

We support Vermont's climbing community by securing, protecting & conserving access to cliffs and other climbing resources.



2021 Annual Report

Board of Directors & Staff

Lauren Greco
Executive Director

Kris Fiore
President

Mischa Tourin
Vice President

Andrea Charest
Treasurer

Rob Fleming
Secretary

Roderick Russell
Membership

Board Members at
Large:

Seth Maciejowski

Travis Peckham

Anna Gutwin

Hunter Hedenberg

Sam Hayden

Steve Charest

Christian Skalka

Pete Clark





Our Work

Protect climbing access on public and private lands

Buy threatened cliffs

Negotiate parking access

Protect & restore climbing areas

Foster climbing stewardship

Build Community

Letter from the Director

As an all volunteer organization for nearly two decades, CRAG has been instrumental and prolific in assuring access to outdoor rock climbing across Vermont. They have built partnerships with the state and local landowners, and when necessary, bought threatened cliffs and secured conservation easements.

In the past several years, and in step with the broader climbing community, CRAG-VT has experienced significant and continuous growth. Membership has more than tripled in the last three years, and the need to address the aspects of access that are beyond securing cliffs has only become more relevant. With more climbers, our role in mediating climber and landowner interests, assuring that parking, signage and trail infrastructure keep up with usage, and interrogating the question of who is climbing are all the more important.

In January of this year, CRAG moved to hire their first staff person, a part time Executive Director, to help the organization better respond to the varied demands of its work. I am lucky enough to be that person, and have been grateful to be welcomed into this organization. I have also been grateful that over this past year our membership has demonstrated their continued commitment us; fundraising income has increased across multiple channels and our community has continued to grow. We appreciate this support and take it seriously. We look forward to continuing the work of protecting Vermont rock, stewarding our natural areas, and nurturing a vibrant climbing community.

Climb On!

Lauren Greco
Executive Director

Organizational

We hired our **first employee**,
Executive Director Lauren
Greco, in January of 2021.

We developed a committee
structure to help organize
our work.

Access

Stewardship

Events

Development

JDEI

We built a new
website!

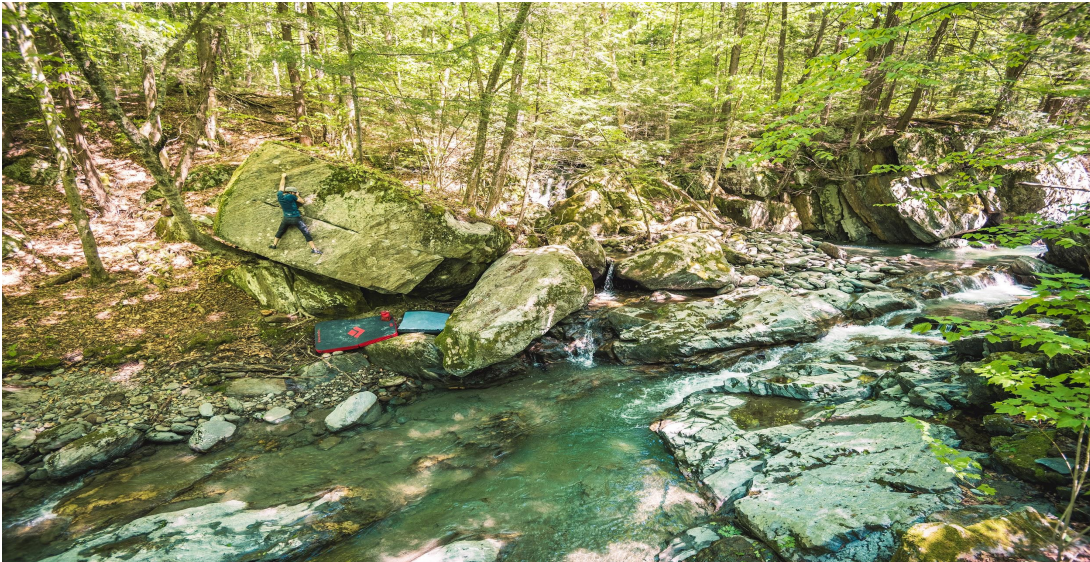
We developed a new
Corporate **Partnership
Program**



Justice, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

CRAG-VT's mission is to support climbing access, share the story of Vermont's climbing history and offer a vision for its future. Historically, much of our effort has focused on where we climb; we now recognize that the barriers to climbing extend beyond land ownership and parking concerns. Many people feel unsafe or unwelcome in the climbing community due to racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and other forms of bigotry. Looking forward, we are committed to expanding our definition of securing access to include addressing the social and economic barriers that limit who climbs.

Regardless of intention, climbers can perpetuate an exclusive climbing culture that curtails accessibility. We believe in the Vermont climbing community's ability to resist these forces and we are committed to working to make climbing available to anyone who wants to rope up or drag a crash pad into the woods. We believe CRAG-VT plays a vital role in breaking down the barriers to the sport we love, and will actively engage in the following activities to help better ourselves and our community:



Understand and learn from the implicit biases that each of us carries, and actively work to change them

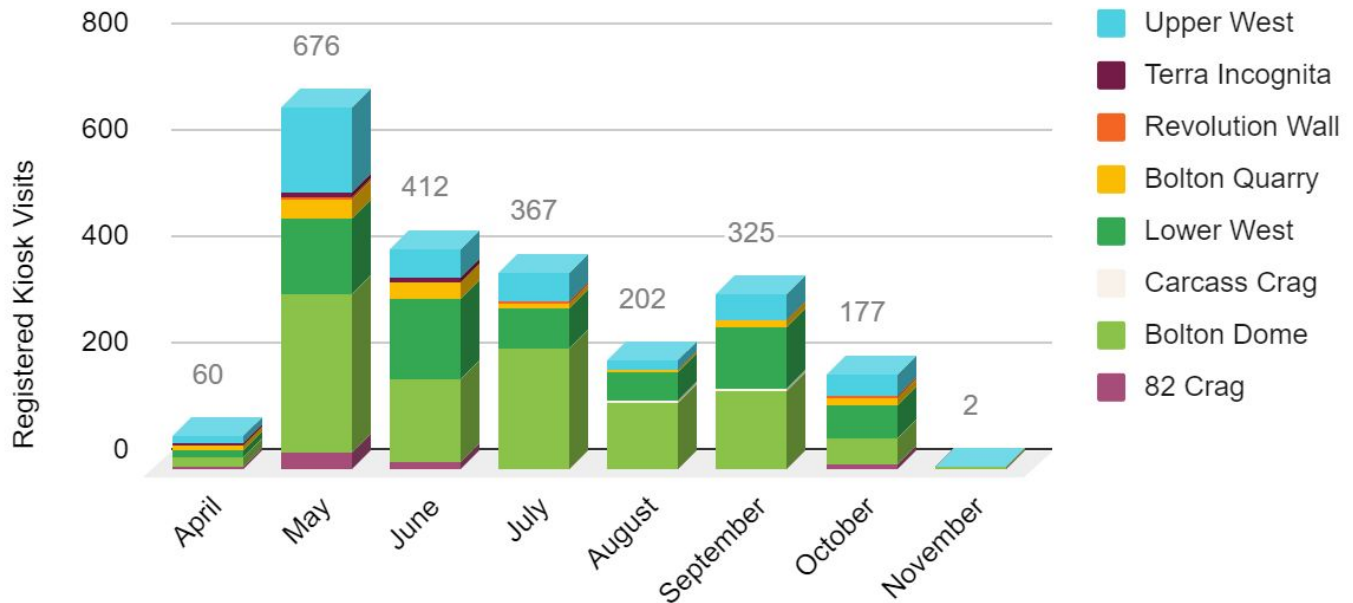
Define norms and expectations to guide our property management and climbing acquisition work that consider the access needs of our community

Create educational materials, host events, and build community with all climbers, regardless of experience level, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, belief system, or neurodiversity

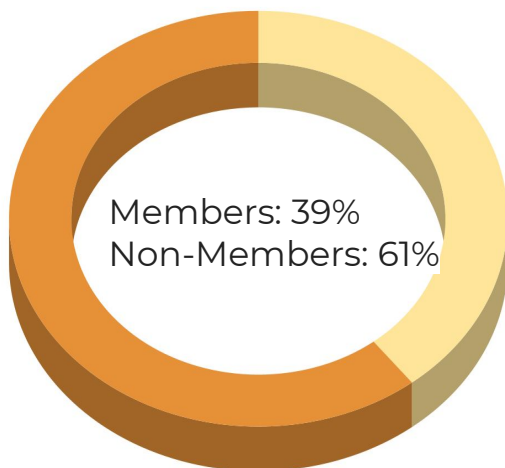
Continue to listen to and learn from our community by directly confronting and learning from mistakes and experiences

Climber Visitation

April 12 - November 4, 2021



In mid-April of 2021 we installed digital sign-ins at most of our climbing kiosks to help us better track long term usage and inform management decisions. Among sign-ins, 39% of users were CRAG-VT members.



Access Southern Vermont

Board Member Samuel Hayden established a Climbing Management Plan with the forest service so that Green Mountain National Forest Land, roughly 400,000 acres, can be enjoyed by climbers. The plan protects climbing on this land while also serving to prevent environmental damage by climbers. For now, Bromley Forest, Crystal Castle, DEKD in Killington, Abbey Pond, Deer Leap, Sunny Valley, Green Brook, Brandon Gap, and Mad Tom Notch are specifically cited as key areas of interest within the plan. The forest service has tentatively accepted this plan.

Bromley Forest is currently undergoing a NEPA review for a small trail system that will make accessing the boulders easier, safer, and better for the natural environment. In addition, a guide has been written and will be released via GunksApp in the near future. This has also been approved by the forest service.



The relationship that we have created with the GMNF is one that will stand the test of time and be beneficial for both CRAG-VT and climbers, and the forest service. They are eager to work closely with our organization and are overjoyed that they are playing a key role in preserving access to both new and old climbing areas on their land.

Access

Upper West Bolton & The Sharks Fin Boulder

It was a busy year at the popular Upper West Bolton area, not just for enjoying the exceptional climbing and the beautiful setting, but for our ongoing efforts to steward the land responsibly, maintain public access and improve relations with neighbors.

New signs are up at all the key trail junctions, information about keeping noise down and leaving no trace is posted, and trail rerouting to the Sharksfin Boulder/Alias Wall area, which is on private land next to the UWB parcel, was completed.



Moreover, what could have become a permanent closure of that area because of adjoining landowners' distress about trespassing, noise and liability became instead an example of how open dialogue can lead to a positive result for everyone; we now have a Memo of Understanding that will remain in effect as long as climbers do their part to minimize their impacts on the land and the nearby neighbors.

Access

Parking & The Bolton Recreation Committee

Parking is a perennial and growing issue for outdoor recreation areas, and increased usage during the pandemic created new parking challenges for CRAG-VT and the town of Bolton. In particular, increased climber cars, especially along the Bolton Notch road, contributed to community stresses.

The Bolton Town Clerk, Amy Grover, and the Select Board created a recreational subcommittee and invited CRAG-VT to attend sessions on parking. There, we met with other stakeholders, including the Vermont Mountain Biking Association (VMBA), Richmond Mountain Trails (RMT), Vermont River Conservancy (VRC), and Bolton Valley. Through this process we've begun to build a working relationship with the town. We've also learned that that rock climbers are just a small piece of the parking congestion in Bolton. Immediate solutions relevant to CRAG-VT were implemented, including re-establishment of parking on the Notch road for Upper West Bolton.



We are hopeful that discussions started at this meeting will lead to better access to several other Bolton climbing areas in the future. Moreover, lines of communication formed through these meetings will better inform CRAG-VT's management strategies of our climbing areas moving forward.

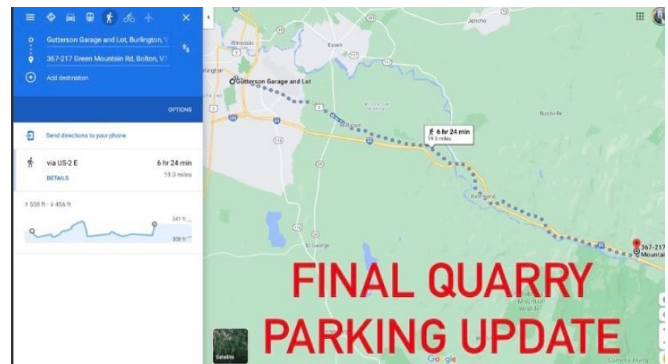
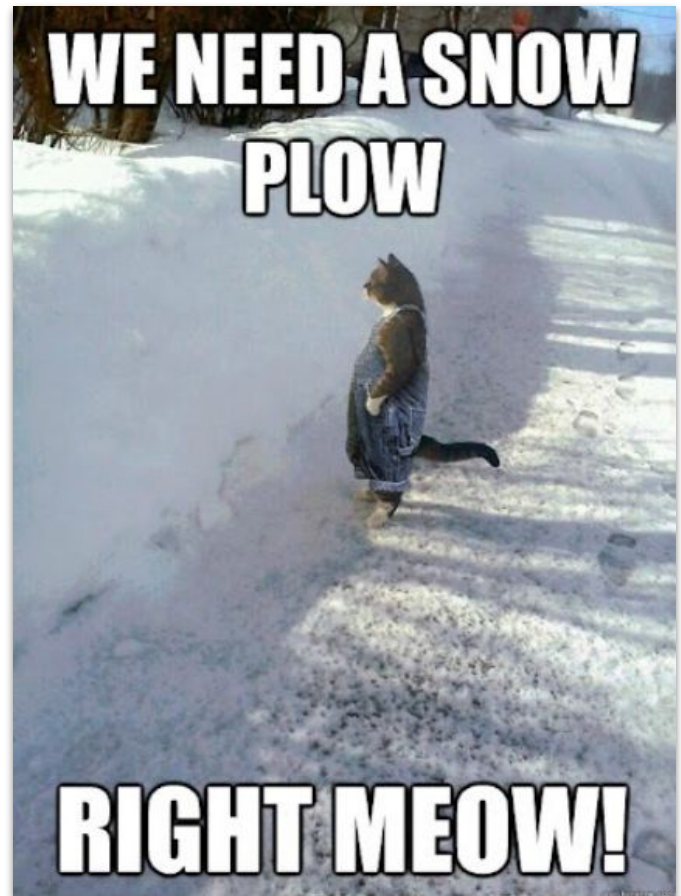
Access

Bolton Quarry Plowing

The Bolton Quarry has presented various difficulties with the local community, especially during ice climbing season. While CRAG-VT owns the parking lot there, the driveway up is a long, gravel road which is expensive to plow and maintain in the Winter.

In recent years we have not plowed the lot, and instead have directed climbers to other parking areas. Since the Quarry is a popular ice crag, this created a host of problems, including nuisances for neighbors and an unpleasant walk along route 2 for climbers.

In response to this, we have chosen to hire local services for plowing and maintenance of the driveway and parking lot for the winter 2021/2022 season. We believe this will ease access for climbers and reduce impacts on neighbors and expect this to be a very popular service for our members! .



Stewardship



Over the course of the year, many dedicated volunteers showed up to get their hands dirty in support of the CRAG-VT mission, amassing over 400 hours of collective stewardship work. Our mainstay trail days at the Summer Kickoff and Vermont Climbing Festival led to vast improvements to the trail infrastructure at various cliffs. In addition to stewarding CRAG-owned properties, our volunteer base showed up in force to help maintain the trail system at Lone Rock Point and to clean up litter around Bolton during Green Up Day. These activities go a long way to building goodwill and partnership with land managers and neighbors. We are forever grateful for the time and energy our member base contributes for the cause of stewardship!

Project Leaders

15

Volunteers

104

Hours Worked

422

Stewardship Days

4

Stewardship



Volunteers: 18

Hours Worked: 78

Leaders: Pete Clark, Christian Skalka, Anna Gutwin, Andy Salo + UVM Earth Week Volunteers

- Spread 8+ yards of mulch
- Installed 2 new 24' sections of split rail fencing
- Brushed in spur trails & cut back invasive buckthorn along trails & cliff
- Cut in and improved the “north” gully trail along the lake shore
- Graffiti removal
- Glued Lone Rock Point wayfinding post signs
- Installed new CRAG VT trail sign for the north gully trail.
- [Rock Point Media Feature](#)

Lone Rock Point Trail Day

Bolton Green Up Day

Volunteers: 24

Hours Worked: 92

Leader: Mischa Tourin

- Picked up: 53 bags of trash, 16 tires, 1 couch, 1 tractor, 1 bag of marijuana
- Lots of smiles and thumbs ups



Summer Kickoff

Volunteers: 54

Hours Worked: 216

Leaders: Mischa Tourin, Dennis Delay, Jordan Rowell, Kris Fiore, Seth Maciejowski, Phil England, Dick Katzman, Mark Klonicke

- 5 new earthen water bars
- 21 water bar cleanouts
- 1 resingled kiosk & 1 restrained kiosk
- 14 new rock steps
- Trails rerouted & Maintained
- Graffiti removed
- Weeds Whacked



Upper 82 Trail: Waterbar installs, improvements, & rock work
Bolton Dome: Stair building, graffiti removal, kiosk re-staining, trailwork & stairway improvements,
Lower West: Kiosk roof re-shingling, trail improvements, & re-routing
Terra Incognita: Trail sidehilling



Vermont Climbing Festival Stewardship Day

Volunteers: 32

Hours Worked: 128

Leaders: Jordan Rowell, Mark Klonicke, Dick Katzman, Seth Maciejowski, Kris Fiore, Joey Catania, Phil England, Demery Coppola, Gene O Desideraggio



Added 9 rock stairs to the Railroad Gully and Neighborhood ledge approach gulley at the **Bolton Dome**.



Rerouted trail to the Alias Wall at **Upper West Bolton**.

Prepped the Quarry driveway for **winter plowing**.

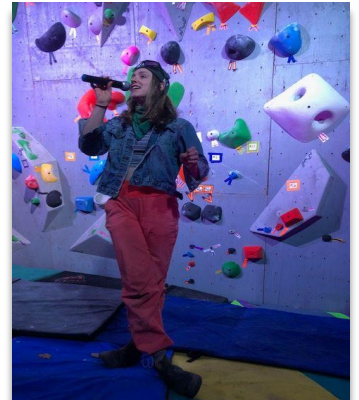


Trimmed & flagged the approaches to **Bone Mountain & Revolution Wall**.

Removed graffiti at the Bolton Dome **Dome Top**.

Vermont Climbing Fest

2021, Cochran's Ski Resort



In 2021 we held the third annual Vermont Climbing Festival at Cochran's Ski Resort in Bolton Vermont. Despite a grim forecast, we had splitter weather and a strong turnout, with just over 200 attendees. The weekend was filled with climbing, friendly competition, workshops, a vendor market and more.

Highlights included the keynote speech by North Face athlete Anna Pfaff, the saturday morning waffle breakfast prepared by Fjallraven, a last minute dyno wall build thanks to a team of super-star volunteers, and a moth style story hour hosted by local legend, Bill Patton.



Attendees
214

PRESENTED BY CRAG-VT

Volunteers
40+

Vendors
22

Clinics
12

Competitions
4

Workshops
4

Money Raised
16K

A WEEK OF ROCK & SHENANIGANS, ON THE CLIFFS IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

VERMONT CLIMBING FESTIVAL

All proceeds contribute to protecting and preserving VT Rock Climbing



None of this would have happened without the hard work & creativity of our team of volunteers and partners. A huge thank you to everyone who helped in ways big and small, you're what makes the Vermont climbing community so strong!



Not only was it a fun time, but we also raised over \$16K towards CRAG-VT's work protecting and preserving climbing in Vermont. Right now, the bulk of this will go towards repaying the loan on the Bolton Dome.

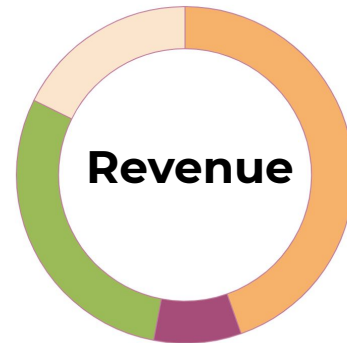
Financial Report

Fundraising grew in 2021, with increased revenue from membership, individual donations, events, and corporate partnerships.

Membership & Small Donations	\$ 25,226.46
Corporate Support	\$ 4,740.00
Events	\$ 16,592.62
Grants	\$ 10,000.00

Total

\$ 56,559.08



Staff Time	\$21,115
Operating Expenses	\$7,789
Fundraising	\$4,523
Events	\$7,951
Access	\$17,066*
Stewardship	\$409

Total

\$59,855



*Access expense based on a \$15,000 payment towards the Bolton Dome Loan. Actual December, 2021 payment is still to be determined.

Based on preliminary numbers, from January 1 - December 1, 2021.

Small Events & Fundraisers



Summer Kick-Off

First in-person gathering since
COVID

40+ Volunteers

Organized by the newly formed
Events Committee

Bolton Quarry Plowing Raffle

A fundraiser to cover costs of plowing
& sanding the Bolton Quarry driveway
through the winter.

Organized by **Mischa Tourin**

Ice Tools & Screws donated by **CAMP /
Cassin**

Monday Raised: **\$2896**

Lone Rock Point Rope Raffle

A fundraiser to help pay our
annual contribution to the VT
Episcopal Diocese for **access to
Lone Rock Point**

Organized by **Pete Clark**

Rope donated by the **Outdoor
Gear Exchange**

Money Raised: **\$1400**

American Flatbread Benefit Bake

Organized by **Kel Rossiter**

Money Raised: **\$623**



2021 Grants Received

Two for the Trails

Bolton Dome Trail Work
Written by: Jordan Rowell
Award: \$5,000

Access Fund

Bolton Dome Loan Repayment
Written by: Seth Maciejowski
Award: \$3,000

American Alpine Club

Trail Work Tool Cache
Written by: Mischa Tourin
Award: \$2,500

Lawson's Finest Sunshine Fund

Bolton Dome Loan Repayment
Written by: Lauren Greco
Award: All Taproom Donations
from June 16 - 30, 2022

ERSA

Bolton Dome Stewardship
Written by Jordan Rowell
Unknown!


VOREC

Black Mountain
Written by Mischa Tourin
Not awarded but amazing work!



Protect America's Climbing





We've tripled our base since 2018, and this is in no small part in thanks to the attention and development that outgoing board member, Roderick Russell, brought to the membership process. Thank you so much!

Membership

Members are the foundation of CRAG-VT, and their support is the most stable and substantial part of our operating budget.

2021 was a landmark year for membership. As of December 1st we have 452 members, up from 345 one year ago. Among those, 171 are brand new members who joined this year.

Our gross membership income was just over \$24K this year, which is an increase of \$6,000 from last year. We also received 60 \$100+ donations, more than ever before.

Total Members

452

New Members in 2020

171

Average Donation

\$50

Member Income

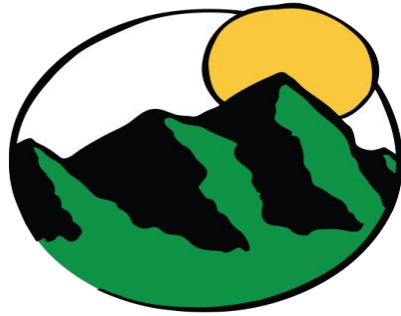
24K +



A special thank you to board members Andrea Charest, Roderick Russell, and Travis Peckham for their contributions to rock climbing in Vermont throughout their tenure with CRAG-VT. As board members, they have all gone above and beyond in different ways, contributing their unique skills and gifts towards our mission. We will miss these voices on the board but look forward to seeing them at the cliffs!



Sponsors & Corporate Partners



Outdoor
Gear
Exchange



metroROCK
ROCK CLIMBING CENTERS



ADVENTURE
SPIRIT
ROCK+ICE+ALPINE EXPERIENCES
WWW.ADVENTURESPIRITGUIDES.COM



In the Media

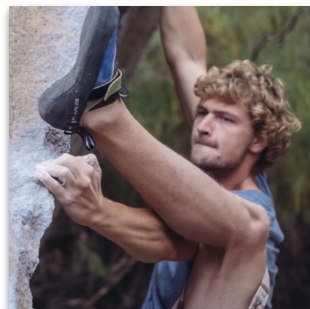
Access Fund: [Bolton Dome Sweatshirt](#)

Partner Spotlight:
[Lone Rock Point Newsletter](#)

Spring Clean-Up - Volunteering at Rock Point



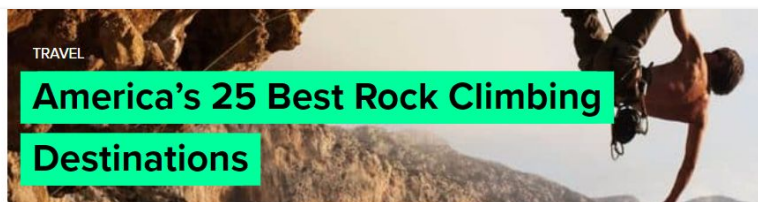
Board Member -
Pete Clark
quoted in
[National Geographic](#)



ADVENTURE
Rock climbing is getting more popular—and that concerns conservationists

With its Olympics debut, the once niche sport is highlighting the environmental impacts from an essential tool—climbing chalk.

The environmental impact of rock climbing, in general, isn't well known. Access is one limitation, as most scientists are not climbers. Even in accessible areas, the variable terrain itself can present a challenge to measuring climbing's effects. "It's been difficult to tease apart the mechanisms that are potentially impacting the sensitive cliff communities," says Peter Clark, a doctoral candidate at the University of Vermont, who is studying cliff ecology.



TRAVEL

America's 25 Best Rock Climbing Destinations



William Kennedy • 4 min read

[Bolton, VT ranked #2](#)
in the **top 25** climbing
areas in the US on
some random list :)



Prepared By:

Lauren Greco, Executive Director

Photo Credits:

Ted Schiele

Sam Simon

Natalia Boltukhova

Andy Wickstrom

Supplementary Reports

Membership Reports

CRAG-VT Board Meeting Minutes

2021 Climbing Festival Report

Lone Rock Point Annual Report

