

STEARNS COUNTY PARKS Rock Climbing Guidelines



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Rock Climbing Guidelines
7/9/04

ROCK CLIMING IS AN INHERENTLY DANGEROUS ACTIVITY, WHICH INCLUDES CERTAIN RISKS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE RISK OF SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH.

Rock climbing is allowed only in areas designated and signed for such use.

Use only approaches to the rock climbing area that are signed as "ROCK CLIMBING AREA."

Do not hammer on bolts.

PURPOSE

The goal is to provide for the use of certain areas of the park for rock climbing, in so far as the park's natural and cultural resources are not being irrevocably altered and clarify a permitting system for their use.

DEFINITIONS

ROCK CLIMBING: the generic term used by Stearns County for all manner of recreational climbing on rock faces. It includes such things as technical rock climbing, bouldering, scrambling, and other forms of recreational climbing. Participants in the sport often use specialized equipment (i.e. ropes, anchoring devices, and protective gear).

BOULDERING: Practicing rock climbing techniques near the ground without ropes or technical gear other than climbing shoes.

SCRAMBLING or FREE SOLO CLIMBING: Climbing on rock surfaces without ropes or technical gear of any kind.

TRUNDLING: Removal of large rocks from cliff areas by rolling them off the cliff or face.

GARDENING: Cleaning of climbing routes by removing vegetation, soil and small rocks.

HARDWARE or PROTECTION: Anchors (i.e. pitons, chocks, wedges and cams) placed in cracks or into the rock to provide fall protection to rock climbers.

FIXED PROTECTION: Permanent or semi-permanent anchors placed into the rock surface either by drilling into the rock or driving the anchor into the rock.

VOLUNTEER TRAILS: Unplanned and un-maintained trails established through constant use of an area by large numbers of people.¹

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Rock climbing is allowed on rock faces designated for that use by Stearns County Parks. Access to climbing areas is totally controlled through the rock climbing permit process supervised by the Park Director.

Developing new climbing areas in non-designated portions of the park will be permitted only after management approval through an identified process. Climbers interested in developing routes outside the defined area may request permission in writing through the park director of Stearns County. Requests for new routes will be reviewed to determine the appropriateness of the request and impact on the resources present and future.

Choice of routes, types and use of equipment and other issues related to the safety of climbers will always be the climber's responsibility.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Climbing Permits

- A. Climbing areas restricted: All cliffs, rock faces and other park areas suitable for climbing are designated RESTRICTED under the authority of Park Ordinance #215. These areas are closed to all kinds of rock climbing, but may be opened to climbing by special use (climbing) permits, issued to individuals or commercial groups and shall be so identified. They may be open for other uses in accordance with the decision making process of the Stearns County Parks.
- B. Permit required: No person may rock climb in any restricted area without first obtaining a special use (climbing) permit.
- C. Special use permits for climbers: Special use permits "climbing permits," shall be issued daily, or annually. Daily permits expire at the end of the day. Annual permits expire December 31st of the year on the permit. Climbing permits shall be issued upon request during regular business hours at the park's entrance, by the park gatekeeper, or park office. Climbing permits may contain restrictions to avoid environmental damage, overuse, pre-emption of climbing areas, or displacement of other park users. No fee will be charged for climbing permits, however, a parking permit is required at Quarry Park & Nature Preserve. Parking permits are available through the Park Office, Quarry Park & Nature Preserve Gatehouse, Stearns County License Centers, or through the self-registration box at the park entrance gatehouse. Costs are posted at the entrance.
- D. SPECIAL USE PERMITS FOR COMMERCIAL OPERATORS: Commercial enterprises such as schools, universities, businesses and other organizations, individuals and entities that provide instruction or guiding services for rock climbers in county parks must first obtain a special use permit for commercial climbing ("COMMERCIAL CLIMBING PERMIT"). Commercial climbing permits shall be issued for a specific date, or series of dates, and shall specify the location where climbing is authorized and the number of individuals that may be included in the group. Commercial climbing permits may contain restrictions or limitations on the number issued in order to avoid environmental damage, overuse, pre-emption of climbing areas, or displacement of other park users. The commercial enterprise shall provide a list naming all the individuals who participated in the scheduled climb. In some cases, the Park Director may waive the individual permit requirement, as established by the Park Commission on April 11, 2007 for certain climbing groups. These groups would be required to produce a list of all participants prior to the climb and follow the remainder of the Commercial Climbing guidelines.

- E. **INSURANCE:** Commercial/Institutional climbing permittees are required to furnish a **CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE** valid for the effective dates of the permit, listing Stearns County as an **ADDITIONAL INSURED**. The amount of liability coverage shall be at least as much as the state's limits of liability under the Minnesota tort claims act, MN State Statute 466.04 \$300,000 per person and \$1,000,000 per incident. In addition to a Certificate of Insurance, the permittee must sign an **INDEMNIFICATION AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT** for Stearns County prior to a permit being issued.

Note: Stearns County is not liable if a climber gets hurt or killed while climbing in Quarry Park & Nature Preserve. If climbers choose to climb, they do so at their own risk!

- F. **WARNING AND LIABILITY DISCLAIMER:** Rock climbing is an inherently dangerous activity. All persons are strongly urged to seek competent instruction and develop appropriate skill before climbing on their own. Stearns County does not certify climbers, instructors or guides, or otherwise determine their qualifications.

G. WAIVER OF LIABILITY:

The individual or organization signing a **CLIMBING PERMIT** acknowledges and represents that she/he/it wishes to participate in rock climbing in Quarry Park & Nature Preserve. Rock climbing in Quarry Park is not an organized activity of Stearns County and should not be considered an official Stearns County event or activity. Those signing a **CLIMBING PERMIT** further acknowledge and understand that any "instructor" or "organizer" of any rock climbing classes or activities are not acting within the scope of any employment relationship with Stearns County. Those signing a **CLIMBING PERMIT** acknowledge, represent and agree that she/he/it assumes all risks, if any, attendant to participating in rock climbing in Quarry Park. They hereby knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently waive all claims for injury in rock climbing.

INFORMATION and EDUCATION

Park management will work with the climbing community to develop information and education materials which foster an environmental climbing ethic

CLIMBER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Stearns County Parks will form a climbing advisory group made up of representatives of the climbing community to advise the County on climbing issues.

CLOSURES

From time to time the rock climbing area may need to be closed for management purposes. Areas open to climbing within the park will be identified and will be mapped on the park handout map. Climbing or bouldering on rock piles is strictly prohibited due to the unstable nature of this debris.

Secondary impacts of rock climbing, such as volunteer trails on cliff top and bottom areas will be addressed when necessary to minimize impacts on the park resources.

USE OF CLIMBING PROTECTION

Stearns County strongly endorses a "clean climbing" philosophy. Except for protection placed with the permission of Stearns County Parks, placement of hardware will be limited to that which can be temporarily placed using the climbers' fingers. All such protection must be placed and removed without altering the rock.

Stearns County will not permit proliferation of bolting and bolted routes. In very limited instances, where fixed anchors are needed for protection of adjacent resources or as alternatives to present tie-off points, they may be approved. No new anchors may be installed without the approval of Stearns County

Parks. The Climbing Advisory Committee will be consulted in all requests. Stearns County has the final word in approving or rejecting any fixed anchor applications.

All new anchors must be commercially manufactured for climbing fall protection and must be installed according to manufacturer's specifications. All approved permanent anchors will be documented in park files.

The decision to climb a route whether fixed anchors have been placed or not allowed, and the decision to utilize any existing fixed anchors are based on climber judgement. Stearns County is not responsible for condition, or appropriate and safe placement of new fixed anchors, or the maintenance and condition of existing fixed protection, and the use thereof is not endorsed by Stearns County Parks. Anchors and bolts are not inspected by Stearns County.

DISCLAIMER:

Rock climbing is recognized as a form of "risk recreation" with potential hazards to those involved in it. Stearns County strongly advocates that the safest possible climbing practices be used for all climbing in Quarry Park & Nature Preserve. Stearns County assumes no liability.

Stearns County shall not accept responsibility for providing rescue services to climbers. The location of the nearest pay phone is at the main parking lot. All injuries are to be reported to the park office. The emergency telephone number is 9-1-1. The Stearns County Park Office telephone number is 320/255-6172.

UNATTENDED EQUIPMENT:

The use of unattended equipment to reserve climbing routes is prohibited unless allowed by a Special Use Permit issued by park management. If such use creates conflicts for other park users, and park management is unable to resolve the problem through other means, the equipment may be removed in order to allow others to use the climbing route or adjacent facilities.

ALTERATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:

Activities that alter the natural environment (i.e. chipping or gluing of natural or artificial holds, "trundling" of rock, or "gardening") are prohibited. In some circumstances, climbing activities may cause temporary visual impacts offensive to other park users. Initial efforts to limit the visual impacts will be through climber education. Other management action may be taken if climber education efforts are unsuccessful. The use of natural vegetation for anchor systems is prohibited.

POLICY CHANGES:

Normal policy review will be done regularly by the Park Commission. Policy revisions will be incorporated into a draft proposal and sent to climbers who have obtained a climbing permit for comment and review prior to implementation.

All comments shall be submitted in writing to **STEARNS COUNTY PARKS, 1802 Co. Rd. 137, Waite Park, MN 56387; or emailed to: parkinfo@co.stearns.mn.us.**

Comments must be received by November 30th of each year for consideration. Policy revisions, if necessary, will be implemented by April 1st of each year.

Any alterations in policy or in rock climbing management plans will be posted at the climbing information sites, or provided in written materials provided to climbers as far in advance as possible.



Aerial photography courtesy of Microsoft Virtual Earth

| # | Name | Difficulty |
|----|----------------------|------------|
| 1 | Crankaroni | 5.3 |
| 2 | The Parachute Club | 5.8 |
| 3 | To Glue or Not to Go | 5.13 |
| 4 | Frostbite | 5.6 |
| 5 | Kris can do it | 5.10 |
| 6 | Quagmire | 5.8+ |
| 7 | Black Ice | 5.11c |
| 8 | Blood Run | 5.6 |
| 9 | Zavadeet-Drat | 5.4 |
| 10 | none | none |
| 11 | Red Ridge | 5.7- |
| 12 | Beginner's Crack | 5.3 |
| 13 | The Camel's Back | 5.0 |
| 14 | Brodizaffa | 5.7+ |
| 15 | Six Foot Flake | 5.5 |
| 16 | Six Foot Direct | 5.6 |
| 17 | The Front Page | 5.8 |

Note: Routes not shown on the above map lie in numerical order along the wall

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Quarry Park & Nature Preserve

Rock Climbing

0 100 200 300 Feet



To
Co Rd
137

m

&

16

18

B

20

Bouldering
Area

1/2

17

Rock Climbing
Wall

Bottom Access

18

A

19

16

17

Ledge
Top
Access

1

15

2

13

12

14

A

5

3

11

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------|
| Rock Climbing | B Restrooms | Hike | Grout Pile | Quarry |
| You Are Here | A Overlook | Hike & Bike | Intermittent Trees | Trees |
| A Derrick Exhibit | & Shelter | Mountain Bike | Prairie | Wetland |
| m Parking | | | | |