

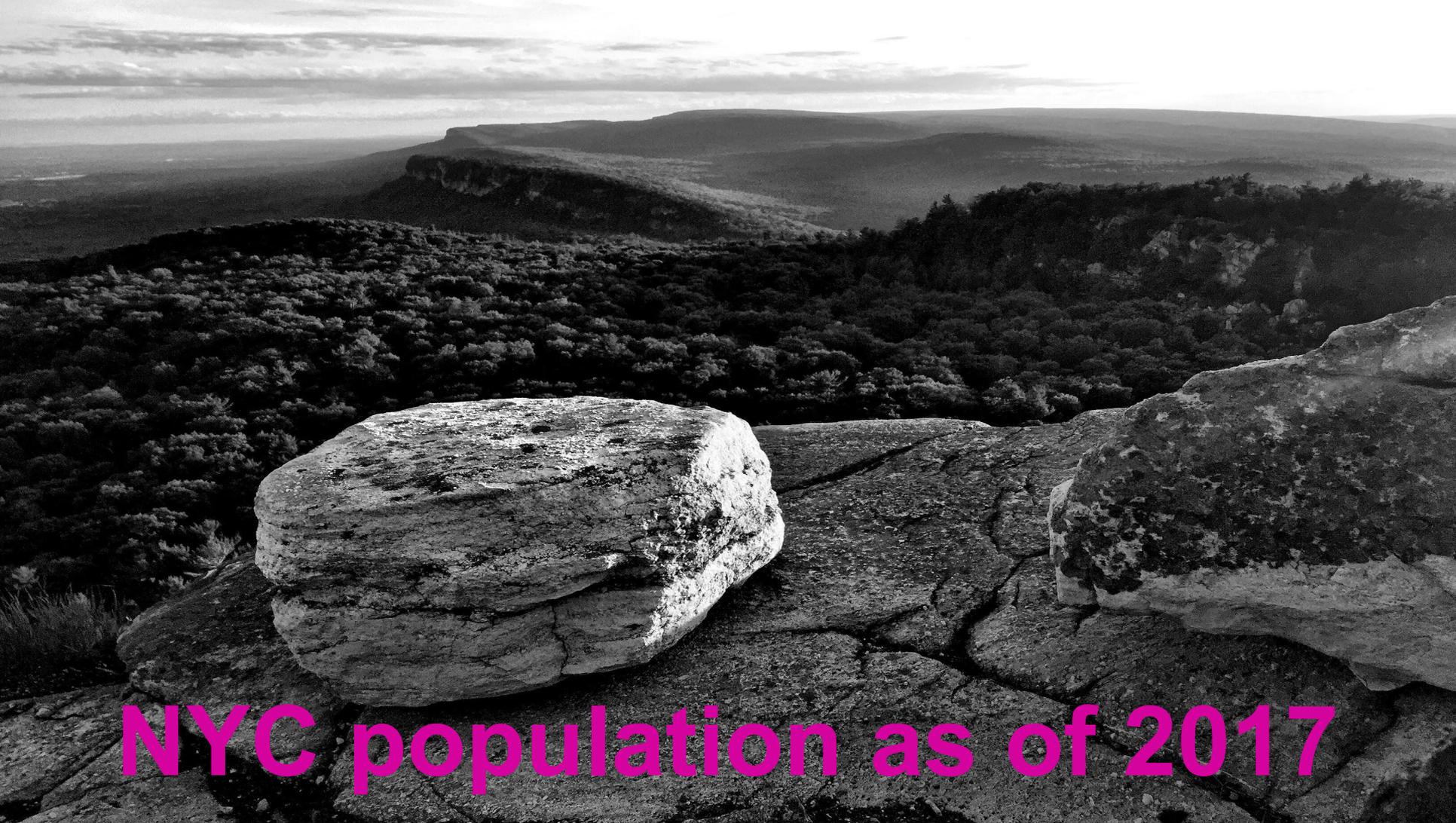
**G**unks

**C**limbers'

**C**oalition

A Discussion on Anchor Management

**8.6 million**



**NYC population as of 2017**

**2x the size of Los Angeles**

**3x the size of Chicago**

**20.3 million**



**The NYC Tri-State  
Metropolitan Population**

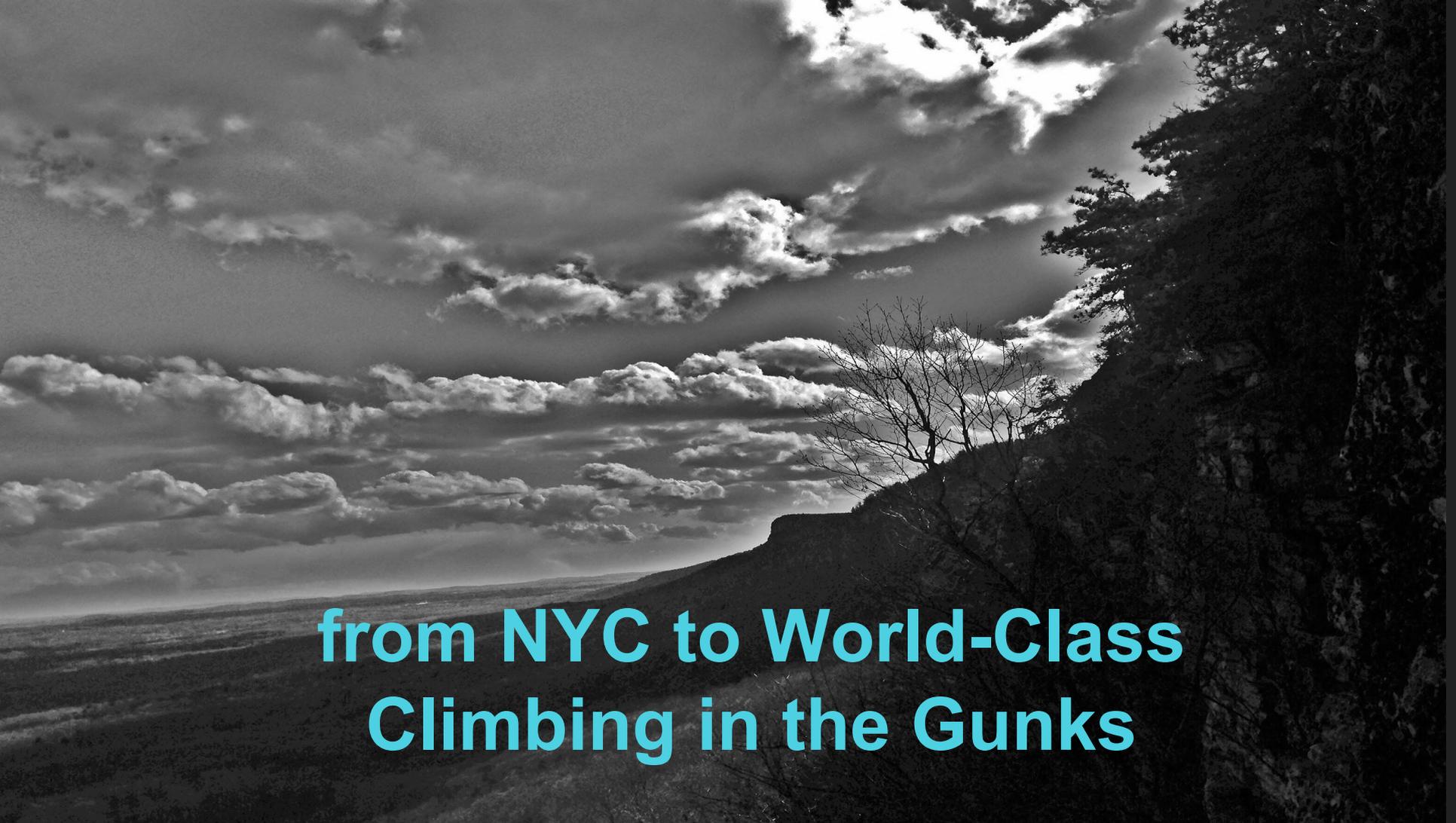


Less than

90 miles

90 miles

Less than

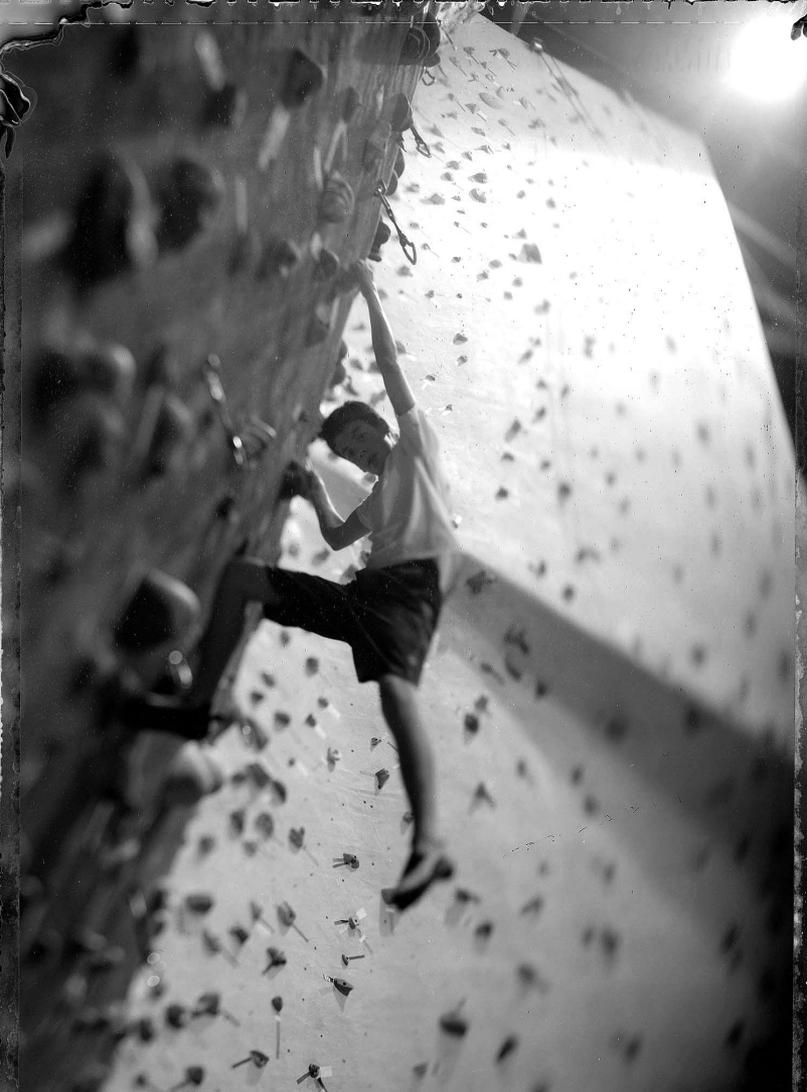


**from NYC to World-Class  
Climbing in the Gunks**

**North America has roughly  
436 climbing gyms**

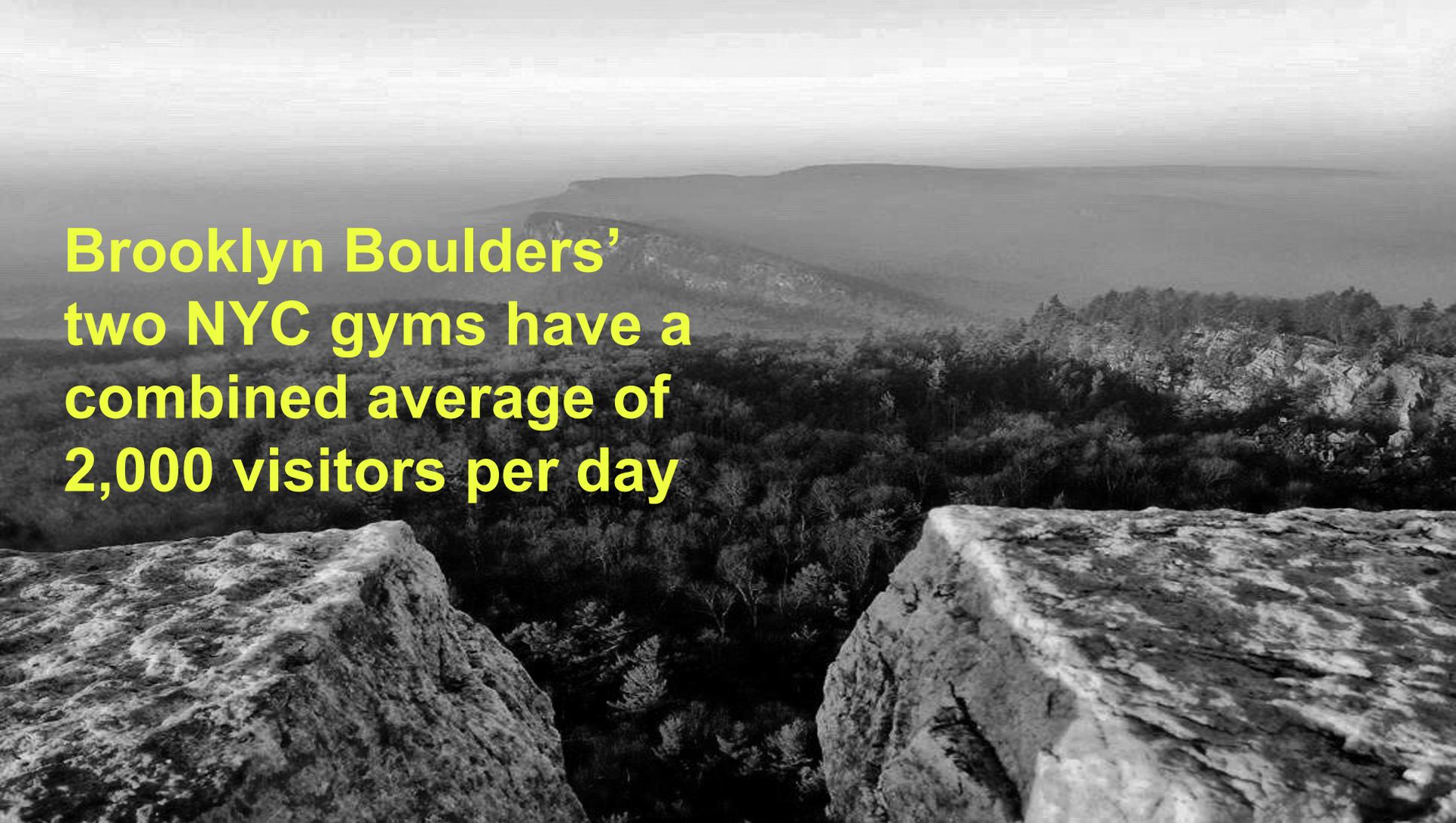


**10% of them are in  
the NY Metropolitan Area**



**3 new gyms opened  
in NYC in 2017**

**4 more gyms are  
planned for 2018**



**Brooklyn Boulders'  
two NYC gyms have a  
combined average of  
2,000 visitors per day**

**Between 1,000 and 1,500 people  
try climbing for the first time  
every single day in the U.S.**





**Technical rock climbing in the Shawangunks (Gunks) began in 1935 when Fritz Wiessner, John Navas and Peggy Navas established *Old Route* at Millbrook placing soft metal pitons designed to conform to the rock. They were left in place because removal without damaging the rock was difficult.**

September of 1947 John Salathe using his newly designed hardened steel piton made the first ascent of the *Lost Arrow Spire* in Yosemite Valley. His new pitons did not deform and were able to be removed easily and reused. These pitons quickly spread to the climbers of the East.



“This has produced a level of destruction in the Shawangunks exceeded only by the destruction it has produced in Yosemite.”

*-John Stannard noted an immediate impact*

By the 50's popularity in the sport had grown to the point at which, as many as 60 climbers might show up for a busy weekend at the cliffs. With increased numbers and the use of hardened steel pitons, Stannard called for a clean climbing revolution in which pitons would be driven once and used as fixed protection.





The first bolt placed in the Gunks was by Hans Kraus, Bonnie Prudden, and Lucien Warner on the first ascent of *Dry Martini* in 1955. In 1960 the climbs *Arrow* and *Sente* were established by placing bolts on rappel.

In 1966 Royal Robbins returned from a climbing trip in England where he was introduced to “spuds” the earliest known metal nuts designed for rock climbing protection. Using these in the Gunks, he found these climbing nuts to be a valuable supplement, and in some cases, eliminated the need for pitons.





With the introduction of nuts and Stannard's placement of fixed pitons, Gunks climbing moved into and through the '70s with a cleaner low-impact approach. During this same time, rappel bolting started to be employed on the crackless limestone cliffs of France. In *American Rock*, Don Mellor writes, "When such practices reared up at traditional areas like the Gunks and Yosemite, they were met with militant resistance."

As climbers began to exhaust the potential for safe but difficult new routes, the bolting controversy led to an official ban by the Mohonk Preserve on bolting in 1987. Through the '90s climber's respected the Preserve's rules and no new fixed bolts or pitons were added.





Between 1999 and 2001, in a response to a variety of concerns, including tree damage and erosion, the Mohonk Preserve installed 62 bolted rappel anchors. According to Rich Goldstone, the appearance of fixed rappel slings occurred during the '70s. As harder climbs were established anchors were used to descend from shorter climbs. Also, a change in parking led to more climbers rappelling rather than walking off.

In November of 2013 the GCC formed a sub-committee called the Anchor Evaluation Committee (AEC) that was tasked with exploring solutions to the anchor concerns in the Mohonk Preserve. A 2014 survey conducted by the AEC determined that 91% of the 989 Gunks climbers surveyed believe there are environmental and safety concerns regarding the non-bolted fixed anchors in the Mohonk Preserve.



Sixish Rusted Pitons



Jackie Worn Quicklinks



# 2014

GCC presents a slideshow of tree damage, slope erosion and degraded anchors to the LSC.

Spring

The LSC decides to reconvene the LSC bolting sub-committee after a 10-year hiatus

The bolting sub-committee (BSC) meets & approves 5 bolted anchors

FALL

The BSC decides that a climber survey should request feedback on bolted anchors

The American Safe Climbing Association (ASCA) donates \$2,000 worth of hardware.



# 2015

5 new bolted rappel stations replace damaged tree rappel stations

The results of the survey come back overwhelmingly in favor of anchors

Three “Walk-off” eroded gullies are roped off and filled with duff

## Spring

Numerous cable and sling anchors are removed from trees

Numerous rusted bolts are replaced with ASCA modern stainless bolts; cable and sling anchors are removed from trees

The BSC meets and raises concerns about liability regarding hardware installation

# 2015

The ASCA donates \$4,000 worth of SS hardware

The GCC works with PETZL to design the first certification course in North America for bolting

Additional tree anchors are removed and/or replaced with new materials to lower impact

## Fall

The GCC secures a grant from PETZL technical Institute for hardware installation certification

Damaged tree bark is shown to be healing where slings were removed, and roped off erosion gullies collecting soil and, in some cases, grass is sprouting

Additional rusted hardware protection bolts and pitons are removed and replaced



# 2016

PETZL sends their technical Director and Institute Director for anchor training

A new volunteer division for anchors is added to the Preserve; 5 GCC members are added

The 1998-2002 bolted anchors are observed to have galvanic corrosion. A decision is made to switch to standardized stainless hardware

\$7,000 is raised in just over 24 hours from the Gunks' Climbing Community

## Spring

4 GCC members & 4 rangers attend workshops & training & receive PETZL Technical Institute certificates

The BSC meets and resolves to continue the project; 3 Bolted anchors are installed, each of which replaces tree anchors. Dir. of Conservation Science is given a GCC tour of cliff top erosion and tree anchors

The GCC holds a fundraiser to acquire funds to purchase tested stainless chain

The ASCA donates \$9,000 worth of standardized stainless quick-links and rings



Baby Erosion



# 2016-2017

A GCC spreadsheet is designed cataloging all anchors and the transition to all stainless

A protocol is developed to contact rangers before work is carried out

GCC submits 17 anchors for review by the BSC

Work is carried out cutting old chain and replacing with new chain

2 bolted anchors are removed due to concerns over loose rock, work done by GCC and rangers

Transition from old chain to all stainless steel. Removing 250lbs of rust and replacing with 250lbs of SS

## Current:

We have upgraded every single anchor in the Gunks (almost 200 Anchors) to be composed of all stainless steel components. Every anchor installed goes through a lengthy approval process and uses all SS components and robust 1/2" bolts. The ASCA continues to support our efforts by providing all hardware. Our community appreciates everything you have done for safety and standardization across the country.

Thank you to everyone involved.

AEC: Jason Beaupre, Christian Fracchia, Dustin Portzline, Jason Hurwitz, Andy Salo

PETZL: Jesse Williams, Rick Vance

ASCA: Greg Barnes

MP: Russ Clune, Andrew Bajardi, Frank Tkac, David Toman, Jon Ross, Hank Alicandri, Dave Gates, Elizabeth Long, Elizabeth Elliott

Dick Williams, Joe Bridges, Richard Goldstone, Richard Gottlieb

