

## The Front Range Climbing Stewards

# Lumpy Ridge/Rocky Mountain Rendezvous Project Report

October 13, 2016

### Project Synopsis-

In 2016 The Front Range Climbing Stewards, a collaborative project of the Access Fund and The Boulder Climbing Community (BCC) coordinated with RMNP Trails Services and Climbing Ranger programs to complete a stewardship project within the park. The project's goals were to mitigate the impacts of climbing in RMNP and to educate the climbing community about their impacts and ways to act as stewards within our national parks.

Under the direction of the Trails Services department areas to be addressed were selected based on current impacts, trends in use and established NEPA clearance. The trail to Sundance Buttress at Lumpy Ridge was selected as an ideal project for intense trail maintenance. Chaos and Emerald Canyons were selected as ideal locations to hold the 2016 Rocky Mountain Rendezvous, a larger stewardship project involving volunteers from the climbing community. BCC fundraised \$8,507 to cover the costs of the FRCS crew and Rendezvous event. REI, Inc. generously donated the lion's share of this cost. Both projects are detailed below.

### Lumpy Ridge Trail Maintenance- Sundance Buttress Trail

The trail maintenance on the Sundance Buttress trail involved hardening the trail tread with timber and stone steps in a steep section of trail approximately 5 minutes below the base of the crag. This area has been the focus of previous stewardship work in recent years but had been left unfinished and depleted of native rock material for construction. Approximately 60 linear feet of trail was a steep loose soil slope (**Figures 1 & 2**). A strategy of utilizing quarrying techniques, highline rigging and non-native timbers was developed in order to provide sufficient source material to build the needed structures.

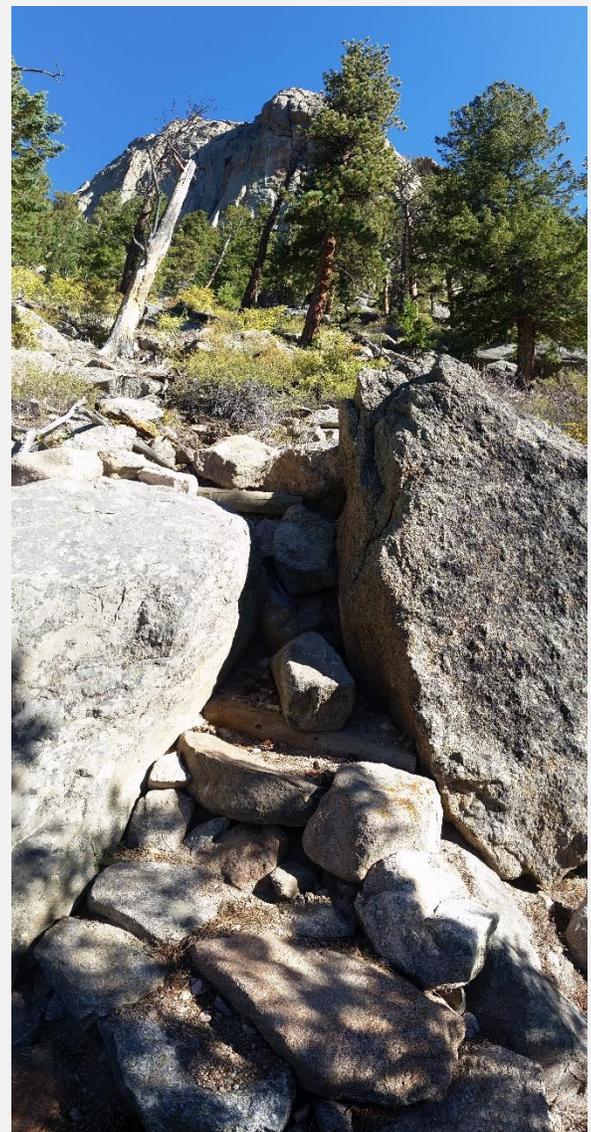


Figure 1 – Site #1, before & after

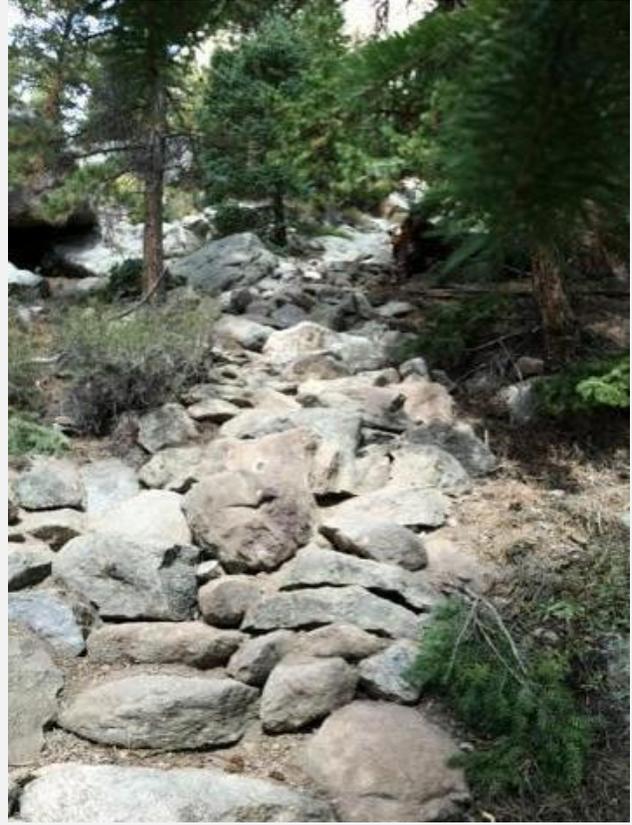
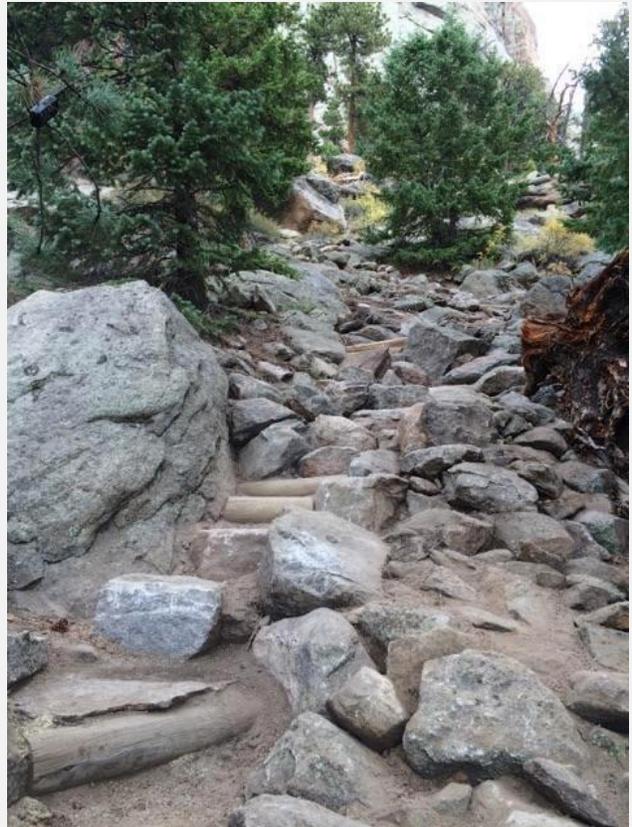
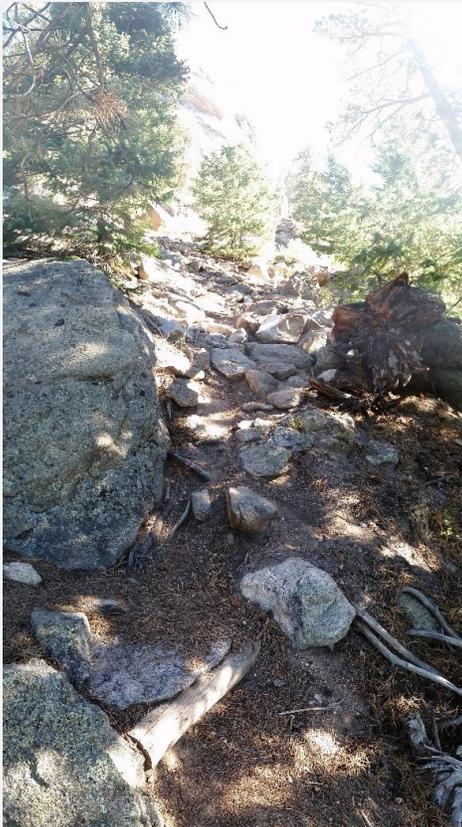


Figure 2 -- Site #2, before & after

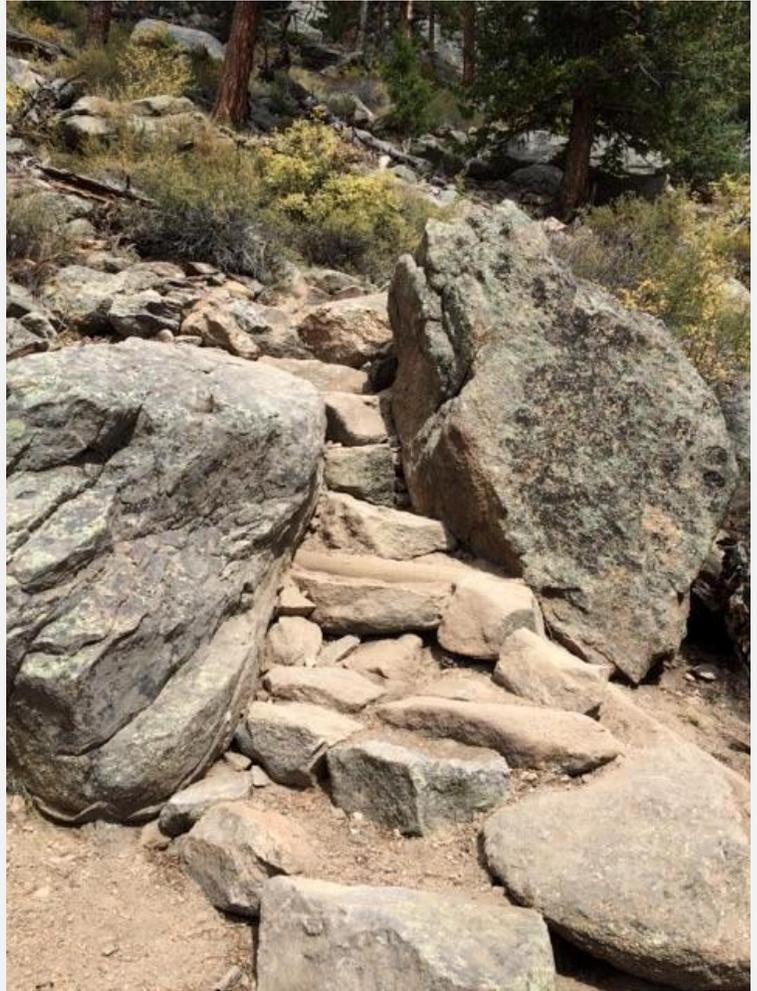


The rock quarrying was done off and above the trail to allow for the material to be transported via highline rigging systems to the worksites (**Figure 4 & 5**). This enabled the material to be delivered to the worksites safely with minimal impact to the

surrounding slopes. A field generator, drill and feathers and wedges were used to shape the primary source into desired shapes and sizes. At one work site (**Figure 3**) rock material was brought in via human power because appropriate source was abundant nearby and the slopes not as extreme.

The construction was completed concurrently while quarrying and rigging operations took place. The three person FRCS crew was aided by NPS Trails Staff, Climbing Rangers and SCA trails volunteers (**Appendix A - Lumpy Ridge labor totals**). This help was critical in making the most of the project’s limited time. All staff and volunteers involved on the project adapted and coordinated together to make efficient use of personnel on the project.

**Figure 3 – Site #3, before & after**



**Work Metrics – Sundance Buttress Trail:**

Project metrics can be seen below:

| outcome                  | amount | unit  |
|--------------------------|--------|-------|
| Trail Improved           | 26     | L FT  |
| Rock Step                | 16     | #     |
| Retaining Wall/Structure | 52     | SQ FT |
| Mono Wall                | 80     | FT    |
| Aggregate Backfill       | 17     | CU FT |
| Move Rock by Hand        | 122    | #     |
| Move Rock by Highline    | 161    | #     |

Figure 4 -- Quarrying



Figure 5 – Highline transport of materials



2016 Rocky Mountain Rendezvous: Emerald Canyon & Chaos Canyon volunteer event-



In addition to the maintenance project completed at Lumpy Ridge, the Boulder Climbing Community hosted a community event that brought a larger number of climbers together for a clean-up day in popular bouldering zones within the park. RMNP’s Trail Services and Climbing Ranger staff directed and managed the field operations while BCC partnered with the Northern Colorado Climbers Coalition, Colorado Mountain School, Kent Mountain Adventure Center, Estes Park Mountain Shop and individuals from the community to promote and build an event around the work-day. Industry sponsor support was solicited to incentivize volunteer participation and presentations were given on stewardship and the impacts of bouldering in sensitive areas.

Thirty volunteers attended the day (including the 3 FRCS crew) alongside 11 NPS Trails Services and Climbing Ranger Staff. This labor force (**Appendix A: Rendezvous labor totals**) was split into three groups and transported to the worksites. The objectives of the work-day were to close & restore social trails that weave between bouldering sites and the designated trails. In addition, one group constructed raised tread in a wetland area near a bouldering site. Although not climbing impact specifically (hiking & fishing), this wetland work was completed because of it’s relative location to other work objectives and the opportunity presented by such a large labor force. The climbing community was thrilled to help the NPS accomplish this goal outside the impacts of climbing.

**Appendix A:**

**Lumpy Ridge labor totals:**

**Rendezvous (Emerald and Chaos Canyons) labor totals:**

| labor source     | hours      |
|------------------|------------|
| FRCS Trail Crew  | 200        |
| RMNP Trail Crew  | 39         |
| RMNP Cl. Rangers | 40         |
| SCA volunteers   | 58         |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>337</b> |

| labor source                        | hours      |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| FRCS Trail Crew                     | 25.5       |
| RMNP Trail Crew                     | 34         |
| RMNP Cl. Rangers (half day b/c SAR) | 28         |
| Community volunteers                | 229.5      |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>317</b> |

Rocky Mountain Rendezvous workday photos

