

Ragged Mountain Foundation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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What is the Ragged Mountain Foundation?

The Ragged Mountain Foundation (RMF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit land management and conservation group dedicated to preserving access to Connecticut's high and wild places. As a group, our goal is to represent the needs and wishes of Connecticut climbers and hikers. Of primary interest is the 56 acre parcel of land in Southington owned by the RMF that includes part of Ragged Mountain. As the local Access Fund Affiliate the RMF also works to help address climbing related issues on a local and national level.

Who owns Ragged Mountain?

Ragged Mountain is owned by a collection of private and public landowners. The RMF owns a 56-acre parcel that includes the area around Main Cliff. (See map posted at www.raggedmtn.org). A [Deed of Conservation Restriction](#) that helps regulate the usage of the property is held with the [Berlin Land Trust](#).

Where is Ragged Mountain?

Ragged Mountain is located in Southington, New Britain and Berlin, Connecticut. It is part of the traprock ridge that runs north to south through central Connecticut. The Metacomet trail runs across the top of Ragged Mountain.

The Main Cliff itself is only a small portion of the entire parcel owned by the RMF. A [map](#) displays the property in relation to our neighbors. The property is bounded on the north by land owned by the New Britain Water Authority, on the east by the Ragged Mountain Preserve (Town of Berlin), along the south by various private homes and on the west by Andrews Street in Southington.

How did the RMF acquire Ragged Mountain?

It was the wish of the previous property owner, Stanley Hart, that the land on and around Ragged Mountain be preserved in its natural state and continue to be used and enjoyed by everyone after his passing. In the 1980's he developed an initial plan that would ultimately transfer the property to the AMC (Appalachian Mountain Club). This plan called for a park with nature trails, a campground, and other outdoor recreational activities. In 1989, before he passed away, Mr. Hart donated the property to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) so that any threatened or endangered species could be identified and their protection ensured before the AMC took ownership. When the AMC then declined to take over the property from TNC, a group of climber and hikers formed the RMF and received the endorsement of the AMC to assume the stewardship/ownership role for Ragged Mountain. The goal at the time was to obtain the property and ensure continued access to one of Connecticut's premier climbing areas. The RMF was granted stewardship of the land in 1991. In July 1999, after years of successful land management, ownership of the property was granted to the RMF, while the conservation easement established by TNC was transferred to the Berlin Land Trust.

Where does my RMF membership fee go?

- Insurance
- Maintenance of property (including dam, trails, etc.)
- Periodic membership meetings (Winter party, annual meeting, summer picnic)
- Newsletters and mailings
- Website
- Cost of clean up activities
- Funding of studies such as the evaluation of area parking done in 2007
- Land surveys, environmental studies, reviews, and legal fees.
- General Fund (For possible future purchases or ability to become self sustaining/funded organization.

Where it doesn't go

The Wilcox Award is funded separately by donations specifically targeted for that Award. Members are free to make contributions to the Wilcox Award, but membership fees are not used to fund this award.

Board members are volunteers and receive no compensation.

What is a conservation easement?

A conservation easement is a legal document that defines how a piece of property can be used. Conservation easements typically limit development of property and are often used to help preserve land in its natural state in perpetuity. A conservation easement can also be used to define allowable uses of a property. It becomes part of the land records, associated with the deed, not with a specific property owner.

What is in the Conservation Easement for Ragged Mountain?

In the simplest terms, the Deed of Conservation Restriction for Ragged Mountain (“conservation easement”) recognizes rock climbing as a valid use of the land and prevents any future landowner from developing the top of Ragged Mountain.

Some highlights of the conservation easement include

- Day use only; camping is prohibited
- No development or construction on the property
- No parking and no construction of a parking lot
- Rock climbing and hiking are approved uses
- No new bolting activity is allowed
- Existing bolts may be maintained (21 pieces of gear specifically identified at the time of the agreement)
- No new trails may be developed (blazed, cleared, etc)
- Existing trails can be maintained

The conservation easement for Ragged Mountain is [posted](#) in its entirety on the RMF website.

Bolting Policy

I’d love to establish a new route at Ragged. Can I put in a bolt at the crux move on the blank face? I’d love to lead xyz, but it’s really runout in one spot. Can I add a bolt? How about some bolted tope rope anchors?

No. Sorry. Our conservation easement prevents us from allowing new bolting activities. This includes bolting existing routes, putting up new bolted routes, and creating bolted toprope anchors.

What about the missing bolts?

There have been numerous incidents of vandalism and climbers have periodically replaced bolts that were damaged or missing in accordance with the conservation easement. Recently legal actions have been taken that may reduce these incidents. RMF

will continue to recognize the value of these original pieces of protection and will make every effort to keep them in place.

Where can I park when visiting Ragged?

Parking on RMF property is prohibited. Nearby parking options include:

1. Timberlin Park – Hike the Metacomet trail in. (30 minute hike – park closes at sunset)
2. West Street in Berlin. Hike red dot trail to the Metacomet. Give yourself 45 minutes to an hour.
3. Legitimate and responsible street parking in the neighboring area of Sheldon Street (south side of street only) and Moore Hill Road

Parking conditions at Ragged are not optimal. Neighbors get impatient with the number of climbers cars clogging up their community. **Carpooling is advisable.** Visitors should always be mindful that they are parking in a residential neighborhood. Please be respectful and do not block access to driveways or mailboxes or leave any trash behind. Abide by “No Parking” signs. Please do not park in front of the first house on Sheldon Road. The “no parking” area is marked by yellow paint on the curb.

Why don't you build a parking lot at Ragged?

The conservation easement prevents us from doing any construction on the property. It specifically prohibits a parking lot.

Are there any other options for parking?

In 2006 at the request of the town of Southington, the RMF, with support from the Access Fund, commissioned Fuss & O'Neill to conduct a study of the existing conditions of the property, including parking. The main goal of the study was to determine any feasible areas for potential parking access. The most viable options include:

- Continue as is. Limit parking in permitted areas, carpool, disperse and be respectful of the neighbors.
- Use of town right-of-way along Andrews Street by the Town of Southington to allow side road parking along the RMF Property line. This is at the discretion and expense of the Town of Southington. The RMF Board will continue to work with the Town of Southington to attempt to meet the needs of visitors to Ragged Mountain as well as local residents, but be aware that changes like this may take years of planning, negotiation, and effort.
- Acquiring an adjacent parcel of land on which a parking lot can be built

Can the conservation easement be changed?

There are provisions for amending the conservation easement. It requires approval of the RMF and the Berlin Land Trust. The conservation easement was put in place to protect

the property from abuse and unnecessary development. Any changes must be carefully considered and approved by both the RMF and BLT, and may be subject to suit or review by outside parties. Changing the conservation easement is not something that can or should be taken lightly or done easily.

Is the Ragged Mountain Foundation a social club?

While climbers are a very social group, outings are not a primary mission of the RMF. The RMF does sponsor several events each year. Most are intended as trail maintenance, fund raisers or as opportunities for the board and membership to meet and discuss RMF activities. These include events like the annual meeting, winter party, summer picnic, trail days, and the Banff film festival. For group outings and to meet other climbers, we suggest you talk to our friends in the [AMC](#) or [CCM](#).

What's next for the RMF

The future direction of the RMF depends on the needs of our membership. Some things are a given:

- We will continue to maintain the property at Ragged, and ensure access to climbers and hikers. In fact, failure of the RMF to care for its property in a reasonable manner puts our ownership of the property in question, per the conservation easement. Keeping the property in good condition is our primary reason for existence.
- Sponsor trail work and clean-up days at Ragged and other crags.
- Represent climbers' interest in the community, particularly issues involving access to climbing and trails..
- Discuss and negotiate access with State, public and private landowners (DEP, New Britain Water Company, MDC, etc.)
- We will work with local and national groups such as CFPA and Access Fund.

Other areas for consideration

- Manage additional parcels land on behalf of landowners (private or public)
- Purchase other crags

How can I help?

- Become a member
- Volunteer – help out at trails days, clean ups, etc.
- Volunteer – help the board, join a committee
- Volunteer – join the board
- Represent climbers positively in the area. Carpool, say hi to the neighbors, and treat everyone with respect.

Where can I go if I have more questions?

Send email to information@raggedmtn.org.