

8.7.9 Rock climbing and abseiling

Rock climbing groups, university clubs and commercial operators all use Namadgi for rock climbing and abseiling. Popular areas include Booroomba Rocks and the Orroral Ridge area. Booroomba Rocks is popular also for non-climbers because of its views over Canberra and the opportunity at the end of the walking track to view climbers on the rock faces below. Park managers are endeavouring to work with rock climbers to address management issues. In recent years a particular issue has been impacts caused by climbers camping in the car parking area at the Booroomba Rocks track head. This has been addressed through the establishment of the nearby Honeysuckle Campground though many climbers prefer the previous car-based bush camping site.

The main environmental and/or social impacts of rock climbing and abseiling are: vegetation trampling; creation of informal walking tracks (access routes); human waste disposal; disturbance of cliff-breeding birds (particularly the peregrine falcon); and scarring or altering of rock faces with removable or fixed bolts (the latter is considered to be relatively insignificant).

Policies

- . Rock climbing and abseiling are allowed throughout all zones of the park and will operate under a code of practice established with user groups.
- . Park management will work with rock climbing groups to minimise environmental impacts on climbing areas as outlined in a code of practice. Particular areas may be closed if impacts reach unacceptable levels.
- . Sections of climbing areas or particular routes may be temporarily closed where peregrine falcons are breeding.
- . Small group sizes will be encouraged to reduce impacts. Group size will be controlled through self-regulation based on a code of practice. A permit system may be introduced if self-regulation is ineffective.
- . Rock bolts and fixed anchor points may be replaced or new ones installed by users according to the code of practice.

Actions

142 Evaluate the establishment of a small walk-in bush camping area in the vicinity of, but away from, the Booroomba Rocks carpark.

143 Work with rock climbing groups to establish and promote a code of practice for rock climbers aimed at low impact use of the park and participation in maintenance and management of rock climbing areas.