

VERTICAL TIMES

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The Big W: The Importance of Wilderness Climbing Ethics

page 8



MAKING THE TRANSITION FROM GYM TO CRAG 6
THE FUTURE OF FIXED ANCHORS 11
2012 SHARP END AWARDS 12



If we climbers don't stand up for what is right, we put our climbing areas and access at risk.

“In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock.”

— Thomas Jefferson

Last fall at the Future of Fixed Anchors conference the Access Fund hosted in Las Vegas, a climber from the Black Hills in South Dakota gave me a little feedback on my opening talk. He noted that I used the words “style” and “ethics” synonymously when, in fact, they have different meanings. Apparently, I’m not alone—in his experience, when climbers talk about ethics they’re often referring to matters of style. In the Black Hills, traditional areas like the Needles coexist in close proximity to the sport crags near Rushmore and Spearfish Canyon. In his view, the differences between ground-up trad climbing and sport climbing are stylistic and don’t rise to the ethical plane of right and wrong. By reminding people that they’re really talking about stylistic differences, he finds he can facilitate more productive discussions among climbers who might not see eye to eye.

This really got me thinking. In climbing, which issues are stylistic vs. ethical? Ethics deals with concepts of right and wrong, which have a certain timeless quality. Style has more to do with personal preference and the prevailing trends. Is placing a bolt on rappel wrong? Well, that depends. It’s perfectly fine in some climbing areas, but what about a place like the Needles of South Dakota where bolts have always been placed by hand from natural stances? Of course, many of the rules governing an area may be defined not by climbers but by a third party, such as a land manager, who has clearly defined what is or is not allowed on the property.

Is a stylistic deviation sometimes an ethical violation when there is consensus on what is an acceptable style in a given area? Again, that depends. Style changes over time. Not too many years ago, just hanging on a rope to work out the moves on a climb was a serious faux pas. Nobody cares about that anymore. On the other hand, some alpinists are willing to risk their lives to climb fast and light,

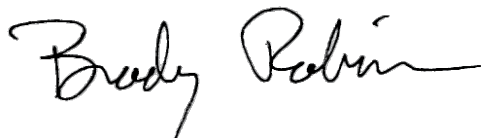
and may even reject other styles of ascent as invalid. So where do we draw the line? These are the sorts of questions that keep philosophers in business and make many climbers want to throw their hands up and just go climbing. But we shouldn't give up so fast.

One way to evaluate a particular action or behavior is to imagine what would happen if every climber followed suit. What if all climbers violated Wilderness regulations, stashed equipment on public land, cut trail switchbacks, treated the outdoors as their personal rock gym, and left big, chalky tick marks on their routes and problems? Well, that would be bad. So these issues are probably ethical issues rather than matters of style.

This issue of the *Vertical Times* has some great articles that address some of these questions. As you read this issue, think about the questions and perhaps the controversies surrounding your local climbing or bouldering area. What are people talking about? Are they talking about style or matters of right and wrong, and are they sometimes mistaking one for the other?

If we climbers don't stand up for what is right, we put our climbing areas and access at risk. But standing like a rock on matters of style is sometimes a mistake—it could mean you're being a jerk.

See you out there,



Brady Robinson

Executive Director

Matt Lloyd takes a swing on Grim Reaper in
Eldorado Canyon, CO | © D. Scott Clark





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Wichita Mountains Climbers Coalition

Wichita Mountains Climbers Coalition (WMCC) recently worked to provide input on a climbing management plan for Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma. Thanks to this

effort, climbing was positively represented in the plan, which will guide climbing management decisions for the next 15 years. WMCC also rallied a team of volunteers for a two-day Adopt a Crag event at Mt. Scott and Quanah Creek, continuing their positive stewardship of the area.



SCC Cleans Up Hospital Boulders

Southeastern Climbers Coalition (SCC) recently organized a successful trail day and cleanup event to give its newest climbing area acquisition, the Hospital Boulders in Alabama, a much-needed facelift. Under dreary skies and light rain, psyched volunteers built and buffed out trails in and around the area's beautiful sandstone boulders. They also dragged out tons of garbage, filling a dumpster to the brim. For more information on the area, check out www.seclimbers.org.

SLCA Leads in Climbing Area Stewardship

Salt Lake Climbers Alliance (SLCA) is having an enormous impact on climbing areas around the Wasatch Range and beyond. This past year at Parley's Canyon, a team of volunteers installed kiosks, water bars, and other erosion control measures to sustain and manage the popular climbing site. At Ruth Lake in the Uintas, SLCA volunteers and the Access Fund-Jeep Conservation Team worked to successfully stabilize the trail and install stone stairs. Further afield, SLCA continues to take care of Joe's Valley, funding and installing toilets for the past four seasons. Keep up the good work, SLCA!



Climbing's Positive Economic Impacts in Red River Gorge

Red River Gorge Climbers' Coalition (RRGCC) recently gave a presentation at a tourism conference to raise awareness of rock climbing's positive economic impact in rural, eastern Kentucky. RRGCC representatives talked to the mayor, business owners, and other residents about rock climbing in their area. This outreach strengthened climber ties to local communities, helping improve long-term climbing access and possibly open up new opportunities for acquiring and protecting climbing areas.



Local Climbing

Organization 101:

Mapping

Maps are a great tool to help local climbing organizations (LCOs) solve access issues and address climbing management challenges. Here are some simple pointers when undertaking a mapping project:

Map your local climbing area. Google Earth is an excellent place to start. You can map parking, access points, property boundaries, trails used by climbers, crag and boulder names and locations, and sites of known climbing management issues, such as rare plants or cliff-nesting birds. With a GPS device or smartphone, you can gather data on site, then upload it onto the computer, and map it.

Plan trails and stewardship. A well-mapped climbing area can lead to more effective stewardship. For instance, a map can show you if there are redundant trails that can be eliminated. Or if a steep, eroding trail can be rerouted for a more sustainable path.

Prioritize access projects. Regional maps can be invaluable for planning and prioritizing access work. Organize your information by plotting known climbing areas, along with corresponding landowners and access status, on a map. Next, rank these areas in terms of priority and feasibility.

Increase climber safety. A well-mapped climbing area can speed up the search and rescue process when an accident happens. Share your maps with the land manager and/or local rescue squad.

Making the transition from **GYM** to **CRAG**

RESPONSIBLE OUTDOOR CLIMBING PRACTICES THAT HELP PRESERVE ACCESS

IN THE GYM	AT THE CRAG	DO THIS INSTEAD
Loud music fuels your climbing session.	Loud music may disrupt others trying to enjoy the outdoors, including landowners.	Leave the speakers at home or at least turn them off when others are nearby.
Lowering off the top anchors is the norm.	Top anchors may not be regularly monitored for wear.	Consider rappelling to lessen the impact on anchors.
Janitors clean up your chalk spills and discarded finger tape.	Chalk spills and trash are your responsibility.	Clean up after yourself and pack out your trash.
You stash your pack and unused gear in a locker.	Sprawling gear can crush plant life, trample sensitive soil, and disturb other climbing parties.	Be aware of where you're dropping your gear and contain it as much as possible.
Fixed draws on lead routes are standard.	Landowners may not appreciate the visual impact of fixed draws.	Know the rules before you go, and don't leave draws on your project unless they are allowed.
You do your business in the bathroom.	You do your business in the wild.	The best methods for human waste disposal vary depending on what kind of environment you're climbing in. Know before you go: www.accessfund.org/poop
Climbing in large groups is no big deal.	Climbing in large groups is not always appropriate, especially when the crag is crowded or in areas where access is sensitive.	Stay low profile—climb in pairs at crowded crags and in areas where access is sensitive.
Gym managers oversee training and safety inside a controlled environment.	The great outdoors doesn't have a supervisor, and climbing outside is inherently more dangerous.	Be safe. Get a mentor or climb with someone who knows the ropes.

PASS IT ON TO YOUR FAVORITE GYM CLIMBER.



Illustration by Kristin Marine

SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL ADVOCACY



Access Fund National Affiliate Director Zachary Lesch-Huie is on a mission to get climbing advocates around the country to share their lessons learned and bits of wisdom with the community. For this issue of the *Vertical Times*, Zachary tracked down Ben Scott, president of the Northern Colorado Climbers Coalition (NCCC), an Access Fund affiliate that focuses on protecting and stewarding areas in greater Fort Collins, Colorado.

ZACHARY: What's the most pressing access issue facing your group?

BEN: Developing a better relationship with our local Forest Service office. Many of our climbing areas are located on National Forest land and under their management plans. Climbers are a small user group compared to hunting, fishing, and OHV/4x4 groups, so we are having a hard time being heard.

ZACHARY: Speaking of Forest Service lands, we've heard rumblings that pad stashing is becoming an issue in your area. Anything to say about that?

BEN: If you leave your pad in the woods or Wilderness, it is abandoned gear according to most land managers, so don't expect it to still be there when you return. Climbers are incredibly strong and athletic people compared to most of the U.S. population—strong enough to carry your equipment back out.

ZACHARY: How do you promote a bouldering and climbing stewardship ethic in your community?

BEN: We host cleanup days to educate the climbing community. We've also installed kiosks to provide general climbing and stewardship information. We want to do more to educate new climbers coming from the gym, but it's a challenge.

ZACHARY: If you could impart three pieces of wisdom to new climbers just getting outside, what would they be?

BEN: Let's see ... I'd say:

1. Be patient. When you decide it's time to get out of the gym, an infinitely complicated and detailed world of

rock climbing begins to come into view. Becoming an educated and experienced rock climber takes a lifetime of effort.

2. Learn from someone who knows. Yes, mentoring can seem slow and constraining, but having someone to show you the ropes in person is invaluable. Don't assume a guidebook or the Internet is all you need to learn about climbing outside.

3. Treat your climbing areas like you would your own home. If you see trash or leave trash, don't assume someone else will pick it up. Take it upon yourself to take it with you. The same goes for tick marks, foul language, loud music, destroying vegetation, etc.

ZACHARY: What's your biggest challenge running a volunteer advocacy organization?

BEN: Figuring out what project to devote our time to. The NCCC board is completely volunteer based. Everyone on the board has a full-time job and family, so figuring out what to spend our limited time on is very important. There are tons of projects we have on the books, but it just takes time and patience to make them a reality.

ZACHARY: So, with your limited time, what are you focused on next?

BEN: Opening access to new climbing areas. The south shore of Horsetooth Reservoir and the Dakota Cliffs and Boulders along Route 287 are our main goals along these lines. We're also looking to create a replacement event for the Horsetooth Hang. The beloved event ended up eating too much of our time and resources, but we're missing a community event in its absence.

ZACHARY: Any tips or words of wisdom for other climbing advocates?

BEN: Try to stay motivated and patient. Nonprofit work is always a labor of love, but keeping a positive mindset and surrounding yourself with likeminded people is always a good way to go. ■



The Big W: The Importance of Wilderness Climbing Ethics

By: Whitney Boland

When you enter The Underground Chasm in Joshua Tree National Park, you notice a steep arête and, to the left, a smooth orange face holding a few long, steep sport routes—an atypical style in Joshua Tree, which is known for its old-school and run-out traditional face climbing. But when a climber approached The Chasm in 2012, he noticed something different. Makeshift “steps” had been chiseled into the rock leading up to the routes. As he got closer to the cliff, he also noticed the routes appeared to be “enhanced.”

In fact, “enhanced” is an understatement. He found hundreds of illegally placed bolts, chipped holds, fixed rope, stashed camping and climbing gear, and burnt Joshua trees as well as other damage to trees and plants.

This type of defacement is a no-no at any climbing area, but it is really disturbing in a designated Wilderness area—a parcel of land meant to be preserved in its natural state by an act of Congress. Not only was this behavior flat-out wrong, it was also illegal.

The old adage *pack in, pack out* and the mantra *leave no trace* are good general guidelines for any outdoor recreation. As climbers, we also need to know the rules for climbing on federally owned land in designated Wilderness.

But this can be tricky. First, designated Wilderness areas can fall across any federal land. The majority of climbing resources can be found on United States Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), or Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property—and these agencies all have different uses, rules, and regulations for their land. Second, there is no set of universal Wilderness laws across all of the agencies. So each agency is left to interpret the Wilderness Act on its own. And this makes climbing on these lands complicated.

A little history of the big W

The federal government owns roughly 655 million acres of land in the United States. And in 1964, Congress passed the Wilderness Act to protect the most prized areas of these federal lands, effectively preserving some of the country’s last remaining wild places. In its formative years, the Wilderness Act protected 9.1 million

acres, and it has grown to cover nearly 110 million acres.

Only Congress can designate an area as Wilderness, and once it does, the area is managed under a more stringent set of rules and regulations. It’s also worth noting that each agency can propose areas for Wilderness designation based on their characteristics. These Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) also are subject to more stringent regulations until Congress decides if they should be designated Wilderness or released, which can take months or even years.

The act defines Wilderness (with a capital W) as: “an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.” It aims to keep Wilderness areas preserved and free from human habitation or permanent improvements in order to maintain their natural, pristine conditions—stating, “There shall be no temporary road; no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment, or motorboats; no landing of aircraft; no other form of mechanical transport; and no structure or installation within any such (Wilderness) area.”

Title image: Congress designated the Zion Wilderness in Utah in 2009, and it now has a total of 124,406 acres. All of this Wilderness is managed by the National Park Service.

That text was written to prohibit things like roads and other infrastructure that would diminish the Wilderness characteristics of an area. But because climbing fixed anchors are, by definition, permanent, some land managers think they should also be banned under the act.

Climbing with fixed anchors in Wilderness

Today, climbing is considered a legitimate and longstanding use of our public lands. Even the NPS calls climbing a “welcome and historical use.” But climbers fought for this legitimacy.

Over the years, disputes between federal land agencies and climbers have not been uncommon—and many of them have revolved around the use of bolts and other fixed anchors in Wilderness.

In 1988, a pass-through hiker in the Tonto National Forest of Arizona saw bolts and notified a ranger who, citing the Wilderness Act, issued a bolting ban that continues to this day at the Tonto. Ten years later, Forest Service lawyers reviewed a Wilderness plan for the Sawtooth Wilderness in Idaho and interpreted the words “structure or installation” in the Wilderness Act to include all fixed anchors. Shortly thereafter, the USFS announced that climbers could no longer use “permanent, fixed anchors” in any Wilderness in America.

Climbers across the country erupted, and the Access Fund intervened with the position that the Wilderness Act does not prohibit climbing anchors. A 3/8-inch metal bolt or 1-inch nylon webbing is hardly the same as a road, truck, motorboat, or airplane. “Climbing is a legitimate activity in Wilderness, and the occasional use of

fixed anchors, which include pitons, fixed nuts, bolts, and even slung horns and trees, is essential for climber safety,” says Access Fund founder Armando Menocal.

Facing Congressional action to block the ban on fixed anchors, the USFS shelved the decision and put the future of climbing anchors to a process it called negotiated rulemaking (reg neg). Nineteen men and women from organizations like the Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, National Parks and Conservation Association, and Access Fund came together for this session. Also at the table were USFS representatives who were hard-core opponents to climbing anchors. And the group was tasked with reaching a consensus—100% agreement.

“The requirement of reaching a consensus effectively gave each negotiator a veto,” says Menocal. “Those who came opposed to any bolts never compromised, and reg neg flopped.”

In a way, however, reg neg was a victory for climbers. The legal opinion interpreting bolts as installation was reversed. Bolts and other anchors

are now treated like the impacts from other forms of recreation in Wilderness, and they are subject to strict management standards to ensure preservation of the Wilderness character of these lands.

While the result of the reg neg process applied only to USFS land, it helped form the fundamental position advocated by the Access Fund with all federal agencies that manage Wilderness.

But how does this ongoing 25-year fixed anchor debate fit into Wilderness climbing ethics?

Climbers should not take for granted their use of fixed anchors to climb in Wilderness. Years of advocacy have gone into preserving our ability to place and replace fixed anchors to climb safely in Wilderness areas. And all of that can be jeopardized by a few climbers who don’t follow the rules.

Beyond the fixed anchor debate

While fixed anchors have been at the center of the Wilderness climbing controversy, they aren’t the entire story. Other behaviors in Wilderness are also stirring up emotions.



Most of Joshua Tree National Park sits within the Joshua Tree Wilderness, designated by Congress in 1976 and managed by the National Park Service.

Feature Story

In 2007 during a patrol, Rocky Mountain National Park rangers found 25 stashed bouldering pads in Chaos Canyon. The following summer, rangers found nine in one day. Most recently, pad stashing at Mt. Evans, another Colorado bouldering mecca, has become an issue. Stashing pads—though, admittedly convenient in a place like Rocky Mountain or Evans with their long approaches—is illegal in a Wilderness area. And it's not just restricted to pads. Caching anything—pads, ropes, or other gear—is illegal, except in limited situations like on El Cap and a few other places where you can leave up fixed ropes for a certain period. But often this is allowed by permit only and on an area-by-area basis.

While it may be hard to see how a bunch of crash pads stashed in a talus field could cause a problem, consider what happens to those pads when marmots and pikas tear them up and eat them. You're basically littering in Wilderness, and you could be causing harm to animals.

While climbers have worked hard to be considered legitimate users of Wilderness areas, it's a stretch to say that we have a legal right to climb there. "We fought to preserve our ability to climb in Wilderness for a long time, and if you break standard rules by stashing gear and using a power drill, it's much easier for land managers to say 'I can't deal with that' and restrict climbing access," says Access Fund Policy Director R.D. Pascoe. And they have the legal authority to do so.

Knowing the rules of a designated Wilderness area is one thing, but what if you don't know you're in one?

This was the case when in 2004 climbers established Infinite Bliss (IV, 5.10b, 23 pitches), a bolted route on Mount Garfield in the central Cascades Mountains of Washington. These climbers did not realize that this area sat within the federally protected Alpine Lakes Wilderness. Not long after the route was established, *Rock and Ice* published a story that called it the "longest sport route in America." Someone from the Alpine Lakes Protection Society heard the news and immediately contacted the USFS. The main concerns were, one, that the party used a power drill to establish the route—strictly prohibited in Wilderness—and, two, that the public nature of the route would entice other first ascensionists to drill on the federally protected virgin rock. The discussion went up the chain of command to D.C.

"The climbers' defense was, 'hey, we didn't know we were in a Wilderness area,'" says Jason Keith, Access Fund senior policy advisor. "And, in fact, the Forest Service had still been publishing the old map before the Wilderness boundaries had been pushed down the mountain, so the climbers had a pretty good argument."

"But," Keith goes on, "the fact of the matter is that it didn't matter ... it's a law, and you don't get to claim ignorance."

Luckily, talk of chopping the 23-pitch route was dismissed, and instead the Washington Climbers Coalition volunteered to help the USFS spread the word that the use of power drills in designated Wilderness is strictly prohibited. The route remains today.

Being cognizant and taking the time to do a little research can go a long way. It all comes back to knowing where you're climbing, who manages the land, and what behaviors are acceptable. Following the rules for Wilderness areas can make the difference between keeping a climbing area open or seeing climbing get banned—for good. ■

What are good Wilderness climbing ethics?

Do your research. Find out if an area you plan to visit has a Wilderness designation or is a WSA. For a helpful resource, visit www.wilderness.net.

Remember: Power drills are prohibited in all Wilderness areas. Even hand-drilling can be prohibited, depending on the area. Know before you drill.

Pack it out. This applies to trash as well as gear. Stashed gear is considered abandoned gear in Wilderness.

Protect the Wilderness experience. Leave the land in its natural state by respecting fire bans/regulations and keeping music low enough to support the quiet enjoyment of visitors around you.

Check on and comply with area-specific permits. Know what's required for camping or prior authorization for fixed anchors (if they're allowed at all) or fixed ropes, which in some areas are allowed for a 24- to 48-hour period.

Be a good steward. If you see people breaking regulations, tell them—maybe they don't know the rules.

THE FUTURE OF **FIXED** ANCHORS



Over the weekend of November 16-18, the Access Fund convened approximately 80 route developers, advocates, and climbing industry representatives in Las Vegas to begin developing an American consensus for best bolting practices and to discuss the future of our sport.

Today, there is no formal, recognized consensus among the American climbing community when it comes to best practices for placing and replacing bolts. And that means lots of room for land managers to make arbitrary decisions concerning bolts that significantly affect climbing access.

Bolting bans, restrictions, and fines have been steadily increasing since the 1980s, with formal climbing management plans and site-specific bolting standards fast becoming the norm. As land managers become more aware of climbing activities, they are increasingly using their legal authority to regulate how climbing areas are used, developed, and maintained. And most of these land managers are not climbers, which means they lack the personal experience with climbing or route development to inform their decisions.

The Future of Fixed Anchors conference called on the leaders in our community to discuss how to maximize safety and sustainability while minimizing the environmental impact of bolts. The group covered a range of topics, including metallurgy 101, hardware specifications, placement and removal techniques, European bolting standards, federal policies on fixed anchors, and organizing rebolting initiatives. There were also demos where attendees got the chance to view and share different methods of placing and removing bolts.

Here are some key takeaways:

- The “Golden Era” of bolting totally under the radar is coming to an end.
- Mixing metals (i.e., stainless with non-stainless or aluminum) causes galvanic corrosion and should be avoided.
- Stainless steel lasts longer and is generally preferable in all but the most arid climates. The downside to stainless is the cost and possibility of over-torqueing, which can compromise strength. (There was not total agreement on this issue – some climbers believe that stainless should be the absolute standard, as it is in Europe, while others believe non-stainless has a role to play.)

- In solid rock, modern, properly placed 3/8" mechanical bolts are typically sufficient. In medium density rock, modern, properly placed 1/2" mechanical bolts are typically sufficient. In soft rock, glue-ins are usually the best option.
- Maintaining bolts is an expensive, thankless job that requires organization, funding, and knowledgeable volunteers.
- Developing positive relationships with land managers is the single most important way to protect climbing access.

The Future of Fixed Anchors conference was a huge success, but it only marked the beginning of the conversation. More work needs to be done, and the Access Fund is already planning the next conference. Stay tuned for a website that will be crowdsourced by climbers and industry representatives to share bolting information and instructional videos.

The Access Fund would like to thank the conference’s sponsors (Liberty Mountain, Petzl, Black Diamond, ClimbTech, and New Belgium Brewery) and attendees who traveled at their own expense to participate in this important effort. ■

2012 SHARP END AWARDS

For leadership and activism in preserving climbing access and the climbing environment.

Menocal Lifetime Achievement Award
GENE AND MAURA KISTLER



The Access Fund is proud to recognize Gene and Maura Kistler with a Menocal Lifetime Achievement Award for years of climbing advocacy, stewardship, and service in the New River Gorge. Gene and Maura have dedicated hundreds of hours to stewardship efforts, worked with countless land managers, founded the New River Alliance of Climbers (NRAC), served on the AF board of directors and as regional coordinators, and launched one of the most successful and popular grassroots climbing events in the country—the New River Rendezvous. Through the Rendezvous, Gene and Maura continue to inspire climbers across the country with a grassroots event that has access as its underlying cause. Their energy and commitment to the climbing community has inspired many, and their work protects one of the country’s most important climbing areas.

Bebie Leadership Award
MATT PERKINS

The Access Fund is honored to present a Bebie Leadership Award to Matt Perkins of the Washington Climbers Coalition. Matt has been a tireless advocate for climbing access in Washington for over 15 years. In 2012 alone, Matt worked to gain a reduced



nesting closure near North Bend that drew full climber cooperation, advocated for reasonable fixed anchor policies in the North Cascades, helped raise money for a toilet at Vantage, and coordinated 10 days of trail work at Index that involved four nonprofits and a state agency. In addition, Matt was the face of the Washington Climbers Coalition in meetings with recreation groups and government agencies.

Reese Martin Award
ERIC SORENSON

The Access Fund is thrilled to present Eric Sorenson with a Reese Martin Award for his climbing advocacy and stewardship in central Oregon. Cofounder of Central Oregon Rocks (COR), Eric has worked tirelessly to preserve and steward the many bouldering areas surrounding Bend. His leadership and collaborative approach has resulted in successful partnerships with local BLM and Forest Service offices, and preserved access to areas like the Widgei Boulders and Meadow Camp. Last year, Eric led a coalition of climbing advocacy organizations to work with the BLM toward more appropriate seasonal cliff-nesting bird closures at Trout Creek.



Sharp End Award
ERIK EISELE

The Access Fund honors Erik Eisele, Access Fund regional coordinator for New Hampshire, for his leadership in helping pass state legislation that supports climbing access. Avid climber,



newspaper reporter, and North Conway local, Erik spearheaded a push to add climbing-specific language to NH House Bill 1551 to protect landowners who open their land for recreation and other uses. The law strengthens climbing access in NH and increases the likelihood that landowners will allow climbing on their land.

Sharp End Award
BILL STRACHAN

The Access Fund is proud to present Bill Strachan with a Sharp End Award for his many years of dedicated climbing advocacy in the Red River Gorge region of Kentucky. Bill serves as the executive director of the Red River Gorge Climbers Coalition and has worked alongside other RRGCC advocates and volunteers toward the completion of the Pendergrass-Murray acquisition. He has faithfully represented climbers’ interests by showing up for every Forest Service meeting that affects climbing management. His commitment and involvement has also been key to RRGCC’s ongoing work with Daniel Boone National Forest to steward climbing areas, increase climbing access, and implement better climbing management overall.



Sharp End Award
SAM LIGHTNER, JR.

The Access Fund is pleased to honor Sam Lightner, Jr., for his dedicated and effective work as the president of the Friends of Indian Creek (FOIC). Even before taking the helm of FOIC,



Sam worked proactively with local land managers at Indian Creek, Castleton, Arches, and elsewhere in the greater Canyonlands region to improve climber–land manager relationships, protect access, and organize stewardship projects. As FOIC president, Sam has greatly increased climbers' ability to positively influence management proposals. His advocacy continues to strengthen climbing activism across southeastern Utah. And if you've ever rappelled off a bomber set of camouflaged bolts in the desert, chances are you've got Sam to thank!

Sharp End Award JOSH REYES

The Access Fund is proud to recognize Josh Reyes for his work to permanently protect Hospital



Boulders of Alabama and his service to the Southeastern climbing community. Josh has been an active board member of the Southeastern Climbers Coalition since 2007. He has consistently maintained positive relationships with the Hospital Boulders' former landowners, with the goal of negotiating a purchase to protect the beautiful boulder field. Despite ongoing challenges, and nearly losing the boulders at private auction, his dedication and hard work paid off in November 2012 when Josh, along with SCC and the Access Fund, completed the purchase.

Sharp End Award BLACK DIAMOND



The Access Fund is honored to present Black Diamond with a Sharp End Award for their unwavering commitment to preserving and protecting the climbing environment. A generous supporter of the Access Fund since our grassroots beginnings, Black Diamond has helped the Access Fund grow stronger and expand our advocacy. Over the years, Black Diamond has joined the Access Fund in political action to protect climbing, and they continue to lead the outdoor industry in preserving the wild and natural places we climb. We applaud the company's community-minded vision and commitment to access and the environment.

Land Conservation Award RED RIVER GORGE CLIMBERS COALITION

The Access Fund is excited to present RRGCC with a Land Conservation Award for its dedication to protecting the Pendergrass-Murray Recreational Preserve (PMRP). Situated in southeastern Kentucky's Cumberland Plateau, the 750-acre preserve contains over 300 sport and traditional rock climbs. The area is extremely popular, attracting climbers from around the world. RRGCC purchased the PMRP in 2004 and fundraised for eight years through their annual Rocktoberfest event, major donors, and two Access Fund grants. In 2009, the Access Fund refinanced



RRGCC's remaining \$65,000 seller-financed loan, eliminating the risk of losing the property if an annual payment was missed. With the support of climbers nationwide, the loan was repaid in October 2012. We congratulate RRGCC on this hard-won success!

Land Conservation Award WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS CLIMBERS' COALITION

The Access Fund is proud to present the Western Massachusetts Climbers' Coalition (WMCC) with a



Land Conservation Award for its dedication to protecting climbing access at Farley Ledges. In December 2012, WMCC completed five years of fundraising for the Farley Ledges Preservation Initiative. Farley Ledges contain arguably the best climbing in southern New England between Rumney, New Hampshire, and the Gunks in eastern New York. WMCC's 2007 acquisition of the area, after decades of troubled access, secured parking and critical access for climbers. WMCC paid down a significant portion of the original bank loan through annual fundraising events, major donors, an original Access Fund grant, and other grassroots fundraising. In 2009, the Access Fund refinanced the coalition's remaining \$30,000 bank loan. The WMCC successfully repaid the loan in December 2012, returning the money to the Access Fund's revolving conservation fund where it will be available for future conservation efforts. ■

Corporate Partners

For 80 years, **La Sportiva** has been bringing you superior technical footwear for your outdoor adventures. They've also helped the Access Fund protect climbing areas since the beginning. This year, La Sportiva is showing their commitment to stewarding climbing areas by supporting the Access Fund–Jeep Conservation Team. And you'll be seeing La Sportiva hats available at climbing events and festivals around the U.S. for a small donation to the Access Fund. We thank La Sportiva for their dedication to protecting America's climbing.



These partners are businesses that put their money where their mouth is to support the future of climbing. Please consider the important contribution these partners make to your climbing future. They support the Access Fund and you. We encourage you to support them!

ABOVE THE CLOUDS - \$100,000+

Jeep® Brand/Chrysler Group, LLC
Mountain Gear
Outdoor Research
prAna
The North Face

TITANIUM - \$50,000+

Black Diamond Equipment, LTD
CLIF Bar & Company
Mammut
MSR
Petzl®
Therm-a-Rest®

DIAMOND PLUS - \$35,000+

Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI)

DIAMOND - \$20,000+

Alpinist Magazine
Climbing Magazine
Dead Point Magazine
Marmot
Patagonia
Planet Granite
Rock & Ice Magazine
Touchstone Climbing, Inc.
Urban Climber Magazine

PLATINUM PLUS - \$15,000+

Osprey

PLATINUM - \$10,000+

Archer Law Offices, P.C.
Big Up Productions
eGrips Climbing Holds
GORE-TEX® Products
Jason Keith Consulting

Mountain Hardware
Mountain Project
Sender Films
Stanley
Stonewear Designs
Trango

GOLD PLUS - \$7,500+

Carhartt
La Sportiva
Native Eyewear
Rock/Creek
SCARPA North America
Sterling Rope Company

GOLD - \$5,000+

Cause & Effect Productions
New England Ropes
ROCK'n & JAM'n
The Spot Boulderling Gym
Xcel Energy

SILVER - \$2,500+

Arc'teryx
Avery Brewing Company
BlueWater Ropes
Campmor
Falcon Guides
Liberty Mountain Climbing
Mad Rock
Metolius
Outdoor Retailer
Schoeller
SuperTopo.com

MAJOR - \$1,000+

Backwoods
CAMP USA
Climb Max Mountaineering
Drive Current
Evolve Sports
Fixed Pin Publishing
Louder Than 11
Moosejaw
Mountain Khakis
New Belgium Brewing Company
Professional Climbers International (PCI)

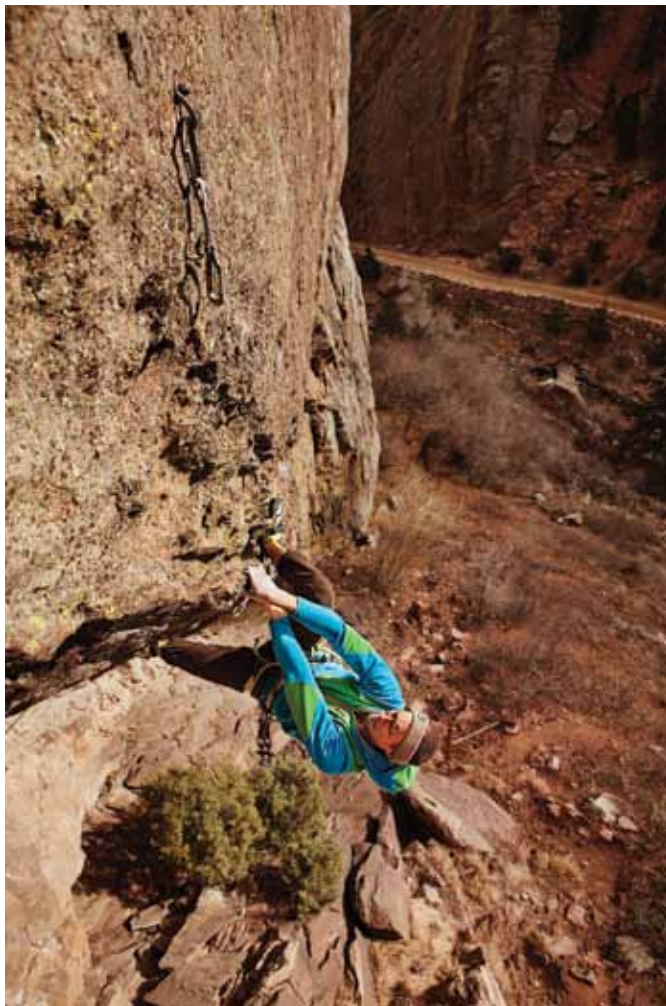
Sea to Summit
Treasure Mountain Inn
Upslope Brewing Company
Yates Gear Inc.

CONTRIBUTING - \$500+

Adventure Inn Moab
Aiguille Rock Climbing Center
Alpine Ascents International
Alpine Endeavors
Amarillo Rock Climbing House
Armaid
DMM Excalibur/Wild Country/
Red Chili
Desert Rock Sports
Eddie McStiffs
Footprints, Inc.
GearEXPRESS.com
Geezer, Inc.
Got it! Real Estate & Development
Gregory Packs
Julbo
KNS Reps, Inc.
Love Muffin Café
Moab Half Marathon
Mountain Tools
Neptune Mountaineering
Oskar Blues Brewery
Outdoor Utah Adventure
Poison Spider Bicycles
Rocks and Ropes of Tucson
Stone Age Climbing Gym
Times Independent Publishing
Tom K. Michael, DDS, PS
Trailspace.com
Vandalian Restaurant
Verde PR & Consulting
Wes & Gold

SUPPORTING - \$250+

Boulder Rock Club/Colorado
Mountain School
Climb Nashville
Omega Pacific
Intelligentsia
Mesa Rim Climbing Center
The Law Firm for Non-Profits
Zeal Optics



Left to right: Matt Lloyd comes over the lip on Lipsync in Eldorado Canyon, CO | © D. Scott Clark. An anonymous climber on the beautiful line of Kaleidoscope in Red River Gorge, KY | © D. Scott Clark.

D. Scott Clark

Following the footsteps of his father, D. Scott Clark grew up adventuring anywhere he could. Even in Indiana he found cliffs to fall off and caves to get caught in. Scott started carrying a camera everywhere he went and documenting his adventures. After four years at university, Scott took off into the real world ready to take the photography world by storm. Two years of freelancing with advertising firms in Indiana showed Scott he needed to get out of the small pond, so he packed his bags and headed to Mumbai, India. Scott worked with ad firms and magazines across India, but mostly he found himself traveling about the subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

Rock climbing had been a passion of Scott's for some time, and when he started photographing climbing in Hampi and Badami he realized it was time for a career change. Adventure lifestyle photography is now his passion, yet he brings his advertising and commercial experience to every shot. Right now D. Scott Clark lives in Boulder, CO, photographing everything outdoor adventure and lifestyle. When not he's shooting for clients, you'll find him climbing rocks or frozen waterfalls, or cruising down a mountain searching for powder stashes on his fatty skis. To see more of Scott's work, visit www.scottclarkphotography.net. ■



Your Climbing Future

The Access Fund
P.O. Box 17010
Boulder, Colorado 80308

CONSERVATION TEAM Spring Schedule



Eddie and Claire will start their Spring '13 tour by doing trail work in the south. Stay tuned to their Facebook page for updates on their current location and opportunities to get out and help them with some trail work:

www.facebook.com/conservationteam

- March 27 - 31: Horseshoe Canyon Ranch near Fayetteville, AR
- April 3 - 14: Holy Boulders near Carbondale, IL
- April 24 - 28: Rumbling Bald in Chimney Rock, NC
- May 1 - 5: Red River Gorge near Lexington, KY
- May 18 - 19: Riverrock Climbing Competition in Richmond, VA
- May 22 - 26: Grayson Highlands State Park near Martinsville, VA
- May 29 - June 2: New River Gorge in Fayetteville, WV
- June 5 - 9: National Trails Day in the Gunks near New Paltz, NY
- June 12 - 16: Pawtuckaway near Manchester, NH
- June 19 - 23: Rumney, NH