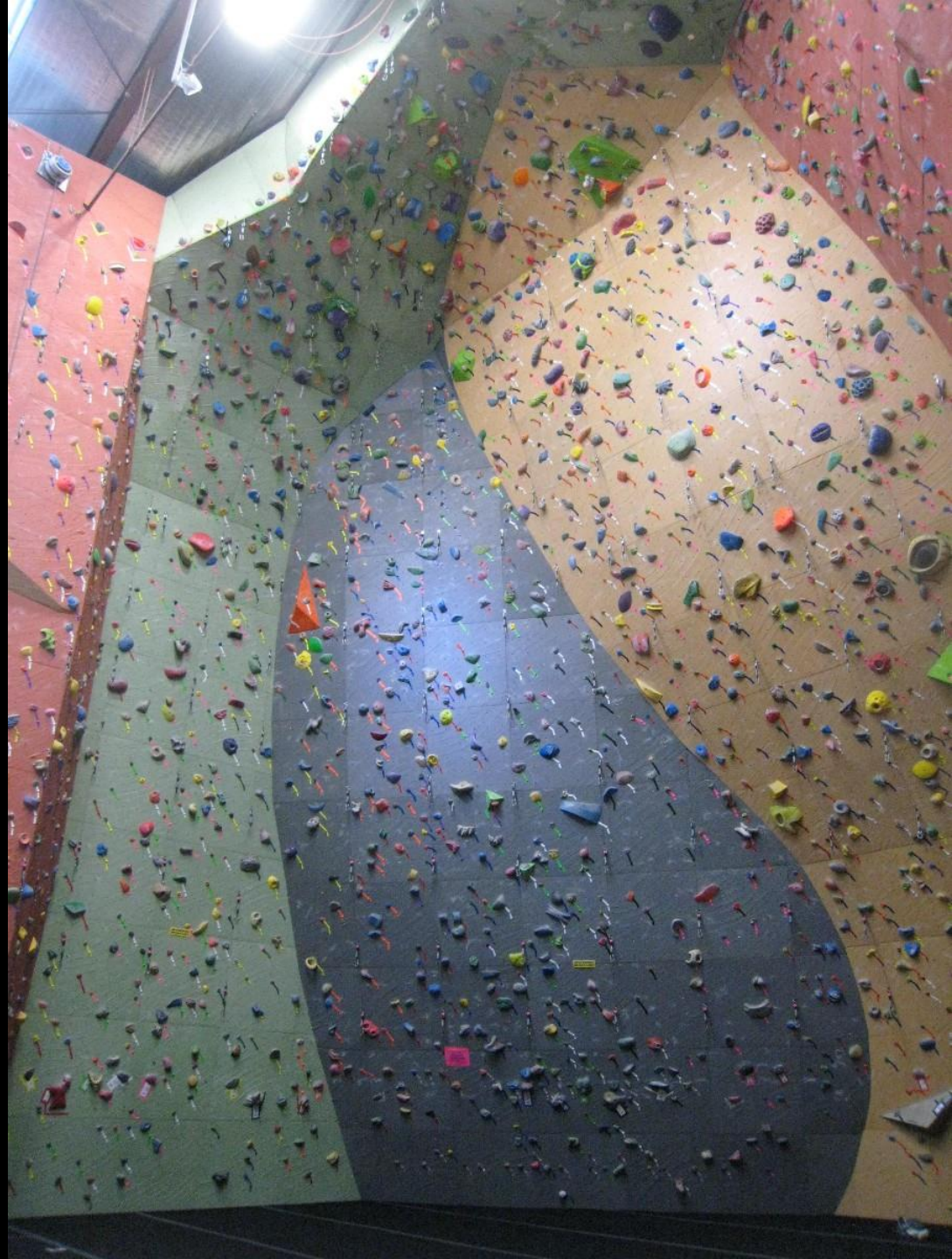


THE CHANGING FACE OF  
THE NEW CLIMBER











Younger Climbers are  
Gaining Technical  
Proficiency More Quickly

- 2000-2500 people go climbing for the first time in gyms EVERY DAY
- If only 10% of these people go outside, up to 100,000 people will be new to our crags and mountains every year



# Accident Statistics

2008: 203

2009: 240

2010: 389

2011: 348

2012: 309

**5-Year Total: 1,489**

**Roughly 10 near-misses for every accident**

ACCIDENTS IN NORTH AMERICAN MOUNTAINEERING

# Climbing Instruction Pre 1995±

## BASIC MOUNTAINEERING

Belaying & Rappelling - 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> class rock – glacier travel – navigation – equipment - camping



## INTERMEDIATE MOUNTAINEERING

Leading easy 5<sup>th</sup> class rock – 45° to 60° ice – route finding - self rescue – general fitness training



## ADVANCED MOUNTAINEERING – ALPINISM

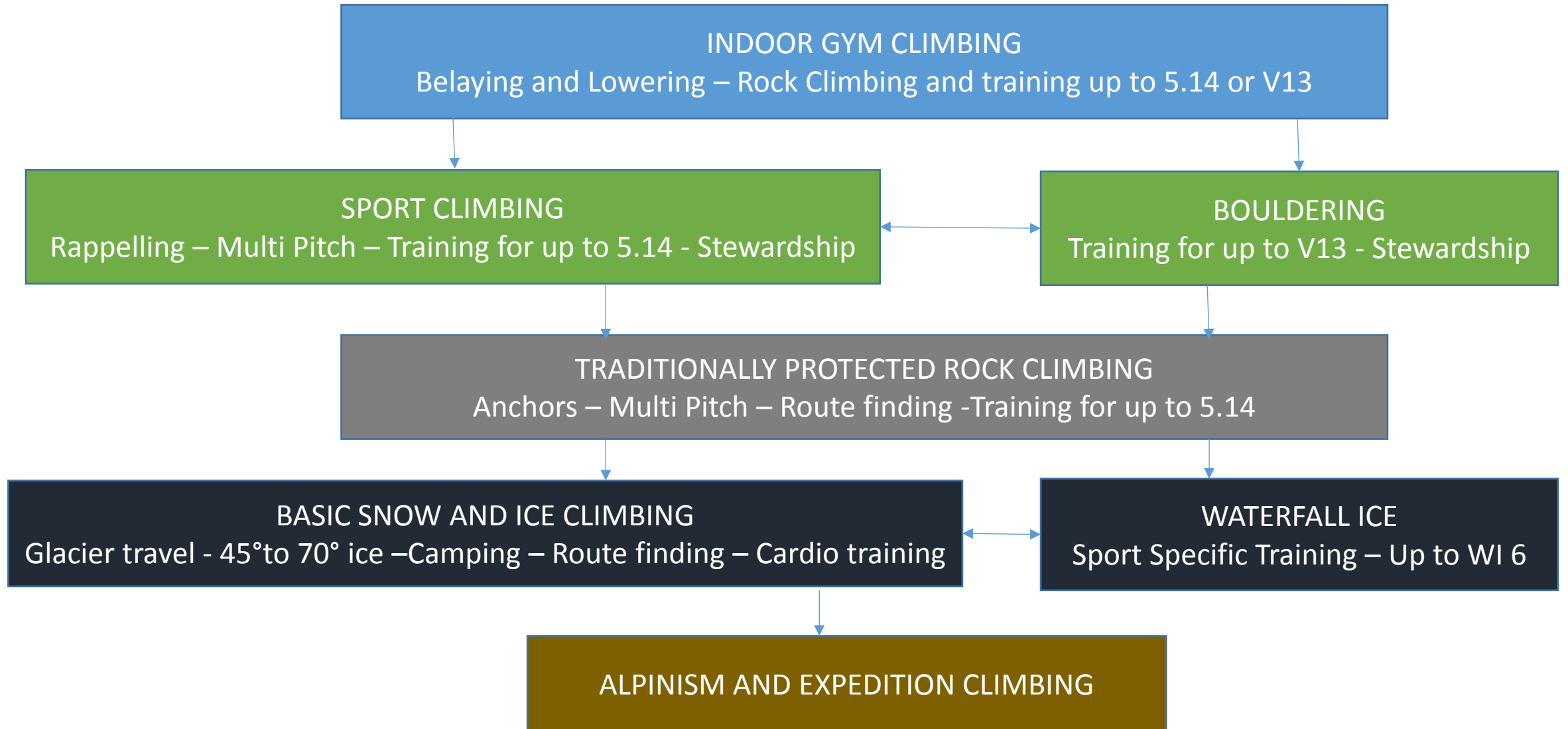
Difficult 5<sup>th</sup> class rock – waterfall ice – big wall climbing - sport specific fitness training



## EXPEDITION CLIMBING

Alpinism + High altitude physiology – logistics - permitting

# Climbing Instruction Post 1995±



# Differences Post 1995

- Nearly all technical climbers start out in the gym
- Gym climbers train at difficulties from 5.10 to 5.13
- Relatively simple transition from the gym to single pitch outdoor sport climbing
- Difficult and hazardous transition from sport climbing to traditionally protected and multi-pitch climbing
- Skilled rock climbers proficient in rope handling and anchoring do not need mountaineering courses that teach what they already know
- Learning basic navigation, snow and ice climbing, and survival skills comes much later in the learning process.

# Challenges for Climbing Education Programs

- Most Mountaineers programs are structured for pre 1995 climbers and current hikers wanting to do easy climbs
- Climbers want courses that reflect the new segmented nature of the sport (gym, sport, trad, waterfall ice, alpinism)
- Huge growth in climbers learning in gyms who will DIY before enrolling in courses that don't fit their needs
- Large demand for courses to teach 5.10+ gym climbers to trad climb
- Obtaining enough qualified instructors to teach trad rock and technical ice climbing will be the critical success factor

# Risks of Inaction

- Other organizations, internet groups, and for profit companies will fill the need
- It will be increasingly difficult for the Mountaineers to attract/retain younger climbers
- Climbers who DIY pose increased safety and stewardship problems
- Inability to respond may hurt fundraising (opposite could also be true)

# Discussion