

JimmyRay

Posted on: Nov 18 2006, 11:41 AM

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

I'm heading to Potrero for 10 days around Thanksgiving, and was wondering who all was going to be down there?

Forum: [General Climbing](#) · Post Preview: [#15653](#) · Replies: 9 · Views: 303

JimmyRay

Posted on: Nov 10 2006, 10:47 AM

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

Rick, good clarifications... I've tried to incorporate them; everyone, please help polish as necessary:

_ Turkey & Black Vultures are one of the more popular birds observed in Enchanted Rock State Natural Area (Park). They can often be seen circling in thermals high overhead, perched on a rocky outcrop or tree, or eating carrion on the side of the road that leads to the Park.

_ However, they are highly social animals that prefer to roost in large colonies, and sometimes their roosting habits can produce negative impacts to Park resources & users. Precedents of such incidents have occurred locally, in places such as Lake Bastrop's North Shore park.

_ We believe a similar problem is occurring in the Park on the backside of Main Dome where the birds have been progressively congregating in larger numbers for a period covering 3 or 4 years. Here the birds gather to roost to spend the night, not to be confused with a breeding roost. While the birds have always been observed in small numbers, until that time, the area had no historical precedent as a roost dating back to at least the late 1970's, basically the timeframe that Park users started becoming active in the area. The main culprit is the Black Vulture.

_ The birds have grown in numbers and the problem has grown significantly worse in the 4 years since the birds moved into (i.e., began roosting) in the area.

_ Years worth of excrement has accumulated to the degree that it is grossly noticeable, both visually and odor-wise, and is unpleasant to the degree that it impacts the Park experience for user groups that go back there. Complaints have been registered by climbers, hikers, Boy Scout groups, concessionaires, etc.

_ The volume of excrement is significant to the degree that it could pose a health hazard?

_ The volume of excrement is significant to the degree that it appears to be causing negative effects to the trees. Some even appear like they have died or are in the process of dying.

Now we need some visual aids/photos, especially historical or before ones, granted that the after ones can be taken this weekend/any time, etc.

Other stuff:

Vultures are prolific, especially in Texas, which is one of the top three states in terms of vulture populations. They're not protected because they're endangered; they're protected because they're migratory birds (USFWS Migratory Bird Treaty Act) and while many people view the birds with disdain, their benefits to our environment are enormous, and not in question.

Admittedly, the following link is a pro-vulture link, but it is very informative on some drivers and methods for disturbing or attempting roost re-location, particularly the "Legal Considerations", and "Health Concerns".

<http://vulturesociety.homestead.com/Discourage.html>

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#15525](#) · Replies: 45 · Views: 854

JimmyRay

Posted on: Nov 9 2006, 05:34 PM

Newbie

I agree that the concept of Park Management taking a "crappy" field trip, so to speak, is the best idea. Then seeing how they'd like to proceed. Perhaps members of the CTCC, as well as FOER can be present for the tour.

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

In broaching the subject with them, a historical perspective, and perhaps a few pictures (i.e., visual aids) would be useful in demonstrating that there really is a serious problem, and motivating them to go take a look-see.

Warn: (0%)

Historical Perspective: Synopsis-wise, do the following bullets sound about right?

- _ Black Vultures are the main culprit involved.
- _ They started roosting back there around 2003 or 3 years ago. Until that time, the area had no historical precedent as a roost dating back to at least the late 1970's, basically the timeframe that users started becoming active in the area.
- _ The problem has grown significantly worse in the 3 years since the birds moved into the area.
- _ Excrement has accumulated to the degree that it is grossly noticeable, both visually and odor-wise, and is unpleasant to the degree that it impacts the Park experience for user groups that go back there. Complaints have been registered by climbers, hikers, Boy Scout groups, etc.
- _ The volume of excrement is significant to the degree that it could pose a health hazard?
- _ The volume of excrement is significant to the degree that it appears to be causing negative effects to the trees. Some even appear like they have died or are in the process of dying.

Visual Aids:

- _ Who ever is out this weekend, take some pictures of the worst, most offensive areas. Look for angles that demonstrate the volume. Look for situations where the trees seem to be suffering negative effects, etc. Take a few shots from on top of the Proks that show how the roost is expanding down the tree line.

_ Does anyone have any pictures of the area from a couple of years back, so that we could show a before & after, or historical perspective of how the problem has grown.
_ Does anyone have any pictures of the tree canopy below the Proks, so that we can show how the roost is expanding down the tree line?
Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#15515](#) · Replies: 45 · Views: 854

JimmyRay

Posted on: Nov 9 2006, 12:30 AM

Hippy juice... redneck juice... Both are made from fruity substances, so spare me the BS as well.

Newbie

Understand there's no "Save the Buzzards" bumper sticker on my car; just trying to be real... as in reality, namely that the freakin' buzzards are a federally protected species living in a State Natural Area... and unfortunately, unlike Bambi, there are no open seasons on the birds whether they crap, piss, and barf on our climbs or not.

Group: Members

Posts: 89

Joined: 19-December 05

Member No.: 18

Any suggested solution in any proposal must recognize at some level, be sensitive to, balance, and be crafted in such a manner so as to address the above mentioned "realities".

Warn: (0%)

Said realities also imply that first resort solutions would intuitively favor softer tactics, such as exclusion strategies (e.g., covering all the trees with porcupine wire, etc.), and perhaps extreme tactics as a last resort.

So, somebody, anybody... please help make things scientifically less fuzzy:

How exactly does vulture poop lead to erosion problems? Sources please...

Send us the link of one published study whose thesis opines that vulture (or any bird for that matter) excrement is a health hazard.

Is there a tree surgeon in the audience (or some facsimile thereof) that can visit the site, and write a report detailing how all that fertilizer is killing the trees?

Can someone get on the horn with park officials at Bastrop and see how they worked their problem? They obviously trumped the federal protection thingy somehow?

Can someone write a tactful end-user complaint letter for review?

These are some of the things that the CTCC is researching; once again, please feel free to contribute.

Lastly, who's doing all the complaining... a bunch of climbers? Is this a climbing-specific problem or does it cover all user groups? Are any other user groups complaining?

Ideally, it would be optimal if diverse voices joined the chorus. In other words, it's not a user group-specific problem; it's a public problem.

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#15497](#) · Replies: 45 · Views: 854

JimmyRay

Posted on: Nov 8 2006, 04:19 PM

Here's some stuff to ponder:

Newbie

Group: Members

Posts: 89

Joined: 19-December 05

Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

While they primarily roost at night, my observation is that the main culprit on the Backside is the Black Vulture.

Vultures are a federally protected species (1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act). Extreme measures, such as killing them as a roosting deterrent will probably require some type of regulatory approval, as well as a driver for requesting said approval, such as they are being detrimental to other Park resources, such as trees or that they are concentrated in numbers and in a manner that constitutes a health hazard or other nuisance.

We are not the only park in the area that is experiencing or has experienced a so-called problem with vultures. What can we glean from them? See the attached link for more info:

http://www.news8austin.com/content/your_ne...amp;ArID=166291

In their case, it appears that they first tried softer methods, but ultimately resorted to more extreme measures. Obviously, one would assume that they somehow received some type of regulatory approval. However, regardless of what precedent they used to obtain regulatory approval, we must understand that Enchanted Rock is a State Natural Area, and carries a special designation over municipal parks, or even regular state parks. This special designation suggests that the wildlife gets the right of way, and intuitively, we would probably have a larger burden of proof that the vultures are indeed creating a health hazard, etc.

The roosting habits or patterns of the vultures in question are subject to change. Historically, they haven't always roosted in the trees that front Sweat, and likewise, they may move on to other areas in the Park in the future without any type of intervention? Yeah, it's a problem for climbers now, but could it turn obsolete in the future?

In reality, the birds on the Backside aren't physically hurting anyone or causing property damage. And while some might argue that they are killing the trees (i.e., park resources), and are a health hazard, what does the science really say? Do we even need solid science or will the fuzzy variety do? The following link speaks of a problem in Virginia with an estimated 450 birds, and a quote from a certified Biologist (whatever that means) that says that "The bird's droppings aren't a health risk". I wouldn't think that the number of birds roosting on the Backside goes anywhere near 450 birds.

<http://www.hangingrocktower.org/vultureart.htm>

Other online inquiries reveal a number of articles that speak to health hazards, but don't quantify specifics. At the end of the day, in our case, it's basically going to boil down to fuzzy science, and personal bias in terms of whether you believe a legitimate health hazard is occurring in front of Sweat or not? I mean can you even answer this question: How many birds are roosting back there in the first place?

The following link is nicely informative on vultures in Texas, and speaks to some of the softer or less extreme methods to alter the roosting habits of vultures. The exclusion methods using porcupine wire sounds like it might merit some thinking for our application?

<http://www.landandlivestockpost.com/commen...05zimmerman.htm>

Lastly, climbers are not the only user group that inhabits E-Rock. How do other user groups feel about the mess back there? Are they even aware of it? How do you think other user groups will feel about any extreme attempts to eradicate the problem? If indeed we are the only user group that perceives it as a problem, how much weight does the problem actually have in the big scheme of things? Granted, we could volunteer for any labor involved, but does the problem actually warrant burdening an already burdened Park staff? As climbers, is it in our best interest to attach more visibility to our user group?

As any climber that's been back there, the CTCC is aware of the admittedly yucky situation, and is openly discussing options. This forum is a good place to start, but it goes without saying that any proposal must rise above the threshold of just bitching about it, and that probably starts with looking at other precedents out there, especially local ones.

Please feel free to help research.

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#15487](#) · Replies: **45** · Views: **854**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Oct 19 2006, 10:00 PM

Newbie

This is an all points Granite Gripper bulletin: if anyone has access to a digital projector that the CTCC could borrow for Saturday night's Merrick Ales presentation, it would be more than greatly appreciated.

Group: Members

Posts: 89

Joined: 19-December 05

Member No.: 18

Jimmy Ray

972-965-1328

Warn: (0%)

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#15136](#) · Replies: **2** · Views: **51**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Oct 17 2006, 09:23 AM

Newbie

I'm looking forward to this weekend/seeing everyone... who all is coming out?

Group: Members

Posts: 89

Joined: 19-December 05

Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#15060](#) · Replies: **25** · Views: **970**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Sep 20 2006, 11:05 AM

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

Seems to me that the TR is the most bomber "piece" in this equation? (Sorry couldn't resist.)

The world of climbing is full of clever "guide" tricks that can be used when one has run out of, or doesn't own, the proper piece of gear. I've used nut tools as emergency passive protection before too... certainly wouldn't have been my first choice for sure, but under the circumstances was deemed better than nothing... whether it was based in reality or not?

Same here, with all the beak technology that's out there today... and there's all kinds of shapes, sizes & goofy names, why resort to a guide trick as a first choice?

Be it carpentry or climbing, if you've got the proper tool for the job... then use the proper tool for the job. If not, then digress relative to the situation.

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#14502](#) · Replies: **6** · Views: **235**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Sep 12 2006, 09:22 PM

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

You must be seeing ghosts! How about leaving the nut tool for the second?

Forum: [Choss](#) · Post Preview: [#14376](#) · Replies: **95** · Views: **2,229**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Sep 11 2006, 11:08 AM

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

I've made the Black Canyon a priority for the past three years... it's an awesome place. The Lightning Bolt Crack (5.11a), seen in the photo, is an exit pitch variation to either Comic Relief or Escape Artist, both of which are good routes, and probable standard ticks as you work toward burlier objectives.

Warn: (0%)

Forum: [Choss](#) · Post Preview: [#14345](#) · Replies: **95** · Views: **2,229**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Sep 5 2006, 11:13 AM

Newbie

Just to show that I wasn't over stating when I said storm... here's the scene after being portaledge bound for two days & nights on Chickenhead Ledge... can you say rope-popsicles?

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Actually, the worse part of the ordeal was probably yet to come, namely climbing the remaining 500ft to the summit in terrible run-off conditions.

Warn: (0%)

Forum: [Choss](#) · Post Preview: [#14261](#) · Replies: **95** · Views: **2,229**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Sep 5 2006, 10:51 AM

Newbie

This picture brings back some memories:

This is a French team at the base of the Shield's infamous Groove pitch (P20)... a literal field museum of buried metal, and various other fixed tat. It's one of the most memorable, if not crux pitch on the Shield, as the actual crux for any given ascent may vary relative to the degree of fixed gear encountered. There have been recorded 100ft falls taken on the Groove pitch with no serious injury... such is the nature of tossing off an overhanging headwall 2000+ feet off of the ground. However, when this happens, it basically "cleans" all the usable fixed gear out of the fissure, starting the "process" anew, but not without leaving a few buried relics behind.

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

We fixed this pitch, and the next pitch, the even more famous Triple Cracks (p21) for our friends seen here... what none of us knew at the time, was that a major storm system was blowing in that would bring 48 hours of continuous precipitation, both wet & frozen depending on the hour, and a lot of helicopter activity, including at least one short haul rescue off of New Dawn.

Warn: (0%)

Due to the prolonged nasty weather, the Shield was my longest, and most compromised wall ascent... 8 days on... Unfortunately, after the storm released its grip, the team seen here actually retreated, or self-rescued from one pitch higher... to anyone that comprehends the variables & position involved... it's a serious accomplishment that commands total respect. Lucky for us, the day after this picture was taken, my partner and I elected to climb through the night to reach the only ledge in over a 1000ft of climbing... it was our somewhat sheltered position which enabled us to weather the storm.

Forum: [Choss](#) · Post Preview: [#14260](#) · Replies: **95** · Views: **2,229**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Sep 1 2006, 11:51 AM

Newbie

No fair weather climbers here: This is Steve Hunt seconding the traverse into the Gray Bands (note the awesome rope management)... we were originally vying for the Shield, but the hostile weather made us think twice about breaching the exposed Shield Headwall, so rather than retreat from 16 pitches up, we opted for the Triple Direct... a much easier path to the summit. The Shield would wait until the following year.

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

Forum: [Choss](#) · Post Preview: [#14225](#) · Replies: **95** · Views: **2,229**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 27 2006, 08:49 AM

Dima that is a bummer... especially since I need to "clean up" the ass-whipping handed to me last month on my first attempt at that route.

Newbie

Unlike vultures, bats are seasonal or migratory so they'll eventually vacate... I'm just curious, has any one observed bats in Ding Dongs before? Barry?

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

In other words, is this an isolated event rather than a yearly sabbatical? While I'm currently too lazy to research the almanac or the internet, the heat seems a smidge atypical this year? I'm wondering if the heat has anything to do with them moving into that specific spot... it obviously gets good shade, etc. Still, even if they just discovered the accommodation this year, they could now return seasonally to Ding Dong Inn, even if they haven't been annual visitors in the past.

Warn: (0%)

Regardless, within the context of a State Natural Area, which carries a special Designation, nature gets the right-of-way. In the big scheme of things, the rewards & positives of nature based climbing far outweigh the demerits & negatives... putting up with some "crap" & some "smell" here & there is still a lot better than the alternative of indoor-gym-like urban climbing.

So while it's a bummer for us, odds are good that the bats are feeling pretty cozy with the arrangement.

For whatever reasons, the roosting habits of animals are subject to change... it just comes with the territory.

And what an awesome nature-based territory it is!

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#14141](#) · Replies: **14** · Views: **454**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 26 2006, 11:08 PM

I noticed a number of improvements over the past draft. Kudos RRCC.

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

Forum: [RRCC Announcements](#) · Post Preview: [#14134](#) · Replies: **1** · Views: **117**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 25 2006, 07:14 PM

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

Just keeping things in perspective:

One of the above rants assumes that the drama started with Bill Gooch... others might say that the drama started when the routes in question were retro-bolted... neither viewpoint hits the nail on the head... the reality is that such dramas are not unique or original... like a worn out movie they get played out from climbing era to climbing era, climbing area to climbing area, and from climber to climber. All any of us are really doing is spin & propoganda, relative to our personal bias, on a worn out movie. That's no reason not to care, or have heartfelt convictions about the role of bolts & the proper manner in which to place (or remove) those bolts... just understand, that "becoming a little concerned" cuts both ways.

The regulations pertaining to fixed gear at E-Rock have been in place for 20 years, and reports of non-compliance are very rare. Percentage-wise or statistically, most local climbers understand the realities in a regulated environment, and the relationship between lasting access & playing by the rules. The numbers don't change based on artificial threat-exaggeration. Odds are good that when the RRCC has been in effect for 20 years that the percentages & statistics will favor the fact that most climbers play by the rules?

Vigilantes can operate both inside and outside of proper channels. Bolting bandits can retro-bolt as well as chop. <Insert spin & propoganda here relative to your personal bias.>

Accordingly, any climbing committee should be paramount in developing consistent policies, both in terms of bolting transactions that go through proper channels, and those that don't... and in that equation... shouldn't the horse come before the cart?

Just out of curiosity what is the official public statement thingy on the RRCC's position on retro-bolts, route modification, route infringement, visual aesthetics, bolted boulder problems, chipping, gluing (wink-wink).

Should this be posted on the Austin thread?

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#14107](#) · Replies: **28** · Views: **809**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 25 2006, 03:41 PM

Within the context of a regulated environment, does it really matter how the bolt got there in the first place? Did it really matter that a bolt wasn't there for 20 some-odd

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

years?

What happens if a bolt is removed from another route... one in which the CTCC didn't have any type of retro-involvement with whatsoever... the answer to that question may still be as clear cut as Kirk suggests... but it speaks to the crux of what were attempting to achieve here... setting precedent.

There are all kinds of precedents... but in a perfect world, we're talking about one that can be applied in a consistent manner. Fairness is a byproduct of consistency. On one hand, we never want to be so rigid that there's no opportunity for positive reform, or wiggle room for the odd exception, granted that circumstances merit it... on the other hand, in the majority of cases an established precedent suggests, if not dictates that THIS is what happens in THESE situations.

That's the benefit of community dialog... to see how everyone interprets or perceives the THIS in that equation.

Ideally, if it's possible, this precedent should largely be generic enough so that it transcends questions, such as the validity of how the bolt got there in the first place, or the identity of the perpetrator, etc.

Is it possible to strip away everything for just a moment and look at any given bolting transaction in the most generic sense, and say THIS is what happens in THESE situations?

Once we've defined THIS & THESE at the generic level, then perhaps it may be appropriate to consider extenuating circumstances...

Within the context of a regulated environment, THESE are intuitively easier to define... it's a fact of life... our bolting freedoms at E-Rock hinge upon mandated bureaucratic processes... what falls inside and outside of said bureaucracy is the same for everyone, and really isn't open to the eye of the beholder.

THIS, however, will ultimately fall victim to the fact that climbing means different things to different people... THIS probably will be open to the beholder's eye, and the values, experience and capacity behind the lense... and that's why there's seemingly no end to the discussion.

Looking toward the future, the aim is to develop a response, or a robust bolting policy that can be applied consistently... not only in how we handle the unilateral, illegal removal of a bolt, but the criteria that goes into evaluating bolting transactions that go through proper channels as well.

If we realize the latter, then it may make the former one a bit more moot.

The aim is consistency. Fairness is a byproduct of the aim.

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#14096](#) · Replies: **36** · Views: **1,035**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 25 2006, 12:32 PM

James,

Newbie

There is a segment of the community that feels exactly like you do... just as there is a segment that feels like Sean does... each has their personal justifications to support their viewpoint.

Group: Members

Posts: 89

Joined: 19-December 05

Member No.: 18

All you guys please help me... Jimmy Ray the end user, not the dude with the CTCC hat on... how would you rationalize these thoughts:

Warn: (0%)

#1:

Regardless of how so-called "wrong" the retro-bolts were, they were placed through proper channels, and vice versa, regardless how so-called "right" removing the retro-bolt was, it was done outside of proper channels. If the bolt doesn't go back, would it not give the perception, whether it's based in reality or not, that all one has to do is break the rules to get their desired end?

#2:

Three routes were altered. How does any argument for "adjustment" or compromise on one route not apply to all three routes? In theory, could we not go through another iteration of the exact same thing on one of the other routes? What happens if another one of the FA's breaks the rules? Is it possible to establish precedent on this incident that transcends future incidents?

#3:

So you don't want the bolt to go back... there are ways to so-called legitimize it (i.e., proper channel the "improper" channel). For example: Say Bill's request was granted, and he simply waited a year until the application expired and never placed the bolt in the amended spot... or say the bolt went back because rules were broken, and that's just the way it goes... but part of the bolting policy reform that is coming down the pike is to have measures in place that can accommodate all types of bolting transactions including removals. In theory, then somewhere down the line, Bill or anyone for that matter, could apply for a removal application to return the route to its so-called natural state (granted that it met resource criteria, etc.)... Or say the "violator" took full responsibility; volunteered to take a citation, issued a formal public apology, etc.

#4

So you want the bolt to go back... does replacing it in the proposed amended position seem like a fair compromise to you... or must it go back in the exact same spot? Conversely, is it within the realm of reason that one day you might gain the self-reliance to attempt the route in question without that bolt in place?

#5

The CTCC can act on any bolting violation whether the identify of the perpetrator is known or not. What happens if we didn't know who removed the bolt in this incident (to Bill's credit, he was upfront about his involvement from the beginning), and there was no alternative solution submitted, etc. All we have is a transaction that we know is "illegal". Should not any precedent set in this incident transcend the identity of "who done it"?

#6

How much weight to ultimately put on any type of input... be it FA-input, or community input... is open to debate. How does one build such things into evaluation criteria in a manner that can be used consistently across the board?

While these are just a few of the precedent-alligators to wrestle with, there's enough here to digest... how would you rationalize your solution?

Disclaimer: Let's keep this discussion constructive, and within context. You can't rewrite historical reality: the context of this issue is E-Rock, a crag with an emphasis placed on traditional values as they pertain to stylistic & ethical approaches to climbing. Is there mixed precedent? Sure, but the color of the roots will always show first.

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#14090](#) · Replies: **36** · Views: **1,035**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 18 2006, 08:17 PM

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Snakes on a plane? Sounds like a pleasure cruise to me!

Warn: (0%)

Forum: [Choss](#) · Post Preview: [#13975](#) · Replies: **14** · Views: **231**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 15 2006, 12:19 PM

Newbie

Group: Members
Posts: 89
Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Scott,

Yep... I can spell a lot of them too. In the old days, I used to do this kind of stuff like a lot of kids do flash cards... give someone the guide, tell them to pick out a snake, tell me the common name, and I'd take it from there. Although, since my main focus shifted to climbing rocks years ago, I'm kind of out of touch with some of it... but Crotalus Atrox is an easy one.

Warn: (0%)

Forum: [Austin Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#13917](#) · Replies: **59** · Views: **1,471**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 15 2006, 10:33 AM

Newbie

What a cutey... Western Diamondback Rattlesnake (Crotalus Atrox).

Group: Members
Posts: 89

Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Warn: (0%)

Forum: [Austin Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#13914](#) · Replies: **59** · Views: **1,471**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 14 2006, 12:36 PM

Newbie

If there are any of us that have taken some sort of guilty pleasure in seeing our Committee put in a bad light, or perhaps let a thin-lipped smile permeate their face due to the negative visibility cast on our organization... then they're missing the boat completely.

Group: Members
Posts: 89

I confess: there have been times when I've been left standing at the dock, but we all make mistakes.

Joined: 19-December 05
Member No.: 18

Most know my heartfelt viewpoints on this matter, and that the events that transpired on the Backside in June 2004 are largely why I ran for the Committee this election period.

Warn: (0%)

My candidacy was based on the premise that "that type" of climbing is dying a death of a thousand scratches at E-Rock, and that we've probably already made enough compromises, but if not, that we must be very smart in balancing future compromise with the preservation of something that is very important, namely E-Rock's heritage.

Still, just because I disagreed with what went down, if I ever thought that the finger of "bad light" was pointing at the former Committee, and not the current one, well I needed to turn around, or look in the mirror, because that same finger is pointing at me. Climbing may mean different things to different people, but at the end of the day, we're all just a bunch of climbers, and we're all on the same team.

It makes modest difference if you're on the Committee or just an end user... a climber in the field. If you think that the finger of "negative visibility" is just pointing at the organization, and not the community at large, then you need to turn around, or look in the mirror, because that finger is pointing at all of us. We may have diverse convictions about the role of bolts & the proper manner in which to place those bolts, but at the end of day, we're all just a bunch of climbers, and there's really no separating us from them... especially at the land manager level.

Rick,

You shame me. I admire and respect your words & response throughout this whole debate. But the reality is, neither you as past-Chair, nor the Committee, have anything to apologize for... you guys went through proper channels, and regardless of what mistakes were made, by virtue of that, you really didn't do anything wrong. We all make mistakes.

Not only did you go through proper channels, but as Soy so eloquently articulated it in a previous post... there's a mixed-precedent at E-Rock in terms of FA-input, as Real Gravy demonstrates, which was retro-bolted well over a decade ago. In addition, there are no guidelines or evaluation criteria in any Committee documentation that mandates that FA-input is a part of the evaluation process on any bolting transaction.

Hopefully, looking to the future, this event can bring about positive reform in our policies so that such stuff is not so “ambiguous” in the future... perhaps by improving the process & learning from our mistakes... well that could be the best apology to ourselves that any of us could give.

Besides, the burden of a public apology should rest on the shoulders of the entity that broke the rules, and didn't go through proper channels, because no matter how “right” they were, by virtue of that fact... within the context of a regulated environment... they were wrong, but we all make mistakes.

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#13889](#) · Replies: **36** · Views: **1,035**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 13 2006, 01:47 PM

Newbie

A “normal” stickclip... as opposed to what... an un-normal one... just curious, in what league was that yellow, telescoping monstrosity you used to get up Real Gravy?

Group: Members

Posts: 89

Joined: 19-December 05

Member No.: 18

Actually, it would be a retro-retro-removal, but I agree, within the context of a regulated environment, two “lames” don't make a right.

Warn: (0%)

Bill wasn't privy to our “initial” go-around (and around and around), so let me be the first to make introductions... Bill, Fracture... Fracture, Bill.

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#13864](#) · Replies: **36** · Views: **1,035**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 13 2006, 12:47 AM

Newbie

“There are better ways to address that issue, and the debate you wish to engage in is much more about the convenience and comfort than it is about danger.”

I like that line... but if I read between the “other lines” correctly, I'd add that the debate is probably more about access.

Group: Members

Posts: 89

Joined: 19-December 05

Member No.: 18

Without “that bolt” some climbers are saying that they don't have access to that route, or at least the “flavor of access” that they'd prefer?

Warn: (0%)

I can totally relate... let me explain.

SKIP ARGUMENT

A common argument that retro-bolt proponents advance is that if you like so-called spicy climbing, then just skip the bolt or bolts.

(Please forgive the self-flatulence to make a point) As I didn't get to Ambulance Blues, Intensive Care, and Carpet Crawl until after they were already retro-bolted, that's exactly what I was obligated to do... To help simulate original conditions, I carefully studied the Dome Driver Manual to determine the “real” bolt locations, and took just enough clips so that in theory, I couldn't cheat myself. I climbed all three routes in that manner, and while I enjoyed them, I couldn't help but feel the chagrin inherent in such tactical games... I had access, but it wasn't the flavor of access that I'd preferred. BTW: For me personally, the lichen land didn't subtract from the game... it added to it.

TR ARGUMENT

Conversely, perhaps an argument that an anti retro-bolt proponent could advance is that if you are unwilling to lead a route in its original condition, then just TR it... a style of climbing that's as safe as it comes. No worries about catastrophic (i.e., time off work, lost income, etc) injury there. If not TR, then what about stylistic tactics, such as stickclips... another viable means to reduce the risk, or even porta-pro... the practice of stringing up a static fixed line with in-line eights to clip as pro... blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

The point is that regardless of which side of the fence we stand on, the climbing opportunity is there... the access is there... it's just that it may not be in the flavor that we'd prefer.

If indeed no one got on those routes before they were retro-bolted; it wasn't because the opportunity, or access didn't exist.

As they relate to retro-bolts, the SKIP & TR arguments are what I like to call wash arguments... they cancel each other out. As they negate each other, these arguments are not the type that should be constructed or developed into evaluation criteria for bolting transactions.

Which brings up a good question: What are the criteria that go into evaluating bolting transactions at E-Rock? Are they applied consistently? Do they pass the wash test?

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#13855](#) · Replies: **36** · Views: **1,035**

JimmyRay

Posted on: Aug 12 2006, 09:57 PM

In terms of visual aesthetic impacts... what we sometimes refer to as "eye sores", I can totally relate to Sean's comment & interpretation.

Newbie

Many times, I've stood at the base of Stranger, and have been chagrined at all the shiny metal objects on the wall. Within the context of a nature-based crag, it's a shining example... in the most negative sense!

Group: Members

Posts: 89

Joined: 19-December 05

Member No.: 18

Please indulge me by stripping the retro-debate out of the equation for just a split-sec... and evaluate one action that climbers can take that **transcends** any given so-called nobody or Godfather's passion & bias about the role of bolts or the proper manner in which to place those bolts.

Warn: (0%)

Within the context of a nature-based crag, when care is taken to "camouflage" bolts and their associative hardware, their visual impacts can be reduced to a level of insignificance.

In terms of visual impacts, as climbers, in our attempts to "educate" our land managers and the non-climbing public... entities that may often misunderstand, or have false/preconceived notions, etc., about bolting impacts, one of the first things that we'd like them to know is that bolts are small, and by default, hard to see.

In general they are located off of the "beaten" path, and well above eye level (i.e., above the level of casual vision), or are completely out of sight (i.e., impossible to see).

On average, if not the majority of cases, climbers are the only user group in a position to see them.

However, on short cliffs, or any situation where bolts may be visually distracting, to climbers or other user groups, then camouflaging is an effective measure that can proactively mitigate visual impacts and the potential conflicts associated with them.

Mitigating "shiny" bolts should reduce an **already low profile**, and may conceal a bolt so well that a climber on route can't readily see it, much less someone hiking or nature viewing on the ground or in the vicinity.

Within the context of E-Rock, it would be very meaningful to incorporate this mandate into the fixed gear approval process, namely that looking to the future, all new fixed gear be camouflaged to match the color of the rock. Intuitively, we should couple this reform with an action item to camouflage existing hardware... and the first place that warrants such attention is the Shield's shinning example... there's no excuse to be eyesore anymore.

Okay, back to the retro-debate...

Forum: [Enchanted Rock](#) · Post Preview: [#13843](#) · Replies: **36** · Views: **1,035**