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Mount Rushmore National Memorial News Release

Preservation Team Gets up Close with Sculpture

Mount Rushmore National Memorial will continue its annual routine preservation work on the sculpture from Tuesday, September 16 through Friday, September 19. As a part of the annual work done on the mountain, the memorial's preservation team will be repairing sections of waterproof tarping and fracture sealants before winter weather arrives. This annual preservation work is done to protect the sculpture from the effects of the freeze-thaw process when water intrudes into the fractures in the mountain.

The annual preservation work is one phase of a larger long-term preservation plan for the sculpture. Utilizing new and developing technologies, this systematic approach to preservation builds upon past conservation work dating back to the time of artist Gutzon Borglum's first efforts to seal and protect the memorial. Visitors should anticipate an increased level of preservation activities in the coming years as more phases of the long-range preservation plan are implemented.

The Mount Rushmore preservation team is composed of a wide variety of specialists from across park divisions as well as park volunteers and advisors to the project. Ropes access technicians round out the preservation team and are trained to use a ropes system to perform work directly on the surface of the sculpture. This team is the only certified industrial ropes team in the National Park Service. Mount Rushmore has also partnered with RESPEC Engineering who provides scientific consulting and support for the rock block monitoring system and other preservation tools used on the mountain.

The ropes access team may be visible on the sculpture throughout the next week as they prepare the sculpture for the winter season. All facilities and trails will continue to be fully operational and open to visitors during this time.



Photo by CMC Rescue

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