



Protect America's Climbing

## 2021 Avalon Climbing Area Access Stabilization Project Phase 1

### Overview

The Boulder Climbing Community's (BCC) Front Range Climbing Stewards (FRCS) program has completed a 4-week trail work project at the Avalon Climbing Area in Boulder Canyon in partnership with the US Forest Service Boulder Ranger District. The primary objective for this project was to address the erosive impacts that climbers have at this popular climbing area. This project was funded by the BCC with help from the Access Fund Climbing Conservation grant, a Two for the Trail grant from Athletic Brewing, and Colorado Mountain Club.

### Project Synopsis

Boulder Canyon located minutes away from downtown Boulder, CO, contains over 120 developed climbing cliffs within a 15 mile stretch of road. Over the years, the Avalon Climbing Area has become one of the most popular climbing destinations in the canyon, with its abundance of quality routes, ranging from 5.5 to 5.12, attracting climbers of all experience levels (**Figure 1**). It is not uncommon to see 20+ cars in the parking area on weekends with climbers accessing the various walls.



*Figure 1:* Climbers at the Middle Wall at the Avalon Climbing Area.

The original climbing access trails in the area were not designed beyond climbers taking the most direct path to their destination. Taking this into consideration and adding the steep grade of the terrain, much of the current access trail and base areas beneath the climbs are in poor condition, with heavy erosion issues and are unsustainable for current and future use.

For the Phase 1 portion of the Avalon Climbing Area Access Stabilization project, BCC's trail crew worked 4 weeks in the Avalon Climbing Area. The goal was to address the erosion issues approaching and at the base of Middle Wall at Avalon. This area hosts the largest concentration of highly rated routes and is often the most trafficked area at the crag. The work consisted of creating

durable stone structures such as retaining walls, staircases, and belay pads from locally sourced material (**Figure 2**).

While BCC's trail crew was responsible for much of the technical construction, another goal of this project was to get the local community involved. Two weekend stewardship events were hosted for volunteers to come out and work alongside our trail crew, learning valuable stewardship and trail building skills (**Figure 3**). In total, BCC accumulated 181 volunteer labor hours during this project.



**Figure 2:** Stone structures were built to facilitate the trail and prevent erosion of the hillside.



**Figure 3:** Volunteers learning to quarry and split stone.

## Project Outcomes

At the end of the project, 135 linear feet of durable and sustainable trail were built, including 185 ft<sup>2</sup> of retaining structure and installation of 80 stone steps. Please see the Avalon Climbing Area Access Stabilization budget in **Appendix A**, full Work Metrics Section in **Appendix B** and additional before/after photos in **Appendix C**.

### Appendix A: Avalon Project Budget

Item	Cost
FRCS Labor	\$ 18,793.92
Tools and Supplies Cost	\$ 866.67
Planning and Development	\$ 609.60
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$ 20,270.19</b>
Access Fund Conservation Grant Awarded	\$ 5,000.00
Boulder Climbing Community Fundraising	\$ 15,270.19

### Appendix B: Labor and Planning Hours

Labor Type	Hours
Volunteer	181
FRCS Paid Labor	592.5
FRCS Planning	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>788.5</b>

### Appendix B: Total Project Outcomes

Project Outcome	Amount	Unit
Trail Improved	135	Linear ft
Rock Steps	80	#
Retaining Structure	185	Ft <sup>2</sup>
Rubble Structure	200	Ft <sup>2</sup>
Rocks moved via rigging	50	#
Trail Restored	150	Linear ft

Appendix C: Before and After Photos







