



September 1, 2019

Joshua Travers, District Recreation Officer
Angeles National Forest
Los Angeles, California
Submitted via email: joshua.travers@usda.gov

RE: Rowher Flat/Drinkwater Flat OHV Area Management Plan and Proposed Action

Dear Mr. Travers,

We are writing to suggest the addition of a parking area for rock climbers and other users of the Texas Canyon climbing area at 5N15 and Rush Canyon Rd, within the current Proposed Rowher Flat/Drinkwater Flat OHV Management Plan. Texas Canyon has been popular with OHV enthusiasts and rock climbers since the early 1960s. Climbing varies from low angle slab to steep overhung faces. The area has become popular due to the range of quality, well protected moderate routes and the short approach. Climbing is possible year round, with the exception of the coldest and hottest days.



Adding a parking area at 5N15 and Rush Canyon Road would mitigate parking issues on high volume days, keeping Rush Canyon Road clear for emergency vehicles. There are many users of the Rowher Flats OHV area. This includes the rock climbers, hunters, hikers, families on picnics, and mountain bikers. 5N15 provides access to the climbing area and many beautiful hiking trails hundreds of people enjoy each year.

The Access Fund

The Access Fund is a national advocacy organization whose mission keeps climbing areas open and conserves the climbing environment. A 501c(3) nonprofit and accredited land trust representing millions of climbers nationwide in all forms of climbing—rock climbing, ice climbing, mountaineering, and bouldering—the Access Fund is a US climbing advocacy organization with over 20,000 members and over

123 local affiliates. Access Fund holds a national level Memorandum of Understanding with the Forest Service¹. Access Fund provides climbing management expertise, stewardship, project specific funding, and educational outreach. For more information about the Access Fund, visit www.accessfund.org.

Southern California Mountaineers Association

The Southern California Mountaineer's Association, was founded in 1986, evolving from the rock climbing section of the Sierra Club since 1930's – making it one of the oldest climbing clubs in the nation.

The SCMA is a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation formed to:

- Promote mountaineering sports, including rock, mountain, snow and ice climbing
- Promote public dialogue and a forum to exchange ideas and concerns affecting mountaineering sports
- Publicize all facets of mountaineering sports
- Provide educational services concerning access, conservation and preservation of climbing resources on public lands

Access Fund Assistance

The climbing community, SCMA and the Access Fund are ready, willing, and able to help planners identify and improve the climbing related trail system, roads, and other management needs the Forest. In addition, some aspects of this planning initiative may qualify for Access Fund Climbing Preservation Grant Program² or assistance from our Conservation Team³ which helps maintain climbing areas throughout the United States by assessing climbing area conservation needs, working with locals to address those needs, and providing training on planning and stewardship best practices to keep those areas healthy.

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¹ See <https://www.accessfund.org/uploads/Access-Fund-USFS-MOU-2014.pdf>

² <https://www.accessfund.org/take-action/apply-for-a-grant>.

³ <https://www.accessfund.org/meet-the-access-fund/our-approach/stewardship-conservation>.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments on the proposed management plan. The Access Fund has the experience, local contacts, and resources to help planners craft alternatives that encourage climbing while sustaining the health, diversity and productivity of the Forest. Please keep us informed as the planning process proceeds. Feel free to contact me via telephone (303-552-2843) or email (katie@accessfund.org) to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Doodman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Access Fund-Policy Analyst and California Regional Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven Sauter". The signature is very stylized and cursive.

Steven Sauter, President- Southern California Mountaineers Association

cc:

Chris Winter- Access Fund, Executive Director

Erik Murdock- Access Fund, Policy Director