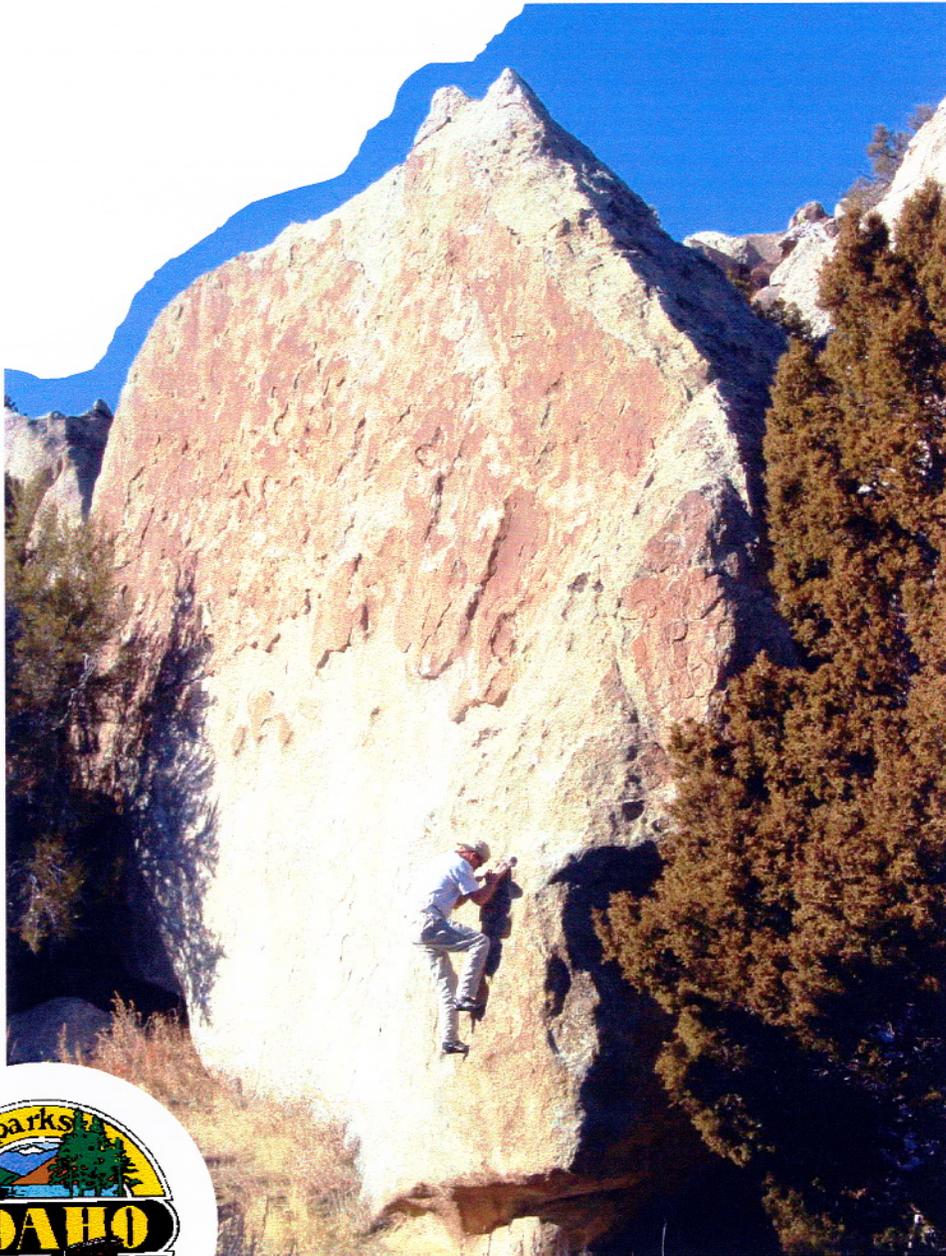


CASTLE ROCKS STATE PARK
AND CASTLE ROCKS INTER-AGENCY RECREATION AREA

CLIMBING MANAGEMENT PLAN



Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Abstract:

The purpose of this climbing management plan is to provide a framework for managing a predominant user group likely to visit the proposed Castle Rocks State Park and adjoining federal lands. The greatest recreational impacts within the first few years of public access are expected to come from climbers. In an effort to protect the resources, while at the same time providing recreational opportunities, representatives from three agencies and members from various groups within the climbing community met to develop a plan that meets both objectives. The plan was written with consideration for the protection of natural and cultural resources, other land uses such as grazing, and other recreational user preferences. The plan is intended to be a part of the Castle Rocks State Park Operations and Management Plan –an interim, planning document that precedes a thorough State Park Master Plan.

The Climbing Management Plan that follows has been reviewed by the Department of Administration, Office of Insurance Management, by the Attorney General’s Office, and is recommended to the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation Director by:

 Date: 4/13/03
Wallace F. Keck, Park Manager
Castle Rocks State Park (proposed)
P.O. Box 169
Almo, ID 83312

This plan has been approved by:

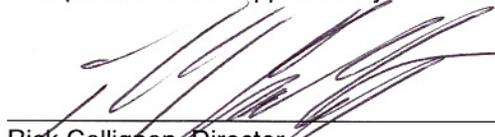
 Date: 4/18/03
Rick Collignon, Director
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Table of Contents:

Introduction	2
Baseline Realities	3
Recommendations for Actions Prior to Opening	3
Recommendations for Actions Upon Opening	4
Fixed Anchor Management Policy	6
Education Program	7
Guidelines for temporary or permanent route closure	8
Appendices (List)	8

I. Introduction:

Castle Rocks is a dramatic geologic area located in the southern Albion Mountain Range of Cassia County Idaho. Castle Rocks consist primarily of Quartz-monzonite, a type of granite associated with the Almo Pluton. Pinnacles and monoliths, towering over 400 feet in local relief, characterize the area. Similar in appearance to features in City of Rocks National Reserve a few miles south, Castle Rocks has proven to be as attractive to climbers.

Until 2003, access to Castle Rocks was limited to a difficult and lengthy hike from Steins Pass. The Castle Rock Ranch Acquisition Act of 2000 authorized the National Park Service (NPS) to purchase the 1,240-acre Ranch, which provided public access on the east side of the geologic area. The NPS was not authorized to manage the land for recreation, but instead to proceed with a land exchange with the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR). IDPR is exchanging land it owns within Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument to the NPS. It is IDPR's intention to provide public access to Castle Rocks through the property, and to provide state park facilities for recreation. The primary recreational users will be climbers, but the park offers many other opportunities.

Jurisdiction of the geologic area includes the Sawtooth National Forest (Minidoka Ranger District), the Bureau of Land Management, Burley Field Office of the Upper Snake River Resource Area, IDPR's Castle Rocks State Park, and private property. Private lands are not open to public recreation; however the three land management agencies would permit and manage recreation in Castle Rocks in coordination with each other. The challenge for these agencies is to develop policies, practices and facilities that provide a seamless recreation experience for the public. A high priority for meeting this challenge is to develop a climbing management plan and fixed anchor management policies that all agencies support.

On January 13-14, 2003 representatives from the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Bureau of Land Management, USDA Forest Service, Access Fund and leaders in the sport of climbing around the Intermountain West, converged at Castle Rock Ranch to develop this plan. A list of participants in the Castle Rocks Climbing Management Planning Work Group is included in the appendix.

II. Baseline Realities:

All work group members recognize the following resource concerns, management constraints, proposed facilities and visitation realities:

- Portions of the geologic area include state land that will be called Castle Rocks State Park – Castle Rock Ranch Unit, and will be managed by the

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. The state park will open to the public on Friday May 24, 2003.

- Prior to agreement and acceptance of this plan, climbing is unregulated on Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management portions of Castle Rocks.
- The general public, and especially climbers, will find three separate climbing management policies and the location of jurisdictional boundaries difficult and frustrating to their recreation experience.
- Climbers are likely to be the first and most numerous user-group of Castle Rocks, and are the most likely to impact natural and cultural resources.
- Most climbers come to climb established routes, and few established routes currently exist. Anchors draw the climbers who create trail and staging area impacts. Climbing can be divided into three types of users: sport climbers, traditional climbers and boulderers.
- Pre-approved established routes make management of climbing easier, since primary recreation areas are known, trails can be designated and staging areas defined.
- Castle Rocks contains incredible and near pristine cultural and natural resources.
- A multi-jurisdictional climbing management plan is necessary to manage recreation use for the protection of these resources.
- Parking facilities at the state park (proposed at 25 units) and a carry capacity of 75 people per occurrence serve as a limiting factor to the number of climbers and other recreation users on any given day.

III. Recommendations for Actions Prior to Opening:

Given that the public, and most certainly climbers, will access Castle Rocks in May, and given that resources must be protected, a strategy for accomplishing both must be in place prior to the opening. The work group reached consensus and recommends the following strategies:

1. IDPR, Forest Service and BLM should sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that approves this plan, designates the boundaries of the Inter-agency recreation area, and outlines the responsibilities and roles of each agency to manage recreation seamlessly to the public.
2. Be proactive in educating and framing the issues and policies prior to opening, by working with the climbing magazines and organizations. It is expected that national media will feature Castle Rocks as one of the premier new climbing areas in the country. The best way to achieve compliance and resource protection is to present the issues in the media as equally supported by public land agencies and climbing organizations alike. Publishing this approved climbing management plan (CMP) prior to opening is the best proactive approach.

3. Open route development in Castle Rocks by zones. The first two zones to open should be zone one (known as Castle Rock and its associated outcrops) and the backcountry zone. Zone one is distinct from the main geologic area known as Castle Rocks. In zone one, park personnel would assess natural and cultural resources prior to opening. The assessment (See Resources Assessment form in appendix) will determine where climbing impacts might be detrimental to those resources. The remaining areas of zone one would be open for fixed anchor development after the resources have been assessed, and a route developer has successfully applied for a permit.
4. Provide a program of route development (fixed anchors) prior to public opening in order to provide recreational opportunities in a managed and far less chaotic process than on opening day. The best way to install fixed anchors prior to public opening is as follows:
 - a. Invite route developers (pre-registration – up to 25) to come to Castle Rocks on May 10 and May 17 to attend an education and orientation program designed to communicate new policies and agency recommendations for climbing management and route development.
 - b. Permit these participants the opportunity to develop new recreational routes and place fixed anchors in zone one on May 10, 11 and 17,18. Developers are required to provide documentation (first ascent registration) to the park of established routes.
 - c. Prepare cursory maps and brochures to these established routes to be made available to climbers on opening day.
5. Designate access routes to established climbs. Existing ranch roads should serve as the primary trunk route to the resource. Secondary access trails have already been identified, but will require review prior to construction.
6. Designate all other areas outside of zone one and the backcountry open to traditional climbing, but closed to fixed anchor placement until officially opened in the future.
7. Fixed Anchors placed prior to development should be brought up to recommended standard by the climbing ranger, approved/trained volunteers, and/or the original route developer, especially as related to safety standards.

IV. Recommendations for Actions Upon Opening:

The work group expects high interest in Castle Rocks on opening day continuing through the first climbing season. To best manage climbing upon opening, the work group recommends the following practices and policies for the entire Inter-Agency Recreation Area (**Note: many of these recommendations are operational issues and are simply supported by the work group and restated here**).

1. IDPR must provide personnel (paid staff, volunteers, etc) to educate and manage first season users.
2. Operate the park with personnel (8-4:30) as a day-use facility between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day, and between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. on Friday-Sunday during the months of September, October, April and May. The park would remain a day-use facility until overnight facilities are developed or backcountry sites are designated.
3. All recreation users must pay a motor vehicle entrance fee or exhibit an annual pass or VIP pass.
4. When parking facilities are maximized, new vehicles will be excluded until space is available. Users entering on bike, horse or on foot would be permitted without charge or concern for parking capacity up to a total occupancy of 75 people at any given time.
5. All users must stop first at the contact center for a required short educational program on park policies and resources values, and orientation to recreational facilities. All users will register prior to entering the resource beyond the ranch house.
6. Do not permit fixed anchor development for the first few weeks of opening to decrease the demands of resource personnel. Efforts upon opening could be focused on education and orientation and not on permitting and resource assessment.
7. Reopen fix anchor development in zone one on June 7 by registration and following attendance at a short educational presentation (unless the visitor is on record as previously attending).
8. Encourage compliance with Fixed Anchor Management Policies proposed in this CMP.
9. Enact the education program proposed in this CMP.
10. Commercial Guide and Outfitter permits would follow IDPR policy as stated in IDAPA 26.01.20 650, "No person, firm, or corporation may operate any concession, business, or enterprise within lands administered by the department without written permission or permit from the board.

V. Fixed Anchor Management Policy

The work group recommends the following standards and policies be enacted by the agencies (IDPR, USFS and BLM):

Fixed Anchor (FA) = any material hammered or drilled into the rock.

1. FA's can only be placed in open zones.
2. FA's can only be placed after the route developer has attended a short education and orientation program at the contact center and has in their possession a valid permit to bolt. If a developer was entering the park from Steins Pass and remained in backcountry zone (BLM and Forest Service), this policy would still be strongly encouraged, but not enforced.
3. Developers must submit route location, description, rating and name upon completion of FA placement, using the first ascent registration form.
4. Agencies accept and recommend to the public the following standards for fixed anchor hardware for consistency, safety and resource protection:
 - Stainless steel hardware (hangers and bolts)
 - Minimum of 3/8-inch bolt diameter
 - Minimum of 2½-inch bolt length (3 ½-inch is preferred)
 - Avoid piton placement
 - Use commercially produced camouflaged hangers
 - Rocks should not be grid-bolted
 - Top anchors should not be shared on sport routes
 - Top anchors should consist of two separate hangers bolted to the rock with a minimum 3/8" X 3.5" ss bolts. Attached to these should be minimum 3/8" threaded screw links, with minimum 3/8" chains attached. The chain length should be as short as possible without compromising safety. All components should be painted to closely match the surrounding stone.
 - Top anchors should not be set back from the edge if possible.
 - A minimum lateral distance of 15 feet should be maintained between all established climbing routes.
 - Bolting is discouraged where removable protection is available
 - Fixed anchor spacing should be consistent and reasonable.
 - FA's are not permitted for routes under 30' feet except as top anchors.
 - Dark-colored webbing (black preferred) should be used only when necessary to descend safely from traditional routes. Webbing is subject to removal by the climbing ranger, and will not be considered a permanent or long-term fixed anchor.

These standards should be reviewed annually by the climbing ranger and park manager to determine if industry standards have improved. If a higher standard is determined, it is recommended that it be incorporated into the fixed anchor management policy.

VII. Education Program

The CMP work group recommends the following components be included in a required education presentation to all recreation users:

1. Cultural/historical resources are pristine, numerous and protected under State and Federal regulations.
2. Soils are highly susceptible to erosion. Not using established trails whenever possible is detrimental to the resources, and reflects poorly on user groups.
3. Federally protected species and state species of concern occur within Castle Rocks and are identified. Users should be able to recognize these species.
4. Grazing is a traditional and continuing use in Castle Rocks. Respect for this prior use builds positive relations with other land users.
5. State and federal rules and regulations apply and are available for review.
6. Pets must be controlled by a leash no greater than 6 feet. Dogs frequently contribute to resource degradation (such as digging, chewing vegetation and chasing wildlife) and user conflicts. Proper control of pets in the park is essential.
7. Users should respect the natural quiet of the area.
8. General orientation to facility
9. Leave no trace

The CMP work group recommends the *additional* following components be included in a required education presentation to climbers:

1. Climbers should be respectful of other recreation users
2. Climbers and route developers should notify IDPR of newly discovered cultural resources or raptor nests, and leave those resources intact and unimpaired.
3. Chalk users should make every effort to remove unsightly markings (especially tic marks) before leaving the route.
4. Climbing is inherently dangerous, and adults should give special attention to the activities and location of children in and around climbing activity.
5. Climbers are expected to comply with this climbing management plan.

The CMP work group recommends the *additional* following components be included in a required education presentation to climbing route developers:

1. Adherence to the fixed anchor policy helps resource protection and reinforces a positive image of climbers.
2. No chipping, gluing, or excessive cleaning (i.e. contriving/manufacturing a route that the natural rock does not provide).

Additionally, this plan recommends the placement of a sign as one enters the gate beyond the ranch house that reads, "Climb at your own risk".

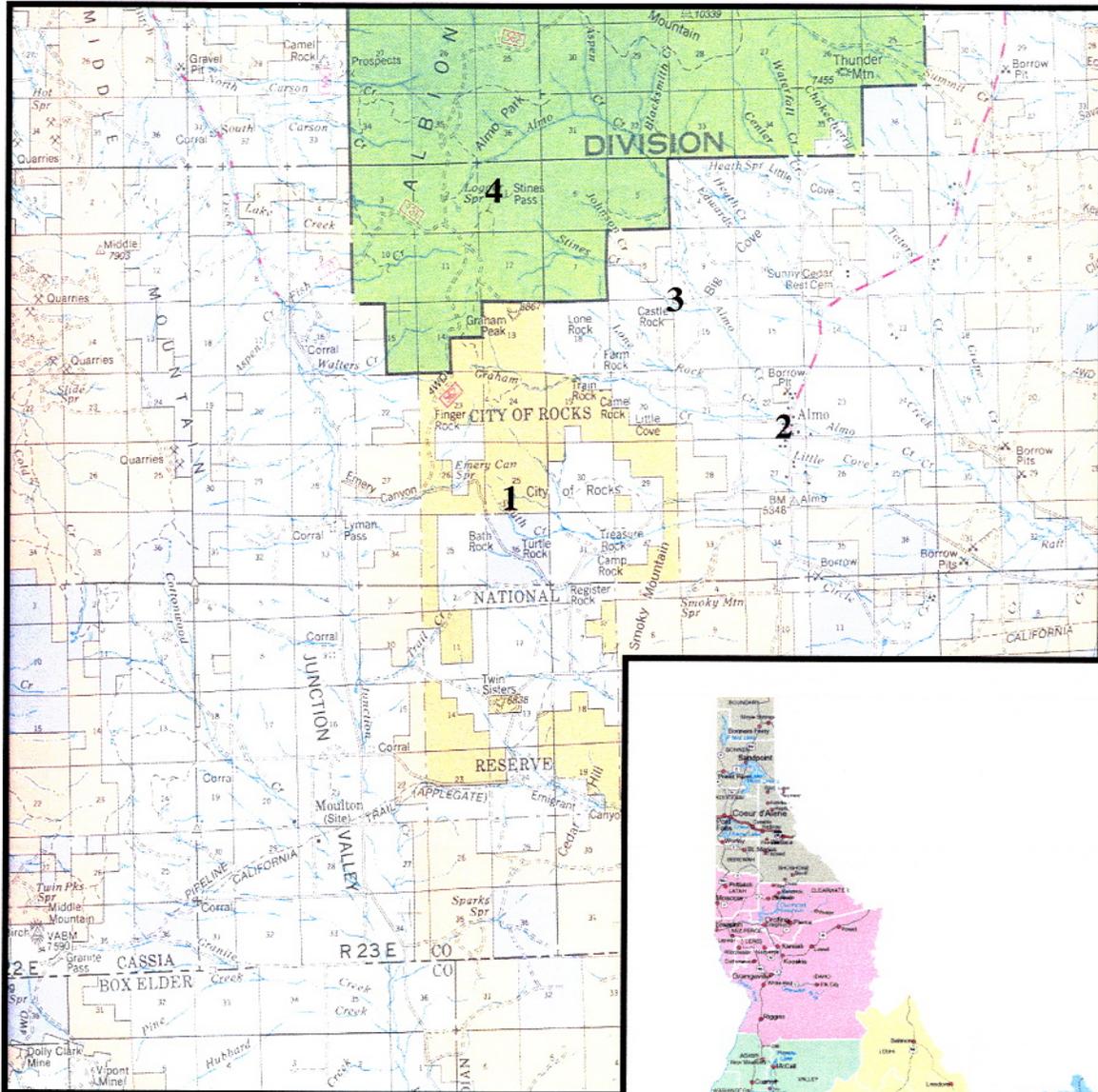
VIII. Guidelines for temporary or permanent route closure:

1. When raptor nesting activity is adversely affected
2. If a route threatens to significantly impact a wet or riparian area
3. When archaeological sites of significance are found
4. If species of special concern are likely to be significantly impacted
5. During administrative activities such as facility maintenance or emergency
6. During rehabilitation, restoration or trail construction

IX. Appendices

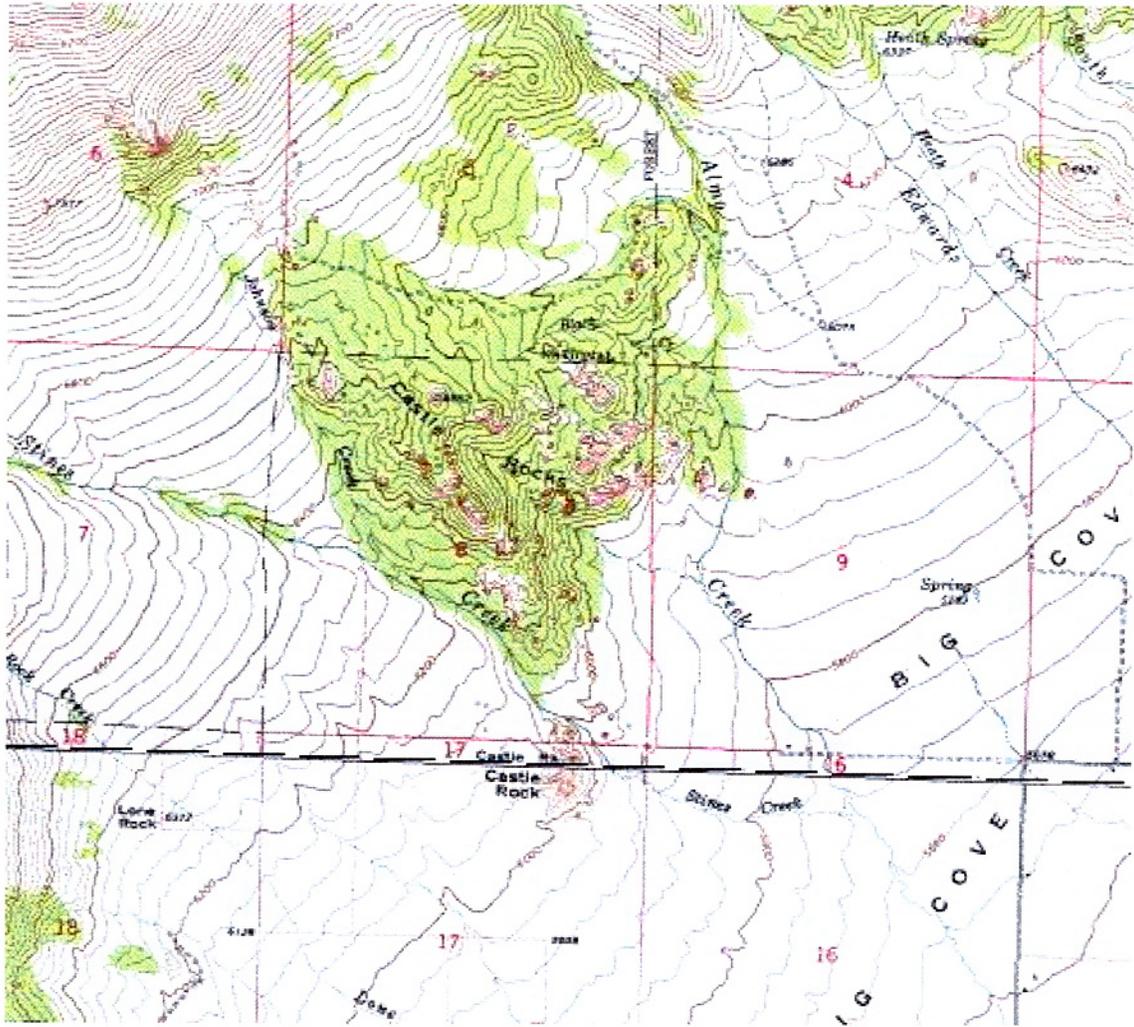
1. Castle Rocks Location Map
2. Castle Rocks Topographical Map
3. Castle Rocks Aerial Photo
4. Castle Rocks Property Ownership Map
5. Castle Rocks Proposed Administrative Boundary
6. Castle Rocks Fixed Anchor Zone Map
7. Resources Assessment form
8. Permit to Bolt
9. Castle Rocks First Ascent Registration Form
10. Work Group members (biographies)
11. Work Group meeting agenda

Castle Rocks Location Map



1. City of Rocks National Reserve
2. Almo and Reserve Headquarters
3. Castle Rocks State Park
4. USFS Sawtooth National Forest, Minidoka Ranger District, Albion Mountain Division

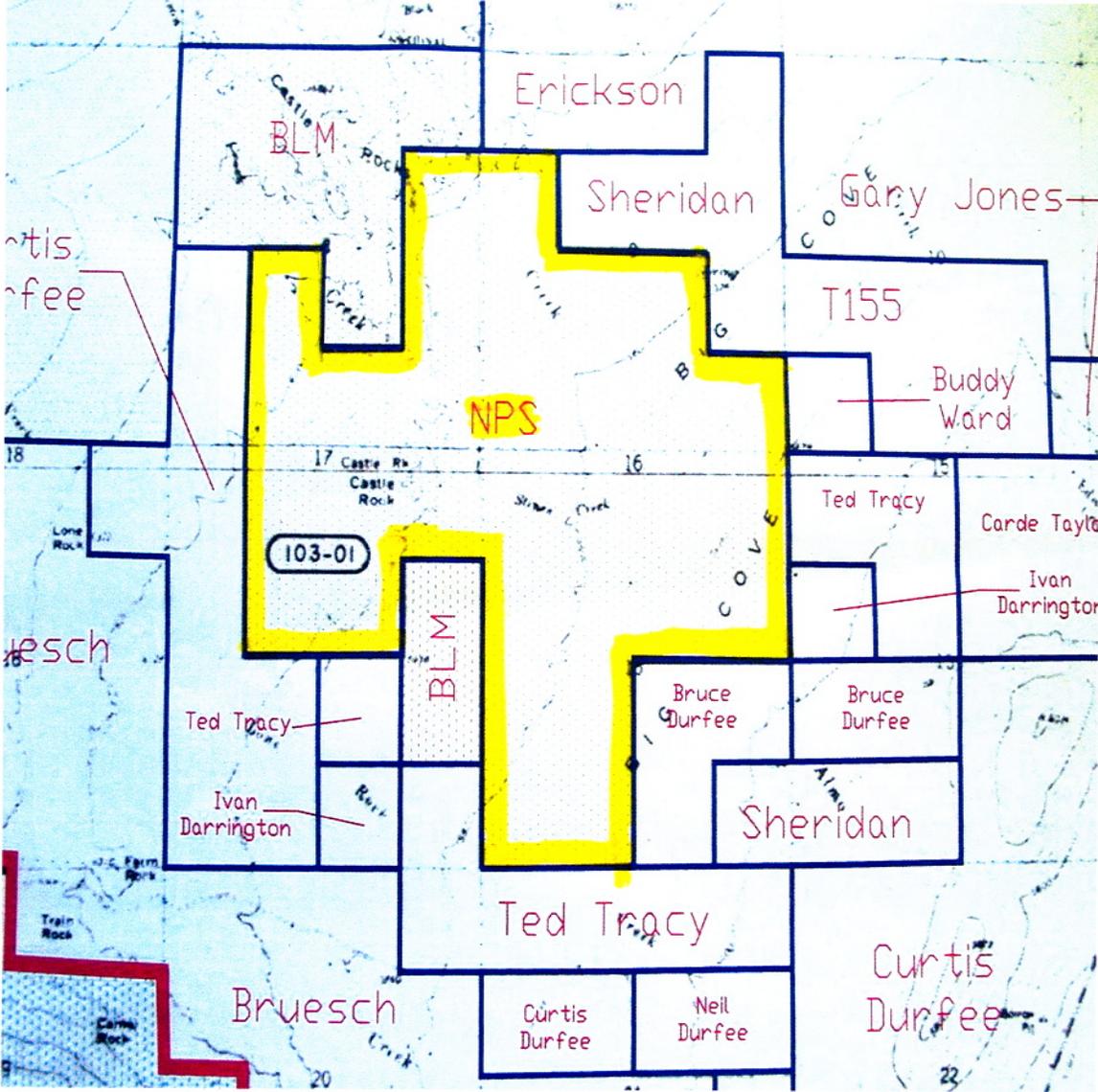
Castle Rocks Topographical Map



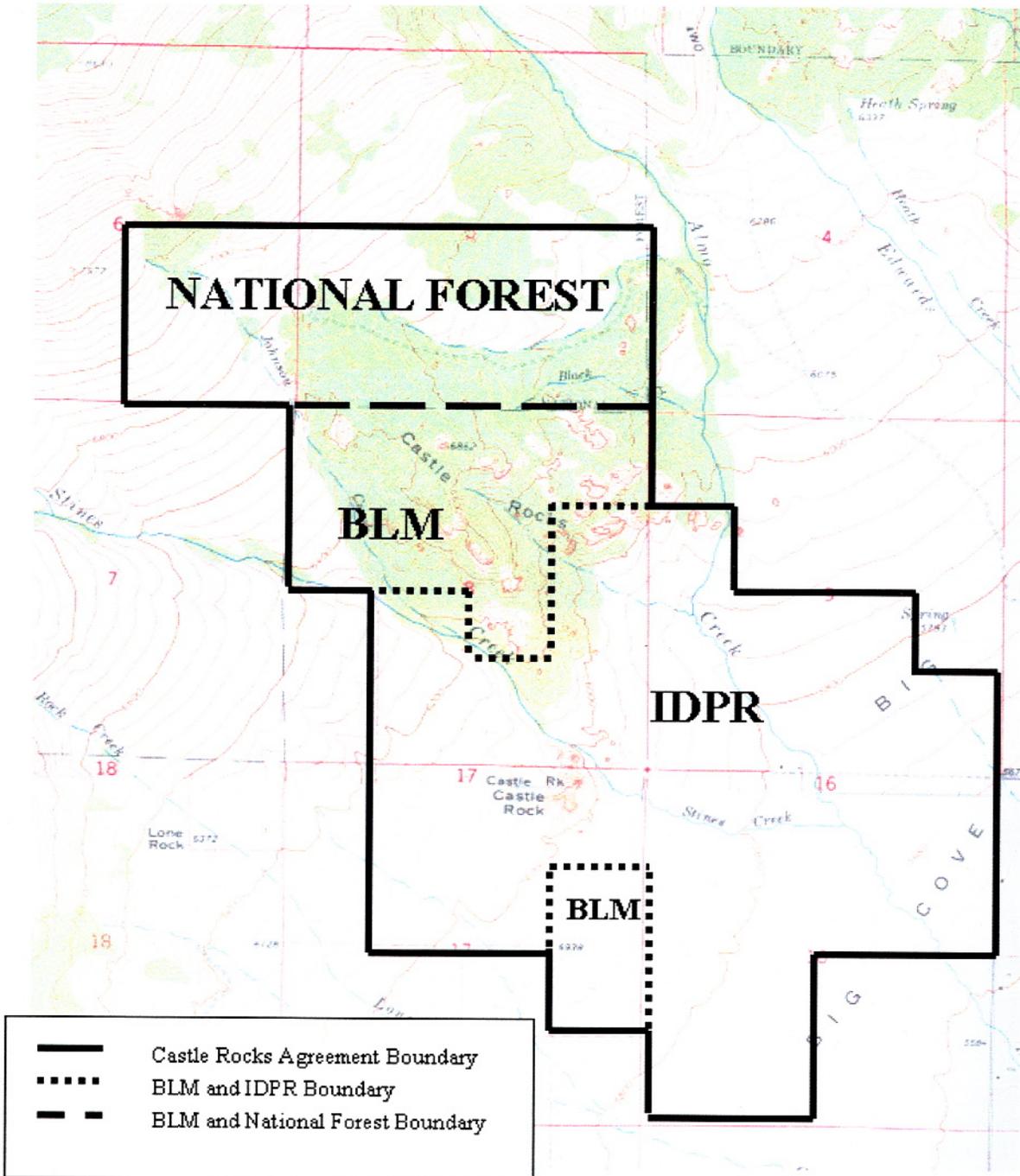
Castle Rocks Aerial Photo



Castle Rocks Property Ownership Map



CASTLE ROCKS PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARY



RESOURCES ASSESSMENT FORM

Castle Rocks State Park and Castle Rocks Inter-Agency Recreation Area

Date of Assessment	
Assessors	
Land Jurisdiction	
Legal Description	
Names of Features Assessed	
Distance to nearest approved road or trail	
Distance to known archeological site	
Cultural Resource Concerns	
Cultural resource mitigation/protection plan	
Principle vegetation and species of interest	
Distance to known nests: (Raptors, pack rat, etc.)	
Soils and surface materials	
Distance to inventoried fragile geologic features	
Natural Resource Concerns	
Natural Resource mitigation/protection plan	
Staging Area recommendations	
Field Notes	
Recommendation	

Castle Rocks First Ascent Registrations

Return this form after a permitted ascent is completed. This is for first

Date: _____ to: _____

Name: _____
mark

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please return form to:
 CLIMBING RANGE
 Castle Rocks State P.
 P.O. Box 169
 Almo, ID 83312
 For more information:
Brad_Shilling@partner1.gov
 208-824-5519

Location of route (indicate on map/describe): _____

Name of Formation: _____

Name of Route---Please no business names! _____

Rating: _____

Fixed Anchors Placed-number: _____

Other Gear Suggested: _____

Descent: _____

Route Description (length, features, and beta): _____

Diagram: (Please use back of form) _____

PERMIT TO BOLT

Castle Rocks State Park and Castle Rocks Inter-agency Recreation Area

Any person using a rock drill for the purpose of installing new bolts or replacing existing bolts for use as rock climbing anchors on public lands within Castle Rocks must completed the following steps: (1) attend the education program on fixed anchor management at the park, (2) receive a free permit to bolt, (3) register entry into the park, (4) complete and return a First Ascent Registration, and (5) abide by the approved climbing management plan. (Note: Step one is required only once a year).

APPLICANT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE ____ ZIP _____

PHONE: _____

Applicant completed the required education program on fixed anchor management on _____.

Terms and Conditions:

1. Permission is granted to applicant exclusively.
2. Permission applies only to open zones only.
3. Applicant understands and agrees to abide the Castle Rocks Climbing Management Plan.
4. Failure to abide by the terms of this permit and the Climbing Management Plan may result in the revocation of this permit. Other fines may apply.
5. It is to be expressly understood that Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) nor the USDA Forest Service are to be held responsible for the soundness or serviceability of any hardware installed on the rock; the quality or location of any hole drilled to accommodate such hardware; the natural or manmade hazards which may be present at any of the sites; or the future inspection or maintenance of the route or associated hardware.

Waiver and Acknowledgment of Risk:

I understand that rock-climbing activities are inherently hazardous. While exercising the privilege which has been granted by IDPR, BLM and Forest Service, my heir and I agree to release from liability and hold harmless IDPR, BLM and Forest Service from any accidental injury or death that I may incur while exercising this privilege.

I wish to make it expressly understood that my request for permission to bolt was based on my own desire and I will not be carrying out the activity as an agent of the state or federal government.

Applicant signature: _____ Date: _____

Park Official signature: _____ Date: _____

WORK GROUP BIOGRAPHY

(1) Jason Keith

Boulder, Colorado

jason@accessfund.org

Jason is an attorney and the Policy Director of the Access Fund, a national non-profit organization dedicated to keeping climbing areas open and conserving the climbing environment. Jason, a climber for 21 years and guide for 12, is the Access Fund's chief strategist on legislative, regulatory, and resource management planning issues. He works closely with the executive director and members of the board to develop and refine organizational policies and position statements that guide the Access Fund's response to various issues. To support these policies and positions, Jason builds relationships, negotiates agreements, and advocates on behalf of the Access Fund in all levels of land management planning and the legislative and regulatory processes.



(2) Peter Joyce

Pocatello, Idaho

joycpete@isu.edu

Peter is the Assistant Director of the Idaho State University Outdoor Program and Education adjunct faculty member since 1995. Peter (age 44) first climbed at City of Rocks in the fall of 1979. He has climbed all over the US, and has been teaching climbing skills to others on a professional basis since 1981 (Special Ops in the U.S. Army, City of Eugene Parks and Recreation Dept., Boy Scouts of American, and currently Idaho State University). Peter has witnessed climbing and camping management in the area evolve from virtually none to the more intense management today. Peter has organized trash pickups, and led climbing trips, classes, and workshops in City of Rocks National Reserve.

(3) Marcus Porter

Salt Lake City, Utah

kris_porter@utd.uscourts.gov

Marcus is a journeyman plumber who has been climbing for 14 years, with many first ascents across Utah, other western states and Canada. Marcus and a small group of climbers from Salt Lake City have been exploring and climbing in the upper reaches of Castle Rocks for approximately four years via the grueling hike from Stiens Pass.

(4) Scott Carson

Salt Lake City, Utah

imeutah@networld.com

Scott is a longtime climber and owner of International Mountain Equipment, Inc.

(5) Hanna North

Boise, Idaho

hannah_north@hp.com

Hannah is a Marketing Product Manager for Hewlett-Packard Co. She began climbing in 1984, and is an active climber frequenting areas around the Intermountain West.

Hannah participated in the development of the City of Rocks Comprehensive Management plan in the early 1990s.

(6) Doug Colwell

Boise, Idaho dcolwell@harrisdean.com

A longtime local climber, Doug is the American Alpine Club's Northern Rockies section chair and serves on the board of the Boise Climbers Alliance.

(7) Dave Bingham

Hailey, Idaho dbingham2@mindspring.com

Dave is the author of "City of Rocks Idaho, a Climbers Guide", and is perhaps the person with the most knowledge about the climbing history of the adjacent Castle Rocks prior to 1995. He was one of the original and most prolific climbers at City of Rocks, with over 100 first ascents to his credit. Dave's positive attitude and intimate knowledge of City of Rocks and Castle Rocks, as well as his extensive experience opening up "new" areas for climbing, make his contribution to the process valuable.

(8) Wallace Keck

Almo, Idaho Wallace_Keck@partner.nps.gov

Wallace is the superintendent of City of Rocks National Reserve and Park Manager of the proposed Castle Rocks State Park.



(9) Brad Shilling

Almo, Idaho Brad_Shilling@partner.nps.gov

Brad is the climbing ranger for City of Rocks National Reserve and the proposed Castle Rocks State Park.

(10) Zeke Zimmerman

Burley, Idaho zzimmerman@fs.fed.us

Zeke is the Outdoor Recreation Planner for the Minidoka District of the Sawtooth National Forest.

(11) Dennis Thompson

Burley, Idaho dennis_thompson@blm.gov

Dennis is the recreation planner for the Burley Field Office of the Upper Snake Resources Area of the Bureau of Land Management.



AGENDA

Castle Rocks Climbing Management Work Group

Almo, Idaho

January 13-14, 2003

Purpose and Scope of Meeting:

A selected group of recreational climbers, climbing advocate group, and public land agency representatives have been assembled to formulate best practices and draft recommendations to agency administrators for managing a significant recreational use of the proposed Castle Rock State Park and adjoining federal lands. Assessment of climbing resources, recommendations for managing use, access to staging areas (base of climbs), resource protection and fixed anchor management, are topics of discussion.

Monday, January 13

- 11:00 noon Welcome, Introductions, and Orientation – Brad Shilling
- 11:45 p.m. Castle Rocks Management Vision – Q&A – Wallace Keck
- 12:00 p.m. Field Session – Assess climbing resources and access to staging areas (bring a lunch)
- 5:30 p.m. Dinner at the Ranch House provided by City of Rocks
- 6:30 p.m. Discussion – “Should the number of climbers and climbing locations be limited (managed) prior to the proper development of trails and other facilities? If so, what are the best management practices?” – facilitated by Jason Keith

Tuesday, January 14

- 8:00 a.m. Discussion – What is the best fixed-anchor management policy for this new resource? Should it be the same or vary between public land agency boundaries?” – facilitated by Jason Keith
- 11:00 a.m. Discussion – “What strategies should IDPR, USDA Forest Service and BLM adopt to mitigate impacts to staging areas?” – facilitated by Jason Keith
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch provided by City of Rocks
- 1:00 p.m. Discussion – “What other policies or practices should IDPR, USDA Forest Service and BLM adopt to manage climbing (Use of chalk, dogs, route closure guidelines, private land relations, etc.) – Facilitated by Brad Shilling
- 3:00 p.m. Discussion – “Based on the discussions, what is the next step for planning, and who should be involved? - Facilitated by Jason Keith
- 4:00 p.m. Recap of Recommendations and Conclusion – Wallace Keck