

Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail

Deep Creek Acknowledgement of Understanding

I confirm that I have been thoroughly educated to important components of concern that are related to route development at the Deep Creek gorge.

1--I am aware of the unique ecology of this area; in particular, the presence of the endangered species of plant known as *Scutellaria Montana*. I am confident in my ability to identify this plant, and will avoid disturbing areas that contain this species. In addition, upon locating populations of this plant, I will notify the Area Representatives* for the Deep Creek climbing area.

2—I am familiar with the Deep Creek Climbing Letter of Agreement and have a personal copy for reference. I agree to follow all rules and guidelines for new route development contained within the document.

3—I agree to be a good steward of this public property, and will encourage all visitors to follow all principles of outdoor etiquette.

Signature of Route Developer: _____

Signature of Area Representative: _____

Date: _____

Temporary Letter of Agreement

Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail & Chattanooga Climbers Association Soddy Creek Gorge

The Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail (CTSST) and the Chattanooga Climbers' Association (CCA) will work together in cooperation to provide rock climbing opportunities in the Soddy Gorge section of the CTSST to meet the growing public demand for rock climbing, while conserving the natural and scenic resources of the gorge.

1.0 BACKGROUND:

A significant portion of the Cumberland Trail runs along the Cumberland escarpment and into the creek gorges that cut through the Cumberland Plateau. The Cumberland Plateau contains large amounts of cliff and boulders. As more of the trail is completed it will continue to present new rock climbing opportunities by providing access to these previously inaccessible areas. While most climbing management plans are written after climbing areas are developed, a unique opportunity exists under this circumstance to develop a preemptive plan for the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail and the climbing community. These two groups will have an opportunity to work together as rock climbing is developed within the park to ensure resources are protected while still providing new recreational opportunities for climbers. The purpose of this memorandum is to create a framework for a working relationship for planning and accomplishing mutually beneficial projects and activities along the Cumberland Trail.

2.0 RESPECTIVE PARTIES:

The Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail (CTSST) is responsible for the management and protection of the natural resources as well as providing recreational opportunities along the Cumberland Trail.

The Chattanooga Climbers' Association (CCA) is subgroup of the Southeastern Climbers' Coalition, a private non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of climbing areas for current and future generations to enjoy.

3.0 AREAS COVERED:

This LETTER OF AGREEMENT Letter of Agreement is written strictly for the Soddy Gorge section of the Cumberland Trail located in Hamilton County. This includes the Soddy Creek, Little Soddy Creek, Board Camp, and Deep Creek gorges, as well as other smaller gorges in the Soddy Creek headwaters. This includes all land owned and managed by the State of Tennessee within Hamilton County parcel 039 018.01.

4.0 TIMEFRAME:

This LETTER OF AGREEMENT will serve as the temporary climbing management plan for a period of one year from the date it is signed by the CTSST and representatives of the CCA. During that time the CCA will work with the CTSST to develop a permanent climbing management plan (CMP). If the permanent CMP is finalized before one year, this LETTER OF AGREEMENT will become void and the permanent CMP will be followed. If the CMP is not finalized in one year, the status of climbing in the Soddy Gorge will be reinvestigated and another temporary LETTER OF AGREEMENT will be proposed.

5.0 ROUTE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES:

During the time period of the LETTER OF AGREEMENT new routes will be allowed to be developed. New routes will be selectively developed with effort to minimize impacts to the environment at the cliff base, cliff top, and the rock face itself.

5.1 APPROVED ANCHOR INSTALLERS

Individuals seeking to develop a new route requiring permanent anchor installation will need to contact one of the CCA representatives listed in section 7.1 to be added to the list of approved installers. Failure to comply with rules and guidelines of this LETTER OF AGREEMENT will be grounds for immediate removal from the list. In addition, any person placing permanent anchors without written consent of the CCA representatives in section 7.1 will have their anchors removed, and all bolting privileges revoked inside the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail. CCA will notify the CTSST contacts via email following each addition to the list of approved installers.

5.2 PERMANENT ANCHOR GUIDELINES:

During the time period of the LETTER OF AGREEMENT permanent anchors will be allowed to be installed with the following guidelines.

- (a) All anchors must be stainless steel.
- (b) All anchors must utilize a minimum of 3/8" X 3" bolts.
- (c) All anchors must be painted/camouflaged.
- (d) All anchors must be installed only by approved route developers.
- (e) Anchors must not have fixed draws permanently attached.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESPECTIVE PARTIES:

6.1 The Chattanooga Climbers Association (CCA) shall:

- (a) Maintain a catalog of all new route development within Soddy Gorge.
- (b) Maintain a list of all approved individuals installing permanent climbing anchors.
- (c) Maintain trails as necessary to reduce overall impact per CTSST rules and guidelines.
- (d) Manage the use of fixed anchors as necessary for climber safety, to protect the scenic resources and to minimize the impacts to cliff-top vegetation.
- (e) All route developers will work with the CTSST to develop the ability to identify and avoid Threatened and Endangered Species (T&E) within CTSST boundaries.
- (e) Work with CTSST to post closures of cliffs and trails as necessary to protect (T&E) species or cultural resources.
- (f) Inform CTSST of any matters, which may affect the administration, and/or management of the climbing resources within the Soddy Gorge.
- (g) Report locations of any T&E species or archaeological resources encountered while climbing in the Soddy Gorge.
- (h) Provide a primary liaison person for coordination with CTSST.
- (i) Participate in an annual meeting with the leaders of the CCA and CTSST to discuss rock climbing policies and future plans and projects.
- (j) Comply with all rules and regulations, which apply to the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail.
- (k) Via email, notify the CTSST contacts of the application for new routes, and, following joint approval, of their completion.
- (l) Partner with CTSST in developing a system for the establishment of place names and route names consistent with the rules and policies of Tennessee State Parks.

6.2 The Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail (CTSST) shall:

- (a) Maintain personal communications between the CCA and CTSST, providing the CCA with a primary contact.
- (b) Participate in an annual meeting with the leaders of the CCA and CTSST to discuss rock climbing policies and future plans and projects.
- (c) Keep the CCA informed on any changes in the guidelines for climbing along the Cumberland Trail.
- (d) Develop baseline data for vegetation cover and species composition selected climbing areas.
- (e) Monitor vegetation cover, species composition, and environmental change at climbing sites.

7.0 PRIMARY CONTACT:

7.1 CCA Contact(s):

Scott Howell
SCC/CCA Area Representative
5600 Lake Resort Terrace, Apt. D207
Chattanooga, TN 37415
(423) 443-9691
Howell678@gmail.com

Chad Wykle
SCC/CCA Area Representative
810 Mississippi Avenue
Chattanooga, TN 37405
(423) 618-4466
ChadWykle@yahoo.com

John Dorough
SCC/CCA Representative
1203 Normal Avenue
Chattanooga TN, 37405
(423) 802-9374

7.2 CTSST Contact(s):

Bob Fulcher
Park Manager
Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail
(423) 566-2253
Bobby.Fulcher@state.tn.us

Andrew Wright
Park Ranger
Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail
(423) 309-9012
Andrew.Wright@state.tn.us

8.0 SIGNATURES:

Chattanooga Climbers Association Representative

Date

Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail Representative

Date