

About the Presenter

Rick Weber is the Training Officer and Team Leader for the Wolfe County Kentucky Search and Rescue Team. He also trains members of other rescue squads in a four-county area of Eastern Kentucky known as the Red River Gorge. This popular tourist area sees numerous rope rescue operations conducted on its many hundreds of miles of sheer cliffs. Rick is a retired mechanical engineer who has a keen interest in the engineering aspects of gear and techniques used in technical rope rescues. Because his squad employs trees as anchors for many of its high-angle rescues, and because he found only a few general guidelines as to how to select and use trees as anchors, he decided to conduct an in-depth testing and research program on this subject.

Rick and his wife own and manage the 400-acre, free-public-access Muir Valley Nature Preserve. This preserve also includes over 350 established rock climbing routes and has become regarded as the most popular rock climbing venue in the Eastern U.S. with 18,000 visitor days projected for 2010. The preserve provides a large number of trees of all sizes and many varieties in high angle settings near cliffs for his testing.

Rick is an avid rock climber, guide, and AMGA-certified Single Pitch Instructor. He is also filling out his retirement years developing a rope rescue training curriculum for the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management.