceremony of the Stimson Bullitt Climbing
Reserve at the Lower Town Wall in Index, Washington. In attendance were state
park officials, the family who owned the Lower Town Wall for 50 years, climbers, the press, and representatives from all the major climbing groups. In 2009, the
area had been posted with no trespassing signs, and there were rumors that the
land owner planned to resurrect the old granite quarry. The Washington Climbers Coalition, Access Fund, American Alpine Club, and many volunteers came
together to preserve this important climbing area. Soon it will be a state park, with
a conservation easement ensuring that it is open to climbing forever. This remarkable transformation occurred in less than two years through a lot of hard work,
negotiation, and dialogue among the various parties.

Another issue that requires dialogue and negotiation (of a different sort) is cultural resource closures, the subject of our feature story in this issue of *Vertical Times*. Balancing the protection of cultural resources and public access to public land often involves federal agencies, historic preservation offices or societies, passionate members of the public, and sometimes sovereign Native American nations. Millennia of history, centuries of human oppression, and current politics can all coalesce into access challenges that might tempt some climbers to throw up their hands and just climb elsewhere.

While many such closures are required to protect these resources, it is the job of the Access Fund to ensure that these closures are enacted with due process and that other legitimate uses of public land, like low-impact recreation such as climbing, are protected to the greatest extent possible. These are tough issues that force us all to grapple with what exactly it means for land to be public. Laura Snider explores this important issue in her article on page 8.

Thank you for being a part of the organization this year—your support helps keep climbing areas around the country open and accessible. With the holiday season approaching, don't forget to take advantage of our amazing holiday packs (shown on the back cover). You can give your friends and family quality gear at a great price and support the Access Fund at the same time. Show your friends that you care and that you know our work is important.

Thank you, and happy holidays.

Brady Robinson

Executive Director

Access Fund



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Donating through a Corporation

My husband renewed his membership through his company's corporate donation program so that the donation would be doubled. What kind of tracking information can we pass along to you so that he still can get his Access Fund T-shirt? Thanks!

— JEANNINE

AF: Thanks for donating to the AF through your employer. Unfortunately, we don't always receive the information from the employer in a timely manner. For donations of \$50 or more, we suggest e-mailing membership@accessfund.org with information regarding your contribution, as well as the T-shirt size you'd like to receive. We'll make sure that you get an awesome AF T-shirt for renewing your membership, without having to wait for your employer to pass the information on to us.

The Mountains in Your Logo

What is the silhouette of mountains in your logo? Or is it just a random drawing? Kinda looks like Mt. Index.;)

- FACEBOOK FAN

AF: According to Armando Menocal, Access Fund founder, the mountains in our logo are generic. Apparently this was a subject of fierce debate at a few early board meetings. There isn't as much fighting at our board meetings anymore.

More Education, Please

It's great to see that the Access Fund is inspiring conscious recreation in the "Tread Lightly" article from your last *Vertical Times*. As a former Leave No Trace traveling trainer, avid climber, and AF member, I commend your efforts and hope AF continues to educate the climbing community.

— CHRISTOPHER MARLATT

AF: Christopher, we're glad you liked the "Tread Lightly" article. One of the things that we learned from our membership survey earlier this year is that folks want to see more educational material from us. Check out the "On the Beaten Path" article in this edition for more of this kind of informative coverage.

Measuring Success

Special thanks to Clear Future Markerboards for donating a custom Access Fund markerboard to help us track victories and organizational metrics!





The Access Fund wants to hear from you. Share your thoughts, ideas, and perspectives on access issues.
Tell us what we're doing well. Tell us where we could improve. E-mail your comments to holly@accessfund.org.



New Land Steward

New Access Fund land stewards are popping up all over the nation. We are honored to welcome Regina O'Conner as the new land steward for Handley Rock, a conservation easement held by the Access Fund in the San Francisco Bay Area. Regina will be monitoring Handley Rock to assist the nonprofit owner, Handley Rock Association, and help meet National Land Trust stewardship standards. For more information, contact Regina at regiroo@yahoo.com.

Making Strides at Tahquitz and Suicide

Over the past year and a half, Access Fund Regional Coordinator Jim Pinter-Lucke has been busy building relationships with Forest Service officials and organizing three Adopt a Crag events to rehabilitate the climbing access trails at Tahquitz and Suicide. Jim is currently working with the Forest



Service to construct a kiosk to post minimum impact education materials. For more information, contact Jim at **jlucke@cmc.edu**.

New Regional Coordinator in Oregon

We are excited to welcome Jane Sabin-Davis as the new Access Fund regional coordinator in Bend, Oregon. Jane is currently extending herself in both Oregon and Idaho—building a local climbing organization in Hell's Canyon near Athol, Idaho, and developing relationships with Forest Service officials in Oregon. For more information, contact Jane at **jsd@bendbroadband.com**.

Allied Climbers of San Diego Going Strong



Allied Climbers of San Diego (ACSD) is working hard hosting Adopt a Crag events, organizing its fourth annual fundraiser, and wrangling volunteers to provide information at local events. For more information on Allied Climbers of San Diego, check out www.alliedclimbers.org.

Local Climbing Organization 101: **Graffiti Removal**

While climbers are hardly ever the ones responsible for graffiti at our climbing areas, they are often the ones who step up to remove it from their favorite cliffs and boulders. Below are some helpful tips on how to remove graffiti on rock faces.

Contact the land manager who may have specific guidelines to follow before graffiti is removed.

Choose your weapon wisely to avoid highly toxic products that could be damaging to the environment. GRAFFITI-GONE and GRAFFITI-Q are recommended by most federal agencies.

Let the graffiti remover sit for the amount of time noted on the packaging, and make sure the rock is the appropriate temperature—some removers are not as effective at higher temperatures.

Scrub in a circular pattern and be sure not to scrub in the same pattern as the graffiti. Circular patterns help eliminate the "shadow" of the graffiti after it is removed.

Bring adequate water supply to rinse off the graffiti remover. Many land managers will lend you a water pump backpack used by wildland firefighters. A bucket of water and a Super Soaker water

water and a Super Soaker water gun is also effective, and its a fun way to get kids involved.



To submit an update for your local climbing organization or area, contact Amy Ansari at **amy@accessfund.org**.

ON the Beaten Path

oday is going to be a good day. You're going climbing. And you want to get to the base of the climb or boulder field as quickly as possible. But taking the most direct route to your destination can severely impact the environment. Going off trail, cutting switchbacks, and scattering gear and crash pads on sensitive plant life can create major access issues.

As climbers, we have an impact on the environment around us. Soil erosion, the development of social trails, and damage to vegetation are all reported side effects of climbing activity. But you can help combat these issues. One of the most important things we can do as climbers is proactively maintain healthy approach trails and climbing areas to ensure we have access for years to come.

Follow these easy tips every time you head out to climb ...

Stay on established trails. We all know this rule, but it's an easy one to forget or overlook. Going off trail not only destroys vegetation and erodes or compacts soil, it also creates a network of social trails that drastically expands our impact on the environment.

Stay in the middle of the trail.

Hike in the center of the trail even when conditions are wet. Once soil is compacted on the edges of trails, it can take decades for vegetation to come back.

Do not create cairns where they do not belong. When you are descending from a long route and you wander off the correct path, do not create your own trail by building cairns as you go. This can create severe trail braiding and frustration to others who are descending behind you.

Avoid scattering gear at crags and boulders. Confine your gear in the smallest space possible to avoid destroying vegetation and eroding or compacting soil.

Take care with crash pads. Don't drag crash pads from boulder problem to boulder problem. Pick them up and place your pads where you need them. Avoid placing crash pads on vegetation or in areas that have been lined with rocks.

Get involved. Contact your local climbing community or land managers and let them know you are interested in helping maintain trails. Stay tuned to Access Fund e-news (www.accessfund.org/enews) to get regular updates about trail days in your area. ■





PARCEL AT A TIME

n a small community in northern Vermont, a group of climbing activists has been quietly acquiring and conserving parcels of land for the better part of the last decade.

Climbing Resource Access Group of Vermont (known as CRAG-VT) was one of the first local climbing organizations to directly own and manage climbing areas in order to conserve access to them. Since 2003, CRAG-VT has secured climbing access on five individual parcels of land, through both direct acquisition and conservation easements, to protect a series of popular schist cliff faces. The area, known simply as Bolton, features a network of high-quality schist rock faces set across a patchwork of private and public lands.

Part of CRAG-VT's success can be attributed to its active and creative role in public-private partnerships. The organization has also embraced its responsibility as land owners, maintaining partnerships with neighboring landowners and protecting sensitive natural resources.

With five conservation projects completed in the last decade, CRAG-VT is a leading example of local climbing organizations taking a hands-on approach to protecting privately owned climbing areas. Through direct acquisitions, local partnerships, and successful fundraising, the organization actively stewards these valuable recreational resources and continues to seek new opportunities. The Access Fund looks forward to supporting CRAG-VT in future projects to secure climbing access throughout Bolton valley and the state. ■

We invite you to take a look back with us at CRAG-VT's impressive conservation history ...

CRAG-VT acquired
Lower West, likely the most popular and accessible crag in Bolton, through a generous donation from the landowner.

Access Fund supported CRAG-VT's acquisition of Bolton Quarry, a 30-acre parcel known for its vertical ice pillars and aesthetic rock climbing.

Access Fund provided
CRAG-VT with a grant to help
acquire the Upper West Bolton
area from private landowners.
CRAG-VT partnered with the
Vermont Land Trust to protect the
parcel with a conservation and
public access easement.

CRAG-VT secured a conservation easement on Crag 82 after a logging company that owned the parcel sold its development rights to the state of Vermont. CRAG-VT negotiated the addition of rock climbing as an expressly permitted activity in the conservation easement.

CRAG-VT acquired one of Vermont's best sport climbing cliffs—Carcass Crag. As the area gained popularity, CRAG-VT became concerned about sustainable access to this private parcel of land. After approaching the landowners, the organization was able to secure an agreement to buy the cliff.

Climbing and Cultural Resources:

A Tough Balance, a Tougher Conversation

by Laura Snider

ccording to Crow legend, some members of the tribe were camped near the Belle Fourche River when a massive bear tried to eat two little girls who were playing among some large rocks. The bear was about to pounce on the girls when they spotted him and scrambled to safety on top of one of the

The Legend of Devils Tower I Vintage postcard circa 1992

nearby rocks. The Great Spirit, seeing that the bear could still reach the girls, caused the rock to grow higher out of

the ground. As the girls were raised up, the bear stretched to snag them, scratching the rock with his claws until he fell to the ground. According to the 1930s oral tradition of Rides the White Hip Horse, the girls remain atop the rock, which is scarred with the bear's desperate claw marks.

Most of us know the rock that saved the little Crow girls as Devils Tower, a bizarrely geometric, 600-foot sentinel of igneous rock that watches over the high plains of northeastern Wyoming. The tower, a collection of hexagonal columns, is a must-climb destination for crack climbing enthusiasts—and it's sacred to at least six Plains tribes, including the Crow, Arapaho, Lakota, Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Shoshone. According to the National Park Service, Devils Tower is also the country's oldest national monument, first gaining protection in 1906. Over the years, as many as 23 tribes have claimed some cultural affiliation with the monument.

Although it's a shorter history than the Native Americans', the climbing community's relationship with Devils Tower dates farther back than its relationship with many other North American climbing areas. The first recorded technical ascent occured in 1937. As the decades have passed and the sport of climbing has exploded, the popularity of the activity at Devils Tower has boomed. By the early 70's, only a few hundred climbers reached the summit of the tower in a year, according to the Park

Service. But by the early 1990s, several thousand had ascended the rock. And while hundreds of thousands of people now visit the monument each year, climbers were the visitors who piqued particular concerns among Native Americans. These users were reaching the summit by climbing over sacred ground, representing an undefined level of encroachment.

In 1995, the National Park Service released its first climbing management plan for Devils Tower, which specifically addressed the impact of climbers on the area's cultural resources. The plan also sought to strike a compromise between climber access to public land and the wishes of Native Americans.

In the last 15 years, climbing has only grown in popularity, and land managers across the nation have been grappling to an increasing degree with how to protect cultural resources—which range from historic cabins to sites where ancient pottery shards have been found—and allow climbing. When these issues arise, the Access Fund advocates for a balanced solution that allows for climbing, but negotiating a cultural resource closure can be some of the trickiest and most difficult advocacy work the organization does. "This is one of the most politically loaded issues we deal with," says Access Fund Executive Director Brady Robinson. "It's often complex, emotionally charged, and thus hard to talk about."

Finding a compromise

The compromise solution at Devils Tower in 1995—which has remained the management strategy ever since—was to ask climbers to respect a voluntary closure of the tower during the month of June, when the majority of spiritual ceremonies are held. "That's the most sacred month of the year for the affiliated tribes," says Mark Biel, the monument's chief of resource management. "We see a drastic drop in the number of climbers in June; then it picks up again come July and August." Biel says the voluntary closure is, in some sense, more meaningful than a forced closure. "It was basically the Park Service that was pushing for just the total ban of climbing in June," says Biel, who wasn't yet working at the tower in 1995. "The tribes were not in favor of that. They wanted it to be voluntary and educate people about it and why it was important."

Biel considers the closure successful since more than 80% of climbers comply with it. But even so, the voluntary strategy hasn't been repeated by other land managers, at least not that he's heard of. Instead, it's far more common to have permanent, mandatory closures. And while the Access Fund doesn't dispute the need for closures in some cases, the size of the closure can be problematic. "We've always supported climbing closures to protect cultural resources," says Jason Keith, the Access Fund's policy director. "Where it gets squirrelly, though, is where we're not talking about a discrete archaeological sitewhen we're talking about sacred sites because the scope of these sites is

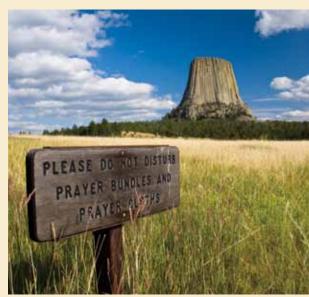
hard to determine." When the cultural resource that land managers are concerned about is a discrete, easily definable place—such as a pictograph or a grinding rock—it's common for land managers to close routes within a defined distance from the site. At Red Rocks for example, climbing is closed within 50 feet of any rock art.

But when the cultural resource is classified as a "traditional cultural property"—essentially, when an area or region is considered sacred—it can be more difficult for climbers to obtain or keep access to it. In part, that's because it's not easy to push for the right to use land that's sacred to someone else—it can be challenging to even talk about it in a way that doesn't seem insensitive or insulting. But when those sacred sites are also public lands, owned by everyone, discussing access for all user groups is a legitimate conversation. And, unfortunately, climbing is often singled out in that conversation as one of the few banned uses. For example, Castle Rocks, which neighbors City of Rocks, Idaho, was recently closed entirely to climbing even though hiking and horseback riding are still permitted. "We're not challenging that sites are sacred," Keith says. "But if we're calling it public land, it should be treated as public land."

Lessening our impact

The question of balancing cultural resource protection and climbing doesn't come down to allowing some degradation of cultural resources in exchange for climbing access. Multiple state and federal laws govern how land managers must protect cultural

resources. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act, for example, makes it a federal crime to steal or destroy artifacts. "There's not the same legal restraint protecting climbing access," says Scott Justham, a park ranger for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) field office in Bishop, California. "If you have to pick one, you have to go with the cultural resource." A second federal act, the National Historic Preservation Act, mandates that agencies such as the Park Service



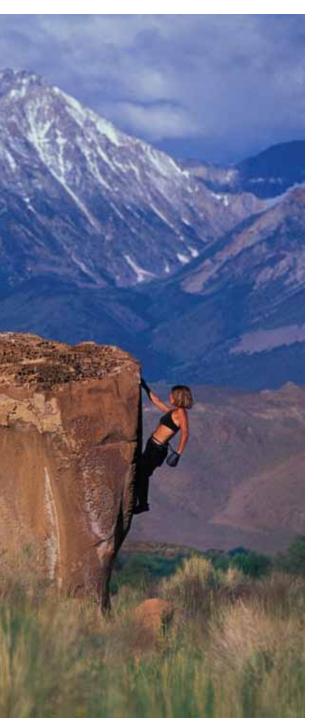
Sign along the Joyner Ridge Trail, West of Devils Tower, advising visitors not to disturb the prayer bundles or flags



Petroglyphs at the Volcanic Tablelands, Bishop, CA | © Matt Keebler

Feature Story

or the Federal Highway Administration consider the impacts that any proposed action—building a trail or road, for example—would have on important eligible cultural resources. The law demands that those agencies mitigate



Bouldering at The Happy Boulders, Bishop, CA I © Corey Rich / Aurora Photos

those impacts, but it does not say that there can be no impacts. When it comes to allowing climbing, the question is when and how does climbing affect cultural resources, and how can those impacts be limited? And that's when it's important to have the Access Fund at the table asking questions. Is it necessary to close an entire area to protect a few, discrete cultural resources? Does climbing need to be banned within a half-mile of a cultural resource, or will 50 feet be enough? Can seasonal bans or voluntary closures work to lessen the number of climbers in an area over a year?

In the Volcanic Tablelands around Bishop—where bouldering exploded in the 1990s—climbing access and cultural resource protection have managed to largely coexist without any wholesale closures. In large part, that's because the climbing community has mitigated its own use by choosing not to include in the area guidebook all the drainages where bouldering could be developed, which has effectively concentrated use at the Happy and Sad boulders. Justham, who helped persuade guidebook authors to leave out some sensitive areas, says he thinks the omissions have reduced the BLM's need to act more forcefully to protect the area's many cultural resources. For example, one of the areas that could become popular for bouldering is also a Native American burial site, Justham says, and if the area were to suddenly become as heavily used as the Happy boulders, the BLM would likely institute an emergency closure while the agency figured out how to protect the area.

And while this system of working with climbers to decrease their impact has worked, it's not perfect. Justham points to a handful of times over the years when climbers ripped down a sign specifically forbidding bouldering on a particular rock that is covered with petroglyphs and then climbed on the rock, leaving telltale chalk marks. Justham has had to head out there, lugging a water jug, to replace the sign and wash off the chalk. But most of the problems in the Bishop area relate more to climbers' lack of understanding that they may be affecting a cultural resource, Justham says. For example, he's seen climbers do "excavation work" at the base of a boulder that could have been a prehistoric rock shelter. "Climbers can be a tough user group to educate, because sometimes we think we don't have a lot of impact," says Justham, who is also a longtime climber, "when, in fact, we do. This sport is way more impacting than I ever used to think."

The Access Fund agrees that climbers have impacts, and that educating the climbing community is critical to preserving cultural resources. But the Access Fund also knows it's critical to continue to push for climbers to be recognized as a legitimate user group that deserves access to all kinds of public lands. "The Access Fund works for climbers by advocating that land managers maintain appropriate public access to public lands as they work to protect important cultural resources," Robinson says. "We want the Access Fund to be an organization that all climbers are proud to be a part of, including climbers who care deeply about cultural resources." ■

enowned as one of the most unique and historic desert climbing venues in America, Arches National Park draws climbers from all around the world who are looking for exhilarating summit experiences on multipitch desert towers.

Climbers have been ascending Arches' unique Entrada Sandstone since the 1960s, before the area became a national park. Climbers and the Park Service have a history Arches National Park's decision to outright ban all fixed anchors was a reaction to an isolated incident and not backed by any studies or a planning process that demonstrated an actual need to limit these necessary climbing tools. And while the majority of the climbing community agrees that new fixed anchors should be monitored to limit impacts on sensitive natural resources (as is done in Zion National Park), an outright ban is not justified.

towers and the placement of new anchors to ascend sections of otherwise naturally protected terrain.

This planning process is especially important because it could set a precedent for how other national parks manage climbing and fixed anchors, especially in the southwest.

Arches National Park just completed the first of two public comment periods for this plan. Sometime this winter, the Park Service is likely to publish



of working collaboratively to protect sensitive cliff-nesting raptors and the unique geologic character of the named arches and bridges, resulting in a handful of justified climbing restrictions and closures.

However, in 2006 a high-profile climb of Delicate Arch caused a firestorm of controversy. In reaction to this, the Park Service banned the use of fixed anchors in Arches, effectively banning climbing on many of the park's historic towers, where fixed anchors are the only means to safely ascend and descend.

This summer, the Access Fund got word that Arches National Park is developing a Climbing and Canyoneering Management Plan that will once again consider the use of fixed anchors, new routes via permit, and access trails, among other things. Our hope is that this plan will restore the unique desert climbing opportunities that our community lost in 2006.

The Access Fund is working with Park Service planners to encourage them to lift the blanket ban on fixed anchors and allow some level of new anchor placements that enable descents off the summit of many of the desert

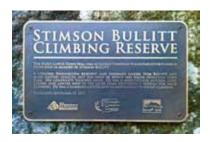
a draft plan that includes a range of management alternatives. The Access Fund has worked to see that one of these planning alternatives will allow for some level of fixed-anchor use and will hopefully reopen many of the historic climbing routes in Arches. Once the draft plan is published, the Access Fund will submit comments, provide analysis of the plan for the climbing community, and encourage our membership to comment.

Stay tuned to Access Fund e-news (www.accessfund.org/enews) for ways you can get involved and make your voice heard.



The buzz GET UP TO SPEED IN ONE PAGE

Allied Climbers of San Diego got a permanent closure lifted at Poway Crags outside of San Diego. Visit **www.alliedclimbers.org** for a list of seasonal closures. Way to go, ACSD!



Lower Town Wall has been protected and is now climber owned! Thanks to all who have committed time, energy, and resources to this fantastic victory for the climbing community, especially Washington Climbers Coalition. Visit http://washingtonclimbers.org/.

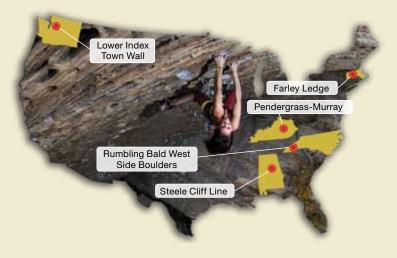


The Access Fund and our Outdoor Alliance partners collected comments from outdoor enthusiasts around the country and submitted them to the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. For more information, visit www.accessfund.org/ago.

2010 Yosemite Facelift draws 1,001 volunteers who collected more than 172,307 pounds of trash. Thanks to all volunteers and organizers who made this year's Facelift a success. Did you know that 2011 is the Access Fund's 20th anniversary? Stay tuned for a celebration in your area next year!



Denali and Rainier national parks are set to raise mountaineering fees significantly. The Access Fund is working with its partners American Alpine Club and American Mountain Guides Association, to ensure these fees are justified and set at acceptable levels.



The Access Fund Land Conservation Campaign

Giving your local climbing organization the horsepower to protect threatened climbing areas. With your help, we can conserve many more treasured cliffs and boulder fields in the years to come.

Donate today at www.accessfund.org/donate.

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othschild would like to congratulate Black Diamond and its employees, friends, customers, vendors, and consumers on building a company with products that capture the lifestyle and values of climbers and outdoor enthusiasts. Rothschild is pleased to provide a donation in honor of Black Diamond's accomplishments over the past decades; its commitment to its mission, vision, communities, and values; and its future as a new public company.



Featured artist Rainbow Weinstock peering off the Salathe on El Cap I © Craig Muderlak

Rainbow Weinstock

rowing up in the boondocks on the Big Island of Hawaii, Rainbow was surrounded by outdoor adventures, and climbing was a natural progression once he relocated to "The Mainland." He first got focused on photography while bumming around interior Alaska for a season in '99. He's been most inspired by old-school bad asses, like Galen Rowell and David Brower, who packed so much into one expedition and one lifetime.

Over the last decade, Rainbow has taught climbing and mountaineering for the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) throughout the West and beyond. In the summer, he guides for Colorado Mountain School and leads courses for various colleges. In between work gigs this winter, Rainbow will be teaming with the American Mountain Guides Association and clipping bolts on some unnamed southern island. And when he's not gallivanting around the globe, you can find him settled in Boulder, Colorado. You can see more of Rainbow's work at www.rainbowweinstock.com.



The Access Fund P.O. Box 17010 Boulder, Colorado 80308

GIVE THE GIFT OF ACCESS Holiday Packs Have Arrived!

he holidays are just around the corner, and you can get the ultimate stocking stuffers for the climbers on your list, right here! Filled with a one-year Access Fund membership and oodles of swag from our corporate partners, our holiday packs are perfect for the climbers in your life.



Basic Holiday Package — \$75 (includes shipping) over \$120 retail value!

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- New J-Tree design of Access Fund's organic cotton T-shirt from prAna
- Metolius Climber's Hand Repair Balm
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- The North Face logo beanie, co-branded with Access Fund logo to show your support of the cause
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- Half-pound of your favorite Higher Ground Roasters' Access Fund Brew
- Favorite seasonal flavored CLIF Bars (think gingerbread and pumpkin spice)

Order today at www.accessfund.org/holiday

Order by December 17 to assure delivery by December 24.

While supplies last! Access Fund reserves the right to substitute products with a product of equal or greater value. Additional \$10 shipping and handling fees for non-U.S. orders; Colorado residents will be charged sales tax.



SUPER Holiday Package — \$95 (includes shipping) over \$180 retail value!

- The Basic Holiday Package plus ...
- Newly released Falcon Guides title, Maximum Climbing: Mental Training for Peak Performance and Optimal Experience
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Photo shows the SUPER Holiday Package

