



Protect America's Climbing

Access Agreements

Access agreements are a great tool for reopening closed climbing areas or providing public access to new areas. A typical access agreement sets up partnership between a landowner and a local climbing organization and/or the Access Fund and incorporates risk management strategies, public access requirements (such as day use only), and stewardship support. These agreements can take many forms—including recreational leases, stewardship agreements, access easements, climbing management agreements, and licenses—and can be tailored to the needs of the area. These types of agreements may be the key for public and private landowners to support climbing in their natural areas and parks.

A recreational lease is the most common type of access agreement, and is a written agreement between a landowner and an individual or organization that allows certain uses of the land during for a defined period of time. Typical recreational uses include climbing, hunting, fishing, camping, horseback riding, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing. Recreational leases can help owners who have trespass problems gain more control over their land. They can also add diversity and flexibility to usual operations, as well as increase cash income if annual lease payments are incorporated. See more important considerations on recreational leases in the Resource Center.

In general, most access agreements are often temporary or non-binding in nature (but renewable), assigning rights and responsibilities to the climbing community and landowners. An effective agreement should anticipate possible problems and describe how each would be resolved.

One potential model is a jointly held agreement or lease with the private/public landowner, Access Fund, and a local climbing organization (LCO). The benefits of such an agreement would be:

- The Access Fund provides another layer of liability protection related solely to this agreement alone through our liability insurance policy by issuing additional insured status through a certificate of insurance to the landowner and LCO. Certain limitations apply and the LCO should also consider its own insurance policy - ask us for further information.
- The LCO oversees stewardship and management of the climbing resources, to the extent desired by the landowner.
- The public or private landowner has active partners in managing the climbing resources, while reducing their exposure to liability.