

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

WICHITA MOUNTAINS WILDLIFE REFUGE

32 Refuge Headquarters
Indiahoma, Oklahoma 73552
580-429-3222



July 10, 2007

Mr. Marion Hutchison II
Board Member
Wichita Mountains Climbing Coalition
3724 N.W. 69th Terrace
Oklahoma City, OK 73116

Dear Mr. Hutchison,

I want to thank you and the other Wichita Mountains Climbers Coalition (WMCC) board members and the Advisory Bolting Committee members for taking time to meet with me at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) over the past year. I would also like to acknowledge your personal, decade's long commitment to rock climbing activities and your efforts to shape the rock climbing management program and partnership on the Refuge.

I have received your June 3, 2007, correspondence and feel it important to reiterate my commitment to open and transparent communication with the WMCC. Based on my review of past correspondence and reporting on refuge efforts related to the management of rock climbing, it is understandable to me that a discussion focused on future management could create a general sense of trepidation within the WMCC. However, I am confident that at all levels of the Service, any analysis of rock climbing on the Refuge will be conducted in an unbiased, professional, and legally prescribed manner.

Public involvement, including WMCC input, will play an important role in the development of future Refuge management strategies. The Refuge has not yet entered any "formal" public involvement period, however, any suggestions or concerns that the Refuge receives from WMCC, including those in your recent correspondence, will receive due consideration.

Thank you again for your active participation with rock climbing management on the Refuge. I look forward to the upcoming meeting with WMCC to visit popular climbing areas on the Refuge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Rupert".

Jeff Rupert
Refuge Manager

Cc: Regional Chief, Refuges, Southwest Region
Refuge Supervisor, OK/TX, Southwest Region