



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

National Forests in North Carolina
Pisgah National Forest
Grandfather Ranger District

109 E Lawing Dr
Nebo, NC 28761-9827
828-652-2144

File Code: 1010

Date: January 14, 2008

Dear Climbing Community:

It's that time of year when we prepare to welcome back North Carolina's Peregrine Falcons. The Peregrine falcon is listed as sensitive on both the Regional Forester's sensitive list and the Nantahala and Pisgah national forest sensitive list. It is listed as endangered by the state of North Carolina.

Thirteen pairs nested in 2007, six of which were on forest service lands. However, five of the 13 sites (three of which are on USFS sites) were not successful producing young this year. Nest success was not able to be determined at Shortoff Mountain due to wildfires in the Linville Gorge area. Reproduction continues to be a real concern. Of particular concern is last year's nest failure at Looking Glass Rock, following recent years of nestling mortality at that site. The cause of this mortality is unknown at this time, however, young chicks startled prior to acquiring full flight capability will inadvertently run off the edge of the cliff to their death. Entry into a closure site once the chicks have hatched and prior to flight will almost certainly cause the chicks to fall off the cliff nest site when they are startled.

Until such time as Western North Carolina can maintain a healthy reproduction rate and successfully raise young Peregrine Falcons, the existing closures will be maintained, posted, and enforced.

Closure areas

Whitesides Mountain, Nantahala Ranger District

Big Lost Cove Cliffs and Linville Gorge (Shortoff Mountain and Table Rock), Grandfather Ranger District

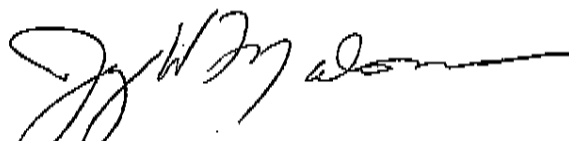
Whiterock Cliff, Madison County and Eagle Cliff, Mitchell County, Appalachian Ranger District

Looking Glass Rock, Pisgah Ranger District

Entry into or upon the areas defined above is prohibited between January 15 and August 15. Areas are defined by orange painted boundary or posted signs; however we have experienced considerable vandalism with our signing. This closure is in effect for the areas listed regardless of whether or not posted signs are present.

If you have any questions regarding these areas or would like a copy of the closure notice, please call Sandy Burnet at this office (828) 652-2144. Any updates on specific closures are available from the respective ranger district office. Thank you for your continued cooperation in the restoration efforts for this magnificent bird of prey.

Sincerely,


JOY W. MALONE
District Ranger



2008 North Carolina Climbing-Site Closures for Falcon

Site Name	Area Closed	Landowner
Whitesides Mountain	All climbing routes between and including Southwest Arete and Mainline are closed.	USFS, Nantahala Ranger District (828) 524-6441
Table Rock (Linville Gorge)	All climbing routes between and including Blood, Sweat, and Tears and My Route are closed.	USFS, Grandfather Ranger District (828) 652-2144
Shortoff Mountain (Linville Gorge)	All climbing routes between and including C.O. to and including Paradigm Shift are closed.	USFS, Grandfather Ranger District (828) 652-2144
Big Lost Cove Cliffs	All climbing routes are closed.	USFS, Grandfather Ranger District (828) 652-2144
Looking Glass Rock (North Face)	All routes to the right of, but excluding Glass Menagerie and to the left of and including Twisted Laurel on the North Face of Looking Glass Rock are closed.	USFS, Pisgah Ranger District (828) 877-3350

Climbing route names are taken from: Kelly, Thomas. 1995. *The Climber's Guide to North Carolina* 3rd Edition. Earthbound Sports Inc., Chapel Hill, NC 332pp. and from Lambert and Shull. 2002. *Selected Climbs in North Carolina*. 1st Edition. The Mountaineers Books, Seattle, WA. 326pp.

All sites are closed from January 15 - August 15, 2008; except that in the event that falcons are not using the site or nesting terminates at an earlier date than August 15th, the site may be opened to public use, as determined by the appropriate landowners. The specified closed (or open) routes will change if the falcons nest on a part of the cliff outside the existing closed area, or if they do not nest in an existing closed area, as determined by monitoring throughout the breeding season.

Devil's Courthouse, National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway, is closed for protection of rare plants.

Moore's Wall at Hanging Rock State Park is open until peregrine residency can be established.

This summary of climbing-site closures represents the best available knowledge regarding closure orders issued by the U.S. Forest Service in cooperation with the North Carolina Wildlife Commission - Non-Game Division..