

VERTICAL TIMES

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10 Climbing Areas in Crisis

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Protect America's Climbing

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“It takes two flints to make a fire.”

– LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

Here's a fun experiment: Throw a group of dedicated, passionate climbers in a room and ask them, “How are we going to save our climbing areas?”

No, this isn't Access Fund's origin story (although it's pretty close). But it's the premise behind Access Fund's summits, trainings, and conferences, which we've been hosting for more than 25 years.

I went to my first Access Fund summit in 2009. It was in Dr. Bob Matheny's log cabin, tucked under one of the Red River Gorge's most historic crags, Torrent Falls. Two dozen volunteer climbing advocates from all over the country were crammed into Bob's living room to learn and share best practices for climbing conservation, ignoring the world-class sandstone 50 feet from the cabin door.

It was a total eye-opener. I was the newbie volunteer, having just joined my local climbing organization, and all around me were giants, folks who'd spent years fighting hard for their climbing areas. They'd been down the hard road of closed crags and advocacy failures. They were the pioneers of real, on-the-ground solutions that worked. The strength of their passion and dedication was palpable...and motivating. If they can do it, I can do it—we can do it!

I have that same feeling now, having just returned from Access Fund's most recent summit in New York City. Over 120 climbers came together at our 2018 National Climbing Advocacy Summit (presented by Patagonia) to share and learn new strategies in climbing conservation. As new and old climbing advocates mixed, piling into conference rooms in a tall building in Manhattan, the energy was palpable. We were here to work on keeping climbing areas open and conserved.

But alongside the excitement and positivity was a common thread of concern: Our world-class climbing areas are suffering from world-class impacts and problems. It's becoming harder and harder to mitigate impacts from the growing number of climbers. While this has been a long-term battle, the problem is more acute than ever. So few of our climbing areas are built or managed for the number of climbers using them today. I heard the same phrase again and again: “Our climbing areas are being loved to death.”

Our charge now is to love these areas back to life. And that starts with getting real about the impacts, acknowledging the need for recreation infrastructure to protect these places, and bringing a whole heck of a lot more resources to bear. We can do it, if we come together. We're at a crux, but we're climbers. We can't be afraid to take on this challenge.

As you gather with family and friends over the holidays, remember your climbing areas and the special experiences they bring to your life. At Access Fund we'll be thinking of you, your local crag, and your generous support. Please consider making a tax-deductible gift before year-end to support our work. The back page of this issue also has some great holiday gift ideas for climbers, and all proceeds support the cause.

Sincerely,



Zachary Lesch-Huie
Interim Executive Director



Become a Legacy Donor

Some of us may never develop a climbing route, put up a first ascent, write a guidebook, or climb 5.15. But there are other ways to contribute to the story of climbing in America. Making a planned gift to Access Fund is an easy way to establish your own legacy of climbing access, and give back to the climbing experience. Planned giving is not just for the wealthy or financial planning experts. Learn more at www.accessfund.org/plannedgift

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National Climbing Advocacy Summit

New York City was the backdrop for our National Climbing Advocacy Summit in late September. Presented by Patagonia, the event brought together more than 120 climbers, advocates, and conservationists from across the country for a day of workshops and discussions on climbing access and stewardship. If you missed it, check out the photos and presentations at our website at www.accessfund.org/2018summit.

15th Annual Yosemite Facelift a Huge Success

Yosemite Climbing Association (YCA) teamed up with Yosemite National Park again this year for another hugely successful weeklong Yosemite Facelift. Volunteers hauled out over 8,000 pounds of trash. YCA and Access Fund also hosted a panel discussion on transitioning from indoor to outdoor climbing with athletes Chris Schulte, Kate Rutherford, and Jeff Loda (The Warrior's Way trainer). Access Fund is excited to now offer joint membership with YCA, meaning you can support Access Fund and YCA with a single membership and help fund this incredible event!

LCO 101: Preparing for Large-Scale Stewardship Initiatives

— Julia Geisler, Executive Director of Salt Lake Climbers Alliance

LCOs everywhere are recognizing that climbing areas are in need of a real overhaul to truly achieve sustainability. So how do you take the leap from one-day Adopt a Crag events to multi-month or even multi-year stewardship initiatives?

- **Consider the entire climbing system.** Where do climbers park, where do they use the restroom, how do they get to crags, how do they get off the boulders, are there other users (hikers, equestrians) who need to be accommodated, are there any species of concern, do fixed anchors need to be replaced?
- **Outline the needs and develop a plan.** Start with a comprehensive map that includes trails, parking, popular crags, etc. Then put pen to paper and outline all the needs throughout the area. Think of reasonable time frames and phases in which the work can be accomplished. Prioritize the needs and document how these may be met in a proposal with a realistic budget.
- **Consider regulations and policies.** If you're working on public land, become familiar with the laws, policies, and regulations that land managers work under. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) governs this process on all federal lands, and you'll need to provide as much information as possible in your project proposals to establish the need, prove you've done due diligence, and show a good concept and implementation plan. If you're working on private land, make sure you establish a relationship with the landowner to work through project proposals and necessary permissions.
- **Find experts to get work done.** The type of recreation infrastructure needed at most climbing areas is not something every volunteer or even trail crew has the expertise to produce. The Access Fund-Jeep Conservation Team crews are a good place to start, and you can supplement with a dedicated group of volunteers or other professional crews or Conservation Corps.
- **Get funding.** Look to leverage any and all resources. Federal, state, and local grants are great avenues, especially for well-thought-out proposals by qualified organizations tackling complex conservation issues. A local fundraising campaign within your community can also be very effective. Consider local companies that are invested in a higher quality of life for people in their community. Also, don't forget the Access Fund Climbing Conservation Grants program as a seed source.



CLIMB LIKE A LOCAL: COCHISE STRONGHOLD

Cochise Stronghold is a jagged ridge of granite peaks and spires that rise out of the remote Dragoon Mountains in southern Arizona. About 1.5 hours southeast of Tucson, this spectacular spot offers a lifetime of remote climbing adventures. Spend a day on the massive granite domes and you'll see why the Chiricahua Apache made this place their stronghold.

LOCAL VIBE: Like all great desert climbing destinations, the Stronghold (as locals call it) is home to the elusive desert rat climber. But good luck finding one...they are more than likely hunting offwidth, flares, slab, and gnarly trad routes out in the hinterlands. Due to its remote location, the Stronghold mostly draws climbers looking for rugged approaches and solitude.

CLIMBING STYLE: If multi-pitch trad and mix climbing is your thing, you'll be psyched with the Stronghold. The style of climbing ranges from scenic cruises up highways of jug plates to glass slabs that will make you question your life decisions. You can also find single pitch routes at Isle of You, Vineyard Cove, or Zappa Dome.

AVOID THE CROWDS: What crowds? It's not uncommon to climb at the Stronghold on a perfect weather weekend and not see another soul.

WATCH OUT! Keep your ears and eyes open for rattlesnakes, which call this area home. Also, don't be surprised if you run into border patrol agents. They may stop you if they think you're up to no good, but there's normally no reason for concern.

LOCAL PET PEEVE: It's hard to get the locals peeved when you can't find them. But if you should happen upon one of these desert creatures, keep in mind that they can become very ornery and ill-tempered if you are toting a portable stereo, get tangled in their ropes, or are generally

unprepared for the remote adventure climbing. Deep down, they are nice people though.

NATIVE HISTORY: The Stronghold was an ancestral home to the Chiricahua Apache. The name Cochise came from one of the greatest Apache war chiefs, known for having survived many battles and physical wounds. Cochise and his band of warriors used the walls of the canyon as a hideout to evade capture by U.S. forces after being falsely accused of kidnapping a child from a ranch. Cochise and his war tribe remained unconquered and signed a peace treaty in 1872. Cochise is said to be buried somewhere in the Cochise Stronghold area, but the location remains unknown.

CAMPING BETA: This beautiful area is separated into two sides of the range: East and West. There's one U.S. Forest Service (USFS) campground on the east side, which has toilets but no water. Both sides offer primitive dispersed camping on USFS land, but don't expect to find toilets or water. Look for spots that are already established in order to minimize your impact, and pack out whatever you pack in—including human waste, which doesn't biodegrade in desert soil.

REST DAY BETA: About an hour south there's the funky old mining town of Bisbee, which is now filled with a unique collection of artists and shops. You can also find decent food here, at places like Bisbee Breakfast Club and a solid dinner spot called The Quarry. Or check out the historic town of Tombstone (home to the famous O.K. Corral), which is only about an hour from the east side.

PRO-TIP: "Recreate with respect and practice good Leave No Trace ethics. The desert is highly susceptible to impact, and it is our responsibility to protect the living biology to ensure access for future generations." —Aaron Mike, local climbing guide and Access Fund Native Lands Ambassador ■

CLIMBERS CAN HELP **SAVE BATS**

BATS IN NORTH AMERICA ARE IN TROUBLE

TOP THREATS¹

- ⊗ Pesticide Use
- ⊗ Disease
- ⊗ Habitat Loss
- ⊗ Wind Energy Conflicts

6 MILLION bats in the United States have died from white-nose syndrome in the last 7 years, and the disease is spreading.²

WHY BATS ARE IMPORTANT



8.4 METRIC TONS of insects are eaten per night by a colony of 1 million Mexican free-tailed bats in Texas.³



~\$23 BILLION in cost savings for agriculture across North America, without the use of harmful insecticides.⁴



Certain bats **POLLINATE THE AGAVE PLANT**, which is the source of commercial tequila.⁵ So, go toast a bat!

HOW CLIMBERS CAN HELP

Since climbers spend time in bat habitat (rock walls and cracks), they are an invaluable resource to researchers.



LOOK

- Bats!
- Guano (aka bat poop): looks like mouse droppings but with pinched ends, not rounded



NOTE

- Route name and height
- Date and time
- Number of bats or amount of guano



REPORT

- Email bat reports to climbersforbats@colostate.edu



PREVENT SPREAD OF DISEASE: Don't mix caving and climbing equipment. The white-nose syndrome can be unintentionally spread by climbers if gear has been used in contaminated environments (like caves or mines).

¹Wind energy (Arnett, E. B. et al. 2008. Patterns of bat fatalities at wind energy facilities in North America.); Pesticide use (O'Shea, T. J. and D. R. Clark, Jr. 2002. An overview of contaminants and bats, with special reference to insecticides and the Indiana bat.); Habitat loss (Law, B., K. J. Park, and M. J. Lacki. 2015. Insectivorous bats and silviculture: balancing timber production and bat conservation).

²US Fish and Wildlife Service. 2012. North American bat death toll exceeds 5.5 million from white-nose syndrome. Press release (January 17, 2012).

³Kunz, T. H., E. Braun de Torrez, D. Bauer, T. Lobova, and T. H. Fleming. 2011. Ecosystem services provided by bats. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1223:1-38.

⁴Boyles, J. G., P. M. Cryan, G. F. McCracken, and T. H. Kunz. 2011. Economic importance of bats in agriculture. *Science* 332:41-42.

⁵Slauson, L. A. 2000. Pollination biology of two chiropterophilous agaves in Arizona. *American Journal of Botany* 87:825-836.



Protect America's Climbing

WILLIAMSON ROCK ON PATH TO REOPENING

Williamson Rock was Southern California's premier summer sport climbing destination until it was closed in 2005 when Little Rock Creek and areas surrounding Williamson Rock were designated as critical habitat for the endangered Mountain Yellow-Legged Frog (MYLF).

This designation prompted the Forest Service to issue a one-year closure of Williamson Rock to climbing. Following the initial closure, several conservation organizations sued the Forest Service to extend the closure, and won. Williamson Rock has been closed ever since.

For years, the Access Fund and local climbing organizations have been advocating for an environmental impact study (EIS) that would evaluate climbing management strategies that could allow controlled climbing access while still protecting the MYLF. However, budget restrictions and bureaucratic roadblocks have prevented the study from moving forward.

In July of this year, Angeles National Forest officials announced that they are finally moving forward with the study, and they released a draft environmental impact statement that proposes several options for reopening Williamson Rock to climbing.

"This is the most progress we've seen in over a decade, and we are optimistic that this planning process will lead to the reopening of this iconic Southern California crag," says Katie Goodwin, Access Fund's California regional director.

Access Fund's policy staff conducted a thorough analysis of the draft environmental impact study and submitted comments to the Forest Service, represented climbers at public meetings, and rallied nearly 500 climbers to submit their own comments to the Forest Service, in support of this proposed plan to allow controlled climbing access. Access Fund has been working alongside Southern California Mountaineers Association, Friends of Joshua Tree, Allied Climbers of San Diego, California Wilderness Coalition, Sender One, Gear Coop, REI Co-op, Latino Outdoors, Bay Area Climbers Coalition, and the Stronghold Climbing Gym.

"Climbers stood up and made their voices heard in this critical planning process, and that made a huge difference," says Goodwin. "Although the planning process is underway, the Forest Service still has more due diligence ahead, and we don't expect to see any changes until 2020."

We ask that climbers continue to respect the current closure of Williamson Rock, and be patient with the EIS process. We understand how frustrating this long closure has been for the Southern California climbing community. Representatives from the USFS have noted and applauded the climbing community's respect of the closure, and this restraint has gone a long way in proving that climbers are responsible users who can be trusted to steward the area and help protect the MYLF.■



10 CLIMBING AREAS IN CRISIS

World-class climbing isn't the only thing these 10 areas have in common. Each one has made its way onto this list because it is facing a major threat—more climbers than the landscape can handle. And things are getting dicey. Access Fund is actively engaged at each of these endangered areas, but we're reaching the tipping point quickly, and we're likely to start seeing restricted access and even closures if we don't come together to address these issues.



Photo courtesy of © Andrew Burr

1 RED ROCK CANYON, NEVADA

With world-class climbing within minutes of Vegas, it's no wonder that droves of climbers descend on this wild landscape each year. But here's the problem: This desert environment is fragile, and when people constantly create new approach and descent routes, they kill native plants that prevent erosion. People are also leaving their poop and toilet paper everywhere, thinking they will biodegrade, but they simply won't break down in desert soil. If conditions continue to deteriorate, land managers could be faced with hard decisions.



Photo courtesy of © Elodie Saracco

2 RED RIVER GORGE, KENTUCKY

The Red River Gorge is one of the crown jewels of American climbing, known across the globe as one of the best steep sport climbing destinations in the world. But it's time to get real: The number of climbers visiting the Red is out of control. On any given day, popular crags will have a rope and group on every climb, with a waiting line right behind them. All those feet and gear have killed most of the vegetation at the base of cliffs, including shade trees, turning many popular crags into dirt piles baking in the sun and littered with human waste. Climbers are losing the deep connection to nature that these crags once offered. And private landowners, who manage the bulk of climbing in the Red, are taking notice. The threat of closures here is as real as it gets—just ask locals who lost access to Roadside Crag for seven years.

3 TEN SLEEP, WYOMING

Hundreds of pocketed limestone sport routes, great camping, and perfect summer temps have put the once obscure Ten Sleep Canyon on the map. Over the last 10 years, large crowds of climbers are unintentionally crushing a wider and wider swath of plant life, which is causing the base of the cliffs to crumble away from erosion. Climbers are also making the most of roadside pull-offs that weren't designed for recreation parking, causing friction with locals and creating safety hazards. Poop and toilet paper flowers are also a growing concern. To make matters worse, the Bighorn National Forest budget was recently slashed, meaning the land manager doesn't have the staff or funds to fix these problems.



Photo courtesy of © Louis Arevalo

4 RUMNEY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Rumney is one of the most iconic sport climbing destinations in the Northeast, offering hundreds of quality routes within an easy drive from Boston, Quebec, and New York City. If the sun is shining, Rumney is packed. But Rumney is seeing more climbers than it can handle: Parking areas are overrun, and climbers have created a ton of unapproved trails, which spreads out our impact and leads to unstable hillsides. If we don't course-correct soon, trails and staging areas will be so blown out that they won't recover, creating safety concerns and environmental impacts that will be hard for the Forest Service to ignore.



Photo courtesy of © Lee Hansche

5 EASY WAYS YOU CAN HELP

1. Donate to our stewardship initiatives. Our Conservation Teams are working with locals to build sustainable recreation infrastructure at these areas, and hundreds of other areas across the country, so they can handle our growing numbers.

2. Speak up! Tell federal land managers that climbers are committed to stewarding our climbing areas, but they need to cut the red tape and allow our Conservation Teams and local volunteers to build sustainable infrastructure.

3. Minimize your impact. Commit to The Climber's Pact, and learn how to tread lightly.

4. Give these areas a rest. Go discover some new climbing areas, and give these ultra-popular spots some time to recover.

5. Volunteer with your time. Your local climbing organization is working alongside Access Fund to address these issues, and we always need volunteers. If you're visiting the area from out of town, consider giving up a day of climbing to volunteer.



Photo courtesy of © Andrew Burr

5 INDIAN CREEK, UTAH

Offering renowned crack climbing in a spectacularly vast and primitive landscape, Indian Creek draws climbers from all over the world. Access Fund estimates that the number of climbers visiting Indian Creek has doubled over the last five years. All those feet and vehicles are unintentionally crushing sensitive desert soil, and camping areas, approach trails, and cliff bases are crumbling. In this desert landscape, cryptobiotic soil plays a star role in stabilizing the earth and sustaining life—it takes decades to grow and a single footstep to destroy. People are also leaving poop and toilet paper everywhere, thinking they will biodegrade, but they simply won't break down in desert soil. Indian Creek is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and this arm of our federal lands system is notoriously strapped for funds and staff, which means it doesn't have the resources to address these impacts.



Photo courtesy of © Michael Turner

6 NEW RIVER GORGE, WEST VIRGINIA

The New River Gorge is one of the most iconic and popular climbing areas in the U.S., with endless miles of bulletproof sandstone trad, sport, and bouldering in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains. This forested landscape is also home to salamanders, lichens, mosses, rodents, and countless other species that make up an impressive ecosystem. But heavy climber traffic has taken its toll on the environment—resulting in beaten-down cliff bases with no vegetation and exposed roots that are killing shade trees. Land managers are taking notice of these unsavory conditions, and we are close to the tipping point. Land managers are likely to react harshly as soon as impacts move beyond their comfort zone.



Photo courtesy of © Peter Dodge

7 JOE'S VALLEY, UTAH

Joe's Valley exploded in popularity in early 2000, and it has seen nonstop growth ever since, drawing climbers from around the world to conquer its sandstone boulders. But Joe's Valley faces some unique challenges. Given the close proximity of climbing and camping to the nearby reservoir and seasonal creek beds, the local water supply is in real danger of being contaminated by human waste from visiting climbers. And heavy foot traffic and pad placements are killing native plants and causing extremely eroded and unstable landing areas and trails. Visitors are also parking illegally on narrow canyon roads with very limited visibility, creating safety hazards.

8 LEAVENWORTH, WASHINGTON

Leavenworth has it all—from roadside crags to world-class bouldering and access to breathtaking alpine adventures. But the same granite that attracts climbers from across the globe also creates a decomposing granitic soil that is just like kitty litter. And on steep and heavily trafficked approach slopes, this is a recipe for eroded hillsides, rapid sedimentation in water sources, and quickly deteriorating cliffsides. Add to that a growing concern about human waste and limited parking, and land managers will be faced with some hard decisions.



Photo courtesy of © Truc Allen

9 BOULDER CANYON, COLORADO

The Front Range of Colorado has one of the highest concentrations of climbers in the country, and Boulder Canyon offers them a few thousand routes on quality granite with quick roadside access. This well-loved climbing area has a list of issues a mile long, starting with the fact that the decomposing granitic soils that make up the canyon are some of the fastest to erode, making approach trails and cliff bases incredibly vulnerable to Rocky Mountain thunderstorms, rapid snowmelt, and heavy foot traffic. Climbers are also parking and walking along the tight canyon corridors en masse, often exploding into traffic lanes and creating huge safety problems. To further complicate matters, the climbing areas, roadside parking, and approach trails are located across a complex matrix of land ownership, meaning it can take years to get necessary approvals to put a shovel in the ground to improve these conditions.



Photo courtesy of © Ethan Welty

10 JACKSON FALLS, ILLINOIS

With a dense concentration of high-quality climbing on phenomenal sandstone, the centrally located Jackson Falls in southern Illinois is a magnet for climbers in the region. In many places, climbing approach trails and belay platforms share travel corridors with heavy equestrian use, and these combined impacts are killing plants, exposing tree roots, and speeding erosion. As visitors struggle to find areas to pass each other, store their gear, or watch climbers, they expand human impacts by moving farther and farther from approved trails, threatening to displace native species. Like so many other forests, the Shawnee National Forest is seeing a shrinking budget and lacks the resources to fix these issues without our support.



Photo courtesy of © Dan Brayack

HELP SAVE CLIMBING AREAS

A GIFT SUPPORTING CLIMBING STEWARDSHIP

Our climbing areas are redlining—beat up and crumbling under the pressure of a growing climbing community. And we need your help. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation before year-end to help us build recreation infrastructure at our climbing areas, helping them withstand the increased traffic.



[www.accessfund.org/
DonateStewardship](http://www.accessfund.org/DonateStewardship)



INNOVATING for Sustainable Bolt Replacement

Many climbing bolts were installed decades ago, using subpar materials that were not meant to withstand the test of time. As the huge number of bolts placed during the 80s and 90s begin to reach their 20th or 30th birthdays, the replacement need is growing bigger every day.

Bolt replacement has been going on for decades, and much of the early replacement saw climbers slap in a new bolt next to the old one, chop the old bolt, patch the hole, and call it good. This was progress, but it often damaged or scarred the rock. And if replacers used subpar metal, the new bolt didn't last much longer, requiring a third and even fourth replacement bolt.

"In some unfortunate cases, you can see three or four generations of replacement bolts, with ugly chopped studs

nearby and literally no space to properly place a good bolt, since poor replacement jobs ate up all the real estate," says Zachary Lesch-Huie, interim executive director with Access Fund.

In 2012, Access Fund began convening the bolt replacement community with a Future of Fixed Anchors conference to share best practices on sustainable bolt replacement. And with the future safety and aesthetics of our routes in mind, some innovative members of the bolt replacement community began experimenting with extracting old bolts and reusing existing holes instead of drilling new ones. And they saw good success.

While this hole reuse method is a much more sustainable way of replacing aging bolts, it was no simple task, as it required specialized tools and techniques to extract the



Looking to fill this need, Access Fund tracked down two of those crafty few—Geir Hundal of Tucson, Arizona, and Greg German of Boulder, Colorado, who were working on several prototypes of innovative bolt removal devices. Building off of Greg's "doodad" tool, Geir eventually developed two simple-to-use, lightweight bolt removal devices: the Hurley Senior, designed to pull compression bolts (button heads and others), and the Hurley Junior, used to pull wedge and five-piece bolts. These tools had the potential to bring sustainable bolt replacement within reach of a much broader audience—if they could be replicated and put in the hands of bolt replacers for testing and feedback.

With Greg's help, Access Fund tracked down a local machinist with the ability to produce short runs of Geir's bolt removal devices from his home shop, as demand required. After reproducing Geir's designs, Access Fund began a beta testing program for the Hurleys, putting the tools into the hands of experienced bolt replacement volunteers across the country for feedback.

Today, Access Fund is manufacturing and distributing the Hurley Junior and Hurley Senior devices for beta testing, free of charge. The response from the bolt replacement community has been enthusiastic, and as these tools continue to pull more and more aging hardware from rock across the country, we are compiling suggestions for subtle tweaks to both the tool design and removal techniques.

To maintain the character, beauty, and safety of climbing routes into the future, we must minimize the number of times we have to drill the rock to place and replace bolts. Right now, the best way we know to do that is through careful removal with Hurley and similar devices and replacement with big, beefy corrosion-resistant bolts that will last for many decades or even centuries.

Eventually we'd like to see these tools, or tools like them, in the hands of every volunteer or local climbing group

doing replacement work, so that old holes can be reused and outfitted with long-lasting, corrosion-resistant hardware. The technology may change over time, but

the end goal of minimizing damage to the rock and having bomber fixed anchors that last a long time is the name of the game. ■

old bolts without damaging the hole or the integrity of the surrounding rock. And the necessary tools simply didn't exist on the market.

"For the crafty few with an engineering background, access to a machine shop, and the wherewithal to fabricate parts, this can be a reasonable task. But for most volunteer

bolt replacers this was insurmountable, making sustainable bolt replacement nowhere near scalable enough to tackle the growing need," says Mike Morin, Access Fund's Northeast regional director.

"In some unfortunate cases, you can see three or four generations of replacement bolts, with ugly chopped studs nearby and literally no space to properly place a good bolt, since poor replacement jobs ate up all the real estate."

Corporate Partners

The North Face has supported Access Fund's mission to protect America's climbing areas for more than two decades. For the last three years, The North Face has gone above and beyond to support *Climb the Hill*, helping Access Fund and the American Alpine Club send climbers to Capitol Hill to advocate for climbing. We thank The North Face for its generous and consistent support.



NEVER STOP EXPLORING™

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 Access Fund and you. We encourage you to support them!

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Taxa Outdoors

SILVER - \$2,500+

1908 Brands
ABC Kids Climbing
Arcana
Arc'teryx
Bitter Bar
Boulder Brands
Boulder Rock Club
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Movement Climbing + Fitness
Mystery Ranch
Olympia Beer
Omega Pacific
Outdoor Retailer
Pacific Edge Climbing Gym
Phoenix Climbs Events
Phoenix Edge Climbing Gym
Phoenix Rock Gym
Ridgeline Venture Law
Rock & Ice
Santo
Scarpa North America
Sciencia Collective
Stone Age Climbing Gym
Stone Gardens

MAJOR - \$1,000+

Alliant
American Alpine Institute
Armaid
Ascend Pittsburgh
Avery Brewing Company
BlueWater Ropes
Butora
CAMP USA
Carabiner Coffee Co.
Carhartt

Feathered Friends
Film Festival Flix
Float Apparel
Fonta Flora
Goat's Beard Mountain Supplies
Good To-Go
GSI Outdoors
High Point Climbing and Fitness
Hippy Tree
John Evans Photography
Joshua Ets-Hokin Photography
Mesa Rim - Climbing, Fitness, and Yoga Centers
Mick Tresemer Rope Art
Movement Climbing + Fitness
Neptune Mountaineering
Pacific Edge Climbing Gym
Peter W Gilroy
Polar Bottle
The Quarry
Restop
Rock and Resole
Rock Gym Pro
ROCK'n and JAM'n
RoofNest
Sender Films
Spire Climbing Center
Sublime Climbing
Tenkara USA
TRUBLUE Auto Belay by HeadRush Technologies
Upslope Brewing
Urban Ascent
Vertical Adventures
Vital Climbing Gym
Voltaic Systems
The Warrior's Way

CONTRIBUTING - \$500+

Apex Climbing Gym
Banff Centre
Boulder Adventure Lodge
Boulder Denim
CityROCK Climbing Center
Climbing Zine
Dog Patch SF
Factory Bouldering
The Gravity Vault
Hidden Woods Media
Liberty Mountain
Macpherson and Associates Inc.
Mad Rock
MontBell
Moosejaw
Mountain Madness
Nite Ize
NOCO Gear
Onsight Chiropractic of Berkeley
Onsight Rock Gym
Real Athlete Diets

Rock & Snow
RockQuest Climbing Center
RoKC
Sender One LAX
SLO-Op and The Pad Climbing
Sophie Binder Designs
Sports Basement
Tom Michael D.D.S., P.S.
Ubergripen Indoor Climbing Crag
Vertex Climbing Center
Vertical World Climbing Gyms

Supporting - \$250+

Altra Running
Avid4 Adventure
BigRentz
Bliss Bouldering and Climbing Complex
Boulder Denim
Cactus Bear Design
Carbon Five
Climb-On Maps
ClimbStuff
Connect Climbing
Deal Spotr Online Shopping
Gearheads
Gneiss Apparel Supply Co.
goTenna
Hotel Boulderado
It's American Press
Joshua Tree Skincare
Law Firm for Non Profits
Lost Soles Climbing
Magic Valley Gear Exchange
MyClimb App
Nadia von Magdenko & Associates, PLLC
Nite Ize
Paloma Dental of RiNo
River Rock Climbing
Rover.com
Ruffwear
Sierra Nevada Adventure Company
SMC Gear
Spangalang Brewery
Sticker Art
Strada Advertising
Two Sisters Mountain Escape
Väyu



Clockwise, from left: Dave Frye takes a ride up a recently discovered gem in the Hinterlands of Pisgah National Forest, NC | Jasyn Klamboroski on *White Fang* deep in the backcountry of Pisgah National Forest at Big Lost Cove Cliffs, NC | Will Shirey tops out *The Great Arete* at Big Lost Cove Cliffs, Pisgah National Forest, NC. © Lynn Willis

Lynn Willis

Based in Boone, North Carolina, for over two decades, Lynn Willis is a graphic designer, photographer, and instructor with a passion for capturing adventure sports and mountain landscapes in the Southern Appalachians. Lynn discovered the joy of photography as a child in the late 1970s with his dad's hand-me-down Brownie camera with black-and-white film. He is the owner of High South Creative and does commercial, editorial, and portrait work and is the publisher of the Boone Region Outdoor Recreational Map & Guide. Lynn's images have been published in calendars, books, catalogs, regional and national magazines, and the Associated Press. An award-winning photographer, he enjoys donating his images for environmental causes, land protection with conservancy groups, and the promotion of local trails, parks, and greenways. A climber of 30 years, Lynn loves both rock and ice climbing, mountain biking, nordic skiing, and most of all, taking his kids on outdoor adventures. To view his work, visit www.lynnwillis.com.



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- 30-oz Tumbler from Polar Bottle
- Omega Pacific Vulcan Carabiner
- prAna Chalk Bag
- Seasonal CLIF Bars (think pumpkin spice and hot cocoa)



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