





Though our government can be incredibly frustrating, it is important to stay engaged.

"Our public lands, beloved climbing areas, and yes even our democracy are treasures worth fighting for."

— Brady Robinson

etween the flooding in Colorado and the budget impasse in Congress, pretty much every single climbing area in the Boulder area is closed as I write this. The First Flatiron opened up a few days ago; that's about what we've got for now. Rocky Mountain National Park is closed. Eldorado Canyon is closed. You can't even drive up Boulder Canyon. And Yosemite and all the other National Parks in the nation are closed. A few people pointed out that our intentionally over-the-top video ad in Reel Rock last year depicting El Cap closing down really came to pass. We didn't expect that to actually happen.

This is not a permanent state of affairs - by the time you read this, many if not all of these areas will likely be open again. But it does go to show that what once seemed nearly immutable - roads, bridges, cliffs, and access trails - can be taken away, either through natural disaster or tragic political comedy.

The morale of the story? We shouldn't take anything for granted. I once heard someone say, "What are you going to do when all the climbing areas are open and safe?" Yeah, right. And though our government can be incredibly frustrating, it is important to stay engaged, even if we begin to lose faith in our leaders. Our public lands, beloved climbing areas and yes, even our democracy, are treasures worth fighting for.

That's what we've been trying to do, more or less, at the Access Fund for nearly 23 years now. In this issue of the Vertical Times we celebrate our one millionth grant dollar, congratulate the Southeastern Climber's Coalition on 20 years of successful work, and welcome three brand new local climbing organizations into our network.

Have a great holiday! Check out our holiday packs - they always sell out and make great gifts. And let's all hope for less dysfunction in our government in 2014.

See you out there,

Brady Robinson Executive Director

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Voices

Action Center Never Works!

When you send Action Alerts, there is nothing there when I click the link. I've tried multiple times.

- RENEE, CA

AF: Sorry about that, Renee. Our Action Center does not play nice with the Firefox browser when it's running the Adblock Plus add-on. Nine times out of ten, that is the issue when people don't see content in the Action Center. You can either use a different browser or temporarily disable Adblock Plus and it should work just fine. Sorry for the inconvenience.

Jeep Discount

I just saved \$2,500 on a new Jeep Wrangler using my Access Fund discount. That is so rad!

- KEVIN, CO

AF: Kevin, so glad you were able to take advantage of the Chrysler Preferred Pricing deal for Access Fund members. Members in good standing are eligible for this special discount as part of Jeep brand's sponsorship of the Access Fund–Jeep Conservation Team. www.accessfund.org/AffiliateRewards

What's the Deal with Joint Membership?

I've heard you guys are now offering joint membership with local climbing access groups. How do I find out if my local group is participating?

- REBECCA, TN

AF: Rebecca, you can find a list of participating local climbing organizations (LCOs) at www.accessfund.org/jointmembership, along with links to join or renew as a joint member. If you don't see your organization on the list, talk to the leaders of your local group about participating!

Local Climbing Organization 101:

How to Secure a Recreational Lease

Your local privately owned crag has been closed for years now, but the landowner has finally come around to consider a recreational lease for climbing access. Fortunately, Access Fund has some resources and tips to assist local climbing organizations with this process:

Insurance: Most landowners require insurance for additional liability protection. Purchasing a single policy can cost thousands, but Access Fund has a program to provide the local climbing organization and landowner with additional named insured coverage through our policy if Access Fund is listed as a co-signer on the lease. Certain limitations and requirements apply, such as no commercial use.

Lease Payments: The landowner may consider no annual payment. But when it's required, consider the LCO's fundraising capacity for the climbing area—\$1,000 may be reasonable to fundraise on a yearly basis.

Lease Term: Long terms such as five years or more are generally preferred so the lease does not need to be renegotiated annually. Provide a provision for

automatic renewal, but also provide for termination if necessary.

Stewardship Support: Include terms for an annual Adopt a Crag and periodic maintenance like litter removal—this will help show the landowner that climbers are good stewards.

Parking & Access: This may be the trickiest part, depending on the climbing area. Many landowners who live onsite are concerned about privacy and high traffic. Consider opening access only on certain days of the week to accommodate the landowner. Make sure expectations are reasonable, because volunteers can't be available to enforce rules 24/7.

Legal Review: Access Fund can help draft a lease agreement and spell out additional language, but separate legal review by a qualified attorney is always suggested.

For more information and resources, visit www.accessfund.org/landownersupport.



The Access Fund wants to hear from you. Share your thoughts, ideas, and perspectives on access issues. Tell us what we're doing well. Tell us where we could improve. E-mail your comments to **holly@accessfund.org**.



Devastating Floods in Boulder, CO

Historic flooding along Colorado's Front Range closed Eldorado Canyon, Boulder Canyon, and Rocky Mountain National Park this past September, as well as many of the roads to these areas. The majority of Boulder Canyon and Rocky Mountain National Park have been reopened; however, there is still extensive damage to Eldorado Canyon, which remains closed. Boulder Climbing Community, Action Committee for Eldorado, and Flatirons Climbing Council have teamed up with other local nonprofits to rebuild access trails. Visit http://boulderclimbingcommunity.net for information on ways to donate and get involved.

New Local Group to Steward Wyoming's Bighorn Basin, Including Ten Sleep

Access Fund is proud to welcome a new local affiliate organization, the Bighorn Climbers' Coalition (BCC). This nonprofit organization aims to protect climbing resources in the Bighorn Mountains and Bighorn Basin of Wyoming. These resources include Ten Sleep Canyon and the 1,000+ boulder problems and sport climbs situated near Cody Basin. BCC intends to work closely with local communities, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the U.S. Forest Service to address climbing management issues like human waste, trash, camping, signage, parking, trails, and economic impact. For more information, visit http://bighornclimbers.org.



Access Fund Welcomes Bishop Area Climbers Coalition

With world-class Sierra scenery and a lifetime of rock climbing, Bishop attracts climbers from around the world. Local climbers have formed a new LCO, Bishop Area Climbers Coalition (BACC) to minimize climber impacts, promote responsible use, and protect access. BACC is already making strides with Adopt a Crag stewardship events, partnership with state and federal land managers, and plans for climber education. Access Fund is proud to welcome BACC to the network of climbing advocacy organizations and looks forward to more positive work in the Bishop area. For more on BACC, go to www.facebook.com/BishopAreaClimbersCoalition.

Ohio Climbers Coalition New Addition to National Network

Access Fund is excited to welcome the new Ohio Climbers Coalition (OCC) to our national network of local climbing organizations. Built on the foundation laid by Northeast Ohio Climbers Coalition, OCC's mission is to promote and protect Ohio climbing for generations to come. Ohio climbers face tough climbing restrictions, despite a growing number of



climbers who want access to the state's high-quality crags and boulders. Access Fund's new Ohio regional coordinator, Jack Santo, has helped spearhead the effort behind OCC. Learn more at **www.ohioclimberscoalition.org**.

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Higher Learning Community Perspective

HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

Pack it in, pack it out. This is a familiar mantra to the seasoned outdoor enthusiast. But what happens when we don't pack it out? How long does our trash last?





Bits of discarded finger tape



2 YEARS



Orange/ banana peel









Energy bar wrappers

Expired oxygen bottles



Poop bags

Energy drink bottles



FOREVER

Before moving on from the base of a climb or resting place, search the area for "micro-garbage," including cigarette filters, discarded finger tape, and organic litter such as orange peels. Even minute amounts of waste can harm animals and the environment. Be vigilant about packing out your climbing trash, and help spread the word!



This information is brought to you in partnership with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics.

SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL ADVOCACY SAVE SANDSTONE BOULDERING



ccess Director Joe Sambataro recently caught up with Jeff Engel of Minnesota Climbers Association (MCA) for our Spotlight on Local Advocacy series. MCA formed over 10 years ago to preserve climbing across the state, and it recently kicked off a campaign to protect one of the finest bouldering areas in Minnesota. Learn more and go online to donate today at www.accessfund.org/ sandstone

JOE: Has climbing always been allowed at Sandstone?

JEFF: Years ago we made an agreement with the owners to allow bouldering. We gave our word we would take care of the property and strive for minimal impact. The landowners don't live close to the property, so keeping contact was difficult. I've sent letters over the years asking if climbing access was still allowed, but in most cases never heard back.

JOE: How did MCA learn that the bouldering area was for sale?

JEFF: Last fall there was an incident where a group of boulderers had a run-in with a bow hunter who claimed he was the only one with access to the land. Alarmed, I sent out letters to both brothers who own the property. Finally I got an email reply from one of them. They were apologetic about the incident. Turns out one brother gave us access, and the other brother gave the hunter access. It was through that encounter that we learned the land was for sale.

JOE: This project is getting some key support from the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota (PTCM). Tell us a little more about their role?

JEFF: The landowners gave the climbing community the first opportunity to buy their land. We had six months to figure out a way to make a deal. I made contact with the PTCM, whose mission is to buy property in Minnesota and eventually turn it over to the state park system. This was a perfect match. The PTCM accepted our application for assistance and made a purchase agreement with the landowners. MCA is helping to fundraise the holding and closing costs.

JOE: How has it been working with

JEFF: It has been great. Not only are they helping us purchase Sandstone, but they are helping us work with the MN Department of Natural Resources and nearby Banning State Park to encourage them to allow climbing and bouldering in their park, where it is currently prohibited.

JOE: It's been only a few months of fundraising, and MCA has raised over \$25,000 toward its goal of \$30.000. MCA has been really creative in its fundraising efforts. What are some fundraising tips for other local climbing organizations to try out?

JEFF: We've made a fair amount of money with raffling off big prizes like a bouldering package or sport climbing

package. This fall we've had a couple of really cool fundraising events, including a festival at Robinson City Park across the river from the bouldering and a celebration at Vertical Endeavors climbing gym. Visit "Save Sandstone" on Facebook to learn about any upcoming events.

JOE: Have any new partners come out of the woodwork to help save Sandstone bouldering?

JEFF: The whole local climbing community has rallied for this cause-individual climbers have donated, and we've received support from The Wisconsin Climbers Association, Organic Bouldering Mats, and Walltopia to name a few.

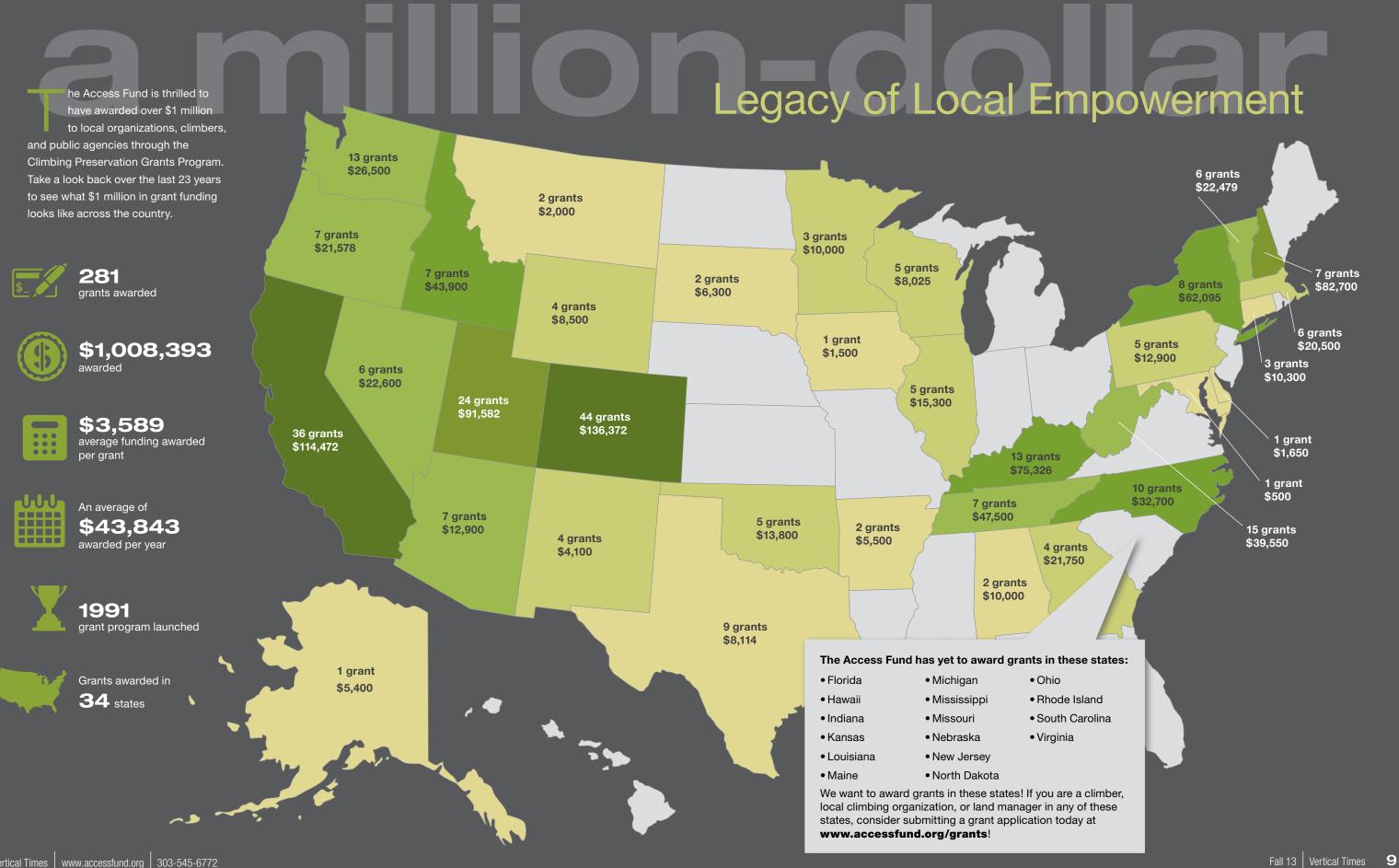
JOE: What should climbers keep in mind during their next trip to Sandstone? How can they get involved?

JEFF: Next time you're climbing in Sandstone, remember that at one point it was not allowed. Thank the landowners for letting it happen and for giving climbers the first opportunity to buy the land.

JOE: Any other thoughts that you'd like to share with the climbing advocacy community?

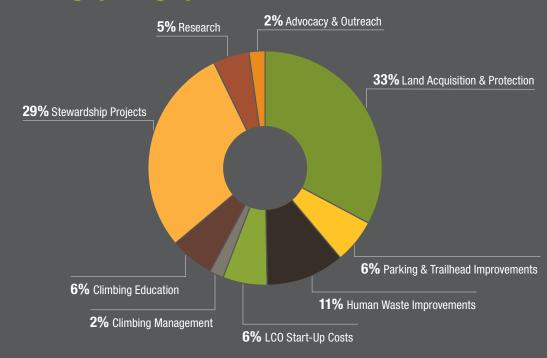
JEFF: Smile lots, make landowners know they are king, and never stop pursuing your goal. Access is a slow process, and you have to be tenacious and dedicated to make it happen.

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Grant Funding by Category



Game-Changing Grants

Every grant makes an impact. Some change the face of climbing in a region.

Boat Rock, Georgia

In 2002 and 2004, Access Fund granted SCC \$13,000 for the acquisition of Boat Rock, Atlanta's beloved urban bouldering area. Halfway destroyed by real estate development, the remaining granite boulders were in imminent danger. This was SCC's first land acquisition and a watershed moment for climbing conservation in the Southeast. SCC went on to purchase and protect five more climbing areas in Alabama and Tennessee. Organizations like the Carolina Climbers Coalition and Red River Gorge Climbers Coalition soon followed with two of the largest climbing area purchases ever. Private land acquisition is now one of the most powerful tools for protecting climbing access in the South.

Castle Rocks State Park, Idaho

In 1998, Access Fund awarded \$30,000 to purchase climbing resources for Castle Rocks State Park in Idaho. The lands purchased with Access Fund grant money remain open to climbing, yet neighboring BLM land closed in 2010 due to cultural resource concerns. Access Fund firmly believes there is a win-win to protecting cultural

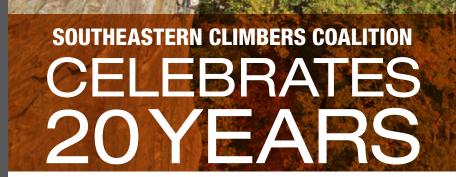
resources and allowing limited climbing access, as evidenced by the successful climbing management plan that we helped develop with Castle Rocks State Park.

Indian Creek, Utah

Access Fund has awarded 10 grants at this premier crack climbing destination. The grant funds have assisted trail projects led by Rocky Mountain Field Institute, one of the leading experts in the field, as well as toilet installations, climber education, and the startup of Friends of Indian Creek. These projects have helped protect this sensitive desert landscape and keep it open to climbing for generations to come.

Unaweep, Colorado

Access Fund grants, in conjunction with help from local climbers, have facilitated acquisition of five parcels in Unaweep Canyon since 1991, conserving this unique climbing area and keeping it open to public, passive recreation for generations to come. Unaweep Canyon is an important local resource in the Grand Junction area of Western Colorado. The property gives climbers access to a lineup of long, steep granite climbs in an area that has been troubled by difficult access.



wenty years ago, the National Park Service was set to close Sunset Rock, the crown jewel of Southern Sandstone, which hosts a fantastic collection of trad climbs on a ridge high above Chattanooga, Tennessee.

A group of concerned local climbers banded together under the name Southeastern Climbers Coalition, intent on working with the Park Service to save access to Sunset Rock. And that is exactly what they did.

Twenty years later, the Southeastern Climbers Coalition is one of the strongest local climbing organizations in the nation, with over 500 members, thousands of volunteers, and a track record of preserving climbing access at dozens of word-class climbing areas across the Southeast.

"We are getting more effective every year, and finding new, creative ways to partner with other groups that support our mission," explains Matthew Gant, SCC president. "We've successfully

protected climbing for 20 years, and I fully expect to see even greater things from SCC in the years to come."

The SCC owns six crags across Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama including Boat Rock, Kings Bluff, Jamestown, Yellow Bluff, Steele, and Hospital Boulders—and leases Castle Rock in Tennessee.

But they've done more than just buy land. "Protecting a crag from closure is only half the battle," says Access Fund Southeast Regional Director Zachary Lesch-Huie. "The SCC has been equally strong on the stewardship front, leveraging thousands of volunteers to build and maintain trails, educate younger climbers, maintain fixed anchors, and sustain the climbing areas in the Deep South."

SCC's 20th anniversary celebrates two rock-solid decades of protecting climbing access in the Southeast, and the Access Fund is proud to call them partners.



Area Update

TOP FIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1. **INSPIRE.** SCC spurred a movement of Southeast land acquisition and protection, beginning with the purchase of Boat Rock in 1998 to save the beloved Atlanta bouldering area from development.
- 2. MANAGE. SCC manages eight climbing areas in Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee for the benefit and enjoyment of the public.
- 3. **VOLUNTEER.** They logged over 20,000 volunteer stewardship hours maintaining trails, stewarding climbing areas, and making the Southeast a more beautiful place to live, play, and climb.
- 4. **PROTECT.** The group plays a critical role in protecting access to public lands, including Sunset, Foster Falls, T-Wall, Sand Rock, and more. Many climbing areas on public land would otherwise be closed if not for SCC action.
- 5. **EQUIP.** They distributed thousands of fixed anchors to local equippers to make existing routes safer.

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Meet the Access Fund Staff

Ever wonder who is behind the work of the Access Fund? Learn about our staff and know whom to contact if you need our help!



MANDY BISHOP Office Manager

Mandy makes the Access Fund office run. She handles dayto-day office

management, membership fulfillment, and online store orders.



JIM CHASE Operations Director

Jim is in charge of the health of the Access Fund as a nonprofit

organization. He handles all business and finance operations, as well as human resources.



LEICI HENDRIX Development Director

Leici develops and implements fundraising strategy to expand

philanthropic support for the Access Fund through our major donor and corporate partner programs.



JASON KEITH Sr. Policy Advisor

Jason manages the Access Fund's government affairs caseload related to recreational

access and conservation advocacy work on public lands.



ZACHARY LESCH-HUIE National Affiliate Director & Southeast Regional Director

Zachary heads

up the Access Fund's national affiliate network from Chattanooga



and serves as Southeast Regional Director. Zachary helps grassroots affiliates address climbing access and conservation issues at the local level.



JULIANA STATIUS MULLER Membership Manager

Juliana is our data and member

services wizard. She manages the membership program at the Access Fund. If you have a question about your membership, Juliana is the gal to ask!



ERIK MURDOCK Policy Director

Erik is the lead policy guru on climbing management planning on

federal and state lands. Erik works with local affiliate organizations and activists to design and implement climbing advocacy strategies.



BRADY ROBINSON Executive Director

Brady provides eadership and sets the vision for the Access Fund.

He works with the board of directors on strategies to fulfill the mission of keeping climbing areas open and conserving the climbing environment.



SAMBATARO Access Director & Northwest Regional Director Joe is our land

protection master. He manages the Access Fund Land Conservation

Campaign, helping local climbers purchase and protect their climbing areas. Joe recently moved to Seattle and acts as Northwest Regional Director as well.



CURT SHANNON Arizona Policy

Analvst

Curt works part time to represent climbers and the Access

Fund in our current opposition to the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act-more commonly known as the Oak Flat Land Exchange Bill.



HOLLY **SMOLENSKI** Communications & Marketing Director

Holly oversees all marketing

and external communications, including Access Fund branding and production of the Vertical Times, Beta e-newsletters, annual reports. and fundraising materials. She also provides general oversight of the Access Fund website.



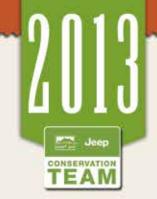
TY TYLER Stewardship Director

Ty directs Access Fund stewardship efforts and education. He

oversees the Access Fund-Jeep Conservation Team, as well the Adopt a Crag and TeamWorks programs.

CONSERVATION TEAM -WE'RE HIRING!

We are currently hiring for the 2014 Conservation Team tour. If you want to travel the U.S. helping to conserve climbing areas, consider applying!



CONSERVATION TEAM Life on the Road

22 states visited * 166 days on the road





VOLUNTEER HOURS



STEWARDSHIP PROJECTS COMPLETED

SOCIAL TRAILS ELIMINATED

STAIRCASES BUILT



RETAINING WALLS CONSTRUCTED

DRAINAGE DITCHES DUG



NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTED



GRAFFITI CLEAN UPS



AREAS CLEANED OF TRASH

THE CONSERVATION TEAM IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:















Corporate Partners Featured Artist

ur friends at prAna have been key supporters of the Access Fund since 1993. This year, prAna generously hosted the Rifle Climbers' Festival, donating over \$3,000 in proceeds to the Access Fund and helping clean up Rifle's famous limestone crags. We thank prAna for going above and beyond to keep climbing areas open and to protect the climbing environment.



hese 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!

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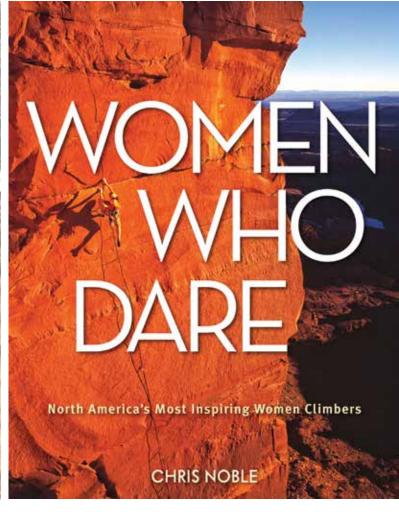
Wes & Gold

Mountain School Climb Nashville Omega Pacific Intelligentsia Mesa Rim Climbing Center The Law Firm for Non-Profits

Boulder Rock Club/Colorado







Clockwise: Mountain guide and mixed climbing champion Dawn Glanc climbing "Pull the Trigger Tigger" in the "Hall of Justice" San Juan Mountains. | Pick up your copy of Women Who Dare at bookstores everywhere. | Sasha DiGiulian climbing "Golden Boy" at "The Gold Coast," Pendergrass Murray Recreational Preserve, Red River Gorge, Kentucky. | © Chris Noble

Chris Noble

hris is a writer, photographer, public speaker, and social activist whose work focuses on reconnecting people with nature and aiding the transition to a more mindful and sustainable world. He's a veteran of over 30 expeditions to the most remote corners of the globe, including Everest, McKinley, Pumori, Ama Dablam, the jungles of Borneo, the Arctic, and remote regions of Bhutan and Burma.

Chris's current project, *Women Who Dare: North America's Most Inspiring Women Climbers*, was published this month by Globe Pequot/Falcon Press. It is a celebration of feminine athleticism, wisdom, and skill. It profiles 20 of America's most inspiring women climbers, ranging from legends like Lynn Hill to the rising stars of today. The book is illustrated with 124 of Chris's full-color photographs of the profiled climbers in action, including the four shown here in the *Vertical Times* (cover, page 3, and page 15).

Look for Women Who Dare wherever books are sold. ■

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

Give the Gift of Access

With a Gift Membership!

The holidays are just around the corner, and a gift membership to the Access Fund makes the perfect last-minute gift for the climbers in your life.

The more members we have, the more effective our collective voice as climbers. When you purchase a gift membership, you'll be adding your partner to America's most effective climbing access and conservation community.



Gift Membership – \$35
Gift Membership with T-shirt – \$50

Buy a gift membership today at www.accessfund.org/shop.

Holiday Packs Are Now on Sale!

Get the ultimate stocking stuffers for the climbers on your list right here! Filled with a one-year Access Fund membership and oodles of swag from our corporate partners, our holiday packs are perfect for the climbers in your life. Visit **www.accessfund.org/holiday** to check out the great gear in this year's packs!

