



Climber: Angela Payne at Hound Ears Bouldering Camp Photo: John Heisel

2001-2002 Bouldering Campaign

The Access Fund's bouldering campaign hit the ground running last month when a number of well-known climbers signed on to lend their support for our nationwide effort to:

- Raise awareness about bouldering among land managers and the public
- Promote care and respect for natural places visited by boulderers
- Mobilize the climbing community to act responsibly and work cooperatively with land managers and land owners
- To protect and rehabilitate bouldering resources
- Preserve bouldering access
- Help raise awareness and spread the message about the campaign, inspirational posters featuring Tommy Caldwell, Lisa Rands and Dave Graham are being produced that will include a simple bouldering "code of ethics" that encourages climbers to:
 - Pad Lightly
 - Climb Invisibly
 - Leave it Natural

The posters will also include logos of prominent climbing industry manufacturers who have endorsed the campaign. Look for the posters at events and in climbing gyms and retail shops soon. Additional education and outreach materials to be developed in the coming months include stickers and laminated tags with the campaign message to be used on sales tags of

bouldering products. Access Fund corporate and community partners enthusiastically expressed their support for the goals and initiatives of the bouldering campaign at the August Outdoor Retailer Trade Show held in Salt Lake City.

As part of our effort to preserve opportunities for bouldering, a portion of our grants program will be targeted toward projects which specifically address bouldering issues. Already, two grants that improve access and opportunities for bouldering have been awarded (more details about those grants can be found in this issue.) Grants will also be given to projects that involve reducing recreational impacts at bouldering sites. The next deadline for grant applications is February 15, 2002.

Another key initiative of the bouldering campaign is the acquisition of a significant bouldering area under threat. There are a number of areas currently under consideration. If you know of an area where access to a bouldering area is threatened, please contact acquisitions director Shawn Tierney at shawn@accessfund.org. Visit our web site at www.accessfund.org and click on "Projects" to learn more about the campaign.



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The Access Fund is a national, nonprofit dedicated to keeping climbing areas open & conserving the climbing environment. Since its incorporation in 1990, the Access Fund has provided more than \$1 million for climbing conservation and education across the US. We've paid for land purchases, climbers' campgrounds, educational brochures, toilets, signs, and scientific research on climbers' impact on birds of prey and cliff-dwelling plants. For more information, please contact us.

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Editorial Director: Sam Davidson
Editor: John Heisel

Exceeds 50 percent recycled content



Letter from Sam Davidson, AF Executive Director

It's November, and that means great weather and colors here along the Front Range in Colorado. Change is in the air, and each day seems full of potential.

Change is also evident in our newsletter, as you no doubt have noticed. We have gone to a different design to improve readability, reproduction of photos and images, and to reduce mailing costs – the new format will save us as much as \$500 per issue. These improvements can be attributed largely to the talents of our Publications Director, John Heisel.

We are continually striving to upgrade the quality and effectiveness of our outreach to the climbing community. I invite you to tell us what more – or less—you would like to see in our newsletter. Send us an e-mail at info@accessfund.org, or call 888-863-6237.

Autumn has always been my favorite time of year, and my favorite season for climbing. This year, of course, things seem different, as a consequence of the events of September 11. At times like this, we may begin to question whether activities like climbing are really as important as we thought they were.

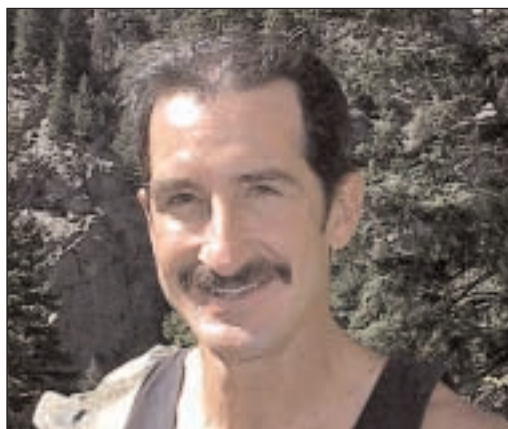
Over my 25 years of climbing, guiding, and activism, I have too often observed the transformative power of climbing to doubt its significance, even now. Moreover, America's mountains, crags and boulders represent what is most beautiful and enduring in our society – they are symbols of our nation's achievements, and havens we visit to nurture and restore our spirits.

Now, more than ever, America's climbing areas must be protected, and our opportunities to enjoy them preserved.

As we approach the end of 2001, I urge you to remember the crucial role that non-profit organizations, such as the Access Fund, play in our society and their reliance on individual donations. I hope you will reaffirm your support for worthy causes which contribute to a better standard of living, a cleaner and healthier environment, and which help preserve the personal freedoms which are the heritage of all Americans. It is these freedoms, after all, which distinguish our nation from all others.

I wish you rewarding climbing and safe returns to your family and friends, now and in the future.

Best regards,



John Heisel

Access Fund Helps to Reduce Fee Demo Extension from Four to Two Years and Increase Appropriations for Land Agencies

On October 10, the House and Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittees extended the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program ("Fee Demo") for two years instead of the four years initially proposed. This scaling back of Fee Demo is a victory resulting from concerted lobbying efforts by the Access Fund, the Outdoor Industry Association, American Whitewater, American Hiking Society, American Alpine Club, Outward Bound, and others.

Fee Demo imposes fees on certain recreational users of lands managed by the federal land management agencies. This is not an entrance fee but a use fee for simply walking, paddling, climbing, fishing or biking on public lands. The Fee Demo program was intended to supplement, not supplant, the general appropriations approved by Congress to support our public lands. Fee Demo, however, has been plagued with problems related to implementation, agency accountability, and fairness. Public support for the program has decreased considerably.

The Access Fund opposes the implementation of use fees to access wilderness areas and other backcountry areas where significant administrative support is neither required nor desired by visitors. There should be no "pay-to-play" where "playing" costs virtually nothing. America's national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, recreation areas and open spaces are the heritage of every citizen and access to these lands should be equally available to all.

Congress should provide sufficient funding for the protection and maintenance of our public lands through annual budget appropriations.

Congress initially authorized Fee Demo in 1996 for a three-year test period. Following this "test" Congress extended the program for successive one-year periods, and recently proposed a longer four-year extension. However, after strenuous lobbying by human-powered recreation groups, including the AF, Congress reduced the extension to two years. Congress provided this extension "to allow the authorizing committees to continue their assessment of this program and to provide for a permanent solution to this issue."

Furthermore, Congress strongly encouraged "the agencies implementing this program to focus on public service, work closely with local communities and the recreational industry, and to use the receipts to enhance visitor services and reduce the backlog in deferred maintenance." Significantly, the FY 2002 Interior Appropriations bill also increased general appropriations to the federal land management agencies as advocated by the Access Fund and others.

While the human-powered recreation community succeeded in limiting the extension of Fee Demo and increasing general appropriations, there is more work to be done. Jason Keith, AF Policy Analyst, attended the September 25, 2001 Oversight Hearing on Fee Demo held by the House Subcommittee on Forests & Forest Health, and submitted testimony for that hearing. He also lobbied Congress about restructuring the Fee Demo program to reflect the policy position of the Access Fund. For more info see www.accessfund.org.

Access Fund Appeals Climbing Closure at the Road 18 Caves Near Bend, OR

On October 11, 2001, the Access Fund filed an administrative appeal of a US Forest



Reese Martin

Climbers at the entrance of the Road 18 Caves near Bend, Oregon. The Access Fund recently filed an administrative appeal of a US Forest Service decision to remove bolted routes and ban chalk use at the caves.

Service (USFS) decision for the Road 18 Caves near Bend, Oregon to remove bolted routes, ban chalk use and prohibit any type of climbing in Hidden Forest Cave. The decision failed to provide evidence that climbing should be treated differently than uses such as caving and hiking, which are not subject of the same level of restriction. Some of these other activities make use of ladders, handrails, and other metal implements far greater in size, visibility, and damage to the natural resource than climbing bolts. The USFS Decision was based primarily on feedback from the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, which "hold Hidden Forest Cave in high regard as a spiritual site."

The Access Fund supports the management of recreational uses of public lands to balance Native American religious and cultural concerns with recreational opportunities. The Access Fund works to educate climbers about Native American spiritual values and to encourage them to respect these values by voluntarily not climbing during ceremonial periods and by not disturbing rock art, prayer bundles, and other cultural resources. However, we do not support mandatory restrictions on climbing based on Native American religious concerns unless there is compelling evidence that climbing violates these concerns.

The Road 18 Caves are a unique climbing resource, unlike any other climbing area in the United States. The climbing takes place only on the walls and ceilings of the mouths of several caves where natural light penetrates.

The Access Fund has been closely involved with the planning process for the Road 18 Caves Environmental Assessment. We offered funding to pay for scientific studies of climbing impacts, and for resource improvement/restoration projects. The Access Fund and local climbers previously supported the closure of one cave for the re-establishment of a bat colony. We also endorsed a variety of management responses that would protect cave resources while permitting some limited climbing in the Road 18 Caves. However, the Forest Service's eleventh-hour switch from a position favoring retention of some climbing opportunities to elimination of climbing was made without sufficient objective analysis of relative recreational impacts and is fundamentally unfair.

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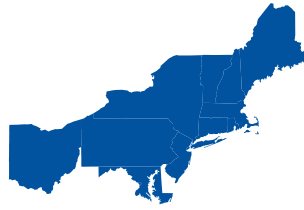
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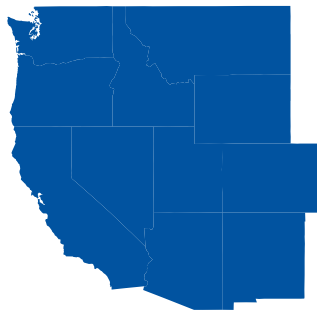
Area reports



NORTHEAST Skytop, New York

(Report provided by Regional Coordinator Russ Clune)

Representatives from the Mohonk Preserve and the Access Fund met recently with the president of the Mohonk Mountain House, Bert Smiley. Mr. Smiley has received numerous letters in the past few months regarding re-opening Skytop to climbing. Most of the letters described the historical significance Skytop holds for climbers. Mr. Smiley remains optimistic that climbing in some fashion will one day be allowed at Skytop, but cannot commit to when that may happen. Among the many hurdles to overcome are insurance costs, lack of adequate New York State liability statutes and stewardship issues. A continued letter writing campaign directed at the Mountain House is not presently recommended since Mr. Smiley understands climbers' stance on the subject. Dialogue will continue between the Mountain House, the Preserve and the Access Fund.



WEST Enchanted Tower, New Mexico

(Report provided by Regional Coordinator Bryan Pletta)

Climbers in New Mexico replaced the old wooden sign new sign with a new one provided by the Access Fund on October 21. The sign directs climbers along the private road through the Cleaveland. The owners and caretaker were pleased with the look of the new sign and the outreach efforts of New Mexico CRAG and the Access Fund. Also, a smaller version of the sign with similar text was installed on the trailhead

kiosk at the climbing area.

There have apparently been problems with an inordinate number of hunters in the area and the caretaker intends to lock the gate at the ranch entrance for the remainder of hunting season. It is presently unclear how long the gate will remain locked, but it will most likely be through the end of the "climbing season" as well. Please contact Bryan Pletta at Stone Age Climbing Gym (phone 505-341-2016 or e-mail sacgym@aol.com) for current status of the gate and access information if you plan on climbing at the Tower.

Also, remember to keep your speed below 15 MPH through the ranch and avoid driving through late at night.



John Heisel

New sign at Enchanted Tower, New Mexico

Help Wanted in Northern California

Activist climber to serve as a volunteer Regional Coordinator for northern California. Handle access and conservation issues in some of the nation's finest climbing areas. Background in law, public policy and/or public lands management a plus. If interested, e-mail Paul Minault at (pminault@earthlink.net).

Bishop BLM gear up for winter bouldering visitors

The Bishop Bureau of Land Management reports that following the popularity of the Pleasant Valley Campground in 2001 they will be expanding the area and adding additional sites. The BLM are pleased at the high number of climbers using the site which by focusing visitor use in one area reduces impacts to the more sensitive high desert habitat of the Volcanic Tablelands surrounding the site.

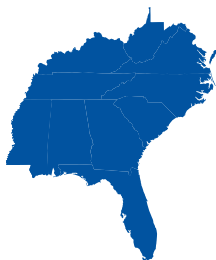
Similar to last year the campground facilities include toilets, communal fire pit, dumpster, recycling facilities and message notice board. Visitors will be asked to contribute \$1.00/night for camping towards campground maintenance.

For more information on camping, access and other work of the BLM around bouldering areas on the Volcanic Tablelands check out the website:

www.ca.blm.gov/bishop/bouldering.html

Plan to move the Sad Boulders parking point

The BLM also plans to move the current parking area for the Sad Boulders which provides access for 8 cars on the top of the Volcanic Tablelands to an expanded site down on the Chalk Bluffs Road. There is already climber access from this point. The move is another measure to reduce impacts to the Volcanic Tablelands area, which is a designated Wilderness Study Area.



SOUTHEAST Obed, TN

Scoping work for the forthcoming Climbing Management Plan for the Obed Scenic River is now complete. The NPS worked with climbers and other local interest groups through a working committee to develop management options. The Environmental Assessment and draft plan with the preferred management alternative will be released for public review in early November. Climbers are encouraged to view the document at www.nps.gov/obed and submit their comments within the 45-day review period.

Foster Falls, Tennessee

Due to the financial crunch in Tennessee all non-resort parks in the state are closed on Mondays and Tuesdays until further notice. Fourteen parks will be closed at the end of November. For more information see news release at (www.friendsofscsra.org/news.htm).

Volunteers are needed as parking lot greeters at Foster Falls State Park. If you are interested in volunteering please e-mail Mary Priestley at (mpriestl@sewanee.edu).



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Access Fund Grants Program Awards Over \$70K in 2001

With the announcement of its final Climbing Preservation Grants cycle for 2001, the Access Fund increases its total distribution for the year to \$70,250.

In recognition of the organization's newly launched bouldering campaign, support of bouldering-related projects featured prominently in this cycle. Awarded four times annually, these grants provide financial assistance for projects that preserve or enhance climbing opportunities and conserve the climbing environment in the United States. Grants approved for this cycle totaled \$29,339 and were distributed to support five separate projects by local climbing organizations, public agencies, and conservation groups. Twenty of 27 applications were approved this year.

"This round of grants is an important one for climbers and the Access Fund. When we launched our bouldering campaign several months ago we pledged to increase our funding of bouldering projects and we've accomplished that by funding three initiatives relating directly to this cause," said Kath Pyke, Conservation Director. "Our distribution of over \$70K in grants this year is proof that our grants program continues to grow thanks to the generosity of our members and corporate partners and the valuable work completed by past grant recipients." Recent grants included:

•Solar composting toilet for the Trapps climbing area of the Mohonk Preserve, NY

\$10,000 to the Mohonk Preserve for installation of a solar composting toilet in the Trapps climbing area. This sum was matched with an additional \$10,000 from an Access Fund Board of Directors member. The unit will be installed on Undercliff Carriage Road and is targeted for spring 2002. This popular area receives over 55,000 visits per year, with an average of 600-800 climbers per weekend day. Until now the Preserve has maintained portable toilets. Installation of a permanent solar-composting facility will eliminate the environmental impacts created by large trucks servicing the unit as well as damage caused by their weight to the Preserve's historic carriage roads.

•BLM Bouldering Management Project Bishop, CA

\$9,750 to the Bureau of Land Management Bishop field office to help towards bouldering management and resource protection on the

Volcanic Tablelands. This area includes the popular bouldering areas the Happy and Sad Boulders and the newly established Pleasant Valley Campground. Funds will be directed towards a number of projects, which include campground maintenance, education, outreach and cultural resource surveys. The BLM are anticipating 14,000 climbing visitors to this fragile high desert area this season. Funds directed towards these projects will reduce vehicle and camping impacts on the Tablelands while supporting climbing access.

•Saddle Park Boulders Acquisition, CA

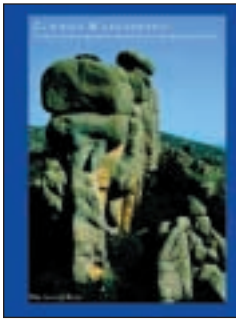
\$5,000 to the Truckee Donner Land Trust to preserve access to Saddle Boulders. The preservation of this bouldering area is part of a 2,500-acre expansion to Donner Memorial State Park. The project will more than double the size of the Park, protect Schallenberger Ridge (a stunning backdrop to Donner Lake) and ensure continued access to Saddle Boulders. The bouldering is on steep granite, has potential for scores of problems of varying difficulty and offers a welcome alternative to the popular nearby Donner Summit.

•Salt Lake City Climbing Areas Access Brochure, UT

\$3,389 to the newly formed group, Salt Lake Climbers Alliance for a 16 panel, color brochure, which will contain quality photographs and a map pinpointing locations for rock, ice and alpine climbing as well as bouldering. The brochure will provide information to climbers on climbing locations in the Salt Lake City Wasatch region as well as details on access requirements and Leave No Trace practices. The project has received tremendous support from the local community with well-known photographers, locally based manufacturers, climbing gyms and land managing agencies throwing their support behind the project. Climbers should look for the glossy brochure in February 2002.

•Study on Climber Abilities to Assess Route Difficulty, MN

\$1,200 to Hamline University to survey climbers' abilities to estimate route difficulty. Photographs will be shown to climbers who will then determine the grade of the routes shown. Supplementary data on age, sex, and experience levels will also be gathered. The resulting data will help land managers and climbing advocacy groups more accurately determine the ecological impacts of climbers on cliff systems based on predictions of route choice. Researcher and climber, Dr Mike Farris, who has previously published in science journals on climbing and vegetation issues, will carry out the project.



In case you missed it...

Copies of the publication *Climbing Management: a Guide to Climbing Issues and the Production of a Climbing Management Plan* are still available from the Access Fund.

New Access Fund publication

This new publication provides the first-ever overview of climbing issues and management approaches in the United States. With other 50 illustrations and a comprehensive reference section this document is designed as a resource for land managers and climbing representatives working on access issues. A summary and table of contents can be previewed at <http://www.accessfund.org>.

Copies cost \$20.00 (shipping and handling inclusive) and can be paid for by check or credit card. A limited number of complimentary copies are available to those currently working on climbing issues. Contact Kath Pyke, Conservation Director: kath@accessfund.org with your request.

Rock Climbing and Rare Plants in the Black Hills Needles, CA

(report by Hollis Marriot)

This past summer, climber/botanist Hollis Marriot surveyed access routes in climbing areas in Custer State Park for rare plants. A Climbing Preservation Grant from the Access Fund and a small grant from the Wildlife Division of the SD Dept. of Game, Fish and Parks funded the project. Other cooperators included Custer State Park and members of the local climbing community.

The intent of the project was to minimize further climber impact on rare plants. Climbing areas at higher elevations in the Black Hills provide habitat for at least six rare plant species. These are relics of the last ice age in North America, persisting in cool moist shaded sites. They grow on mats of mosses, sedges and grasses in narrow gullies and drainage bottoms. Without protective measures, climbers accessing routes can severely impact this habitat.

Where existing or potential conflicts were identified, possible solutions were developed. After consulting with Park staff, volunteers Cheryl Mayer, Daryl Stisser and Marriot installed signs and stabilized access trails in three different areas with rare plant populations. Additional projects are planned for 2002.

In addition to protecting the natural heritage of the area, this project demonstrates

that climbers can be conservation-minded. Custer State Park has no regulations to protect rare plants, and there is no threat that climbing areas will be closed. With this project, climbers have taken the lead in conserving rare plants while keeping areas open to climbing.

Hollis Marriot is a professional field botanist and Access Fund member. She has worked with the Access Fund as an advisor on vegetation management issues, as well as on vegetation projects on Devils Tower, WY.



John Heisel

Cheryl Mayer and Daryl Stisser after the trail stabilization project last summer at the Black Hills Needles, South Dakota.

Events

11/11 Vail, CO climbing comp, Vail Athletic Club - Climbing Wall, Mark Krasnow, (970) 477-3239

11/17 Enchanted Rock, TX, trail project, Texas Mountaineers - Friends of Enchanted Rock, Michael Lewis, (210) 682-4480

11/17 Bloomington, IL - Hangdog Jamboree, Upper Limits, Jody Furr, (800) 964-7814

11/17 Santa Clara, CA - Cranberry Crank, Planet Granite, Lea Nesbitt, (408) 727-2777

11/17 Seattle, WA - Seattle Bouldering Challenge, Stone Gardens, Jason Duckowitz, (206) 781-9828

12/15 Enchanted Rock, TX trail project, Texas Mountaineers - Friends of Enchanted Rock, Michael Lewis, (210) 682-4480

2001 CORPORATE PARTNERS

The Access Fund sends great thanks to industry members and like-minded businesses for partnering with the Access Fund this year.

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\$20,000

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- Five.Ten
- La Sportiva
- Climb High/Mammut
- Nalgene
- Petzl America
- PrAna
- Trango USA &
Stonewear Designs

Silver Partners

2,500+

- Advanced Base Camp
- BlueWater
- Boreal
- Boulder Rock Club

- Corplan
- Eagle Creek
- Entre Prises USA
- Falcon Publishing
- Gregory Mtn. Products
- Kelty
- Lowe Alpine Systems
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Threadworks
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- Weathered Stone

Major Partners 1,000+

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ADOPT-A-CRAG 2001 PHOTO GALLERY



John Heisel

Hammond Pond, Massachussets



Kerry Nodal

Jonathan cleaning chalk: Flagstaff, Arizona





Kerry Nodal



September 8, 2001

*Photos from top:
Flagstaff, Arizona;
Palisades Park,
Alabama; Black Hills,
South Dakota; Piute
Butte, California*

Adopt-a-Crag Day 2001 Declared a Success!

Climbers and volunteers across the country celebrated the second annual Adopt-a-Crag day at 67 areas in 25 states. Over 2,000 people united to build and restore 150 miles of trail and clear thousands of bags of trash from crags. Erosion control and trash removal was the focus of most events as climbers worked with land managers in the nationwide climbers stewardship event. Areas saw improvements in trail maintenance and construction, chalk clean-ups, regrading of switchbacks, building of retaining walls, clearing of drainages and water bar construction, re-rocking of parking areas, mulching and stabilization of belay areas, cliff top enhancement, anchor replacement and much more. According to post-event surveys, most events enhanced public relations with land managers and improved the image of climbers. Adopt-a-Crag Day is aimed at educating the climbing community about the importance of stewardship and of teaching climbers the skills needed to maintain their local climbing areas.

Major highlights included:

Hammond Pond, MA – over 90 volunteers between the ages of three and 65 participated in Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Massachusetts to improve trails, mitigate erosion and remove trash. Participants learned about Leave No Trace and were encouraged to write to Congress regarding Fee Demo.

Independence Pass, CO – climbers worked in conjunction with the Forest Service and the Independence Pass Foundation at the International Outdoor Festival in Aspen Colorado to plant 170 trees on a steep slope at the elevation of 11,600 feet.

Palisades Park, AL – 41 very organized climbers joined together to clean up this park just outside of Birmingham, AL. These project involved and strengthened relationships with the park employees, board and park superintendent.

Adopt-a-Crag of the Year Award - Adirondack Adopt-a-Crag. This event was a collective effort utilizing 61 people at two major crags in the Adirondack State Park. Josh Baker from Colgate University and Heather Hibbard, Access Fund Regional Coordinator, were the main organizers. This event succeeded through the support of the volunteers and the Mountaineer, Adirondack Rock and River, Lake Placid EMS retailers. Many students from five area universities began driving at 5am to reach the event by 8:30am. Five crews worked on 1000+ feet of trail, built rock steps, installed cedar-log revetments and blocked off goat trails. They built a new vertical path leading through a ravine that had become an erosion wash. This event epitomizes the purpose of Adopt-a-Crag day: to bring all aspects of the climbing community together in an event that provides grassroots support and activism at local climbing areas.

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