



# Climbing Guidelines



## Overview

People are drawn to Shenandoah National Park for many different reasons; some want to take in the beautiful scenery along Skyline Drive, others want to enjoy nature and the feelings of solitude and renewal that wilderness brings.

Rock climbing is a unique experience that creates a special bond between the climber and the rock face. To have a great experience and ensure that those after you do as well, follow the guidelines and recommendations below.

## Why Guidelines?

The Shenandoah Climbing Management Guidelines have been developed to protect Shenandoah's natural resources, while also providing visitors opportunities for rock climbing, bouldering, and ice climbing within the Park.

These guidelines will allow us to:

- Manage recreational use.
- Protect natural resources.
- Provide climbing opportunities in the Park.
- Protect the backcountry and wilderness experiences of other Park visitors.

## Rules & Regulations

### Prohibited Activities:

- Using motorized equipment to place bolts, anchors or climbing equipment
- Chipping or gluing.
- Removing vegetation to “clean” or improve a route, or access to a route.
- Leaving fixed ropes or other equipment for longer than 24 hours.
- Using non-climbing specific hardware (i.e., concrete anchors, home-made equipment).

### Fixed Anchors (including belay/rappel stations):

Fixed anchors are prohibited in all locations where temporary, removable protection can be used. The installation of fixed anchors should be rare parkwide, especially in wilderness areas.

### Group Size Limits:

Groups may contain a maximum of 12 people.

## Rules & Regulations (continued)



### If forced to install a fixed belay and/or rappel station, follow these rules:

- Do not install within view of an overlook or trail.
- Construct using modern equipment.
- Do not exceed three bolts when placing.
- Keep chains to a minimal length to avoid visual impacts.
- Do not use webbing and accessory cord fixed stations.
- Refer to pages 155-156 in the downloadable [Rock Outcrop Management Plan](#) (PDF) for additional guidance and information.

### Trees as Anchors:

Do not cause physical damage to trees or plants. Keep bark, lichen, and branches intact and unharmed.

- Trees are allowed as anchors only if they are not obstructing Park trails. Do not extend rope or webbing across a trail, whether elevated or not.
- Tree anchor use is prohibited directly on or around Little Stony Man.

## Climbing Closures

### Little Stony Man

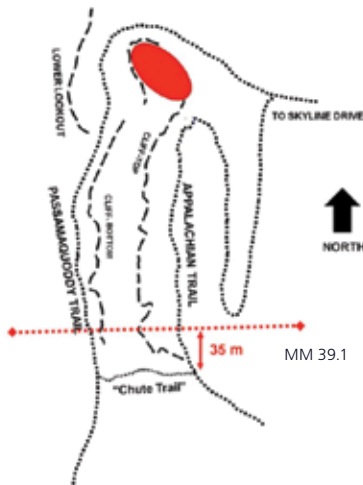


Figure 1. The red portion of the above diagram and all points on Little Stony Man Mountain for 158.6 yards (145 meters) south of the red dashed line are closed to all off-trail uses.

## Permanent Closures

- **Little Stony Man Cliffs**  
All off-trail areas on Little Stony Man located south of a line placed 28.3 yards (35 meters) north of the Chute Trail (Figure 1) are closed to visitor use. The large boulders on the northernmost end of Little Stony Man cliffs between the A.T. and Passamaquoddy Trail are also closed. View closure at: [go.nps.gov/stonymanromp](http://go.nps.gov/stonymanromp)
- **Hawksbill Mountain**  
The summit area and cliff faces are closed to all climbing activity. A portion of the northern and northwest face of the mountain is also closed to visitor use. View closure at: [go.nps.gov/hawksbillromp](http://go.nps.gov/hawksbillromp)
- **Old Rag Mountain Western Summit**  
The crown of the western summit is closed to all visitor use. Climbing permitted on the walls around the crown of the western summit. Climbers should access them from the base. View closure at: [go.nps.gov/oldragromp](http://go.nps.gov/oldragromp)

## Temporary Closures

Certain areas frequented by peregrines for breeding and nesting are temporarily closed each year. These closures typically run from May -July.

### Additional Information

For current peregrine closure information, call 540-999-3500 ext 3291.

### Watch Sites

Fragile and ecologically important sites within the Park have been showing signs of climbing impact. These sites are being *monitored* and *could* face temporary or permanent climbing closures in the future:

- North Marshall Mountain
- Marys Rock
- Old Rag Western Summit

### Additional Information

[Rock Outcrop Management Plan](#)

For more information, call 540-999-3500 ext 3720.