

In order to limit impact to the Bridge Buttress climbing area, climbing trips will be limited to a maximum of fifteen (15) individuals per trip, including the guide(s), with a guest-to-guide ratio not to exceed four (4) guests to one (1) guide. The Bridge Buttress designated climbing area includes: The Ogre; The Pinnacle; North Bridge Wall; Central Bridge Wall; The Roc; South Bridge Wall; Bridge Buttress; Rock Shelter Cave; Overlook Buttress; The Rostrum. Two groups of fifteen may climb in the Bridge Buttress Climbing Complex at the same time as long the two groups are climbing separately, with one group being in The Pinnacle climbing area and the other group being in any of the other climbing areas of the Bridge Buttress Climbing Complex. In order to limit the impact to all other designated climbing areas, climbing trips will be limited to a maximum of ten (10) individuals per trip, including the guides(s), with a guest-to-guide ratio not to exceed four (4) guests to one (1) guide. Guest count will include individuals in the group watching the climbing activity. Operators are limited to four trips per day park-wide (with two groups of fifteen climbing at the same time at the two separate climbing areas in the Bridge Buttress Climbing Complex, as outlined above, being considered one trip). Groups accessing designated climbing areas must be actively involved in rock climbing/rappelling activities and not utilizing the climbing access areas for guided/group hiking.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER
GAULEY RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
BLUESTONE NATIONAL SCENIC RIVER
104 Main Street
P.O. Box 246
Glen Jean, West Virginia 25846



IN REPLY REFER TO:

Effective: 01/2008

SUBJECT: New River Gorge National River has established that the following criterion will be utilized when reviewing alternative climbing guide certification and determining its equivalency to the American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) single pitch instructor level.

Organizations applying for recognition as a climbing instructor certifier must provide training materials, such as course syllabus or textbook, for evaluation by the park's rock climbing program manager to ensure the course of instruction covers three primary areas: 1) the organization applying for certification equivalency approval will certify in writing climbing instructors have successfully completed the course curriculum and are capable of providing safe climbing instruction; 2) the course will include a minimum of 24 hours of instruction, plus an exam where proficiency is measured; 3) the course will cover contemporary baseline skills for safe climbing as follows:

KNOTS AND ROPE MANAGMENT

At a minimum the curriculum will include:

- Bowline, figure-eight and double figure-eight, overhand, figure-eight follow-through, water knot, double fisherman's, munter, and prussic.
- Instruction in what knots need to be "backed-up".

BELAYING AND DEVICE TYPES

- An overview of intermediate, slick, grabbing, and locking belay devices. Examples: figure-eight, ATC, Gri Gri, etc.
- The proper use and operation of the chosen device in order for the device to be effective.

ANCHOR POSITION, ASSESSMENT AND SYSTEMS

- Creating sound anchors that will be used as workstations.

What we are looking for:

- Setting the anchor directly above the climb.
- Sound placements of the anchor.
- Anchor system distributes the load equally.
- Anchor system has redundancy (if any point in the system was to fail, there must always be another part that will take the load).
- The load is spread equally.



- Instruction includes the use of natural anchors (trees, rocks, etc) and artificial anchors (stoppers, camming devices, etc.).
- Safety aspect of loading a carabiner (three-way loading, loading a carabiner over an edge, cross loading, etc.).
- Overview of self-equalized and pre-equalized anchors.

BELAYING

- Instruction in top and bottom belays.
- Belays will include a back-up (catastrophe knot, back-up belayer).

RAPPELLING

- Back-up belay using a separate belay line or “fireman’s belay”.
- The use of a “releasable” rappel.
- Safety considerations (loose items, clothing, etc.).

ASCENDING TO ASSIST CLIMBERS

- Ascending a single or double strand rope using friction hitches.
- Counter ascending a rope to rescue/assist a climber.

THE USE OF PULLEYS AND RAISING SYSTEMS TO RESCUE OR ASSIST A CLIMBER

ADDITIONAL TOPICS OF INSTRUCTION

- Inspecting equipment and when it should be replaced.
- Environmental concerns (lightning, rock falls, etc.).
- Promoting “leave no trace”.