

## **Application Process for Fixed Anchor Activity at WMWR**

### **Management Strategy:**

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) requires approval of a Fixed Anchor Application prior to the placement, replacement or removal of fixed anchors in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge (WMWR). WMWR management in association with the Advisory Bolting Committee of the Wichita Mountains Climbers Coalition, Inc. has developed guidelines for the placement of fixed anchors which minimize negative impacts to WMWR resources while allowing new development of quality fixed gear routes. This process is part of a comprehensive management plan for rock climbing designed to insure that the activity is subject to fines and penalties as specified by the USFWS.

### **HOW DO YOU APPLY FOR A PERMIT TO PLACE OR REMOVE FIXED ANCHORS?**

Any person desiring to place, replace or remove fixed anchors (bolts, pitons, etc.) in the Refuge must complete a Fixed Anchor Application form. Applications are available online at [www.wichitamountains.org](http://www.wichitamountains.org). Please read the Review Criteria, fill out and sign the Application form and waiver, and email the completed form to [abc.wmcc@gmail.org](mailto:abc.wmcc@gmail.org).

Only one application per person may be submitted during a review period (quarterly) for new routes. Applicants must be 18 years old or older.

### **HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR APPLICATION IS APPROVED?**

WMWR Management, assisted by the Advisory Bolting Committee (ABC) of the Wichita Mountains Climbers Coalition (WMCC), will meet four times a year (quarterly) to review applications. You will be notified by email within two weeks of the review date as to whether the application is approved or not approved.

The review process will be expedited for applications to replace bolt for bolt in the same location on existing routes.

### **WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOUR APPLICATION IS APPROVED?**

If approved, you will receive a permit outlining the terms and conditions for placing, replacing, or removing, the authorized fixed anchors. The permit must be obtained before you install or remove any gear. The permit expires six months from the date of issue.

### **ARE SOME AREA OF THE REFUGE CLOSED TO ANY FIXED ANCHORS?**

YES. Fixed anchors should not be placed on the short rock faces immediately and directly off of the road which travels to the summit of Mt. Scott (curb side).

### **A SPECIAL NOTE ON APPLYING FOR NEW FIXED ANCHORS**

While there is not a moratorium on new fixed anchors in the Refuge, It is unlikely for new fixed anchors outside of an established climbing area to be approved. Additional factors such as Compatibility Review periods may also influence whether or not an application will be recommended.

## **General Rules and Review Criteria for Fixed Anchors at QMSP & WMWR**

### **Quality Routes:**

New fixed gear routes will be evaluated using a high standard. Only quality new fixed gear routes that add to the climbing experience and do not infringe on existing lines will be approved.

### **Resource Impacts:**

New fixed gear routes will be evaluated on the potential degree of impact to Refuge resources. Of main concern are areas with: (1.) Existing high density of fixed anchors (2.) Sensitive plants and wildlife (3.) Fragile rock.

### **Visual Impacts:**

Bolt hangers and fixed chains must blend in with the natural color of the rock. Use commercially made camouflaged hangers or paint the hardware the color of the rock. Large, obtrusive bolts; (rings, etc.) should not be used for lead bolts, but may be appropriate for belays. Anchors should be designed to eliminate the need for nylon slings. Perma-draws are considered fixed anchors.

### **Convenience Bolting:**

Equipping new routes with fixed anchors should be done out of necessity (i.e. fixed anchors are the only means by which the route can offer protection). Generally, fixed anchors should not be placed near adequate natural protection. Convenience bolting is not appropriate for the Refuge or Baldy Climbing Area. Rappel anchors may be appropriate in cases where rappelling the route results in less trail erosion or resource impact than down climbing or hiking off of the "back-side".

### **Retro-Bolting:**

The essential character of routes, as established by the first free ascent, should be preserved. This means existing traditional climbs will remain so. Generally, retro-bolting will only be approved to replace bolt for bolt in the same location.

### **Climbing Styles:**

New fixed gear routes will not be evaluated on the basis of climbing styles. Local climbing ethics support diverse values and attitudes regarding the role of fixed anchors as well as the "process" of placing those fixed anchors.

### **Route Alterations:**

Gardening, chipping, gluing, removing vegetation, cutting trees, and prying off rock is prohibited. Be "resource sensitive" when developing new routes. Tread lightly and be aware of environmental impacts. Use good judgment!

### **Route Height:**

Generally routes under thirty (30') feet will be evaluated as top-rope problems only.

### **Power-Drills:**

Power Drills are prohibited in the Charons Garden Wilderness Area.



# Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge

## Liability Waiver and Release Regarding Fixed Anchor Placement

### Liability Waiver and Release Regarding Fixed Anchor Placement:

In making this Application for Fixed Anchor Placement, I expressly understand and agree that the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS), the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge (WMWR), the Wichita Mountains Climbers Coalition (WMCC), and their respective employees, representatives, agents, assigns, officers, and directors, and all persons acting by, through, under or in concert with any of them, are not responsible for and make no representations or warranties regarding the suitability for use, safety or reliability of any fixed anchors or other hardware, currently existing or installed in the future, on any climbing route in the WMWR. Moreover, I understand and agree that the FWS, WMWR and WMCC makes no representations or warranties regarding the degree of hazard or danger involved, or lack thereof, on any rock climbing route in WMWR.

I further understand and agree that if my Application for Fixed Anchor Placement is granted, such grant of permission applies only to the physical placement of that fixed anchor and does not confer approval or express any opinion as to the quality or safety of that placement or to the quality or safety of the climbing route to be established. The permission to place fixed anchor points at specified sites is based solely on a determination that the affect of the activity will not result in significant negative impact to WMWR resources. Moreover, I understand and agree that the grant of permission to place a fixed anchor does not certify that am qualified to place fixed anchors or have the experience and expertise to place fixed anchors properly.

I have made this Application for Fixed Anchor Placement solely of my own desire. Should this Application be granted, I will not be carrying out any activities pursuant to said grant of permission as an agent or representative of the FWS, WMWR and WMCC. I understand that through I may be granted permission to place fixed anchors; I am not obligated to exercise this privilege.

I further understand that rock climbing activities are inherently hazardous and that I am personally responsible for my own safety while climbing or placing fixed anchors to a grant of permission. I hereby release, covenant not to sue, and forever discharge the FWS, WMWR, and WMCC, and their respective employees, representatives, agents, assigns, officers and directors, and all persons acting by, through, under or in concert with any of them, from any and all claims, including without limitation those for personal injury and or death arising from my activities in connection with the grant of permission to install fixed anchors in the WMWR.

By signing below I certify that I am 18 years old or older and that I agree to the terms of this Liability Waiver and Release Regarding Fixed Anchor Placement.

### Signed:

Signature:

Date:

(Additional space for route description)