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• FOP Editorial •

Bolting, Rebolting and Retro-bolting

After clipping into a relatively harmless looking bolt, I look up to scope out the next section of climbing. Not too bad at first glance—I see 25 feet of 5.6 Pinnacles rock that, after careful climbing, will bring me to the next clip. However, when I arrive at the next bolt, I reassess my position. It soon becomes apparent that some nerve-calming medicine is in order; the so-called bolt is a Star nail-drive whose nail I wiggle out with my fingers...

Has this ever happened to you? If you've climbed some of the older routes at Pinnacles, chances are that you have some similar stories to tell around a six-pack of beer. As well, if you've climbed enough of these hair-raisers, you might find yourself wanting to do something about the unnecessary runouts you encounter.

But, you may ask, what's the story on fixing bolts on existing routes? What kind of gear do you need and what are the issues that you should be aware of? To start, if you plan to "fix" an existing route, you'd better be sure you know what you're doing. There's a lot of us climbers out there, and if you botch it up, you may need something a bit stronger than nerve-calming medicine to fix your woes. The climbing community doesn't take the rebolting issue lightly. And, if you've been following the latest developments, you'll notice that the climbing community has recently gained some important new members. Most notably, I want to point out many park officials and land managers have now joined the ranks of the climbing community. So aside from pleasing yourself by fixing an old route, you must also make sure to please the others in our extended family: fellow climbers, park officials, and land managers alike.

This article is not meant to scare off would-be Good Sams from fixing a death route here or there. In fact, this article is to encourage this community service. However, to make sure your efforts are viewed as service, be sure you know your stuff before you go out and bolt your way into an ethical debate.

To begin, you must understand the difference between rebolting and retro-bolting. While these two actions may seem to be closely connected, their underlying makeup are worlds apart. "Rebolting" is the act of replacing old bolts on existing climbs. New protection points are not added nor are they moved. New bolt technology has greatly improved the trustworthiness of bolts. Because of this, rebolting is generally considered an accepted practice by the climbing community.

"Retro-bolting," on the other hand, makes a greater impact on a climb because it entails adding bolt-protection points to an existing climb. Additionally, moving the placement of bolts is classified as retro-bolting. Think carefully before you retro-bolt because you're treading on thin ice as soon as you begin to change the makeup of an existing climb. The climbing community does not generally approve of this tactic.

cont. pg 2

• FOP Update •

The Pinnacles Wilderness/Climbing Plan What Should You Know?

• Brooks White

The Park Service, led by Chief Ranger Bill Lester, is in the process of developing a Wilderness/Climbing plan for Pinnacles National Monument. This plan, based on the "Limits of Acceptable Change" criteria put together by the National Forest Service, will be the definitive guideline for climbing, and other activities, in the Park for years to come. Their goal is to have the plan in place by the end of June.

So, what does that mean to us, the climbing community? Just EVERYTHING! This plan will, most likely, include recommendations concerning everything from trash handling to bolting regulations, safety concerns to route maintenance. This is the biggie. If we don't seize this opportunity to help shape the Wilderness/Climbing plan, it will be a long time before we get another chance.

The great news is that Bill Lester and the Park Service know and respect the climbing community. Many of the rangers are climbers themselves and Pinnacles National Monument is one of a handful of Parks that actually have a full-time climbing ranger. We (the climbing community) have a perfect forum in which to be heard. We can lend our assistance to the development process and shape the future of climbing for the Monument.

What can you do? Meetings to outline the development of the Wilderness/Climbing plan have already begun. Bill Lester brings a great deal of experience to the process, having written the Wilderness plan for the Cascades National Park. Friends of Pinnacles is working closely with Bill and the Park Service in order to get the word out to the climbing community and get input. To that end the Park Service is planning to organize a series of get-togethers at local climbing gyms to bring more information to the community and gather that feedback. FOP will be working with the gyms and the Park Service to publicize these events, all you have to do is show up.

The more you know, the better. For more details about the Wilderness/Climbing plan, see the "Gory Details" article in this newsletter. You can also contact the Park Service or Friends of Pinnacles for more information. Write, call or FAX.

Friends Of Pinnacles
208 Woods Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
(408) 458-9151 (Voice)
(408) 984-2222 (FAX)

Pinnacles National Park
Paicines, CA 95043
(408) 389-4485 (Voice)
(408) 389-4489 (FAX)



Friends Of Pinnacles

Bolting, Rebolting and Retro-bolting (cont.)

In the scenario beginning this article, there's no doubt that the Star nail-drive bolt needs to be replaced. With the proper tools, one could remove the old bolt and put a new one in its place. Such a service is viewed as a plus by the entire climbing community; the first ascent party is not likely to complain about the bolt replacement, and the park rangers and land managers alike are happy to see an existing route made safer.

However, if someone didn't take the time to remove the old bolt and just pounded a new bolt in right next to the old one, they've effectively desecrated on the route and significantly impacted the rock unnecessarily. When replacing old bolts, every effort must be made to keep the aesthetics of the route intact. And this means keeping the number of bolts on the route consistent with the number placed by the first ascent team.

Returning to our Pinnacles adventure, suppose my friend hates runouts and insists on protecting the 25' runout with a bolt every six feet. Don't laugh yet, as I've seen some routes that have had this very thing happen to them. In recent years, retro-bolting has taken on new dimensions. I've even heard one person claim it will be the next big issue to face the climbing community.

Retro-bolting raises some tough issues. Many new members of the climbing community believe that climbing should be a risk-free sport. Their train of thought may go something like this: "Why should I risk life or limb when the technology exists to make this death route safe?" The argument continues as some people feel that everyone should have equal access to all routes: "Why should I put myself at risk just because ten years ago, some hot-shot climber built runouts into this great line?" Yet another popular track concerning retro-bolting goes something like this: "Why should climbers have to think about what they need to take on a climb? I've got a rack of 25 quick-draws—why should I need to buy crack pro too?" With this thought, they break out the electric drill and proceed to place a bolt ladder next to an A1 crack.

For sure, all these arguments for retro-bolting have counter-arguments. And although I don't want address all the concerns here, I do want to say that climbing is a dangerous sport. If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen and let someone else do the cooking. But more important than my opinions about bolting and retro-bolting are the concerns of the park rangers and the land managers. Anger them, and you might not even need your bolting gear anymore. In fact, you might not even need your rope or quick draws, because they have the ability to decide that bolts are not an acceptable use of the wilderness (this has happened before). In fact, this is how Friends of Pinnacles got its start. Climbing at the Pinnacles was being threatened by an individual who took it upon himself to change the generally accepted approach to climbing at the Pinnacles (no pun intended). His actions alone endangered our ability to climb at the Pinnacles.

So, when you break out your bolt kit, keep these ideas in mind. Before bolting, ensure that the time you spend upgrading a route is actually seen as a positive gesture by the others who are impacted by your actions. Lastly, I urge you to be informed about the mechanics involved with rebolting routes. Read Todd Vogel's article on rebolting: "BOLTS: bomber or time bombs" (Rock & Ice #62, July/August 1994). This excellent article explains the gear you'll need to replace bolts and the problems you're likely to encounter when you undertake the roll of a Climbing Good Sam.

• Kelly Rich

• Telegram for Mongo •

• Brucestopher

Letters to Relayer
Friends Of Pinnacles - Letters
208 Woods Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Dear FOP,

Why does the Park Service close the best climbing areas due to raptor nesting from January 15th to April 15th. It seems like every year, more and more of our best spires fall prey to closure. It is just not fair.

Yours in climbing,

Mona Lott

Dear Mona,

Every year, certain rock formations in Pinnacles are put under a "climbing closure" or "climbing advisory". These areas are closed to protect nesting birds at the Pinnacles. These species include: Prairie Falcons, Golden Eagles, Kestrels, Ravens, Turkey Vultures and Owls. Two of these species, the Prairie Falcon and the Golden Eagle are listed by California Department of Fish and Game as "Species of Special Concern" and are protected by State and Federal Laws.

It is known that the presence of humans in the nesting areas of raptors can disrupt the breeding cycle of these animals. Human disturbance can be disastrous - disturbing a female falcon sitting on a nest can cause her to fly, spilling out her eggs or young, thus destroying that generation of birds. Climbers need to comply with these closures to protect the nesting raptors during this critical breeding period.

Those of us working in the raptor monitoring program are thankful that the climbing community has been so supportive of our program, even though it means that some prime climbing areas are under closure for a good part of the year.

The first set of closures went into effect on January 15th, and these will be revised in March when we know where the raptors are nesting. Closures are traditionally lifted in mid-June or July, depending on the young birds fledging. No new climbing areas have been added to the closure areas in the past four years or so, and usually some of the areas that were closed in the original January closure are reopened in March. Closure information can be obtained by stopping at either ranger station or by calling (408) 389-4485. If you have specific questions about the raptor program, you can ask to talk to one of the raptor monitors. Or look for us in the field - we're the ones with the spotting scopes on various ridge tops around the park.

Once again, I thank the climbing community for its past and future support of the Pinnacles raptor protection program.

Wendy Blailock (Raptor Monitor - National Park Service)

Closure Specifics:

Climbing formations in the following areas are subject to raptor closures from January 15th through June or July:

Balconies, Citadel Canyon, Juniper Canyon, Yaks wall, High Peaks North/Central/South, and Upper Reservoir Area.

See postings and the Pinnacles Climbing Guide for the names of specific formations. *When in doubt, pick another area.*

Relayer Staff:

Editor In Chief: Brooks White
Head Writer: Phil Rouse
Associate Editor: Bruce Hildenbrand
Contributing Editor: Chuckie The Wonder Lizard
Design & Production: Brooks White

• **What's New(s)** •
Access - Climbing Guidebook

• Phil Rouse

Tourist Trap Climbing Restrictions

Due to continuing erosion problems around popular climbs at the Tourist Trap area on the East Side of the Monument, the National Park Service has established restrictions regarding the number of climbers at the base of those climbs. Effective January 1995, climbing groups are now limited to 12 people, and no more than 6 climbers are allowed at the base of each of the two climbing areas (Rat Race and Thrill Hammer).

The NPS has posted signs at the access trail to alert climbers of these restrictions. These changes are designed to protect the fragile resources without closing the area to climbing access. The good relationship between the NPS and the climbing community contributed greatly to the decision to restrict the area, rather than close it.

Climber cooperation with these restrictions will help keep this area open to climbing, as well as demonstrate the ability of the climbing community to work with the NPS in protecting these resources. This cooperation is key to obtaining a Wilderness Plan which is "friendly" to climbing access.

Restoration projects will be initiated in order to reduce future impact and restore plant cover. Friends of Pinnacles will provide assistance to the NPS in these restoration activities. If you are interested in becoming involved in this project, look for volunteer information in future issues of **Relayer**.

New Climbing Guidebook Coming Soon

Look for an updated Pinnacles Climbing Guidebook scheduled to go to press in the beginning of '95. Rumors are that there are over 70 new routes listed.

• **Upcoming Events** •

• Phil Rouse

The Park Service, coming to a gym near you!

In connection with the drafting of the Wilderness Plan for Pinnacles National Monument, National Park Service rangers will be visiting local climbing gyms along with members of the Friends of Pinnacles. The purpose of these visits is to provide an opportunity for climbers and the NPS to exchange concerns over climbing access in the Pinnacles, and the content of the Wilderness Plan specifically relating to climbing resources. The goal of Friend of Pinnacles is to ensure the future of climbing at the Pinnacles and to disseminate information concerning the development of the plan to the community.

Friends of Pinnacles will present a slide show on climbing at the Monument, while the Park Service will update climbers on the importance and benefits of the Wilderness/Climbing plan, and offer an opportunity for climbers to voice their concerns and suggestions for climbing access in the Monument.

Here is your chance for an evening of climbing with fellow Friends of Pinnacles members and letting the NPS hear your thoughts about climbing at Pinnacles. Check with your local climbing gym, Friends of Pinnacles, or the NPS (Pinnacles National Monument) for specific details about the dates and times.

• **FOP Update** •
The Pinnacles Wilderness Plan
The Gory Details

• Brooks White

"... to conserve the scenery, the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations...."

The National Park Service (NPS) is putting together a series of guidelines for managing the resources of Pinnacles National Monument. This plan, in accordance with guidelines outlined in the Wilderness Act, is necessary to preserve the Monument's resources for generations to come. The plan takes into consideration **all** uses of those resources and aspires to strike a balance between wilderness experience and preservation.

The NPS at Pinnacles recognizes the history of climbing at the Monument and regards climbing as one of the valuable wilderness experiences the park has to offer. The NPS's positive attitude towards climbing and climbers affords the climbing community the golden opportunity to contribute heavily to the creation of guidelines that will preserve the future of climbing at Pinnacles National Monument.

The climbing community needs to make sure that the right issues are being considered and, after identifying the issues, we need to help steer the discussions which will lead to guidelines applied to these issues.

Discussions with the NPS have identified these, climbing related, issues for consideration:

- Basic Climbing Standards
- Bolting/Rebolting - visual impact, restrictions, safety
- Fixed Anchors - visual impact, safety
- Raptor Closures
- New Routes - how to monitor
- Chalk - visual impact
- Refuse
- Group Sizes
- Commercial Use (Guides, Classes)
- Slings - visual impact
- Staging Areas - erosion reduction/monitoring
- Trails - erosion reduction/monitoring
- Enforcement of Regulations
- Dissemination of Information
- Areas of NO Impact

The specifics of these issues are only now beginning to be discussed. For the time being, **EVERYTHING** is on the table.

The History of the Wilderness Plan:

The NPS was established in 1916. The formation of the National Wilderness Preservation System with the passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964 provided for the inclusion of designated NPS lands as Wilderness areas. All National Parks with designated wilderness areas will, eventually, develop a Wilderness Plan.

The Wilderness Act states that a wilderness is "... an area where the earth and its' community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." It is an area which "... generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, in which the imprint of Man's work is substantially unnoticeable." With this in mind, the NPS is developing the Pinnacles national Monument Wilderness Plan.

The Players:

The creation of the Wilderness Plan for Pinnacles National Monument is coordinated by Bill Lester, Chief Ranger at Pinnacles. Bill brings with him the unique experience of having helped author the North Cascades National Park Service Wilderness Plan. This plan was adopted in 1989 and stands as an excellent model for the Pinnacles plan. Bill's core team of rangers at Pinnacles includes experts in fields including livestock, grazing, Interpretation and Cultural Resources. Andy Artz, one of Bill's team members, is Pinnacle's first official, full-time, Climbing Ranger. Andy has been climbing for several years and personally understands the climbing issues. It is Bill's priority to include the climbing community in the process of developing the Wilderness Plan. As a representative of the NPS, Bill is looking for input from all users of the resource, hikers, campers and climbers alike.

The Goal:

A booklet called Wilderness Management - A Five Year Action Program, outlines the goals that the North Cascades Wilderness Plan is built around. These goals will likely serve as the model for the Pinnacles Wilderness Plan:

- Examine and evaluate existing wilderness education techniques.
- Institute and revitalize comprehensive in-service wilderness management training focused on wilderness resources, ethics, and low-impact camping.
- Identify, monitor, and publicly report internal and external threats to wilderness values from overuse, acid rain, degraded air quality and visual or sound impairments.
- Manage indigenous plant and animal communities, assuring that levels of human use are compatible rather than detrimental to endangered and threatened species.
- Conduct workshops and other programs as cooperative ventures of agencies, educational institutions, and interest groups.

The Plan and Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC):

The LAC, created in 1985, is a nine step planning procedure intended to develop a set of measurable objectives that define desired wilderness conditions. It also defines management actions necessary to achieve and maintain those conditions.

Using the LAC, the Pinnacles Wilderness Plan will define its resources and uses and build a set of measurable guidelines for managing them.

The nine steps of the LAC:

- 1) *Identify Area Concerns and issues*
These are features or values of the Park that need to be maintained or achieved. Critical habitat for an endangered species would be an area concern.
- 2) *Define and describe Opportunity Classes*
These describe the desired type and extent of recreational visitor impact (ranging from Urban to Primitive conditions).
- 3) *Select indicators of resource and social conditions*
This would include trail conditions, water quality, opportunity for solitude and party size.
- 4) *Inventory existing resource and social conditions*
- 5) *Specify standards for resource and social indicators*
(as specific as possible)
- 6) *Identify alternative opportunity class allocations*
Define and present alternatives to provide the desired resource and social conditions.
- 7) *Identify management actions for each alternative*

8) *Evaluate and select an alternative*

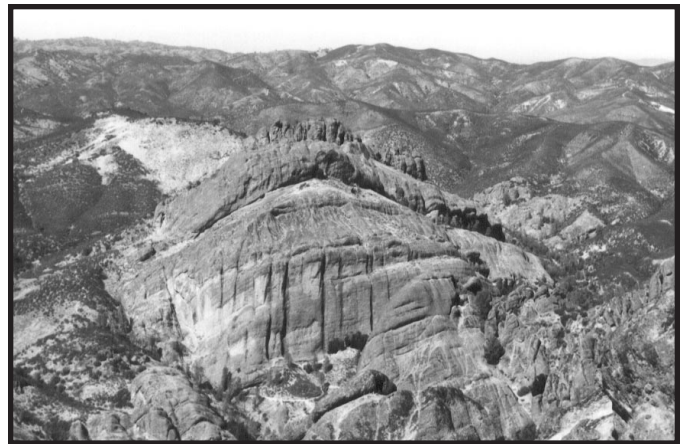
9) *Implement actions and monitor conditions*

The NPS is in the early phases of the plan, but things are moving rapidly.

Related Documents:

- National Park Service Organic Act of 1916
- The North Cascades National Park Service Complex Wilderness Management Plan
- The Wilderness Act of 1964
- Pinnacles Statement for Management
- The Olympic Wilderness Authorities and mandates
- National Park Service Wilderness Task Force Report
- The Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) System for Wilderness Planning

Contact the National Park Service or your local library for copies of these documents. Friends of Pinnacles may also be able to provide copies of some of these documents.



• Final Notes •

New Superintendent Named

It has been announced that Gary Candelaria, a 19 year veteran of the National Park Service, will become the Superintendent of Pinnacles National Monument in late February. Currently at Santa Monica Mountains National Park, Gary has also been at Saratoga National Historical Park, Ozark Riverways National Scenic Riverways, Sitka National Historical Park and Laramie National Historic Site. Gary's wide range of experience will be a great asset to the process of developing the Wilderness Plan for Pinnacles.

New Ranger at the Pinnacles

Gerry Reynolds is the new District Ranger at Pinnacles National Monument. Gerry was last at Denali and before that spent six years at Yosemite. Gerry will be involved in the shaping of the Wilderness Management Plan along with the other rangers.

Become a FOP Member

Pull of the attached postcard, fill it out, throw on a stamp and mail it in today. If you are already a member, sign up a friend. Stay in the know on all the issues, hear about all the upcoming events.

We need your support.