



## The Front Range Climbing Stewards Cynical Pinnacle Reroute-Cathedral Spires Park October 14, 2020



### Overview

The Boulder Climbing Community's (BCC) Front Range Climbing Stewards Program (FRCS) has completed a six-week trail work project on the Cynical Pinnacle reroute at the Cathedral Spires Climbing Area in partnership with Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS). The primary objective of this project was to address the impacts that hikers, including climber traffic, have on this very popular area.

## Project Synopsis

The Cathedral Spires Park climbing area hosts a handful of iconic climbs and formations that have a historical use of climbing long before JCOS acquired the land in the mid-nineties. The nine formations within the park boundary contain 95 published climbing routes with potential for new routes still available. The majority of the climbing appears to be focused on the Cynical Pinnacle formation, as it hosts various routes considered to be the best in the state including the Center Route, a 5.9 multi pitch climb that for the grade, is argued to be one of the best in the country.

The original climbing access trails in the area were not designed beyond climbers taking the most direct approach to their destination. Taking this into consideration and adding the loose decomposing granitic soil and arid conditions, many of the trails are in poor condition, with heavy erosion issues and are unsustainable for current and future use (**Figure 1**). In 2020, FRCS began construction of the new Cynical Pinnacle reroute, which was proposed in the 'FRCS CSD Trails Assessment Project 2018' document. The goal for 2020 was to construct the initial 3,000 ft of trail, 1,850 ft of which JCOS trail crews would construct, leaving the remaining 1,150 ft for FRCS to construct. Due to the ambitious nature and numerous large-scale construction projects, an American Conservation Experience (ACE) youth corps crew was contracted to work for three weeks on this project. FRCS was responsible for assigning proper tasks for the ACE crew to accomplish as well as training them in best rigging practices and proper dry-stone masonry techniques (**Figure 2**).

Many sections of the new reroute were located near existing historical quarries which allowed the crews to split stone efficiently and move it short distances to the worksites (**Figure 3**). With the readily available stone, FRCS and ACE were able to construct large stone structures such as staircases and retaining walls quickly, which allowed the crews to cover a lot of ground during the six-week work session.



*Figure 1: Erosion issues on the current Cynical Pinnacle trail*





Figure 2: ACE crew members learning to split stone using feathers and wedges.



Figure 3: FRCS and ACE crew members working together to split stone which then had to be transported to the worksite.

## Project Outcomes

At the end of the project 1,150 linear feet of durable and sustainable trail were built, including 110 stone steps and 701 ft<sup>2</sup> of retaining structure. Please see the labor and planning hours in **Appendix A**, full work metrics section in **Appendix B**, as well as before and after photos in **Appendix C**.

### Appendix A: Labor and Planning Hours

Labor Type	Hours
FRCS Planning	141.25
FRCS Labor	1,074
ACE Labor	840
Volunteer Labor	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,103.25</b>

### Appendix B: Completed 2020 Work Metrics

Project Outcome	Amount	Unit
New Trail Construction	1,150	Linear Ft
Tread Construction (18")	550	Linear Ft
Rock Steps	110	#
Retaining Structure	701	Ft <sup>2</sup>
Rubble Structure	217	Ft <sup>2</sup>
Rocks Quarried	813	Ft <sup>3</sup>
Rocks Moved via Rigging	131	#
Rocks Moved by Hand	90	#
Crush/ Aggregate Material	218	Ft <sup>3</sup>



**Appendix C: Before and After Photos**



*Before*



*After*



*Before*



*After*





*Before*



*After*



*Before*



*After*





*Before*



*After*





*Before*



*After*





*Before*



*After*



*Before*



*After*