



CUMBERLAND TRAIL FIXED HARDWARE AND AREA REVIEW COMMITTEE AND GUIDELINES

CT-FHRC is a sub-committee of Southeastern Climbers Coalition (SCC) formed at the request of Cumberland Trail and State of TN to support the park's climbing management. The mission of the CT-FHRC is to provide rules and guidelines for placement and replacement of fixed hardware; and to work with members of the climbing public to consider applications for installation of new fixed anchors. The FHRC will evaluate, and, if necessary, revise such applications, and conduct a vote of its members to recommend or reject such applications to Cumberland Trail .

There are many potential climbing areas along the Cumberland Trail, as well as existing climbing areas. The purpose of this FHRC committee is to approve new route applications at existing areas and provide opportunities for the public to assist the CT in developing new climbing areas. The FHRC shall consider applications within the list of open climbing areas within Cumberland Trail at this time those areas are Deep Creek, Big Soddy, Rock Creek, Dinner Branch of Graysville RMA Section, Black Mountain. As new areas open the FHRC will relay new development opportunities to the public. The FHRC only has authority to recommend new applications to Cumberland Trail..

Final authority to approve an application rests with Cumberland Trail. The FHRC's decision to reject an application is final.

A. Composition of the FHRC

1. Membership of the FHRC

The FHRC shall have four members to be selected by SCC. Members of the FHRC may be, but are not required to be, board members, donors or volunteers of the SCC. SCC shall have complete authority to remove and replace members of the FHRC prior to the expiration of their terms.

2. The Chairperson of FHRC

The FHRC shall select a chairperson. In the event the FHRC is unable to agree on a chairperson, the SCC shall select one. There shall be no limit on the number of terms that the chair is eligible to serve so long as s/he remains a member of the FHRC.

B. Terms of FHRC Members

1. Initial terms

Two FHRC members shall have initial two year terms and two FHRC members shall have initial one year terms. If the members of the FHRC are unable to agree on which members shall have one year terms, the SCC shall make the selection. The FHRC will decide the effective start date of such terms.

2. Subsequent terms

After the expiration of the first year, all FHRC members shall thereafter have two year terms.

3. Renewal of terms

FHRC members are eligible for an unlimited numbers of term renewals, but there shall be no presumption in favor of, or against, such renewals.

C. Voting

For all votes other than recommendations on new fixed anchor applications, a majority of the FHRC members present shall be entitled to vote and decide any matter before the FHRC. In the event of a tie, the chairperson shall cast the deciding vote.

These Procedures and Standards for New Fixed Anchors can be amended only by a majority vote of the SCC. In the event of a tie, the chair of the SCC shall cast the deciding vote. The FHRC may recommend changes in the Procedures and Standards to the SCC.

II. PROCEDURES FOR REVIEWING NEW FIXED HARDWARE APPLICATIONS

A. The Application Process

1. Overview of process

There shall initially be at least three annual opportunities for members of the public to participate in Area wide route development opportunities and submit applications for new fixed hardware at existing climbing areas in the Cumberland Trail. The FHRC will publicize the area-wide development opportunities and application process on the SCC website and possibly other places; create the application forms; and make application forms reasonably available to area climbers. FHRC may recommend to the CT and SCC to increase or decrease the number of times each year that applications may be submitted and considered based on the volume of such applications and as further experience dictates.

Area wide development opportunities will be scheduled and made open to the public. SCC will publicize dates for each area wide event at least three weeks in advance. Cumberland Trail Rangers will work with FHRC to determine boundaries for development and number of routes permitted. FHRC representatives will be in attendance at each event and routes will be approved before development begins. Applications do not need to be submitted for area wide development events.

2. Submitting an Application

For existing climbing areas in CT, applicants should submit a detailed description of the proposed route to routes@seclimbers.org. These existing climbing areas include Deep Creek, Big Soddy, Rock Creek, Dinner Branch of Graysville RMA Section, Black Mountain. A complete application must include the items and information listed below. If needed, the FHRC can assist you in compiling information needed for your application. You can view all previously submitted applications FHRC section of the SCC website. Photos should be submitted separately as JPEGs.

1. A photocopy or diagram of the cliff section with the proposed route drawn in. Please submit all photos separately as JPEGs.
2. A description of existing nearby/adjacent routes on the same section of cliff, including the number of routes, route names, route grade, type (traditional or bolted), and approximate distance between routes. A photocopy or diagram of the existing route[s] is required.
3. A description of the approach. Include approximate distance from the designated trail system, existing "social" or undesignated trails leading to the climb and condition of the trail, and a statement as to whether there is a durable surface, such as rock or maintained trail. Include photographs of the approach.
4. If different from the approach or route itself, a description of the descent. Include approximate distance from the designated trail system, existing "social" or undesignated trails, a description of the trail condition and whether there is a durable surface, such as rock. Include photographs of the descent where applicable.
5. A description of the staging area at the base of the climb. Include existing levels of soil compaction, existence of a durable surface such as rock, and existing soil erosion. A proposal for feasible staging area improvements or hardening to improve the sustainability of the site are very welcome. Include photographs of the area at the base of the climb.

3. Pertinent dates

The FHRC shall have authority to select dates for each step in the review process. Initially the following due dates shall govern. In each case, the due date shall be the Friday of the second week of the listed month.

Winter Cycle / Spring Cycle / Summer Cycle / Fall Cycle

Applications due: January 1, April 1, and October 1. Committee Vote: Early February, early May, and early November.

Applicants will be encouraged to submit applications well in advance of the due date to afford them and the FHRC sufficient time to work together on the application.

The FHRC may defer consideration of an application if safety, natural resource, cultural resource or other SCSP resource management issues prevent sufficient consideration of the application.

A. Subsequent Events

1. The FHRC shall publicize the results of the vote.
2. The FHRC shall promptly notify CT of each application that was recommended for approval. Applications that were not recommended for approval shall not be presented to CT.
3. A rejected application may be resubmitted during a subsequent cycle only upon a written statement from the applicant setting forth material changes in the application or other circumstances warranting reconsideration. Changes in the composition of the FHRC or the voting public are not a basis for reconsideration.

B. Anchor Installation

Approved anchors must be placed within one year of approval. If a closure intervenes, the time period shall be extended for the length of the closure. An applicant may request an extension of time from the FHRC, which shall have discretion to grant or deny the request.

After receipt of timely applications, members of the FHRC shall work with the applicant(s) on assessing the proposal, as needed, and undertake application consideration actions such as visiting the site of the route, discussing possible concerns, discussing potential revisions or changes to the application, or preparing a public notice of the application.

The application and the public notice of the applications shall be precise as to the number, type and location of fixed anchors sought to be installed.

III. CRITERIA FOR NEW FIXED ANCHORS

The decision to recommend or reject an application for new fixed anchors will be based on an assessment of several factors listed below. Applications involving chipped or glued holds, or retro-bolting shall not be recommended. The identity of the applicants is not a consideration.

A. Criteria for Fixed Anchors on New Routes

1. The quality of the climbing, including: the quality of the moves, the rock and the route's position.
2. The extent to which the route is independent of other routes.
3. The ability of a leader competent in the grade to lead the route in relative safety.
4. The extent to which the route follows a good line and is not contrived.
5. Whether the route may be better left for top-roping or a future traditional lead.
6. The grade of the route is not, by itself, a consideration. However, the applicants may be required to demonstrate that they, or someone they designate, can complete the first ascent within a reasonable amount of time.
7. Routes may be rejected if T&E species or archaeological resources are found in or around the climbing route area.

B. Additional Fixed Anchors on Existing Routes

1. The extent to which the anchor or elimination of an anchor would improve relatively safety for a competent lead climber.
2. The extent to which the anchor would improve the environment by, among other things: eliminating webbing or the use of trees—which should not be used for anchors—or rerouting descent traffic toward a lower impact line.
3. Opinions of the first ascent party will receive serious, but not decisive, consideration.

IV. RULES FOR INSTALLATION OF NEW ANCHORS

1. 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 then in use by responsible climbers.
2. All bolts must be a minimum of 3/8" in diameter and 3" long. Mechanical or glue-in bolts that are 1/2" in diameter and at least 3" long may be more appropriate in sections with softer rock.
3. Fixed draws must be made from a reputable manufacturer.
4. Motorized rock drills are highly recommended.
5. Bolts, hangers and other hardware must be camouflaged *prior* to insertion into the rock.
6. Permanently fixed cord or webbing is prohibited.
7. Cold shuts are prohibited.

V. Rule Enforcement and Repercussions for Failure to Follow Procedures

1. Anyone caught installing, or found to have installed, any new hardware without the proper permit and documentation shall be subject to misdemeanor citation for violation of T.C.A 11-1-108, as well as the removal of all illegally installed hardware and loss of new route development privileges for the period of one year.

VI. RULES FOR REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING, OLD OR UNSAFE FIXED ANCHORS

1. Replacement of old, unsafe fixed anchors or hardware is encouraged, appreciated and permitted by CT, and is not subject to FHRC review.
2. Replacers must send notification of their replacement activity to the FHRC before replacement activity. Replacers are encouraged to log their activity on badbolts.com.
3. Replacement of old, unsafe fixed anchors or hardware must follow all of the same Rules for Installation of New Anchors (1-7 of III. B. IV) described above.
4. When replacing fixed hardware, the replacer will make every effort to repair and restore the rock to its natural state.
5. It is suggested that anyone replacing old or unsafe existing hardware contact the SCC Anchor Representative, as the SCC can help with cost of hardware in fixed anchor replacement.