



“TUOLUMNE OF THE MIDWEST” PRESERVED ACCESS FUND FINALIZES BALDY POINT ACQUISITION

First it was Peshastin Pinnacles, then Rumney, Golden Cliffs, Society turn Crag—all saved by the Access Fund. The April acquisition of Baldy Point made the Access Fund’s effort to preserve one of America’s classic climbing areas a reality. Long known for its outstanding friction climbing and high quality stone, Baldy Point is the “Fort Knox” of granite domes in the Wichita mountain range. Baldy’s south face offers possible the highest concentration of high-quality granite routes between the Mississippi River and the Rockies. Routes like S-Wall (5.9) and Last of the Good Guys (5.10a) provide some of the best face climbing in the region. Climbing has been allowed place at Baldy Point for over 30 years thanks to the open-mindedness of the Ted and Margaret Johnson family.

Alerted to the possible sale of the area in November 1999, the Access Fund began a serious effort to acquire Baldy Point and transfer it to the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department to be managed as part of nearby Quartz Mountain State Park. The Access Fund, State Park officials, and the property owner completed all the necessary agreements for the acquisition after months of negotiations. Local climbers and the Wichita Mountain Climbers Coalition strongly supported the purchase by raising over \$15,000.

Marion Hutchison, the Access Fund’s Regional Coordinator



Marion Hutchison

Baldy Point (pictured above) has been preserved for climbing after a series of negotiations spearheaded by the Access Fund, Wichita Climbers’ Coalition, and local volunteers. Baldy Point is the “Fort Knox” of granite domes in the Wichita mountain range.

in Oklahoma, played a key role during the negotiations and was the driving force behind the acquisition. “Marion’s dedication to seeing this unique area preserved, coupled with his hard work and leadership over the past year really made this acquisition possible,” said Shawn Tierney, Access Fund acquisitions director. “The climbing community owes him a huge debt of gratitude.” On behalf of the climbing community, the Access Fund thanks the Johnson family for their commitment to preserving this area for future generations. See www.wichitamountains.org for more info.

AN OBED PERSPECTIVE

Frank Harvey works as an assistant district attorney in Tennessee. He has been climbing for 16 years and prefers trad routes and ice climbing more recently. He helped form the East Tennessee Climbers club, and has worked on access issues at Cherokee Bluffs, Black Mountain, and the Obed.

BY FRANK HARVEY

Having climbed in the Obed for over 15 years, I recently attended a focus group meeting along with other climbers, NPS personnel, and representatives of the Nature Conservancy, Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning, and the National Parks and Conservation Association. This meeting followed a scoping meeting and a time period for public comment.

The National Park Service is in the process of formulating a Climbing Management Plan for the Obed Wild and Scenic River (OWSR), site of world-class sport and trad climbing. In each case where climbing policy for public or private land is formalized into rules and regulations. There exists a background of climbing history that either begins on a positive basis or reduces the process to little more than a fancy way of arriving at an outright ban on climbing.

But these meetings were preceded by a long history that set the tone for the management plan process. As early as 12 years ago, climbers made formal contact with the Park Service, hoping to establish a dialog to deal with any climbing related problems before they escalated. When parking became an issue at the popular Clear Creek area, we raised the funds for a gravel parking lot on private property, courtesy of the landowner. The Park Service provided the heavy machinery for the work and the local city of Wartburg donated a culvert for the

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Looking downstream from the north towards South Clear Creek Canyon, Tennessee, at the Obed Wild and Scenic River Area.

DENALI RESCUE-COST STUDY

A study now being completed by the National Park Service at Denali National Park in Alaska has not received much attention from climbers – but it should. The study could result in new and higher climbing fees and mandatory costs to individual climbers for rescues.

The considered policy changes would have a dramatic and devastating effect on the climbing experience and access to climbing areas at Denali. The Access Fund urges its members to respond to the Park Service and Congress to stop this misguided effort to reduce the costs of visitor rescues in the national park system.

Last fall Congress passed a law requiring the Department of the Interior to study the “suitability and feasibility” of recovering the costs of high altitude rescues on Mount McKinley (Denali). A final report to Congress is due by August 2001. The study will examine whether

climbers should be required to provide proof of medical insurance prior to being issued a climbing permit, and whether the current climbing fees at Denali should be raised.

The Access Fund objected to the passage of this law, authored by Senator Frank Murkowski (R-AK). Murkowski has been trying to make climbers pay for the costs of their rescues since 1992, when a record thirteen climbers lost their lives on McKinley and the National Park Service spent \$431,000 on rescues and body recoveries.

In response to those costs and fatalities, the Park Service made several changes in climbing policy at Denali: the park began to charge climbers \$150 to attempt Mounts McKinley and Foraker; climbers were required to register for a permit at least 60 days prior to their visit; and the park started an aggressive climber education program.

These changes appear to have made a difference. Between 1991 and 1995, the average number of climber rescues per year at Denali was sixteen. Since 1995, the average dropped to about 11 major search and rescue missions per year, with an average of two climbing fatalities per year. In 2000, 13 major climber rescues cost the park \$73,137.

In February 2001, the Park Service initiated the rescue cost recovery study. The Access Fund responded that we would oppose any policy requiring climbers to pay for their rescue costs, unless it applied equally to all park visitors.

The Access Fund does not suggest that the costs of rescuing climbers at Denali and elsewhere are insignificant or should be ignored. However, it is unfair to expect climbers to pay for rescues and not expect the same from hikers, swimmers, and boaters. Rescues of these types of visitors cost the Park Service much more than what the agency spends on

To comment on the Denali rescue cost recovery study, write:

Denali National Park, Attn. Mike Gauthier, PO Box 588, Talkeetna, AK 99676,

or e-mail: mike_gauthier@nps.gov. Also, check the Access Fund web site (www.accessfund.org) or the Denali National Park Service site (www.nps.gov/dena/) for updates on this issue and advice on how to contact Congress.

climber rescues.

It is official Park Service policy to undertake, if possible, rescues of visitors in distress. The Access Fund proposes that if the agency is going to rescue any visitors in distress, the NPS should find alternatives to reduce rescue costs before singling out climber rescues. These methods could include:

- Reduction or elimination of administrative (government) services;
- Allowing visitors to sign a “no rescue” waiver instead of paying a fee;
- Terminating the \$250,000 annual contract for a special, high-altitude helicopter at Denali.

Climbing program costs at Denali (which includes climber rescue costs) should be compared to the costs of supporting other types of recreational uses. The Access Fund will actively oppose the adoption of new fees, insurance requirements, and rescue cost recovery efforts for climbers until other non-discriminatory strategies have been tested and proven ineffective.

USE FEES OPPOSITION GROWS

In recent months several developments have boosted efforts to end the nationwide Fee Demo Program, which allows federal lands agencies to impose and raise fees for virtually any use of public lands, including parking your car to watch the sunset.

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Michael Kennedy

A rescue like this one above on Denali could have mandatory costs for climbers if the Denali Rescue-Cost study is approved.

Policy Update Continued...

The Access Fund has opposed the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program since Congress passed it in 1996. The "test" program was given an initial life span of three years, but it has been extended twice since its inception, now through 2002.

Out of 155 national forests, 100 now charge some kind of use fee.

The Access Fund was a co-founder of the Public Access Coalition. Along with organizations such as the Sierra Club, Wild Wilderness and American Whitewater, we have worked actively to force a thorough and accurate examination of the "success" of Fee Demo. Also, we support higher annual appropriations to land management agencies so that use fees are unnecessary.

The Access Fund believes use fees are discriminatory, and a form of "double taxation" since Americans already pay to maintain public lands through their federal income taxes. A government rushing to cut taxes by \$1.6 trillion can certainly afford to pay for trail maintenance, campground improvements, and visitor education in our national parks and forests.

An editorial in the April 1 edition of the Seattle Times effectively frames the issue. The desperate financial straits of our land agencies are a result of skewed spending priorities. "A nation with enough loose change in its drawers to crank out a \$4 billion white-elephant aircraft carrier, the USS Ronald Reagan, can afford to repair [trail] switchbacks," wrote Columnist Ron Judd.

The human-powered outdoor recreation industry and advocacy groups have also stepped up efforts to lobby Congress for more revenue to manage lands. The Access Fund is working with organizations such as REI, the Outdoor Recreation Coalition of America, and the American Hiking Society to boost land agency budgets.

Meanwhile, a bill (HJM 15) has been introduced to the Oregon state legislature urging Congress "to abolish the Northwest Forest Pass portion of the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program and permit the citizens of Oregon to enjoy the national forests... without payment of a fee." The bill appears to be widely supported.

At the national level, Congresswoman Lois Capps (D-CA) has reintroduced a bill in Congress that would terminate the Fee Demo program and pay for the lost revenue by ending government subsidies for logging.

WE URGE CLIMBERS TO:

- Support the Capps bill and use the US Forest Service's on-line Fee Demo comment form:

www.fs.fed.us/recreation/feedemo/commentform.html;

- To oppose new and higher use fees. The Forest Service and other agencies are saying that Americans support use fees, while in reality 20% of visitors are refusing to pay them at all and 45% refuse to pay them until they are issued a warning;

- Tell your congressperson and senators that you want public lands paid for through your income taxes, not extra use fees (go to www.congress.gov for contact information);

- Consider practicing your religion in the outdoors, since by law you do not have to pay a fee for religious use of public lands;

- Make an additional contribution to the Access Fund so we can take this fight to the next level.

For more information on this issue, see the Access Fund website by clicking on www.accessfund.org.

SIGN UP FOR THE ACCESS FUND VIRTUAL TIMES

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER
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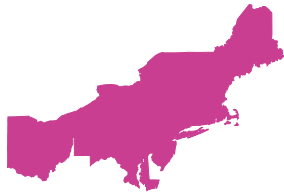
WWW.ACCESSFUND.ORG

AND CLICK ON
"JOIN LIST"



Adam Johnson, "accesses" the Sundance Butress, Lumpy Ridge, Colorado, photo: John Heisel

PLEASE NOTE: The Virtual Times does not replace the Vertical Times but complements it to keep you informed.



NORTHEAST

HOW IMPORTANT IS SKYTOP, NY TO YOU?

Skytop in New York's Shawangunks is one of the most storied and beautiful cliffs in the country and was a very popular destination for both local and visiting climbers until a few years ago. It hosts ground breaking classics such as "Foops," "Supercrack," "Open Cockpit," and "Vandals."

Unfortunately, due to a change in insurance carriers, the Mohonk Mountain House, proprietor of Skytop, banned rock climbing. The result has been the loss of one of the country's great crags. Despite efforts of the Access Fund to regain access to Skytop, nothing has changed since the late-1980s. The Mohonk Mountain House is a business that caters to few rock climbers, and their overriding concern has been liability.

Still, all may not be lost. Access Fund Regional Coordinator Russ Clune urges climbers that now is time to inform the hotel of Skytop's importance. Please write a letter to the hotel asking them to reconsider their ban on climbing. Be polite and tell the Mountain House of its historical value and how important the crag is to you. The more letters the hotel receives, the better the chances for further negotiations. For more info: (www.gunks.com).

WEST

Please address letters to:
Mr. Albert Smiley
Mohonk Hotel
Mohonk Lake
New Paltz, NY 12561

If you send a letter to the Mountain House, please email a copy to the local climbing organization at webmaster@gunks.com.

LAS VEGAS LAND MANAGER CONFERENCE, NV

The Access Fund recently attended the first-ever climbing management conference held March 6-8 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Hosted by the Bureau of Land Management, the conference was a national gathering of climbing rangers and land managers who oversee climbing resources.

Over 50 representatives from the BLM, National Park Service, National Forest Service, various State Parks, the Mohonk Preserve, and others attended the invitation-only event. The Access Fund and the American Mountain Guides Association were the two non-governmental participants invited to the event.

Issues addressed at the conference included discussion of fee demo pro-



grams, enforcement of commercial guide service regulations, bolting, resource impacts from bouldering, and raptor monitoring. When Jeff Jarvis, wilderness specialist for the BLM, asked participants if they thought there was a problem with bolting, no one said yes. Instead attendees seemed most concerned with bouldering and its increased environmental impacts.

Sam Davidson, Access Fund executive director, made a presentation at the conference about the organization and its advocacy, conservation, and education programs.

Prior to the conference, Davidson and Mike Alkaitis of the AMGA, took Jeff Jarvis climbing at Red Rocks. It was Jarvis's first time climbing, and he immensely enjoyed the experience.

BISHOP, CALIFORNIA

The area around Bishop, California attracts climbers from around the world. The dramatically increasing number of climbers in recent years has raised concerns about impacts to the fragile desert ecosystem, particularly by people camping on the Volcanic Tableland, home to the Happy and Sad Boulders. In response, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) created a free campground in November of 1999. Last year, the campground saw over 6,000 visitors, and this number has already doubled for the current season. The campground provides toilets, a community fire pit with picnic tables, established campsites, a dumpster, and recycling bins. In early March the BLM organized a successful volunteer campground cleanup day, where many campers helped remove trash and create new campsites.

The BLM is increasing its efforts to work with climbers. In addition to maintaining the campground, the BLM has posted educational information at the campground and bouldering areas, performed raptor studies, conducted photo monitoring of vegetation loss near bouldering areas, and maintained several trails. The BLM now employs a climbing ranger to help oversee these operations, yet its financial burdens have increased. As a result, the BLM now asks for a \$1 per person/per day voluntary payment for camping. This money goes directly into maintaining the campground and climbing facilities. Since November 2000, \$1,100 has been donated, which is below the BLM's expectations. With over 12,000 campers this season, this averages out to be less than \$0.10 per person, per night. In the future, the BLM will begin enforcing a 14-day camping limit on BLM land, and a long-term visitor pass may be made available.

The BLM is working with local climbers and the Access Fund to preserve the integrity of the beautiful desert ecosys-

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Area Reports Continued...



Volunteers maintain the trail at the Volcanic Tableland of Bishop, CA.

tem while maintaining access for climbers. For any further information or comments contact the BLM Bishop Field Office at 760 872-4881 or see: www.ca.blm.gov/bishop/blmfacts.html

ZION NATIONAL PARK, UT SHUTTLE SYSTEM

Report from Ray O'Neil, ZNP ranger

Due to the overwhelming increase of visitors into Zion National Park, authorities introduced a public transportation system in 2000 to minimize traffic and noise. Climbers can no longer drive into the canyon unless they have a special permit, and no vehicles are permitted inside the park gates overnight.

Shuttles now transport the majority of people into the canyon. They run from the first week of April to the last week in October.

Climbers can park at the Visitor Center or Springdale and take the shuttle from Sinawava in and out of the canyon between 7 am - 10 p.m. during the spring and fall seasons. During the summer months after Memorial day, the shuttle hours are extended to 5:30 a.m. - 11 p.m.

There are two exceptions, which enable climbers to obtain a Red Permit, which allows driving into the canyon:

- Climbers doing long routes in a day (i.e. Moonlight Buttress).

- Climbers planning multi-day climbs who need to make several trips to transport heavy gear. The permit allows them to drop their gear prior to climbing and pick it up afterwards with their car.

However, they must park at the Visitor's Center and take the shuttle into the canyon as part of the policy.

The Zion to Mt. Carmel Highway is still open to cars. Between November and March, cars can access the canyon without permits.

"It is now much more of a natural experience," said Ray O'Neil, backcountry ranger of ZNP who avoided the canyon in the past on busy days due to traffic and the "urban experience."

Climbing permits are still required for climbers attempting multi-day routes. They may be obtained for \$5 per permit at the Backcountry Office. There is no limit to the number of climbing and Red Permits that are granted. For more information, contact the Zion National Park Service at 435-772-3256 or www.nps.gov/zion.

RED ROCKS LATE/EARLY EXIT POLICY, NV

The Access Fund reported incorrectly the Late Exit/Overnight Parking information in Vertical Times #39. The correct policy is as follows:

Effective April 1, the entrance gates to Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area are being closed at 8 p.m. Late Exit Permits, which allow climbers to be in the park until 11 p.m., and Overnight Parking Permits may be issued seven days in advance from the ranger's office. The office closes daily at 4:30 p.m. Late Exit Permits are granted to climbers attempting longer routes (i.e. Levitation Wall, Rainbow Wall, Bridge Mountain, and Buffalo Wall), but are not granted for sport climbing and single pitch routes.

The gates open to climbers at 6 am all year. For more info call the Red Rocks Late Exit/Overnight Parking Line at 702-647-5042.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK, CO

The Access Fund submitted detailed comments to the Park Service in response to the draft RMNP Backcountry and

Wilderness Management Plan. The "preferred alternative" of the plan recommends new standards or management actions to protect wilderness values, which would affect a variety of backcountry recreation opportunities.

Climbing receives significant attention in the draft plan. Of note are proposals to prohibit new summit registers and "top to bottom" bolted routes. The Access Fund supports the bulk of the proposed climbing policy, but recommended that a distinction be made between traditional bolted face climbs (which should continue to be allowed in wilderness) and sport climbs, which are inappropriate for most wilderness areas. To review the draft plan, go to www.nps.gov/romo. Although the public comment period ended March 30, we encourage climbers to continue to provide feedback. You can e-mail comments to romo_superintendent@nps.gov or fax 970-586-1310.

YOSEMITE, CA

Yosemite National Park is looking for volunteers to work on climbing projects this summer. Ranger Mark Fincher reports that the Yosemite Fund is paying for a seasonal climbing ranger who will coordinate climbing-related trail and cleanup projects. Priority areas will be the base of big wall routes. Volunteers may receive free camping in the Valley. Contact Mark Fincher at mark_fincher@nps.gov. Meanwhile, the Access Fund will meet with Park Service officials this summer to discuss alternatives to the proposed roadside parking area closures, which would make it difficult to access many popular crags such as the Cookie Cliff.

MISSION GORGE, CA TRAIL DAY

Reported from the San Diego Climbers' Coalition News

The March 3rd trail day at Mission Gorge was a big success. Approximately 30 volunteers, organized by Mike Brown,

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FROM SURF TO SANDSTONE: SAM DAVIDSON TAKES THE LEAD AS AF ED

The Access Fund has appointed Sam Davidson to the position of executive director. Davidson will lead the organization's staff and national network of volunteers in their work to keep US climbing areas open while promoting responsible use and management of climbing resources. He assumed the leadership role from Interim Executive Director Susy Levin in April.

A passionate climber with more than 20 years of experience in every facet of the sport, Davidson has worked for the Access Fund since 1990. As senior policy analyst for the past six years, he has spearheaded land use policy issues, challenged closures and negotiated with land managers, environmental groups and Congress. Davidson recently represented the organization in meetings of the US Forest Service's Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on Fixed Anchors in Wilderness. There he was instrumental in improving awareness of climbing history and ethics, forging agreements to protect climbers' interests, and addressing the concerns of wilderness preservation groups.

"After an extensive search where we were privileged to consider several outstanding applicants, we couldn't ignore the fact that the best candidate was here within the organization," said Access Fund President Becky Hall. "The board of directors and staff unanimously agreed that Sam was the most qualified person to represent our 11,000 members and help guide this organization to the next level. His unique blend of legal and policy experience, coupled with his energy and knowledge of the complex issues facing climbers today is unparalleled. I look forward to continued growth in our membership and increased effectiveness in our advocacy efforts under his leadership."

Davidson graduated from Princeton University in 1983. He has worked extensively in the outdoor recreation field, including serving as a field instructor for the National Outdoor Leadership School. Davidson has climbed throughout North America and in Australia, New Zealand, and Hong Kong. However, he says, "My favorite place to climb remains Yosemite Valley. It's where I learned to climb in 1975, and there is no place more inspirational." Davidson admits that his preference for areas like the Valley may be at least partly due to his woeful sport climbing abilities, which he blames on his size (6' 3", 200 lbs.). He will immediately relocate to Boulder from his home in Salinas, California.

About his new job, Davidson says, "Climbing access and the protection of the climbing environment is a cause worth fighting for, and the Access Fund will continue to lead this fight. Watch for us to increase our efforts to support grassroots advocacy, provide resource management solutions, improve climber education, and represent climbers effectively in the political arena." Davidson adds, "It is an honor to represent our membership, and I look forward to working with them, our corporate partners, and others within the climbing community and outdoor industry to keep climbing alive for ours' and future generations."

• *Meet the Access Fund continued on next page*



photos by John Heisel

Sam Davidson



Sam takes a break from pulling down at a recent bouldering session at Red Rocks with the AF staff. Above from left: Kerry Cowan, Sam Davidson, Shawn Tierney, Kath Pyke, John Heisel, Heather Clark, and Susy Levin.

KICKIN' ACCESS WITH KURT SMITH

Interview by John Heisel



©Corey Rich www.coreyography.com

"It's unfair to play God with climbing," says Kurt Smith, who is travelling the country on his 2001 Kickin' Access slide show tour to benefit the Access Fund. The tour will feature 12 shows around the country with music, climbing, prizes, beer, and more!

Heisel : What can you tell us about your "Kickin' Access 2001" slideshow tour?

Smith: It is the first of its kind climber's party benefiting the Access Fund. DJ Underground Chuck will spin some heavy beats and show a one-hour slideshow about my last 20 years of climbing.

Heisel: How many events are you having.

Smith: There are 12 events across the country. *Rock and Ice* magazine is the main sponsor, and most shows are in the East and Midwest.

Heisel: What will a typical show be like?

Smith: They will be setup at a local climbing gym. There will be a gear demo for Scarpa/Black Diamond, and there will dyno and pull-up competitions going. The winners will get booty. Chuck will play music during the competition. Around 8-8:30, there will be the slideshow with a gear raffle afterwards. People that join the Access Fund, get four tickets for the raffle.

Heisel: What are you guys doing to promote this event?

Smith: We are pushing a big web presence this year and we will have info on a number of sites such as: Portrero Chico.com, Rock and Ice, RockList.com, Black Diamond, Ropegun.com, and the Access Fund among others.

Heisel: What is your motivation to host this tour again this year?

Smith: I want to inject some energy into local areas and get people psyched to join the Access Fund. It's shocking to me that there's about 800,000 climbers in the U.S. and only 11,000 are members of the Access Fund.

Heisel: Do you think it is too expensive for most people to join?

Smith: It's a small price to pay in my opinion. For the price of a good case of beer you can save a lot of climbin' outdoors!

Heisel: Why should climbers join the Access Fund?

Smith: They're taking care of climbing in the whole country. You might not have access problems now, but what if your local crag is closed down? People should join unless they are content to climb in gyms the rest of their lives.

Heisel: What can people do to help climbing access in their area?

Smith: They can call their local Access Fund regional coordinator, take care of their local areas, talk to their land managers, and get involved with politicians.

Heisel: Are there any other reasons why you are stoked for "Kickin' Access 2001?"

Smith: I'm a gypsy, I like to travel. This is a fun break in the summer for me to leave Mexico, get on the road, and help out my sponsors and the Access Fund.

Heisel: Is there anybody you want to thank for helping your show?

Smith: Yes, I want to especially thank Elaina Arenz and Charles Fyberger (DJ Chuck) for all of their hard work. I'd also like to thank my sponsors RockList.com, Ropegun, Rock and Ice, and Black Diamond for all their support.

Heisel: Any last thoughts?

Smith: Yeah, I think the future of climbing will be good if people let it grow. I hate it when people keep their areas a secret, when people keep it [climbing] down, and have their trad. vs. sport debates. It's unfair to play God with climbing. People should just have a good time with it!

(See page 13 for the Kickin' Access Slide Show schedule.)

**ACCESS FUND AWARDS
FIVE GRANTS**

The Access Fund Climbing Preservation Grants Program utilizes your membership dollars to fund projects that preserve or enhance climbing opportunities and conserve the climbing environment in the United States. For the

first of its four funding cycles in 2001, \$18,000 was distributed to support five separate projects planned by public agencies, wildlife protection organizations and conservation groups. The following are recent grant recipients:

- \$6,500 to the Rocky Mountain Field Institute for trails and impact mitigation at Indian Creek and Castleton Tower in Utah, and Shelf Road in Colorado.
- \$4,500 to Snow Canyon State Park, Utah for developing of a kiosk and brochure to promote resource protection,

low impact practices and climber safety and responsibility at the park.

- \$3,000 to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and its Endangered Wildlife Program. Funds will support monitoring of peregrine falcons at seven cliff sites with both nesting raptor activity and rock climbing.
- \$2,250 to the National Wildlife Federation in Vermont to help promote awareness of cliff-nesting raptors amongst climbers and to protect peregrine falcon breeding sites.
- \$1,656 to the Northern California Chapter of the Access Fund for publication and distribution of its regional newsletter - Northern California Access News.

NEW REGIONAL COORDINATORS

Our Regional Coordinator Network is the cornerstone of our support for grass-

roots climber activism and is a primary resource for keeping climbing areas open. RC's are the Access Fund's principal liaisons to local areas and represent climbers' interests on both public and private lands. Please contact your RC when access issues arise in your area.

We would like to extend a welcome and thanks to these new RC's for volunteering their time and energy to preserve access:

- Lonny Whitcomb, Central Pennsylvania 717/642-6994
lwhitcomb@skiliberty.com
- Aram Attarian, North Carolina 919/515-3709
aram_attarian@ncsu.edu
- Heather Hibbard, Vermont 802/863-6788
hhibbard@zoo.uvm.edu
- Jason Keith, Western Colorado 970/945-2942
jasonkeith@hotmail.com
- Frank Harvey, Obed, Tennessee 865/986-6618 faharvey@aol.com

The Access Fund: your climbing future



There are many ways you can help preserve our valued climbing resources. They include:

*** Stock**

Stock is an attractive option for many people because you not only get to deduct the appreciated value of the stock, but you are not required to pay capital gains tax on the asset. In cases where the initial investment was small, the resulting contribution and subsequent deduction can be substantial.

*** Bequest**

By putting the Access Fund in your will, you may lower your estate taxes while helping to ensure climbing will be preserved for future generations. We can provide sample language to make this easy for you.

Help the Access Fund preserve climbing.

*** Charitable Gift Annuity**

You make a gift to the Access Fund in return for a fixed amount of annual income and a tax deduction. You may receive income immediately or defer it until retirement.

*** Pooled Income Fund**

You make a gift of \$5,000 or more to the pooled income fund, which is similar to a mutual fund. You receive a variable amount of income each year, and the assets ultimately go to the Access Fund.

If your gift is \$10,000 or more, you may designate it for one of the following categories: Acquisitions, Advocacy & Activism, Membership, Trails, Education, Climbing Preservation Projects or Unrestricted. For more information on any of these options, contact Susy Levin in the Access Fund office at 303-545-6772, ext. 102.

PAY TO PLAY?

I am a relatively new member of The Access Fund looking for some info regarding the entrance fees to our National Parks. I have been paying fees to enter Joshua Tree and other Parks for the last few years. Recently I read an article stating that these fees are not mandatory and are in an "experimental" stage. The article goes on to suggest that not paying the fee and getting a "ticket" from the NPS would serve as a vote against the fee and nothing more. What should I do? I go to the parks to climb and relax, not cause fights. I agree with the idea that these lands are ours already and are paid for (or should be paid for) by our tax dollars. Why do the NPS employees support and enforce these so called laws as if they were set in stone? I can't seem to even have a decent conversation with the NPS about these fees. They don't even return my email. I have no problem paying to support the NPS if my money is truly being used correctly. Do I simply pay and trust that this is so, or do I become the vigilante climber and subject myself to being hassled, lectured, and ticketed?

Walter Lockwood
Via email

THE AF RESPONDS

The NPS is not required to impose new or higher fees as a result of legislation first passed by Congress in 1996 and renewed again last year through 2002. The law allows the Park Service and other federal lands agencies to keep 80% of such fees, while the other 20% of Fee Demo revenues goes into a "slush fund" to support the fee program. So you can see there is substantial incentive for the agencies to charge new fees or raise the established, therefore, the new entrance fee is \$20 at Yosemite and \$10 at Joshua Tree (increased from \$5).

The Access Fund opposes Fee Demo and use fees generally, for reasons of fairness and accountability. Plus, we do not believe the federal lands agencies should be encouraged to operate on a for-profit business model — it confuses their means with their purpose, which is resource stewardship and visitor management.

Your most effective response is to write and call your congressperson and two senators, urging them to terminate the Demonstration Fee Authority and boost the annual appropriations to the agencies provided by Congress through the annual budget process. Urge your congressional delegation to support the bill recently re-introduced by Congresswoman Lois Capps (D-CA, Santa Barbara) that would stop Fee Demo and make up that revenue by ending subsidies to logging on national forest lands. Money provided through appropriations comes from our collective income taxes, and the agencies that support Fee Demo revenue because Congress cannot control how it is

spent. Unfortunately, what we see from analysis of the Fee Demo program so far is that the vast majority of revenues collected doesn't go toward trail repair and campground improvements, but toward paying the administrative costs of the program and other backlogged expenses which have higher priority. We need to let Congress know that the public does not want use fees, instead we want our public lands funded through our income taxes.

If you need help identifying your Congressperson and senators and how to reach them, please look for the link on our web site (www.accessfund.org) or go to a site such as www.congress.nw.dc.us/rollcall.

As far as civil disobedience goes, the Access Fund does not recommend that you refuse to pay Fee Demo fees. You should always register your objection to such fees, however, whenever you pay them.

LETTER TO THE ACCESS FUND

I would like to thank The Access Fund for your continuing support of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission's peregrine falcon monitoring program. In addition to monitoring the peregrine population in North Carolina we are committed to working with all agencies, landowners, and organizations to manage peregrine falcon nest sites, while minimizing restrictions upon other activities that share North Carolina's cliffs. We are committed, thanks to your contributions, to ensuring that climbing restrictions at peregrine falcon nest sites be publicized broadly and accurately for the benefits to both climbers and falcons.

We have initiated the monitoring efforts that the Access Fund grant, the 2001 Peregrine Falcon Productivity Monitoring Project in North Carolina, supported. We have confirmed territorial falcons at four sites thus far, and have observed falcons at two others. Within the next month we expect to confirm peregrine territoriality at the remainder of the previously occupied territories. In addition we have made some efforts to coordinate, compile, and disseminate information regarding climbing restrictions at North Carolina Cliffs. Those activities will also continue as the breeding season progresses and we learn more about the specific peregrine nesting activities.

Christopher McGrath
Mountain Nongame Project Leader
Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program, NC

Editor's Note: For more information on wildlife closures and restrictions click on www.accessfund.org/ClosuresRestrictions.html. The NC Wildlife Resources have made a special initiative in 2001 to provide regular updates on the status of raptor restrictions via the Access Fund and other climbing organization websites.

• continued on next page

Letters continued...

REMOVABLE BOLTS

It is frustrating to see the Access Fund treat Removable Bolts like a non-issue or see them engage in circular arguments that have nothing to do with the difference between removable and fixed bolts. Some people may not like using RBs instead of fixed bolts, but their reasoning either has nothing to do with the difference or nothing to do with what The Access Fund says they support. Statements like "leave less trace" and "bolts are not a convenience" are inconsistent with a lack of support for RBs. How can we advocate painting bolt hangers, yet not advocate using RBs? It is time for the organization to stand behind what it advocates or stop advocating it.

The Access Fund makes mistakes sometimes and they do not (and cannot) represent all climbers. Slandering the Access Fund would be self-defeating, since they have done so much to benefit all climbers' interests. But it is time for them to start accepting constructive criticism from their constituents. A good place to start is consistency in what they advocate.

Tony Calderone
Via email

THE AF RESPONDS

The Access Fund appreciates Mr. Calderone's commitment to minimizing the "traces" left by climbers on the natural environment. There is perhaps some confusion regarding the Access Fund's position on drilled anchors: we urge climbers never to place ANY kind of drilled anchor unless there is no alternative (e.g. top-roping, using chocks or cams, choosing not to do the climb at all). When a decision is made to place a drilled anchor (bolts, removable bolts, rivets, cold shuts), it is the climber's choice to choose a type of anchor. We are not "hiding" or "ignoring" the facts about drilled anchors. The Access Fund does not make recommendations between the different types of drilled anchors, because there are too many factors requiring the exercise of personal judgment involved in the decision to place them.

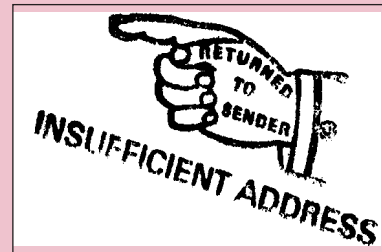
From what we have heard, removable bolts are safe and reliable anchors when used properly. Removable bolts do offer the benefit of zero visual impact... unless they get "fixed" after a fall. We can certainly envision that removable bolts could be employed on wall routes to reduce or eliminate rivets. Removable bolts also introduce a new level of challenge (and potentially of risk) into the free climbing game, as it's a lot harder to find a small drilled hole than a bolt hanger is.

But we should not fool ourselves that land managers and critics of climbing will think that removable bolts are any better, from a philosophical standpoint, than regular bolts. RBs still require a

drilled hole, a permanent intrusion on the natural landscape. The controversy over "fixed anchors" has never been about their visual impacts — it's about whether climbers should be able to alter the environment in a lasting way. Let us be clear: the problem with fixed bolts and removable bolts alike is that they require the drilling of a hole in the rock. In the Forest Service's Negotiated Rulemaking on fixed anchors in wilderness, for example, the committee members agreed quickly that visual impacts could easily be mitigated, but we never agreed if climbers should be permitted to drill a hole for an anchor.

The Access Fund's decision not to endorse one kind of drilled anchor over another does not mean that we oppose or recommend against the use of removable bolts. We are simply neutral on this question. As Calderone points out, we have made mistakes from time to time. We believe we are open to constructive criticism and to admitting when we've been wrong. However, we do not think that our neutral stance on what type of drilled anchor climbers should use is inconsistent with our long-time advocacy for Leave No Trace principles and minimizing climbers' impacts on the environment. The best way for climbers to reduce our "trace" on the rock, and to help resolve the public policy dispute over bolting, is to exercise more self-control in the placement of ANY kind of drilled anchor, period.

**MOVING?
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kerry@accessfund.org

Spray Continued from page 2...

entrance. Since then climbers have erected a signboard at the trailhead as well as a secure donation box for the landowner.

At this and other areas, climbers have worked hard to change their access routes as needed to avoid or address problems, including landowner complaints and changes, erosion and impact issues. Climbers came out in force to establish in virtually one weekend a major NPS trail to the Obed Clear junction, solving a longstanding access issue.

In 1998, it came to light that The Nature Conservancy, not the Park Service, owned the land containing the Clear Creek climbing area. A meeting was quickly set up between climbers and representatives of the Conservancy and the NPS. While concerns were voiced about the unknown environmental and archeological impact of climbing on the area, due to the obvious level of stewardship of climbers, climbing was left "as is" pending further study.

In October of 1999, a meeting was held between climbers and representatives of Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning, an organization whose birth was closely tied to the establishment of the OWSR itself. The TCWP expressed serious concerns about the impact of climbing in the OWSR. Despite differences of opinion, the meeting led to a memorandum of understanding that committed climbers to education efforts. Also, it acknowledged the legitimacy of climbing, and fixed anchors in the Obed. This memorandum demonstrated at the 2000 Access Fund Adopt-a-Crag event, attended by climbers, boaters, Scouts, TCWP members, NPS personnel, and others. This kind of partnering with other user and interest groups has been invaluable in preserving climbing in the Obed. We can hang together or hang separately!

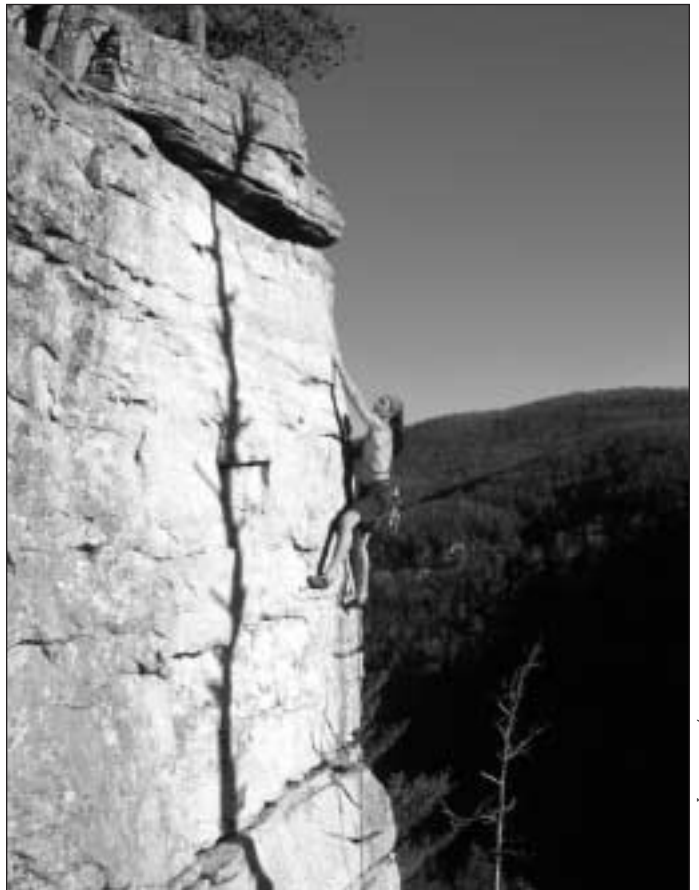
What can be learned from our history? The following things come to mind:

- Know the players; your homework on landowners and officials will pay off.
- If you even think a problem is arising, get busy and address it. Don't wait for others to come to you or worse, take action without your input.
- Practice "Leave no Trace" climbing as much as possible. Remember, "Gym trained" climbers may not have the same environmental ethic as those who learned climbing outdoors.
- Partner all responsible user and interest groups that you can. There is true strength in numbers, and the broader spectrum creates legitimacy for your efforts.
- When access issues arise, the investment of time, effort and money will create a positive image and a sense that climbers are willing to give and not just take from the environment.
- IF you climb on NPS land, sign an Agreement for Volunteer Service (form 10-85 downloadable at

www.nps.gov/chal/nps7.pdf). The NPS, like most government agencies, is grossly under funded!

- In any meetings, come to the table with a positive attitude, a willingness to compromise and a command of the facts and climbing history (good or bad) of your area.
- If your state has a landowner's liability act be very familiar with its provisions!
- Join and become active in the Access Fund. Be ready to spend time and money as needed to protect climbing and the land in your area. If you chose to spend all your dollars on gear, you may have to drive very far to use it!

We still face challenges at the Obed; the management plan will clearly involve a moratorium on new routes pending the impact studies long hinted at in all the history of the area, but due to the efforts of climbers over the years, climbing on existing, as well as ultimately new routes, will likely continue. The foundation we have all built over the years makes it hard for anyone to "walk away from the table," saying that climbers don't matter or don't care. Looking back it has been more than



Kelly Brown soaks the exposure of "Blue Sky, Green Water" at North Clear Creek Canyon of the Obed, TN.

The opinions in Spray are not necessarily those of the Access Fund

Events

Kurt Smith's Kickin' Access Slide show tour to benefit the Access Fund is heading to a climbing area near you. Kickin' Access is a climber's party benefiting the Access Fund, and it's coming this summer to a crag near you.



This fundraising event is designed to bring your climbing community together. Join the party with DJ Underground Chuck as he spins some heavy beats while Kurt Smith shares his 20 plus years of climbing experience in his one-hour slideshow. Come out and join the Access Fund, enter the gear raffle, test the latest and greatest gear on the market, enter the pull-up and dyno contests, or bring your favorite slides of you and your buddies for the "locals slideshow." Check below to find venues and dates or log onto www.potrerochico.com for more updated information.

Calendar

MAY

- 5/5 Atlanta, GA - 6th Annual Rocktown Trail Days, The Challenge Rock Climbing School, Kathryn and Jerry Dodgen 404-237-4021
- 5/5 Lexington, KY - Red River Gorge Derby Festival, Red River Gorge Climbers Coalition, Julia Fain, 606-335-0067
- 5/9 Roswell, GA - Kurt Smith slide show, Call of the Wild, 770 992-5400
- 5/12 Houston, TX - 6th annual Outdoor Summit, Sun & Ski Sports EXPO, 281-537-0928
- 5/12 Terrebonne, OR - 9th Annual Smith Rock Spring Thing, Smith Rock Group, Catherine Rhode, 541-330-5138
- 5/12 Fayetteville, WV - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, Blue Ridge Outdoors, www.seclimbers.org/kickinaccess.html, 304-574-2425
- 5/17 Bloomington, IL - Access Fund Bouldering Blow Out, Upper Limits, Jennifer Hawbaker, 800-964-7814
- 5/19 Tulsa, OK - 6th Annual Outdoor Summit, Sun & Ski Sports EXPO, 918-254-0673
- 5/26 Lexington, KY - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, Red River Gorge Climbers Coalition, Miquels 606-663-1975, www.seclimbers.org/kickinaccess.html

JUNE

- 6/2 Lookout Mountain, TN - Sunset Trail Day, Southeastern Climbers Coalition, Brad McLeod mcmcLeod@mindspring.com, 404-329-1519
- 6/2 Asheville, NC - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, CLIMBMAX, INC, www.seclimbers.org/kickinaccess.html, 828-252-999
- 6/2 Atlanta, GA - Peachtree Pump indoor comp; JCCA regional final, Atlanta Rocks!, Chris Reed, 404-351-3009

- 6/16 Boone, NC - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, Footsloggers, www.seclimbers.org/kickinaccess.html, 704-262-5111
- 6/26 Alexandria, VA - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, SportRock Climbing Center, www.seclimbers.org/kickinaccess.html, 703-212-7625
- 6/3 New Paltz, NY - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, Rock and Snow, Inc, 914-255-1311

JULY

- 7/12-15 Lander, WY - 8th Annual International Climbers Festival, Leslie Van Orman, 307 332-2971
- 7/12 Lander, WY - Wild Iris Trail Project, International Climbers Festival, Leslie Van Orman, 307 332-4541
- 7/14 Plymouth, NH - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, The Rock Barn- Rhinoceros Mountain Guides, Jim Shimberg, 603-536-2717
- 7/18 Pittsburgh, PA - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, Mountain Dreams International, Inc, 412-621-4878
- 7/26 Dayton, OH - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, Urban Krag Climbing Center, 937-224-5724
- 7/28 Pontiac, MI - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, Planet Rock Gym, 248-334-3904

AUGUST

- 8/2 Boulder, CO - Kickin Access Kurt Smith slide show tour, Boulder Rock Club, Kurt Smith, 303-447-2804
- 8/7 Colorado Springs, CO - Kickin Access 2001 slide show with Kurt Smith, Sport Climbing Center, 719-260-1050

EVENTS PINNACLE

THESE EVENTS RAISED THE MOST MONEY FOR THE ACCESS FUND THIS WINTER!

- \$1,234 Mike Libeck: Year of the Dragon slide show Skinny Skis, Jackson, WY
- \$1,010 Mike Libeck: Year of the Dragon slide show Alta Sports, Alta, UT
- \$1,000 The Reach Out Climb University Recreation at JMU, Harrisonburg, VA
- \$880 60th Anniversary Dinner: Topher Donahoe slide show-Chicago Mountaineering Club, Chicago, IL
- \$800 5th Annual Adirondack Mountaineering Festival-The Mountaineer, Keene Valley, NY
- \$667 American Bouldering Series- Championship comp - Climb Time of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH
- \$560 Crankin in the New Year - Rocknasium, Davis, CA
- \$410.50 Lost and Found Auction - Rock'n & Jam'n, Thornton, CO
- \$385 6th Annual Frigid Flash Alaska Rock Gym, Anchorage, AK
- \$381 Mike Libeck: Year of the Dragon slide show - Black Diamond Equipment, Salt Lake City, UT
- \$350 Boulder Blast VII - Rockreation, Salt Lake City, UT
- \$340 Michigan Ice Climbing Festival - Down Wind Sports, Marquette, MI

Area Reports Continued from p. 5...

Gorge was a big success. 30 volunteers, organized by Mike Brown, assisted the work. They installed two kiosks. While the kiosk crew was busy, the trail crew did some habitat restoration work by eliminating an old unused section of trail. They also did some reengineering work on the main trail and the lower section of the Middle Earth trail. The San Diego Climbers' Coalition extends its thanks to the Access Fund and Adventure 16 for their monetary donations to the project. Also kudos to all of the volunteers, especially Mike Brown who coordinated the project.



SOUTHEAST SERVICE AND TRAIL PROJECTS, NC

The Carolina Climbers' Coalition has been working with Brad McLeod, chair of the Southeastern Climbers' Coalition, on a collaborative service project to benefit the climbing community and the climbing environment. Also, the CCC and SECC will be hosting a National Trails Day Project on Saturday June 2, 2001 at Whitesides Mountain, located near Highlands, NC. The plan is to do some much needed trail work in the area. Nantahala National Forest personnel will be present to provide guidance and tools. Work starts at 9 a.m. For more information, email Aram Attarian at aram_attarian@ncsu.edu or Brad McLeod at atmbmcleod@mindspring.com.

ADOPT A CRAG

September 8, 2001



Mick Ryan



On September 8, 2001, nationwide, the Access Fund will lead trail restoration projects and clean-ups at climbing areas in the most wide ranging volunteer effort ever by the climbing community. Adopt-a-Crag Day brings climbers together to preserve our climbing resources and care for climbing areas. It inspires activism, advocacy, volunteerism, and stewardship across the country.

For more info email: adoptacrag@accessfund.org
Phone: (303) 545-6772
Web: www.accessfund.org



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Climbing comps- American Bouldering Series- entire series so far

\$3,712.50! -Climb Time of Cincinnati, Club Sport, Aminos City Rock,

Vertical eXcape, Nathan Holmes, Miami University, Julie Versteeg; Vertical

Endeavors, Jason Noble, CU Outdoor Program, Trace Bundy, Rockreation, Nate Smith, Rocknasium,

Squirrel and Mark , Alaska Rock Gym, Siri Moss, James Madison University, Guy de Brun

Hosting or giving a slide show-Mike Libeck slide show tour- Elephant's Perch, Black

Diamond, Barrel Mountaineering, Trailhead Sports, Mountain Chalet, Neptune Mountaineering, Cross

Country Connection; Kurt Smith, Elaina Arenz, Alta Sports, Shawn Chartrand, Skinny Skis, Jeff

Crabtree, Armando Menocal, Marmot-Berkeley, Western Mountaineering- Santa Clara

Festivals, demos and membership promos- Down Wind Sports, the Michigan Ice

Festival & Bill Thompson, The Mountaineer, Mountainfest & Vinny McClelland, She-Climbs, Carolyn

McHale, Keri Conte, Chicago Mountaineering Club, Alex Andrews, Ben Kweton

For just being awesome- Boulder Rock Club, Matt O'Conner, Mike Moelter, Rock'n & Jam'n,

Deb Grass, Rockquest, OH, Armando Menocal

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

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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:

PHONE: 888-863-6237

WEB: www.accessfund.org

**MAIL: P.O. Box 17010,
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AMERICAN BOULDERING IN JEOPARDY!

BY SAM DAVIDSON, ACCESS FUND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Recently, I returned from a three-day conference on climbing management. The conference was hosted by the Bureau of Land Management and attracted over 50 land managers from around the country. The Access Fund and the American Mountain Guides Association were the only two climbing organizations invited to the event.

I gave the closing presentation at the conference. At the end, I asked all the land managers, "What is the one thing you would most like the Access Fund to help you with?" The response was unanimous.

These resource professionals said their biggest management challenge right now is bouldering. They are worried about crash pads damaging plants. They are concerned about chalk marks near historic rock art and the "over-use" impacts we are starting to see at popular bouldering sites.

Climbers have practiced bouldering for over 50 years, yet only in the past decade has bouldering become an end in itself. With no ropes, hardware, or harnesses, bouldering is perhaps the freest expression of climbing. In this respect, bouldering is the most accessible form of climbing, and its popularity is increasing rapidly. Last year, the Access Fund asked many of you what types of climbing you participated in and most of you responded that you boulder with some regularity.

With our growing interest in bouldering, the most popular areas are starting to show some wear-and-tear. Many land managers do not know how to respond to these effects. As a result, they restrict access to these areas.

The Access Fund has launched a new campaign to develop solutions to bouldering-related problems, and to preserve access to bouldering areas. As part of this campaign we will initiate a nationwide outreach effort to land managers. It will help them understand bouldering and how they can manage this climbing experience without resorting to closures. At the same time, we will redouble our climber education efforts to promote minimum-impact practices and a solid stewardship ethic.

What can you do to protect the natural resources at your bouldering areas and preserve climbing access? For starters, you can start or join an Adopt-a-Crag Day project at your local bouldering area. Call the Access Fund at (303) 545-6772, or visit our web site at www.accessfund.org, for more ideas on how to get involved! Together we can make a difference!.



Heather Clark at Red Rocks. Photo: John Heisel