

2018 CLIMBING ADVOCACY REPORT



Protect America's Climbing

© Kyle Queener

ACCESS FUND ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

PROTECT AMERICA'S CLIMBING

We are a community of climbing advocates who love our climbing landscapes and the experiences they offer—and we are willing and committed to fight for them. Not just for access, but for the integrity of these amazing places.

Today, 1 in 5 climbing areas in the United States is threatened—whether it's private land lost to development, threats to public lands, or climber impacts degrading the environment, the list of threats is long and constantly evolving. But they can be managed. At Access Fund, we are on a mission to keep climbing areas open and conserve the climbing environment.

OUR CAUSES:

- Protect Public Lands
- Buy Threatened Climbing
- Restore Climbing Areas
- Inspire Climbing Advocacy
- Replace Aging Bolts
- Encourage Responsible Climbing
- Access Private Lands

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

© Andrew Burr

2018 was a year of change for both Access Fund and the world of climbing, and we are stronger than ever as a result. Over the course of almost 30 years, Access Fund has developed a reputation for protecting access and conserving climbing areas across the country. No crag is too small, and no landscape is too big for us to engage.

When Executive Director Brady Robinson announced his departure in the middle of the year, our board of directors rallied together and executed a professional transition plan. I was honored to be offered the opportunity to lead Access Fund into the future, and the future looks bright.

Our mission is more relevant today than ever, and the organization is strong and focused. We are representing climbers in the halls of Washington, D.C., as we've done for three decades. We are purchasing and protecting threatened climbing sites as the only nationally accredited land trust for climbing. Our professional trail crews are leading the effort to restore America's deteriorating climbing areas. And we're tackling national and local policy issues around the country, every day, to protect climbing access and the climbing environment.

Access Fund has grown into a powerful advocate for climbers. The commitments we make to the community are critical as we face the challenges that lie ahead. Our public lands are facing unprecedented threats, and many of our most treasured climbing areas are deteriorating under the strain of a growing climbing community. We must also carefully defend the intangibles that make climbing and our community unique.

Over the past several years, we have expanded our staff to better meet these growing challenges. We've built a regional presence in New England, Texas, the Southeast, the Southwest, California, and the Pacific Northwest. You will see us out on the ground from coast to coast.

As a result of the growing needs, and our expanding impact, our budget has grown significantly in the last three years. Thankfully the members of our community—you and thousands like you—have invested in Access Fund with both passion and money. We take our responsibility to you seriously, and we are transparent and accountable in showing the impact of your support. This report is just one place where you can learn about our efforts. For more information, go to www.accessfund.org.

Access Fund will continue to bring people together around a positive vision of the future, and promote the benefits that climbing brings to society as a whole. We will make strides on being an inclusive and welcoming organization. And we will have a good time doing it. At times, we might make a mistake and get off route, and if we do, I want to hear from you. With your input, financial support, and commitment, together we will continue to fulfill our promise to protect America's climbing.

We've got work to do—let's get to it.

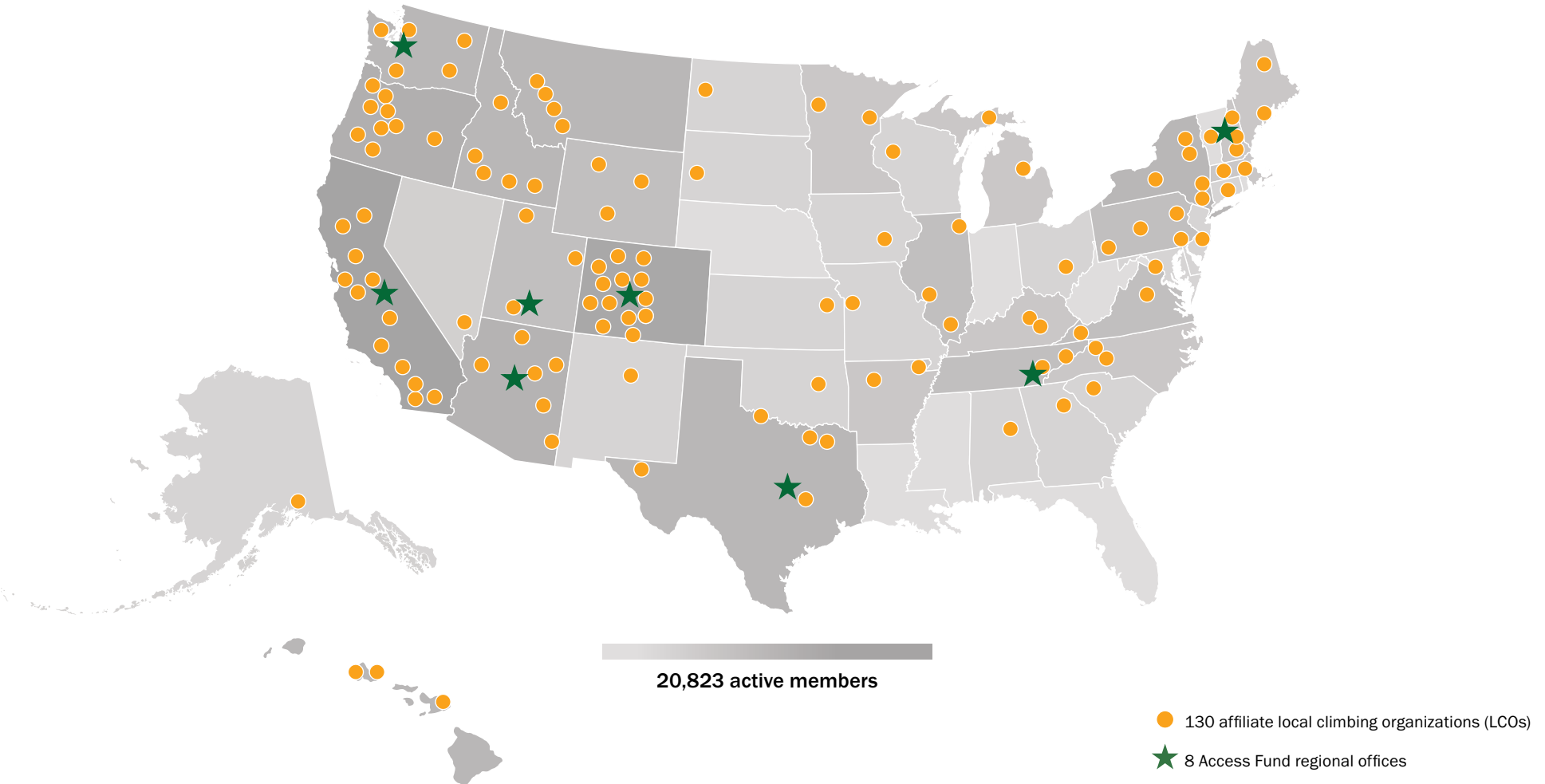


A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris".

Chris Winter
Executive Director

THE CLIMBING ADVOCACY MOVEMENT

Our community of climbing advocates is growing larger and stronger every day. With over 20,000 members, 130 affiliate local climbing organizations, and 8 regional offices, we have boots on the ground across the country.



PROTECTING AMERICA'S CLIMBING AREAS

We measure our success one climbing area at a time. In 2018, Access Fund and our incredible network of local climbing organizations had boots on the ground preserving access to 231 climbing areas across the country, including opening six new or previously closed areas to climbing.

Allenbrook, AL • Moss Rock Preserve, AL • Steele, AL • Trussville Boulders, AL • Hatcher Pass, AK • Beardsley Boulders, AZ • Cochise Stronghold, AZ • Coconino National Forest, AZ • The Homestead, AZ • Mount Lemmon, AZ • Oak Flat, AZ • The Peaks, AZ • Priest Draw, AZ • Tonto National Forest, AZ • Horseshoe Canyon Ranch, AR • Nowlin Creek - Rattlesnake Ridge, AR • Big Rock, CA • Black Wall, CA • Buttermilk, CA • Castle Craggs, CA • Descanso, CA • Dixon Lake, CA • El Cajon, CA • Glen Canyon Park, CA • Gold Wall, CA • Hatfield, CA • Holcomb Valley Pinnacles, CA • Idyllwild, CA • Inyo National Forest, CA • Jailhouse, CA • Joshua Tree National Park, CA • Lizard's Mouth, CA • Lover's Leap, CA • Malibu Creek, CA • Mount Diablo, CA • Mount Sain, CA • Pinnacles National Park, CA • Remillard Park, CA • Riverside Quarry, CA • Santee Boulders, CA • Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, CA • Stoney Point, CA • Valley of the Moon, CA • Volcanic Tablelands, CA • Yosemite National Park, CA • Boulder Canyon, CO • Cascade Canyon, CO • Cathedral Spires, CO • Clear Creek Canyon, CO • Deep Creek, CO • El Grado Canyon, CO • Flatirons, CO • Grand Mesa Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, CO • Lime Creek, CO • Respect Mountain, CO • Rocky Mountain National Park, CO • Society Turn, CO • Staunton State Park, CO • Steamboat Springs, CO • Weep Canyon, CO • Upper Dream Canyon, CO • Pinnacle Rock, CT • West Rock, CT • Tallulah Gorge, GA • Black Hills, ID • Castle Rocks State Park, ID • City of Rocks National Reserve, ID • Dierkes Lake, ID • Laclede, ID • Masopu, ID • Q'emiln Park, ID • Ross Park, ID • Swan Falls, ID • Holy Boulders, IL • Jackson Falls, IL • Pere Marquette State Park, IL • Pictured Rocks County Park, IA • Bald Rock Recreational Preserve, KY • Daniel Boone National Forest, KY • Miller Fork Recreational Preserve, KY • Pendergrass-Murray Recreational Preserve, KY • Roadside: Graining Fork Nature Preserve, KY • Rock Domain, KY • Slab Camp, KY • New Gloucester, ME • Cunningham Falls, MD • Great Falls Park, MD • Harpers Ferry, MD • Northwest Branch, MD • Old Rag Mountain, MD • Farley Ledge, MA • Lynn Woods, MA • Blue Mounds, MN • Ely's Peak, MN • Quarry Park, MN • Sugarloaf, MN • Winona, MN • Gallatin Canyon, MT • Hyalite Canyon, MT • Stone Hill, MT • Red Rock Canyon, NV • Trippy Rock-Incline Village, NV • Ansara Property, NH •

ACCESS
PRESERVED AT
231
CLIMBING
AREAS

Bald Mountain, NH • Band M Ledge, NH • Cathedral Ledge, NH • Hewes Hill, NH • Mount Washington, NH • Northwest Crags, NH
 • Rumney, NH • Powerlinez, NJ • Carson National Forest, NM • El Rito, NM • Mentmore, NM • Mills Canyon, NM • Questa Ranger
 District, NM • Questa & Taos Areas, NM • Rio Grande Gorge, NM • Adirondack Park, NY • Minnewaska State Park, NY • Mohonk
 Preserve, NY • Morrisville, NY • Pinnacle Boulders, NY • Thacher State Park, NY • Blue Ridge Parkway, NC • Buckeye Knob, NC
 • Linville Gorge, NC • Nantahala & Pisgah National Forests, NC • Rumbling Rock/Chimney Rock, NC • Shortoff Mountain, NC •
 Beach City/Dundee Falls, OH • Logtown, OH • Mad River Gorge, OH • Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, OK • Broughton Bluff,
 OR • The Callahans, OR • Lower Gorge, OR • Madrone Wall, OR • Mount Jefferson, OR • Mount Washington, OR • Smith Rock,
 OR • Three Sisters, OR • Trout Creek, OR • Birdsboro, PA • Boxcar Rocks, PA • Breakneck, PA • Cheat Canyon, PA • Governor
 Dick, PA • Governor Stable, PA • High Rocks, PA • Shaffer Rocks, PA • Whiskey Springs, PA • Lincoln Woods, RI • Rocky Point
 State Park, RI • Table Rock, SC • Custer State Park, SD • Falling Rock, SD • Palisades State Park, SD • Cumberland Trail State
 Park, TN • Denny Cove, TN • Dogwood Boulders, TN • Foster Rocks, TN • Hell's Kitchen, TN • McDonald Park, TN • Monterey, TN
 • Obed, TN • Old Wauhatchie Boulders, TN • Roaring Creek, TN • Rocky Fork State Park, TN • Sucka Cave, TN • Barton Creek
 Greenbelt, TX • Bull Creek District Park, TX • Hueco Tanks, TX • Loper Springs, TX • Monster Rock, TX • American Fork Canyon,
 UT • Bears Ears National Monument, UT • Donnelly Canyon, UT • Escalante State Butte, UT • Grand Staircase-Escalante Na-
 tional Monument, UT • Joe's Valley, UT • Maple Canyon, UT • San Rafael Swell, UT • Scarface, Indian Creek, UT
 • Supercrack Butte, Indian Creek, UT • Baldy Mountain, VA • Blue Ridge Parkway, VA • Breaks Interstate Park, VA •
 Flag Rock, VA • Grayson Highlands, VA • Alphabet Rock, Leavenworth, WA • Beacon Rock, WA • Darrington, WA • Elwha, WA •
 Enchantments, WA • Equinox, WA • Exit 38 Far Side, WA • Gold Bar Boulders, WA • Icicle Creek Canyon, WA • Index Town Wall,
 WA • Larrabee State Park, WA • Little Si, WA • Mazama - Fun Rock, WA • Middle Fork Area, WA • Morning Star NRCA, WA •
 Mount Baker, WA • Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, WA • Newhalem, WA • North Cascades National Park, WA • Tieton
 Canyon, WA • Tyler Peak, WA • Vantage, WA • Washington Pass, WA • Bridge Butte, New River Gorge, WV • Bubba City, New
 River Gorge, WV • Butcher's Branch, New River Gorge, WV • Coopers Rock State Forest, WV • Meadow River, WV • Needleseye,
 WV • Snake Hill WMA, WV • Summersville Lake, WV • Devil's Lake, WI • Willow River State Park, WI • Devils Tower, WY • Ten
 Sleep, WY • Wild Iris, WY

6
**CLIMBING
 AREAS OPENED**

OUR CAUSES

PROTECT PUBLIC LANDS

Nearly 60% of climbing areas in the United States are located on federally managed public lands, which are facing unprecedented threats. The best way to protect our climbing areas and influence how they are managed is to have a seat at the table. Access Fund represents the collective voice and interests of climbers. We have the largest climbing policy team in America, working with officials in Washington, D.C., and land managers at parks and forests across the country to protect access to, and the integrity of, our climbing areas.

OUR 2018 WORK AT A GLANCE

- 548 hours advocating for climbers on Capitol Hill
- 11 key pieces of federal and state legislation advanced
- 24 forest plans include hard-won protections for climbing
- 9,998 advocacy letters written to lawmakers
- 60 influential climbing advocates convened at Climb the Hill
- 1 legal motion won, keeping Bears Ears lawsuit in Washington, D.C. courts



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PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

Access Fund Convenes National Park Service Leaders

A core component of Access Fund's policy strategy is building long-term partnerships with federal land managers. In 2018, we convened leaders from the National Park Service to share best practices in climbing management, including fixed anchors, stewardship of sustainable climbing areas, climbing policy, and climbing trends. The event brought over 40 attendees together, including NPS administrators, superintendents, wilderness managers, and climbing rangers from major national parks like Devils Tower, Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Denali, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, New River Gorge, Canyonlands, Mount Rainier, North Cascades, and Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks. This event was an important steppingstone in NPS climbing management history. The incredible turnout from influential NPS managers indicates that the agency is invested in improving climbing management in national parks and that it values climbing and the climbing community.

OUR CAUSES

BUY THREATENED CLIMBING

Some of our most iconic climbing areas—from the Red River Gorge in Kentucky to Jailhouse Rock in California—are located on private land. And when a privately owned climbing area is put up for sale, we must act quickly to ensure that access is not lost forever. Access Fund provides local climbing communities with the horsepower to swiftly protect threatened climbing areas—before they are lost. We provide loans, grants, and acquisition expertise to place threatened land in climber-friendly hands.

OUR 2018 WORK AT A GLANCE

- \$485,000 loaned to acquire threatened climbing areas
- 5 climbing areas acquired and protected forever:
 - Medicine Wall, TX
 - Bolton Dome, VT
 - Hell’s Kitchen, TN
 - Dogwood Boulders, TN
 - Cathedral & Whitehorse ledges connector, NH
- 2 permanent conservation and recreation easements secured

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

Two Chattanooga Boulder Fields Purchased

In 2018, Access Fund worked with Southeastern Climbers Coalition (SCC) to purchase two properties just north of Chattanooga, Tennessee. The acquisition secured a new climbing area, known as Hell’s Kitchen, and created a critical public access point to the climbing at Dogwood Boulders. Both properties had been on SCC’s and Access Fund’s radar for years, and when they went up for sale, Access Fund began negotiations with the landowner to prevent the properties from falling into non-climber-friendly hands. Hell’s Kitchen is a score for local climbers, featuring a densely concentrated boulderfield with free-standing blocks, short sections of cliff, and a labyrinth of hidden corridors offering hundreds of problems. A few miles northeast, the acquisition of a 7-acre tract provides a new public access point to the Dogwood Boulders, previously only accessible via a 6-mile hike, and also protects a small section of the Dogwood Boulders and a portion of cliffline. Access Fund is currently holding both properties while we work alongside SCC to create sustainable access. We will eventually transfer them to Cumberland Trail State Park for long-term stewardship and climber-friendly management.



© Shannon Millsaps

OUR CAUSES

RESTORE CLIMBING AREAS

From Maine to California, the story is the same: Our climbing areas are redlining, beat up and crumbling under the pressure of a growing climbing population. Access Fund's work doesn't stop once access is secured. We are committed to the long-term sustainability of our climbing areas. Our three Access Fund-Jeep Conservation Teams travel the country helping to build sustainable climbing areas that can withstand the impacts of our growing sport.

OUR 2018 WORK AT A GLANCE

- 3 Access Fund-Jeep Conservation Teams on the road restoring climbing areas
- 372 Adopt a Crag trail days completed
- 10,924 volunteers recruited to improve climbing areas
- 65,544 hours of volunteer time harnessed to restore climbing areas
- 5,135 feet of sustainable trail constructed
- 15,991 feet of unsustainable trail closed



© Matt Perkins

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

Restoring Liberty Bell Spires, Washington

This iconic climbing area has been a popular destination for almost 50 years, attracting both new and seasoned climbers to its granite crack climbing and beautiful scenery. Liberty Bell Spires is just a short hike from the scenic North Cascades Highway, funneling climbers into a sensitive alpine environment where native vegetation struggles to survive. Over the years, a historic lack of maintenance led to expanding social trails, increased erosion, and loss of critical vegetation. Working alongside volunteers and AmeriCorps conservation crews, the Access Fund-Jeep Conservation Team spent two months working to construct a half-mile of new trail to reroute unsustainable sections to safer, less impactful, and more stable paths. The Conservation Teams also built several large stone staircases and retaining walls to protect a safe travel corridor and began efforts to close and restore 2 miles of undesirable social trails.

ACCESS PRIVATE LANDS

Risk. Liability. Lawsuits. The fear associated with these three little words prevents many landowners from opening their property to climbing. But the risk associated with climbing is largely overstated and misunderstood. And risk can be managed when climbers and landowners work together. At Access Fund, we partner with private landowners on strategies to mitigate both real and perceived risks of climbing—giving them the confidence and protections they need to open their land to public access.



OUR 2018 WORK AT A GLANCE

- 78 hours supporting private landowners
- 53 private landowners educated on risk management strategies and tools

INSPIRE CLIMBING ADVOCACY

When an access issue occurs in your backyard, who will be there to help? The first and best line of defense is almost always the local climbers who are familiar with the area and the issues. That's why a critical piece of Access Fund's work is inspiring and organizing local climbers to join together as affiliate local climbing organizations to protect and conserve climbing areas. A powerful climbing advocacy movement is gaining momentum, driven by advocates who go to the mat every day to protect their climbing areas. Working together as a national network of climbing advocacy organizations, we're protecting more climbing areas than ever.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

Climbing Advocacy Summit in the Big Apple

Each year, Access Fund convenes the largest gathering of climbing advocates in the U.S. to share best practices for protecting America's climbing areas. In September 2018, over 120 climbing advocates from around the country joined us in New York City for our national climbing advocacy summit. Participants learned from a range of workshops on cliff ecology, education strategies for low-impact climbing, ways to engage diverse communities in conservation, building sustainable trails and climbing infrastructure, and fundraising tips for local climbing organizations. Our attendees included both seasoned and brand-new advocates, land managers, and professional athlete ambassadors.

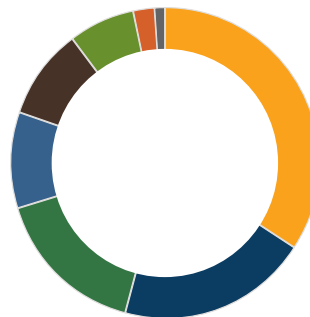


OUR 2018 WORK AT A GLANCE

- 130 affiliate local climbing organizations (LCOs) across the country
- 38 LCOs served by Access Fund's joint member program
- 8 new LCOs welcomed into the network
- 7,200 staff hours invested to strengthen local advocates
- \$50,000 in grants awarded to local advocacy and conservation projects

CLIMBING CONSERVATION GRANTS PROGRAM

Our Climbing Conservation Grants Program awards funds to local climbing organizations and other partners working to protect and conserve climbing areas around the country.



- Trail Work & Stewardship: \$17,150
- Anchor Replacement: \$10,500
- Acquisitions: \$8,000
- Climbing Management: \$5,000
- Human Waste Management: \$4,750
- Research Studies: \$3,500
- Education Kiosks & Signage: \$1,100
- LCO Start-Up Costs: \$500

REPLACE AGING BOLTS

Climbers usually breathe a sigh of relief after clipping a bolt on a route. Bolts mean safety, we tell ourselves. Bolts give us the courage to keep pushing higher. But bolts can—and do—fail. As the huge number of bolts placed during the climbing revolution of the '80s and '90s reach their 20th or 30th birthdays, the stories of bolt failure are sure to increase. At Access Fund, we are on a mission to help local communities replace aging bolts.



OUR 2018 WORK AT A GLANCE

- \$10,500 granted to replace 2,793 bad bolts
- 139 bolt replacement tools put in the hands of volunteers
- 90 volunteers convened to share innovations in sustainable bolt replacement

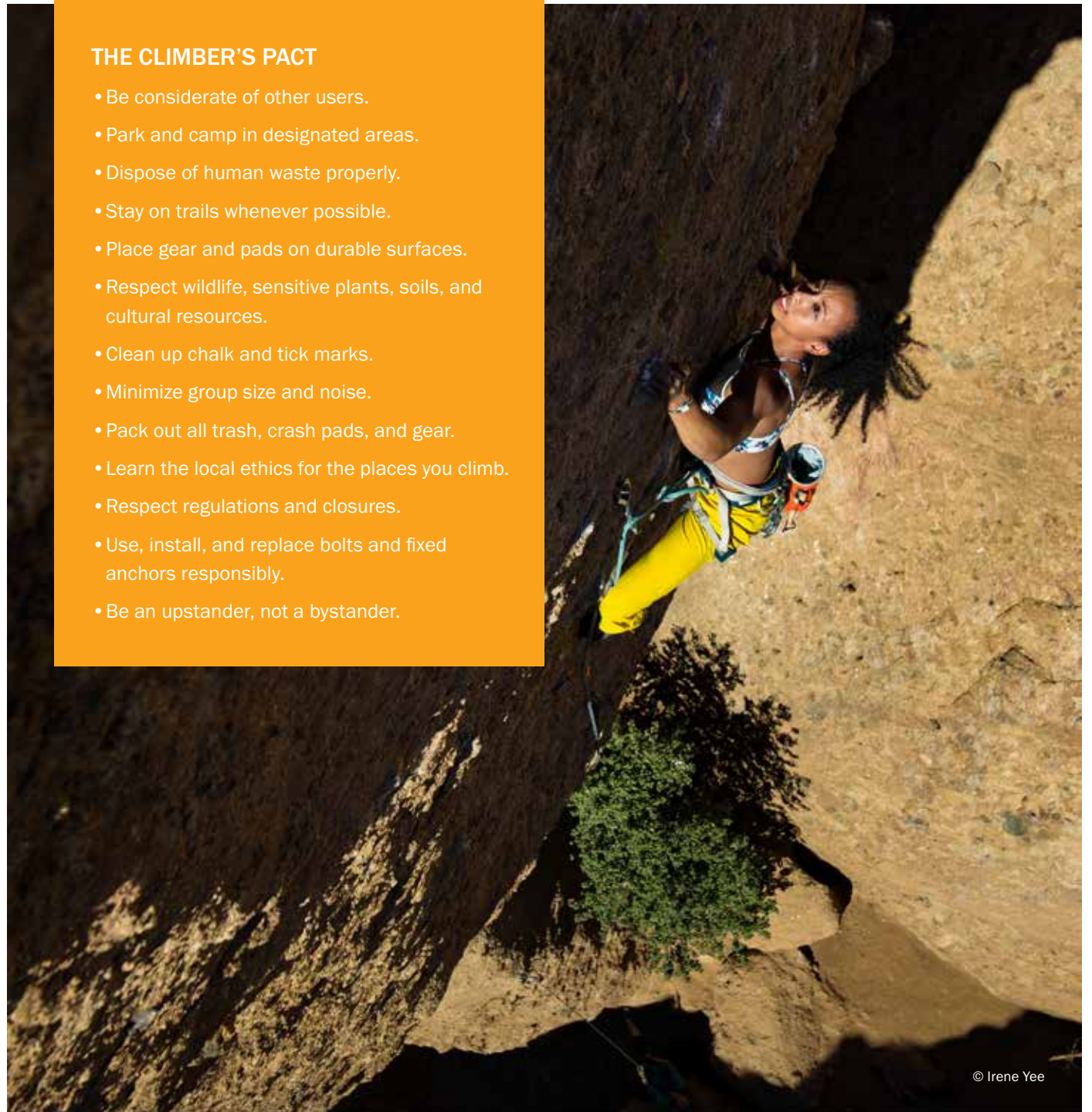
OUR CAUSES

ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE CLIMBING

We envision a world where climbers are stewards of the land, not just users. As climbers, we have a personal stake in the health and integrity of our outdoor landscapes—without them, we have no place to climb. But just loving our climbing areas is not enough. That's why a large part of Access Fund's mission is to help climbers understand the sensitivities of each unique climbing environment and provide the knowledge and tools to help them reduce their impacts. Access Fund encourages all climbers to learn and sign The Climber's Pact, a commitment to making a few minor adjustments to our climbing practice that will protect our outdoor landscapes and the climbing experience we love.

THE CLIMBER'S PACT

- Be considerate of other users.
- Park and camp in designated areas.
- Dispose of human waste properly.
- Stay on trails whenever possible.
- Place gear and pads on durable surfaces.
- Respect wildlife, sensitive plants, soils, and cultural resources.
- Clean up chalk and tick marks.
- Minimize group size and noise.
- Pack out all trash, crash pads, and gear.
- Learn the local ethics for the places you climb.
- Respect regulations and closures.
- Use, install, and replace bolts and fixed anchors responsibly.
- Be an upstander, not a bystander.



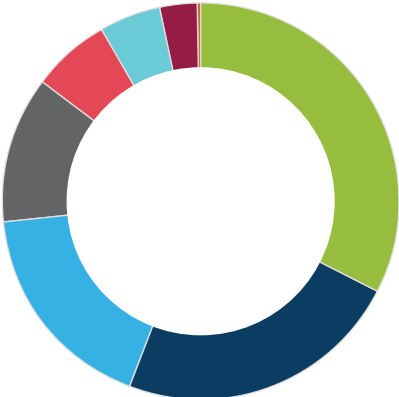
FINANCIALS

2018 was another year of growth for Access Fund. Total assets increased 8% to \$3.2M, allowing Access Fund to continue to protect and conserve America’s climbing.

HIGHLIGHTS

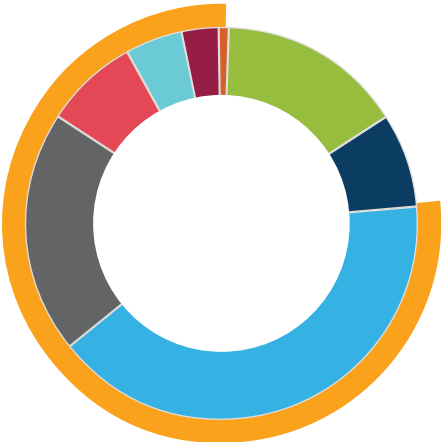
- 70% spent on mission-related programs.
- Over \$1M spent on stewarding climbing areas.
- \$800,000 in assets currently invested in climbing area acquisitions
- Over half a million dollars spent on policy initiatives.

2018 REVENUE*



■ Individuals, Foundations, & Organizations	\$1,110,000
■ Member Dues	\$790,000
■ Corporate Support	\$600,000
■ Stewardship Contract Revenue & Project Funding	\$400,000
■ Events	\$225,000
■ Conservation Loan Program	\$100,000
■ Inkind Contributions	\$170,000
■ Other Income	\$5,000
Total	\$3,400,000

2018 EXPENSES*



Operational Expenses	
■ Development	\$592,000
■ General and Admin	\$293,000
Program Expenses	
■ Stewardship	\$1,103,000
■ Policy	\$541,000
■ Acquisition & Access	\$216,000
■ Local Support	\$123,000
■ Fixed Anchors	\$92,000
■ Education	\$11,000
Total	\$2,971,000

*Based on preliminary financial data

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Access Fund is incredibly grateful to all of our donors for supporting our mission to protect America's climbing areas. These individuals and foundations made especially generous contributions during 2018. We do our utmost to ensure that all donors are recognized properly. If you find an error on this list, please accept our apologies and contact development@accessfund.org to make a correction. Thank you.

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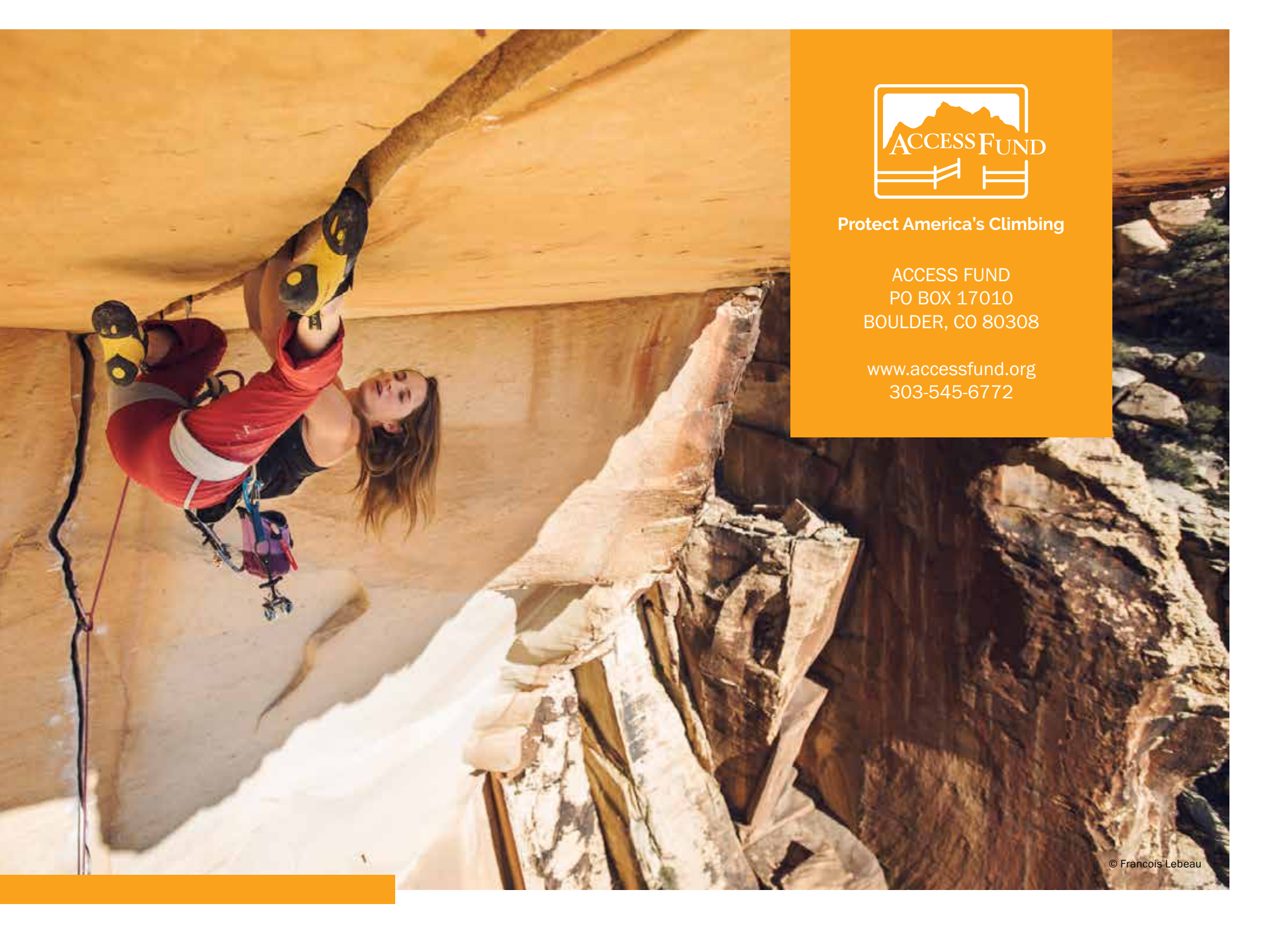
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