The Final Frontier
Rumney Climbers Association raising funds to expand and protect New England sport-climbing

RCA

Rumney Climber’s Association (RCA) and Access Fund are pleased to announce they have secured the exclusive right to purchase Rumney’s Northwest Crags for permanent conservation and climbing access. The Northwest Crags are the final set of privately owned climbing resources at the central New Hampshire sport climbing mecca. Now we need the community’s help to raise $300,000 for the purchase and stewardship of Rumney’s Northwest Crags.

With the community’s help, RCA is poised to acquire and permanently protect six crags—including Northwest Territories, Buffalo Pit, Northwest Passage, Prudential, Asylum, and western portion of the Black Jack Boulders—which account for approximately 12% of developed routes at Rumney, with potential for more. “The routes are less travelled and the experience is less urban than the more frequented crags at Rumney,” says RCA board member Jay Knower. “Given the issues of overcrowding at popular crags, adding this area will provide climbers more options for their climbing days.”

The 86-acre property extends half a mile along Buffalo Road and gains 600 feet up the forested slopes of Rattlesnake Mountain. It borders White Mountain National Forest and offers extensive views of the valley below. The beautiful, untouched nature of the property is what attracted landowners Gary and Robyn Zielinki to purchase the property 25 years ago. When they expressed interest in conserving their land, Access Fund and RCA offered their support.

In 1994, Access Fund worked with the Rumney Climbers Association raising funds to expand and protect New England sport-climbing

LINDA MOORE

What draws one into the forest? Is it the peace and quiet? The solitude? Possibly the opposite: You may enjoy hiking in groups and enjoy the social aspect. Maybe it is getting a great workout. Some may go for an amazing view. Maybe all of the above!

Those of us who love these wild spaces would like to see them protected forever, and land trusts are one way to conserve them. Land conservation is often misunderstood by folks yet it is crucial to keeping everything from open spaces to woodlots to farmland to mountainsides preserved for our wildlife, culture and future generations.
There are many reasons to conserve land: Preserving historically significant buildings or landmarks; protecting a special wildlife habitat; ensuring common uses of land, such as farming or timber harvesting, will continue; maintaining unfragmented lands for wildlife to roam without encountering human development. The motives are many and personal.

Did you know that you can conserve a small lot such as an acre? In Sugar Hill there is just such a spot, protecting an amazing view of Franconia Ridge and the Presidential Range. Did you know that there are many options? It’s not a blanket contract that limits owners from doing anything on your property. Land trusts are the organizations that normally hold the conservation easement: The legal document that protects the land from being developed in perpetuity. Land trusts will work with you on the terms of the easement.

What if you would like your property kept private? Done. What if you have a large tract and allow hunting? Done. What if you don’t want ATV use but will allow hikers to utilize trails? Done and done. The options are endless and you are in the driver’s seat. The land is still yours to work, enjoy and pass along or sell to whomever you wish. The easement stays with it. All these things, and many more, the trust will help you with.

When you place your land under a conservation easement the land trust that holds it will monitor the property annually to ensure that nothing is encroaching on the terms of the easement. They work to protect that which you chose to protect.

New Hampshire has a long history in land conservation. Our oldest land trust being the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests which began in 1901. We have over 1.8 million acres conserved! These lands are mainly protected by conservation easements and something called fee ownership. This is when a landowner sells or donates the land to a qualified conservation group. There are tax incentives for both types of conservation.

Even if you don’t own land to conserve, there are many land trusts, large and small, in New Hampshire that look for volunteers to assist with stewardship. They are in every region of the state: Simply go to the New Hampshire Land Trust Coalition’s website and find one near you: NHLTC.org/find-land-trust

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Whipple field in Sugar Hill, NH. The Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust, with the help of over 110 community members, purchased these 20 acres from one of Sugar Hill’s earliest farms, maintained mainly as an open field for wildlife habitat. Photo courtesy of Linda Moore.

MOUNTAIN PASSAGES
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LARRY YETTER

Did you start hiking this spring only to hit a lot of ice and have to turn around unprepared? Are you interested in hiking year round instead of just in the summer? If so, the NH Chapter is offering the Winter Hiking Series (WHS) again this year.

This is a great course for experienced three-season hikers who wish to expand their hiking into the winter season. The series includes an opening weekend at Highland Center and includes a day of classroom training and a hike. The series continues with four additional hikes spread two to three weeks apart with the final hike in winter. The series is taught by highly experienced NH Chapter Excursion leaders who possess extensive skills and experience. There is a high instructor-to-participant ratio so that participants have good access to instructors throughout the series.

Many winter hikers claim winter is the best hiking season. The views are amazing with snow and ice covered trees and mountain tops. The rocks hikers clamber over in the summer are covered with snow and a nice snowshoe path is created. The black flies, mosquitoes and ticks are all gone, however, that doesn’t mean winter hiking is easy or without risk. The series will teach about the gear and clothing needed to safely tackle the NH 4,000 footers in winter, as well as discuss nutrition, hydration, body heat.
local community to purchase 36 acres of private property at Rumney for climbing access. The acquisition protected The Meadows, 5.8 Crag, Monsters, and important habitat for nesting raptors and plants. In this signature “hold and transfer” project, Access Fund held the property for a year while RCA volunteers built the main parking lot and trail improvements before transferring it to the US Forest Service (USFS) for long-term protection. Conservation of the Northwest Crags will draw on a similar conservation strategy and comes just a couple months after RCA and the USFS collaborated together to update the 2008 Rumney Climbing Management Plan.

“We are excited to bring this story full circle by supporting RCA’s efforts to secure Rumney’s final frontier,” says Access Fund Executive Director Brady Robinson. “Our acquisition 22 years ago formed a partnership between Access Fund and the newly formed RCA, and we are proud of all they have achieved to protect this New England gem.”

After a year of discussions, RCA, Access Fund, and the Northwest Crags’ landowners agreed to a purchase price of $185,000. Access Fund extended $10,000 of short-term financing from its Climbing Conservation Loan Program to secure the Option Agreement. RCA now has until December of 2016 to raise the necessary funds to complete the purchase.

Once the purchase is complete, RCA will work with White Mountain National Forest on construction of a new parking area and trail system to the Northwest Crags, which will help alleviate crowding at the main parking area and crags. The final phase will be to transfer the property to the USFS for permanent conservation. The USFS, with support from RCA and Access Fund, will seek federal funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, to complete the hold and transfer and match climbers’ donations.

“The White Mountain National Forest is very excited about this acquisition. This property will provide new climbing opportunities,” says Jon Morrissey, District Ranger of the Pemigewasset Ranger District. “We look forward to working together with RCA on this final phase of land protection at Rumney Rocks.”

Many local and professional athletes cut their teeth at Rumney. “My early years as a climber were spent in Rumney,” says professional climber Joe Kinder. “It is what shaped me as a climber today. And it’s why all of us to need to take initiative and help protect areas like Rumney—so future climbers can share the same experience.”

The Rumney Climbers Association is a nationally recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit and represents a large community of climbers with the common goal of preserving the climbing resource located on Rattlesnake Mountain. RCA was formed during the early 1990s when Rumney needed to secure access to critical cliffs. Through collaborative efforts and education, the area.

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Rumney Rocks encompasses approximately 150 acres on the south facing slopes of Rattlesnake Mountain in the WMNF. Scattered across these slopes are approximately 28-rock faces known by the climbing community as “crags”. The 1987 guidebook, Rock Climbs in the White Mountains of New Hampshire by Ed Webster showed 48 published routes. Two decades later, there were more than 480 documented routes, and today, there are an estimated 707 routes, 261 boulder problems and numerous ice routes.

**NH and Boston Chapters lead effort to protect Rumney Rocks**

**BRETT BILLINGS**

The AMC NH Chapter Executive Committee pledged $15,000 during its May meeting to aid the acquisition of 86 acres of privately owned land abutting the Rumney Rocks in the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF). The NH Chapter joins the Boston Chapter’s Mountaineering Committee in supporting the Rumney Climbers Association’s (RCA) Final Frontier capital campaign to secure the land and add six crags to New England’s premier sport-climbing destination.

“Rumney Rocks is one irreplaceable destination for the mountaineering adventurers of the NH-AMC members for climbing outings as well as a prime location for both ice and rock training clinics,” AMC NH Chapter Mountaineering Co-Chair Thomas Sintos said. “It is a wonderful example of AMC, local climbing organization, community, forest service and state partnership that stands as a model for the future of this type of outdoor experience.”

“The purchase and conservation of this Final Frontier goes to the very core of what the AMC is all about,” AMC NH Chapter Chair Bill Warren said. “Those of us involved in the final decision to fund this effort are very enthusiastic. It is an occasion of having the opportunity to provide a benefit directly to our members, especially our mountaineering people.”

Since its founding in the 1990s, the RCA has sought to expand and protect the Rumney Rocks area. RCA activists worked with the Access Fund, a national advocacy organization that works to keep climbing areas open and conserve climbing environments, to buy the land and then sell it to the United State Forest Service (USFS), as well as build the main parking lot and secure future access to the area.

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**Mark Heslin**

Hut Nights are a long-standing tradition for the NH Chapter, and we look forward to a memorable evening at one of our western-most huts. We have reserved a limited number of bunks at a special rate of $98.50 for NH Chapter Members.

On the morning of September 10, you are welcome to join us for a group hike to the hut. Upon arrival, we will check in, select our bunks and unpack our gear. Tripsters will then be free to relax around the hut, or join us for a group hike to the summit of Mount Lafayette (5,260’ elevation).

Built in 1929, Greenleaf Hut (4220’) is located 1.1 miles below the summit of Mount Lafayette. Starting from the Lafayette Place parking area, the most common approach is from the Old Bridal Path Trail (a moderate 2.9 miles, 2.5 hours, 2,450’ elevation gain). For the more adventurous, the Falling Waters trail can be taken to the Franconia Ridge trail, crossing the summits of Little Haystack (4761’), Mount Lincoln (5089’) and Mount Lafayette (5260’), before descending to the hut (a rugged 6.0 miles, 6+ hours, 3,490’ elevation gain).

In late afternoon, we will gather for our traditional wine and cheese “happy hour” on the porch, followed by a hearty dinner prepared and served by the Greenleaf Hut “Croo.” After dinner, we’ll relax with new friends, swap trail stories with our fellow hikers, play card games or read a book before retiring for the evening.

On the morning of September 11, we’ll enjoy breakfast and entertainment by the hut crew before saying goodbye and heading home. **optional**

**Jump Start Your Weekend**

by joining us at the Highland Center on the evening of Friday September 9. We’ll have an afternoon warm-up hike around Ammonoosuc Lake followed by happy hour and dinner in the lodge’s dining room. The Highland Center has a variety of lodging options and we’ve reserved the entire Shapleigh Bunkhouse for our group. If interested, inform the AMC reservations desk when you make your hut night reservation.

**Reserve Your Space for NH Chapter Hut Night**

**How to Reserve Your Space**

1. Call the AMC Reservations Line at (603) 466-2727 (Monday-Saturday, 9 am-5pm).
2. Tell them you are with the NH Chapter September 10 Hut Night (Group Number 292952).
3. You will be asked to provide contact info, food allergy and vegetarian requests.
4. Reservations are first come, first serve and deadline to book is August 27, 2016.
5. Questions? Call Mark Heslin (Hut Night Trip Leader) at (603) 930-6880 (7-9pm).

**Young Members 20s and 30s Group Update**

JAMIE GILLON

The Young Members/20s and 30s Group is very busy this summer thanks to an upswing in volunteers from the group. We recently had three people complete leadership training, and would love to have some more. Additionally, we have seen our recurring social locations grow from two to five in the last year.

The interest for our two June camping trips has been really strong, and they are already at capacity. There is, however, still room on the climbing trip to Rumney on June 25 or the hikes to Cannon on June 25 and Tecumseh on June 26. We’ll be offering two more camping weekends later this summer, Barnes Field in the Northern Whites on August 19-21 and Osceola in the Southern Whites on September 9-11.

Our Wednesday night hiking series had a successful first trip to Piper Mountain. We have room for the upcoming trips to Oak Hill, Mt Rowe and Bear Brook State Park. These hikes take place on the last Wednesday of each month. We also have scheduled socials for June 7 in Portsmouth, June 13 in Concord and should be having one in the Lakes Region toward the end of the month.

Please check out the full listings on outdoors.org to find out trip details and registration.

If you are looking for a way to keep up with our group, we’ve recently launched a meetup page: http://www.meetup.com/AMC-New Hampshire-Young-Members-20s-30s-Group/. We still have the facebook page that we share with the Maine Young Members: https://www.facebook.com/groups/amcmaineyoungmembers/. We also have a monthly blast email through our yahoo group: https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/youngamcnh/info. If you aren’t into social media, you can always find our events on outdoors.org.

If you would like to get involved in the group beyond just participating, please contact one of our co-chairs: Jamie Gillon: jmegillon149@hotmail.com or Ann Hudnall: ahudnall1@gmail.com. We’ll be meeting in July for our next Advisory Board meeting. We’re always looking for new camping organizers, trip leaders and social hosts. We are especially looking for people who may want to lead biking and paddling trips.

We hope to see you at an upcoming event!
Do you own a GPS device but would like some help learning how to use it? Are you hiking un-trailed peaks? Are you working on the New England Hundred Highest? Our September weekend GPS Navigational Workshop may be for you! The GPS workshop is taught by two experienced hikers, bushwhackers and AMC NH Volunteer instructors, Beth Zimmer and Barb Audin.

The Workshop Includes:
- Four weeks of advanced informational emails and phone support so that everyone arrives to the workshop with some basics in place and on the same page; lodging at the beautiful Highland Center in Crawford Notch (bunk style lodging, linens and towels provided); Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast; and maps and handouts.
- Saturday’s session includes: Classroom sessions and light field exercises; map and compass review; GPS Handhelds basics, settings, compass, altimeter, bearing vs. heading, etc.; GPS Use, creating and saving tracks, navigating with the unit; Garmin's Basecamp (computer management of your data and tracks); and planning a hike/bushwhack and uploading it to your handheld device.
- The Sunday session involves a hike/bushwhack to a 3,000-foot peak, where participants will put all of the skills they learned to use. This hike is both trailed and un-trailed (bushwhack), and participants need to be in good hiking shape for this hike.

Workshop Dates: Saturday-Sunday, September 17-18, 2016
Cost: $130 members / $150 non-members
Class size is limited to 12. If you are interested, contact Beth Zimmer at btzimr@gmail.com.
From Gym to Trad!

VALERIO VITI

The AMC NH Chapter is introducing our first rock climbing educational series “From couch to the Nordwand.” Or, with a little less panache and more realism, “From gym to trad!”

The series consists of nine individual classes that began in June, each class addressing a specific topic in rock climbing. Each class is a self-contained, one-day event, so no need to sign up for the entire series: Pick and choose the classes that you are interested in and will benefit you the most. If you are interested in the entire series, kudos to you!

You can also spread it over two climbing seasons. The series is intended to gradually build your rock climbing skills from easy rock climbing scenarios, such as top rope climbing, to more advanced situations and techniques such as multi-pitch climbing and self-rescue.

We will hold the classes in different locations around New Hampshire, and we want to keep the class size to a maximum of ten participants so as not to crowd the cliff and promote good climbing ethics. There is a cost for each class, see below for details.

If you are looking for more information on the individual classes, feel free to contact the instructor directly at the email listed for each event, and if you have any other questions, contact Valerio Viti at valerio.viti@gmail.com.

From Gym to Trad • 2016 New Hampshire AMC Rock Climbing Series

July 9th, 2016, Pawtuckaway, NH
Intro to rock climbing
July 9th, 2016, Pawtuckaway, NH
Michelle and Jen Gross
mpbeadle@aol.com

Saturday, July 23, 2016, Echo, NH
Intro to traditional climbing
Saturday, July 23, 2016, Echo, NH
http://activities.outdoors.org/search/index.cfm/action/details/id/90720&act=7
Cost: $35/45 member/non-member
Jed and Valerio
Valerio.viti@gmail.com

July/Aug 2016, TBD
Advanced anchors class
July/Aug 2016, TBD
Ben and TBD
benmelon@gmail.com

Saturday Aug 27 2016, TBD
Intro to multi-pitch rock climbing
Saturday Aug 27 2016, TBD
Cost: $35/45 member/non-member
Basil and Valerio
alwinholdings@gmail.com

Corrections and Clarifications

In the article titled, Kilimanjaro, in the May-June issue, the second sentence should have read, “…due to the Ebola outbreak.”

Please contact the editors at newsletternh@amc-nh.org with further corrections or clarifications.

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617-523-0636 or
www.outdoors.org/membercenter
‘Mountain Passages’ is only the beginning…

From hiking to biking, AMC’s New Hampshire chapter has it all. Visit our website at amc-nh.org and read more about us and our many year-round events.

management, group emergency/survival gear, trip planning and weather. The goal of the series is to ensure that every graduate has the knowledge to begin safely hiking the 4,000 footers in winter.

The cost of the series is $279 for members which includes two nights lodging at Highland Center with two dinners, two breakfasts, one lunch, a manual and instruction. The opening weekend is October 28 to 30. Hikes are scheduled for November 19, December 3, December 17 and January 7. All hikes are scheduled for Saturdays but could be moved to Sunday if weather warrants a change of date.

The WHS is geared toward those having gathered a considerable amount of experience during the three seasons who now want to push the envelope, just a little, and enjoy a season packed with beauty and excitement for those who are properly prepared. The experienced staff of WHS instructors will impart the knowledge and skills needed to safely hike in winter.

Participants will make incredible friends, meet like-minded people and form a bond with one another, which in some cases, will last for a lifetime.

We urge you to apply today. If accepted, you will be amazed by the camaraderie, fun, challenges and true beauty winter hiking can bring! This series has become quite popular and will fill fast, class size is limited to 24, so don’t miss your chance. Apply early today!

If you are interested, please contact Larry Yetter at Larry@texloom.com or 603-554-8284 for more information and an application.