

Fixed Hardware Management Guidelines

Management Strategies for Rock Climbing and
Slack Lining

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Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS) manages over 56,000 acres of land where thousands of established climbing routes attract climbers year-round. The mission of JCOS is to protect park and natural resources while providing access to healthy, nature-based activities, including rock climbing and slack-lining. With our stated mission in mind and to ensure future access to climbing and slack-lining opportunities in JCOS, climbers and slack-liners are asked to know and adhere to all [JCOS Park Regulations](#) and the following guidelines. These guidelines apply to all climbing, slack-lining, and fixed hardware activities on all JCOS owned and managed properties.

Rock climbing and slack-lining are dangerous activities. Permission to climb or slack-line on JCOS is conditioned on your assumption of all risk. JCOS does not install or take responsibility for any hardware or routes on JCOS owned and managed properties.

Permitting

Permits are required for the following activities:

1. Installing fixed hardware (bolts, anchors, etc.). See “Fixed Hardware Guidelines,” below.
2. Removing fixed hardware for any reason aside from a substantial safety concern.
3. Installation of permanent chain anchors and metallic perma-draws. These may be allowed on a case by case basis and intended use of these should be reflected in your hardware application.
4. Group activities with fifteen or more people.
5. Any commercial activity. This includes paid personal trainers, professional guides, paid climbing classes, and professional photographers.

Fixed Hardware Guidelines – For the protection of park and natural resources, the following guidelines must be followed.

1. For rock climbing: all bolts, hangers, and chains shall be assembled from like metals, of stainless steel or titanium (except when added to pre-existing, non-stainless installations; in such instances, like metals shall be used). All bolts shall be minimum 3/8” in diameter. All bolts and hangers shall be strength-rated by the manufacturer to withstand 25kN ultimate shear load and 20kN ultimate tension load. All new hardware must be installed and torqued to manufacturer specifications. *Reference regulation: C.17. Hazardous Activity.*
2. For slack lining/high lining: all bolts, hangers, and chains shall be stainless steel; shall be from a reputable manufacturer; and shall be at least comparable in strength to those of other bolts, hangers, and chains in use by responsible slack liners. All bolts shall be minimum 1/2” in diameter and 4½” long. *Reference regulation: C.17. Hazardous Activity.*
3. Individuals who are qualified to do so may replace substandard fixed hardware when a safety concern is identified. All replacement hardware must meet the criteria listed above, and JCOS must be notified by email at climbing@jeffco.us within 3 days of the replacement.
4. Permanent non-metal draws (perma-draws) for protection on a route are prohibited. *Reference regulation: C.29. Abandoned Property.*

General Guidelines – For the protection of park and natural resources, the following guidelines must be followed.

1. Use fixed anchors or traditional climbing gear (cams, nuts, etc.). When possible, avoid using trees or other vegetation as anchors or for tyrolean traverses as this is destructive to cliff ecology and natural resources. *Reference regulation: C.6. Destruction of Natural/Cultural Resources.*
2. Cliff habitat is a delicate ecosystem requiring thousands of years to develop. Leave flora and fauna (e.g. moss, lichen, leaves, and other natural materials) as undisturbed as possible while maintaining a safe route, as this is a critical ecosystem resource. *Reference regulation: C.6. Destruction of Natural/Cultural Resources.*
3. Do not deface, damage, or alter natural rock (e.g. chiseling, chipping, etc) in any way, except to install permitted fixed hardware. *Reference regulation: C.6. Destruction of Natural/Cultural Resources.*
4. No amplified music allowed (ex. phones, radios, mp3 players, speakers, etc.). Amplified music can be a distraction to others, inhibits communication between climbers and belayers, and disturbs wildlife. *Reference regulation: C.26 Unreasonable Noise.*
5. Consider leaving pets at home. Dogs must be on a physical leash at all times and cannot be left unattended. Dogs present a distraction to belayers and climbers, can create safety issues, and disturb wildlife. The best practice for safety and resource protection is to leave pets at home. *Reference Regulation: C.11. Pets.*
6. Respect closed areas. Closures exist for two reasons: visitor safety and natural resource protection. Sites may be closed to protect visitor safety in unsafe areas or may be closed to protect sensitive wildlife or natural resources. Know before you go: check the status of your desired route online for temporary closures or advisories before you leave your house. *Reference regulation(s): C.5. Natural Resources Protection Closure, C.20. Closed Areas.*
7. Gear may not be cached for future use. Found items will be stored for a period of 72 hours at the JCOS office. After the storage period, items will be disposed of following “Lost or abandoned property” guidelines. *Reference regulation: C.29. Abandoned Property.*
8. Report active violations or non-emergencies to the Jefferson County Sheriff’s non-emergency number 303-980-7300.
9. Report suspect routes to JCOS at climbing@jeffco.us.

Safety Tips

1. In case of an emergency, call 911.
2. Know where you are. In the event of an emergency, rescue time will be greatly reduced if you can thoroughly explain your location. Be prepared to provide a vehicle description, the closest road with mile marker, and a crag name.
3. Storms move fast in the foothills region. Be especially aware of lightning. In the event of lightning, move away from high points and tall trees. Get to a lower elevation as fast and safely possible.
4. Be prepared. Bring plenty of water and extra layers. Never drink water directly from a stream.
5. Tie a knot in the end(s) of your rope to prevent the possibility of going off of the end.

6. Do not climb or slack-line under the influence of marijuana or alcohol. Recreational marijuana is legal in the state of Colorado, but consumption of it in public places is not. Marijuana and alcohol use are tied to some of our most severe high angle accidents.

Monitoring and Compliance

1. Climbing areas and rock formations will be monitored by a collaboration of JCOS staff, volunteers, the FHRC, and the climbing community as a whole.
2. Report active non-emergencies, violations of JCOS rules and regulations, or violations of climbing guidelines to the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office non-emergency number at 303-980-7300.
3. Persons found in violation of the fixed hardware guidelines or other JCOS rules and regulations will be issued verbal warnings, written warnings, or a summons based on the nature and severity of the violation.
4. Unpermitted fixed hardware will be removed immediately.

Applicable Open Space Regulations

C.5. Natural Resources Protection Closure: It shall be unlawful to enter, use or occupy Open Space lands, or any portion thereof, during the time such Open Space lands, or any portions thereof, are designated as Sensitive Areas, seasonal closures, wildlife protection closures, refuges, or other protected areas. **Fine: \$100.00**

C.6. Destruction of Natural/Cultural Resources: It shall be unlawful to deface, damage, or in any other way vandalize any vegetation, rock, or any object of archaeological, biological, geological, or historical interest on Open Space lands. **Fine: \$125.00**

C.8. Destruction of Wildlife Habitat: It shall be unlawful for any person, or any pet under their custody, control, or ownership, to alter, damage, destroy, remove or in any other way vandalize wildlife habitat features on Open Space lands, including but not limited to, animal dens, burrows, dwellings, or nests. **Fine: \$150.00**

C.11. Pets:

C.11.a. All pets must be on a leash and under physical control on Open Space lands. "Leash" means a strap, cord, or chain and shall not exceed ten (10) feet in length. **Fine: \$50.00**

C.11.b. It shall be unlawful for any person not physically present on Open Space lands to have any pet under their custody, control, or ownership run freely upon said lands. **Fine: \$75.00**

C.11.c. It shall be unlawful for any person on Open Space lands to fail to pick-up and dispose of pet excrement deposited by any pet under their custody, control, or ownership in a waste receptacle. **Fine: \$50.00**

C.17. Hazardous Activity: It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in any activity on Open Space lands that constitutes a hazard to the safety of self or other persons. **Fine: \$125.00**

C.20. Closed Areas: It shall be unlawful to enter, use or occupy Open Space lands, or any portion thereof, during the time such Open Space lands, or any portions thereof, are closed to entry, use, or occupancy. **Fine: \$50.00**

C.26. Unreasonable Noise: C.26.a. It shall be unlawful to use sound amplification devices on Open Space lands or permit unreasonably loud noises that would disturb others. **Fine: \$50.00**