

03/19/2020

Bryson Stephens  
3800 Old Leeds Road  
Birmingham, AL 35213

Dear Mr. Stephens:

This is a letter of support for the renovation of the famous Red Mountain road cut, which would allow for access of the site by the general public and geology classes. Moreover, renovation might also spur renewed scientific research in paleontology and geology.

The Red Mountain road cut site exposes rocks from an important part of the geologic past of Alabama and Birmingham, from the Cambrian to the Mississippian period, spanning about 150 million years. The exposure of rocks representing such a long time span is truly remarkable and not seen anywhere else in the state to my knowledge. Many fossils have been found at the road cut including a trilobite species first described from this site (Norford, 1972) as well as ostracods (seed shrimp), gastropods (snails), crinoids (sea lilies), brachiopods (lamp shells), other trilobites, bryozoans (moss animals), algae, sponges, corals, and bivalves. Some parts of the exposure even show ancient reef-like structures. The environments represented by these rock units vary from an open ocean to a beach.

The site has gained national attention because was declared a National Site of Geologic Interest by the American Geological Institute (Thomas & Bearce, 1986) and was designated as a National Natural Landmark by the US Department of Interior in 1987 (<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nlandmarks/site.htm?Site=REMO-AL>).

Since the 1960s, classes have been coming to this road cut to study the rocks and fossils, but access to the road cut has become more problematic over time. Restoring and improving access to the cut and walkway would have many benefits: (1) Alabamians and people from elsewhere from children to senior citizens could enjoy a great view of the rocks and downtown Birmingham again while learning about Birmingham's prehistory, (2) class field trips would become more effective, and (3) scientific research would get a boost.

In sum, I very strongly support the renovation of the famous Red Mountain road cut. Thank you for your time and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Adiel A. Klompmaker

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March 18, 2020

Bryson Stephens  
3800 Old Leeds Rd.  
Birmingham, AL 35213

Dear Mr. Stephens,

I'm writing to express my support for the proposed plan to renovate the Red Mountain road cut in Birmingham and provide better access for the general public and geosciences classes. This site is registered as a National Site of Geologic interest by the American Geological Institute. It has also been recognized as a National Natural Landmark by the United States Department of Interior. The site is important in the history of Birmingham and the renovation and improved access would create a significant resource for the education of children and adults from across the United States. It already has the attention of numerous geology classes that come from states other than Alabama. The proposed renovations would also beautify the expressway and create a destination for anyone wanting to get a fabulous look at the downtown skyline...in the short-term, this would undoubtedly be of interest to the visitors of the upcoming World Games. I strongly encourage you to consider this proposal. If I can assist in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John C. Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

John C. Abbott, Ph.D.  
Chief Curator and Director of Research and Collections

Alabama Museum of Natural History  
Museum Research and Collections  
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