

FEDERAL & AGENCY CLIMBING AND GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLANS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Prepared by the Access Fund February 2001

I. Federal and Agency Climbing and General Management Plans

The following is a list of agency documents that address climbing specifically or as part of a general management plan. Climbing Management Plans (CMP) have been (or are being) implemented by federal and state authorities nationwide to assist in the management of technical rock climbing. The majority of CMP's focus on the unique requirements and impacts from climbing, for example fixed anchors, new route development, commercial guide and outfitting services, and visitor safety. Additional issues include the protection of sensitive wildlife populations or rare plants communities.

Many of the documents remain in draft versions. Some CMP's address climbing issues in far greater detail than in others, and where possible these topics have been highlighted. Readers are directed to the more comprehensive documents for a thorough discussion on climbing issues.

II. Memoranda of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Agreement (MOA) is a written understanding that frames a cooperative relationship between two or more parties. The MOU works to define the common interests that parties share. It also defines the way they will work together to reach common goals. These documents can cover a range of objectives, from very broad partnership and stewardship responsibilities to very specific applications, such as land acquisition. Documents may be obtained from the agency or organization listed.

I. Federal & Agency Climbing and General Management Plans

Acadia National Park (1997). *Final climbing management plan/finding of no significant impact*. Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Bar Harbor, ME. 9 pp.

ABSTRACT: A source of information on collaboration, education, and outreach, on cliff nesting raptor restrictions.

American Mountain Foundation. (1993). *Shelf Road climbing area site management and development study*. Unpublished manuscript, Rocky Mountain Field Institute, Colorado Springs, CO. 17pp.

ABSTRACT: Report to local authority and Bureau of Land Management about management options for vehicle access, camping, and education materials for a site, which has experienced a rapid transition into a sport, climbing area. Also contains a 2-page description on how a sport climb is established.

Big South Fork National River and Obed Wild and Scenic River. (1997). *Climbing management plan*. Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Oneida, TN. 17 pp., w/ glossary.

ABSTRACT: Provides management direction for two popular climbing areas in the "Sandstone Belt." Addresses condition of natural and cultural resources, climbing techniques and equipment necessary for the area, mitigation and prevention of resource impacts, zoning (designated "developed" or "nondeveloped"), site closures, safety and liability, bolting, commercial guiding, permits for power drills, new route reporting, trails, maintenance of existing routes, rappelling, and creation of a climbing advisory group.

Cave Rock. (1999). *Cave Rock management direction, draft environmental impact statement*. Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, South Lake Tahoe, CA. 117 pp. with glossary and appendices.

ABSTRACT: Analyzes possible changes in management direction for Cave Rock study area. Preferred planning alternative would "strike a balance between all those who consider Cave Rock important, while protecting the heritage resources in the area." Protects heritage values by reducing number of climbing routes, prohibiting establishment of new routes, prohibiting commercial activities, and developing climber education and outreach efforts to encourage use of alternative climbing sites. Cave Rock is a Traditional-Cultural Property nominated to the National Register for Historic Places.

Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park (1998). *Final climbing management plan*. Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Fort Oglethorpe, GA. 25pp.

ABSTRACT: Establishes management direction and actions for Lookout Mountain/Sunset Rock. Closes some routes to protect historic view shed. Authorizes placements of bolt top-anchors below rim of mountain to protect summit vegetation and soils. Sets group size limits, links future limits to success of efforts to protect and restore natural resources. Directs park staff to analyze potential for use fees. Urges voluntary trailhead registration by climbers for monitoring purposes. Provides for inventory of all

climbing anchors, prohibits new fixed anchors and use of power drills without NPS approval.

City of Rocks National Reserve, Idaho. (1988). *City of Rocks National Reserve climbing management plan and finding of no significant impact*. Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Almo, ID: 77pp.

ABSTRACT: One of the most comprehensive climbing-specific management plans available. Addresses historic values (Oregon-California pioneer trail), safety issues, zoning, resource impacts (includes results of scientific studies), new route establishment, climber education and outreach, visitor use levels, climbing history commercial guiding, wildlife, scenic quality, and quiet.

Devils Tower National Monument (1995). *Final climbing management plan and finding of no significant impact*. Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Devils Tower, WY. 112 pp.

ABSTRACT: Precedent-setting management plan based on negotiations between NPS, climbers, and Native Americans. Aims to protect cultural values and climbing opportunities by establishing a "voluntary closure" to climbing during month of June each year. Also provides direction for management of resource impacts associated with climbing, including fixed anchors, trails, chalk, slings/webbing, plus restrictions to protect wildlife.

Eldorado Canyon State Park (1991). *Climbing management plan*. Unpublished manuscript, Eldorado Springs, CO: 15 pp.

ABSTRACT: One of the first climbing management plans to be produced. Provides information on developing a climbing advisory group. Does not reflect current issues and management given current levels of use.

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (1999). *Proposed management plan - final environmental impact statement*. Unpublished manuscript, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Cedar City, UT. 246 pp.

ABSTRACT: Comprehensive plan. Addresses recreational effects on natural and cultural resources in a desert environment. Limited reference to rock climbing.

Granite Mountain Wilderness, Prescott National Forest, AZ. (1996). *Environmental assessment for the Granite Mountain Wilderness: decision notice and finding of no significant impact and pre-decision*. Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Prescott, AZ. 125 pp., includes appendices & amendments.

ABSTRACT: Establishes management direction for placement and replacement of fixed anchors, implementation of Limits of Acceptable Change in allocation of Wilderness Opportunity Classes.

Joshua Tree National Park. (1998). *Supplement to the draft general management plan amendment supplemental environmental impact statement: Backcountry and wilderness management plan.* (climbing management, pp. 24-32). Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Joshua Tree National Park, Twentynine Palms, CA. 55pp.

ABSTRACT: Establishes park wide policy for climbing, including use of fixed anchors.

Mohonk Preserve ("the Shawangunks"). (1990). *Revised statement of rock climbing policy.* Unpublished manuscript, Mohonk Preserve Trust Board of Directors, New Paltz, NY. 5 pp.

ABSTRACT: Sets management policy and access requirements for climbing at this famous privately-owned area near New York City. Establishes policy for fees, user registration, facilities (parking, camping, trails, litter, and sanitation), environmental protection and responsibility of visitors, new routes and fixed protection, commercial operations.

North Carolina Division of State Parks (1997). *North Carolina State Parks climbing management plan.* Unpublished manuscript, Division of State Parks and Recreation, Raleigh, NC. 10 pp.

ABSTRACT: Addresses fixed anchor policy, staff responsibility, and collaborative management with grassroots climbers' coalition.

Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. (1999). *Proposed general management plan and draft environmental impact statement* (see "Recreation Management," pp. 47-51). Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Las Vegas, NV. 288 pp., w/out appendices.

ABSTRACT: Provides management direction for climbing use. Foundation of strategy is establishment of Climbers Liaison Council that helps with resource monitoring, review of new route proposals, bolting issues, trail maintenance. Addresses commercial climbing (guiding) issues, bivouacking, cultural resource and wildlife protection. Bolting in Wilderness policy subject to revision based on likely revision of BLM Interim Management Policy for Wilderness Study Areas.

Snow Canyon State Park, UT. (1988). *Resource management plan* (including 11 page Climbing management plan). Unpublished manuscript, State of Utah, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation, Salt lake City, UT.

ABSTRACT: Provides detailed information on how to create a climbing work group to assist in the development of climbing policy and resource protection.

Spring Mountains National Recreation Area, Toiyabe National Forest. (1996). *Record of decision, final environmental impact statement, general management plan*. Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Las Vegas, NV. Approximately 200 pp. in three documents.

ABSTRACT: Amends Land and Resource Management Plan for Toiyabe National Forest. Provides new management direction on Wilderness issues, ecosystem health and integrity, wildlife concerns, cultural values and archeological sites, public safety, user conflicts, commercial uses, establishment of new climbing routes, cooperative education and monitoring with climbing community, ability to monitor and enforce management guidelines. Adopts the "Choosing by Advantages" approach to decision-making.

State of Maine. (1994). *Climbing management policy*. Unpublished manuscript, State of Maine, Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Recreation. 9 pp.

ABSTRACT: Sets policy for permission and management of technical rock climbing on state lands. Addresses resource impacts, safety and liability, visual impacts, carrying capacity, and commercial use. Establishes procedures for closures and restrictions.

Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, OK. (1995). *Final environmental assessment for technical rock climbing: Decision notice and finding of no significant impact*. Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of the Interior, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Indianahoma, OK. 26pp.

ABSTRACT: Report and assessment of the influence of rock climbing on natural resources. Covers wildlife, geology, riparian areas, vegetation, and socioeconomic issues. Provides general appraisal of environmental effects in a climbing area, and evaluation in relation to impacts from other types of recreation. Provides a model for dealing with fixed anchors, permission for new routes and fixed anchor replacements in a USFW refuge.

Yosemite National Park. (1993). *Draft climbing management plan Yosemite National Park..* Unpublished manuscript, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Yosemite, CA.

ABSTRACT: Thorough consideration of environmental issues of climbing. Identifies and provides management approaches to a spectrum of environmental issues. Also addresses the unique management considerations of big wall climbing. Draft plan never finalized or adopted.

Forthcoming agency documents that address climbing specifically or as part of a general management plan.

Black Canyon of the Gunnison Backcountry Management Plan. Due date 2003.
United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Montrose, CO.

Western State College of Colorado is working with the National Park Service to develop a backcountry management plan for the park's wilderness areas. This includes the access gullies and the inner walls of the canyon used by climbers. The resource assessment process is estimated to take two years. For more information see the web site:
<http://www.western.edu/envs/black/>

Castle Rock State Park Climbing Management Plan. Due date June 2001. Santa Cruz, CA.

ABSTRACT: Climbing Management Plan developed by State Park with assistance from climbing advisory group. Issues identified include mitigating climbing impacts on sandstone rock faces, management approach towards increased use from bouldering activity, fixed anchors.

Indian Creek Corridor Recreation Plan. Draft due date - April 2001. United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Monticello Field Office, UT.

ABSTRACT: Plan will address recreation use and visitor management in 4 zones in the Indian Creek Corridor. Climbing activity is focused in Zone II. Issues identified include human waste, protection of natural resource values (riparian and desert habitat and cryptobiotic soils), cultural resources (rock art and dwellings), social trails, and dispersed camping.

New River Gorge National River Climbing Management Plan. Draft due date – May 2001. United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, WV.
For more information refer to web site: <http://www.nps.gov/neri/cmp/index.htm>

ABSTRACT: Plan will address increasing visitor use and commercial guiding use and identify management approaches to mitigate impacts on vegetation, soils and manage social trails system.

Obed Wild and Scenic River Climbing Management Plan. Due date 2002. United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, TN.

Scoping stage February 2001. Address issues of increase in use, mitigation of climbing impacts, fixed anchors, social trails.

Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Ansel Adams, John Muir and Dinkey Lakes Wilderness Areas. Inyo and Sierra National Forests, CA. Draft due date for final document July 2001. United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service. Available from USDA Forest Service, Bishop, CA or at web site: www.r5.fs.fed.us/inyo&pskip=&nskip=10&se=0,3,0,913&index=1

ABSTRACT: Plan addresses visitor use in back country/wilderness area. Management alternatives include permit systems, systems to regulate commercial use, managing for different recreation opportunities and visitor experiences.

Rocky Mountain National Park Backcountry/Wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. Draft January 2001. United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Estes Park, CO. Available on web site: <http://www.nps.gov/romo/pppressreleases/01%2D2bcmp%2Ehtm>

ABSTRACT: Section on Climbing Management described in pages 2-37 – 2-41. Includes sections on human waste, social impacts, hardware/equipment and education. Climbing bivouacs and management policy are described in section 2.1.4.4. Back country Permit and Reservation System.

II. Memoranda of Understanding

Access Fund and the National Park Service, New River Gorge National River

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this MOU is to establish a framework of cooperation upon which the Access Fund and National Park Service (NPS) will work to establish permanent trailhead access points and facilities to NPS lands within New River Gorge National River in the vicinity of Nuttallburg Mine and Upper Endless Wall/Beauty Mountain areas.

Coronado National Forest and the Southern Arizona Climbers' Coalition

ABSTRACT: An arrangement between the Coronado National Forest and the Southern Arizona Climbers' Coalition (SACC) was initiated in order for the SACC to monitor peregrine falcon nest sites to assess occupancy and nesting success.

Memorandum of Understanding No. 99-07MO12 between Red River Gorge Climbers Coalition and the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service. 7th February 2000. 4pp. Available from Stanton Ranger District, Daniel Boone National Forest, KY or at web site: http://www.rrgcc.com/mou_intro.htm.

This MOU establishes a framework of cooperation that will guide the Red River Gorge Climbers Coalition (RRGCC) and the Forest Service in forging and continuing a working relationship for planning and accomplishing projects and activities within the Red River Gorge Geological Area.

Rumney Climbers Association and the White Mountain National Forest

ABSTRACT: The Rumney Climber's Association has the sole responsibility for overseeing fixed anchors, erosion control, new route activity, trail maintenance, posting peregrine falcon closures, and monitoring the status of rare plants at this popular New Hampshire climbing area.

Shawnee National Forest and the Southern Illinois Climbers Alliance

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this MOU is to establish a cooperative framework upon which mutually beneficial programs, work projects, and rock climbing activities may be planned and implemented by the Forest Service and Southern Illinois Climbers Alliance working cooperatively at the local level.

Wichita Mountains Climbers' Coalition and the Department of Interior U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge

ABSTRACT: The Wichita Mountain Climbers' Coalition will provide volunteer assistance to the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge by (1) providing and advisory bolting committee, (2) educating and informing the climbing community about conservation issues, resource protection, leave no trace ethics, and stewardship philosophy, (3) assist refuge managers in monitoring the effectiveness of the FWS rock climbing management plan, (4) maintain all rock climbing areas free of trash or abandoned equipment, (5) remove excess gymnastic chalk from the rock as needed, and (6) work in partnership with the FWS.