**USA Climbing Announces Updated Routesetting Team Selection Policy**

Beginning with the upcoming competition season, USA Climbing will implement a centralized appointment process for all National-level routesetting positions, including Head Routesetters, Assistant Routesetters, and Apprentice Routesetters.

The purpose of this policy is to create fair, professional, and high-quality competition environments for athletes while improving consistency and intentionality in how National-level routesetting teams are assembled. The updated process is intended to broaden opportunities for qualified routesetters, reduce actual or perceived favoritism or conflicts of interest, support long-term routesetter development, and more closely align USA Climbing with the appointment model used for international competition routesetting teams.

Routesetters will continue to apply for event assignments through the same application process used in previous seasons. After the application period closes, the Routesetting Program Manager will review eligible applicants and develop recommended appointments based on the needs of each event and the overall composition of the team. Those recommendations will be presented to the Routesetting Committee for review and feedback before being submitted for final organizational approval.

Head Routesetters, along with High Performance and Coaching staff, may provide input regarding team composition, technical needs, individual strengths, and previous working relationships. That input is advisory and does not constitute appointment authority. Once appointed, the Head Routesetter remains responsible for leading the crew and managing the technical execution of the competition.

Selections will consider a range of factors, including certification and eligibility, competition routesetting experience, previous performance and evaluations, technical routesetting and forerunning ability, discipline-specific experience, communication, teamwork, professionalism, adaptability, leadership, experience with the applicable athlete population, professional development, availability, and event-specific needs. No single factor will determine selection, and certification level, seniority, or previous appointments do not guarantee future assignments.

USA Climbing will evaluate teams as complete working groups rather than simply ranking applicants individually. Team composition may consider balance of experience, complementary strengths, forerunning ability, discipline expertise, team dynamics, and the development of future National- and international-level routesetters. Athlete safety, competition integrity, and the quality of the field of play will remain the primary considerations.

The centralized appointment model is also intended to reduce the actual or perceived influence of favoritism, personal relationships, gym affiliations, or established professional networks and to improve consistency with USA Climbing's broader organizational objectives and directives.

Routesetting assignments remain competitive and limited. Meeting minimum qualifications does not guarantee selection, and non-selection does not necessarily indicate that an individual is unqualified. Previous non-selection also does not prevent consideration for future assignments.

USA Climbing will communicate appointments directly to selected individuals and notify applicants once the selection process is complete. The objective of this policy is to create greater consistency, accountability, and intentionality in team selection while assembling routesetting crews capable of delivering the competition environment athletes deserve.

Please direct any questions to Jeremy Ho, National Routesetting Program Manager, at Jeremy@usaclimbing.org