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News and Notes

Ken Kimball Retires as AMC Research Director

Dr. Ken Kimball worked as research director for the Appalachian Mountain Club starting in 1983. On August 1, 2018, he retired from his position and promptly left for a nine-day backpacking trip in the Teton Wilderness in Wyoming.

Kimball spearheaded AMC's response to the Northern Pass power line proposal from Hydro-Quebec, along with many other projects, such as hydropower dam relicensing, protecting an endangered alpine plant, and expanding AMC's research and conservation ambitions.

He prepared for contentious meetings with a sense of fairness and honor and used science to dissolve personal differences. For me, his perspective demonstrated the wisdom of AMC's moderate stance. By recognizing the



Ken Kimball commuting in to work at AMC's Research Department in Pinkham Notch, at the base of Mount Washington in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

ROB BURBANK

value of hydroelectric power to society, for example, Kimball's integrity and commitment to truth shone through in his hydropower relicensing positions.

Kimball holds a PhD in botany with associated degrees in zoology and ecology. When Kimball arrived, the embryonic AMC Research Department had a staff of one and a half. Today, the research program has five scientists, a cartographer, a research fellow position, and research interns—all of whom give AMC the breadth and capacity to tackle energy project siting and licensing, forest carbon offset markets, Northeastern alpine ecosystems, climate change, mountain air pollution, land and trail corridor protection from Maine to Pennsylvania, and AMC's GIS/GPS cartography capacity for developing AMC's line of recreation maps.

I have known Kimball since 1988 when volunteers started working on the hydropower relicensings on the Deerfield River in Vermont and Massachusetts. Despite my focus on rivers, I think one of Kimball's most impressive achievements is protecting and implementing a recovery plan for Robbins' cinquefoil, *Potentilla robbinsiana*, one of the rarest alpine plants in the world.

Kimball wrote proposals, elaborate plans, and follow-up reports as he oversaw transplanting the rare species to more protected locations in the White Mountain alpine zone. Much of this work had never been attempted before. "This involved not only management issues and transplanting, but also designing and overseeing decades-long studies on this species' biology, genetics, and demographics," Kimball told me. His effort was recognized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Northeast Regional Director's Conservation Award in 2002. The plant was removed from the Endangered Species Act listing in 2002; it is only the second plant to achieve that status. His related research then led to several publications on alpine ecology, global warming, and pollution in mountain air.

Kimball made AMC a leader in hydroelectric dam relicensing and conservation-minded wind power siting in the Northeast. I've witnessed the positive impact of Kimball's work in protecting rivers, riparian corridors, and watershed resources throughout New England. Indeed, I've seen him perform miracles in negotiations.

The results of his work in New England hydropower dam relicensings so far include the following:

- 642 more days of guaranteed whitewater on six New England rivers
- Nearly 50 miles of riverside land protection

- Conservation easements and protection on more than 60,000 acres of land
- More than \$20 million in enhancement funds
- More than \$600,000 for whitewater amenities, such as stairways
- Removal of all barriers to access, including fees

His leadership and negotiating skills have often pulled together disparate interest groups, sometimes seemingly enemies, to focus on the resource and what mitigation might be lost in the name of selfish interest. Slowly and calmly Kimball would find ways to develop common interests. His successful work in protecting rivers has been based on his recognition that “good science and good economics will produce good decisions.”

Kimball argues that rivers are best protected when watersheds and lands are likewise preserved as part of a comprehensive view that encompasses both. To this end, at the AMC Pinkham Notch facility, he managed a staff of scientists, researchers, and cartographers whose task is to protect and, in some cases, acquire land areas that include ponds, wetlands, and streams with high resource values.

Appointed by the governor of New Hampshire, Kimball has been chair of the New Hampshire Rivers Management Advisory Committee, whose task is to set flow standards for rivers within the state. His river conservation efforts have extended to the national stage as one of the founding members of the Hydropower Reform Coalition in Washington, D.C., as a member of the Review Group of the Electric Power Research Institute, and as a founding board member of the Low Impact Hydroelectric Institute.

Kimball received the Andy Falender award from AMC, named for the organization’s previous president and honoring “outstanding and sustained leadership, innovation, contribution, and commitment to AMC’s annual objectives and long-term goals,” and recognizes the award recipient for “the achievement of quantifiable results with clear and measurable impact,” and for “tenacity and an entrepreneurial spirit.” Kimball was specifically recognized for his work in negotiating settlement agreements in federal dam relicensing processes that led to enhancement of recreational opportunities and land conservation, and for his scientific research on climate change, species preservation, and alpine ecology.

Kimball’s most recent achievement was the work he put into AMC’s response to the proposed Northern Pass transmission line, whose massive towers would have bisected 192 miles of New Hampshire from Canada to

Massachusetts, and would have run right through the White Mountain National Forest. Northern Pass generated a blizzard of paperwork. With Kimball's retirement, the conservation community will miss this spokesman for the rivers, alpine zone, and the forests.

—Norman Sims

NORMAN SIMS is a former member of the AMC Board of Directors and co-author of *Canoes: A Natural History in North America* (University of Minnesota Press, 2016). In 2016, he was awarded the AMC lifetime Distinguished Service Award. He lives in Winchester, New Hampshire.

Editor's note: Wildlife and evolutionary biologist (and Appalachia contributor) Mike Jones began work as AMC's new director of research on November 26. Watch our next issue for more.

Appalachian Mountain Club Will Assess Sustainability of Fire Island Cabin

In March 2018, the Appalachian Mountain Club Board of Directors considered and delayed a decision on the proposed sale of AMC's Fire Island Cabin in Atlantique, New York. Over the next five months, the Fire Island Committee worked with the vice president of operations to develop plans for the cabin, with the aim of assessing its sustainability. The Fire Island Committee has also worked closely with the director of volunteer-led camps and briefed the board's Facilities Asset Management Committee.

AMC staff and a representative group of directors visited the cabin last August. This is a further step in AMC's assessment of its facilities (both staff- and volunteer-managed) for their contribution to organizational goals and mission, long-term sustainability, and overall impact. While there are concerns about these issues for Fire Island Cabin, including its limited flexibility in lodging options and access and the threat posed to it by rising seas, there are also many positive considerations, including its proximity to New York City and accessibility by public transportation.

Following this in-person visit, the Board of Directors, FAM Committee, and staff will continue to evaluate the use, impact, and potential of the cabin as part of the AMC mission while engaging in further dialogue with the Fire Island Committee to plan for the cabin's future.

—Appalachian Mountain Club news release

AMC Launches Trail-Running Blog

In March 2018 *AMC Outdoors* magazine launched Running Wild, a new blog on trail running. Marc Chalufour, former AMC senior editor, describes backcountry running routes around the Boston area and New England. His posts have covered Acadia National Park in Maine; the Western Greenway in Belmont, Massachusetts; Arlington's Great Meadows in east Lexington, Massachusetts; the Arlington Reservoir in Arlington and Lexington, Massachusetts; Cape Cod; and more. Check the blog for other articles and keep running: outdoors.org/runningwild.

—Christine Woodside

AMC Celebrates Highlands Conservation Act Renewal and Full Funding

Protecting the places you love just got a lot easier. In March 2018, the U.S. Congress renewed the popular Highlands Conservation Act for seven more years, providing \$10 million this year to fund open space projects in the mid-Atlantic region.

First passed in 2004, the Highlands Conservation Act (HCA) allowed Congress to allocate money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for important land protection efforts in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. When the HCA expired in 2014, the Appalachian Mountain Club led the charge to reauthorize it. Today and at long last, we're proud to see that come to fruition within the passage of the 2018 Omnibus Appropriations Act.

Since the 1990s, AMC has led efforts to protect the Highlands Region, beginning with the fight to save Sterling Forest, which at the time was threatened by an enormous development scheme. After a decade of working to secure the support needed to protect Sterling Forest, AMC then took a leadership role in the Highlands Coalition, where we still serve as the lead force behind a partnership of more than 200 organizations.

With AMC's stalwart support, projects under the HCA have received more than \$47 million of federal LWCF dollars to date and have protected more than 7,000 acres of valuable landscapes across the region.

Besides Sterling Forest, the Mid-Atlantic Highlands include spectacular and popular places such as the Hopewell Big Woods in Pennsylvania,

Allamuchy Mountain in New Jersey, and Bear Mountain in Connecticut. Many such places host the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and often are the first stop for outdoor adventures near more urban centers.

To learn more about AMC's leadership in the Highlands Coalition, visit [outdoors.org/conservation/land-water/policy-priorities](https://www.outdoors.org/conservation/land-water/policy-priorities) and read an oral history of the act's passage and recertification in the Fall 2018 issue of *AMC Outdoors*, at [outdoors.org/hca](https://www.outdoors.org/hca).

—Mark Zakutansky, AMC

Still Missing the Old Man

Perhaps I am the only New Hampshire resident of a certain age who never saw the rocks that formed the jutting chin and the contemplative forehead of the Old Man of the Mountain. My school never took me in a bus, and my early trips to the White Mountains did not take me through Franconia Notch, where I could have looked up and seen it. And yet it still looks out from the backdrop of my driver's license.

May 3, 2018, marked the fifteenth anniversary since the Old Man collapsed. Viewed from the north, the five ledges of the rock formation on Cannon Mountain showed the pensive forehead, narrow nose, and open mouth of a human. The Old Man's legacy as a symbol runs the gamut: license plates and quarters and highway signs, pictorial books, and even the inspiration for a Nathaniel Hawthorne short story published in 1850. The Old Man became the official emblem of the state of New Hampshire in 1945. Vandalizing the Old Man was a criminal misdemeanor. New Hampshire named an official caretaker of the rock formation, state highway worker Niels Nielsen, in 1987 after he had done the job for twenty years. The role fell to his son, David, in 1991, and members of the Nielsen family climbed and rappelled around the face to keep it in place. The Old Man was beloved and valued more than as a rock formation. When it collapsed, after being turnbuckled and shackled and cabled with steel for almost a century, many people mourned. My sister Rachel posted the news article on her door for years.

Profler Plaza, the Old Man memorial in Franconia Notch State Park, was dedicated in June 2011. Visitors can reconnect to the Old Man through "profilers," creative and minimalist metal posts of the Old Man profile designed by Shelly Bradbury and Ron Magers. People of varying heights stand on various marked spots and can view a metal version of the Old Man



Profiler Plaza in Franconia Notch State Park offers this view of the now-gone Old Man of the Mountain. Stand in just the right spot, and the metal sculpture will create the old profile. CHRISTINE WOODSIDE

in line with the cliff where it once jutted out. The memorial plaza was funded almost entirely by private donations.

Fifteen years on, how do people feel? I think about the passing of time and the works of water and rock. I marvel that these mountains are still alive and shifting. Many people, unsurprisingly, mourn every time they look up at the missing face. They wish it could be rebuilt, whether with rock or wood. All of us grieve in our own ways.

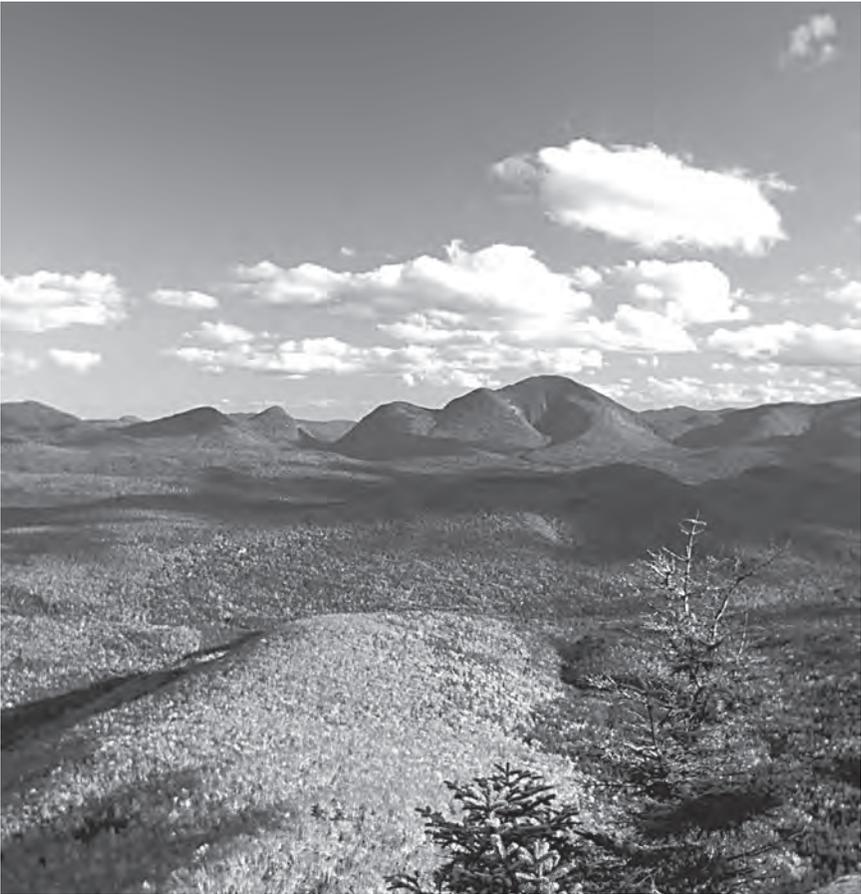
—Sally Manikian, with thanks to Ray Duckler, whose May 3, 2018, article in the Concord Monitor, “15 years later, the death of the N.H.’s Old Man of the Mountain remains painful,” provides much of the background information; and to the Old Man of the Mountain Legacy Fund, oldmanofthemountainlegacyfund.org.

The 4,000-Footers, a Reprise, 46 Years Later

I am making my way out of the Pemigewasset Wilderness in New Hampshire’s White Mountains on a rainy day in June 2017, having climbed one of the more remote mountains on AMC’s New Hampshire Four Thousand Footer Club’s list—Owl’s Head—and having overnighted near the base of the peak. I’ve been hiking in wet boots for 8 miles, but I’m in good spirits. I am getting close to achieving my goal of summiting all 48 peaks on the list, for the second time. I will be 70 years old in a few months. Owl’s Head was number 40.

The hike eerily recalls one I made 46 summers ago, when I completed the 4,000-footers in late August 1971. I had climbed many of the peaks with campers when I worked as a counselor just south of the Whites. At the end of the season, I had just four peaks remaining: Waumbek, Isolation, Owl’s Head, and Garfield. I climbed the first two and then one day set out from the Wilderness trailhead (now Lincoln Woods) to climb the last two. I summited Owl’s Head and then made my way to the Thirteen Falls campsite, from where I intended to climb Mount Garfield, descend to camp, then hike out the following morning. As I reached Thirteen Falls, it started to rain, so I quickly set up my tent, then started the climb up my last peak, not willing to be deterred by the weather, although it seemed to be worsening rapidly.

In fact, the weather worsened *very* rapidly, deteriorating into hard rain and high winds as I emerged from the trees and made my way to my last summit. It was really quite scary; I could barely stay on my feet and couldn’t



The magnificent 4,000-footer Mount Carrigain, seen from Zeacliff in the White Mountain National Forest's Pemigewasset Wilderness.

JERRY AND MARCY MONKMAN/ECOPHOTOGRAPHY

see more than 10 feet as I reached the cairn at the top. Hardly time to linger and enjoy my final peak. I immediately retreated to the trees and began the descent, with the rain now coming down in torrents. I reached my tent at Thirteen Falls and climbed in. I didn't have much to eat that night other than whatever snack food I had in my pack, but as I recall, I slept fairly well despite the rain. However, in the morning the rain had not relented; I packed up my very wet equipment and trudged out the 8 miles to my car. When I turned on the radio, I learned that I had just hiked out through Tropical Storm Doria, passing over New Hampshire at the time.

So, 46 years later, I find myself hiking out the same trail, in the rain, having climbed Owl's Head once again. But I haven't yet climbed everything on the 4,000-footer list at least twice.

Why climb all these peaks for a second time? I don't think I need to explain to lovers of the Whites why I enjoy hiking these mountains. Whether it's the ruggedness of the trails, the thrill of ascending peaks through the forest, subalpine, and alpine zones and reaching the summits, the changeable weather conditions, the views (sometimes!), the thrill of hearing the call of the white-throated sparrow in the subalpine county, the fresh air, the exercise—we all have our reasons. But I find that another applies as I near my milestone birthday. These climbs remind me of class reunions, only this time the old friends are summits or trails that conjure up memories of hikes long ago. Mount Garfield was exceptional in this regard, but do I remember the hiking conditions? My hiking partners? In some places, lean-to shelters have been removed, or replaced by tent platforms. Can I spot the exact locations?



Jon Kaplan enjoys a perfect summit day on Mount Osceola. COURTESY OF JON KAPLAN

Another nice feature of my recent climbs: Since I have ascended the Presidentials and Franconias many times over the years, my focus now is on the smaller, less-traveled peaks, which I have not climbed in many years. They offer more solitude and require less from my legs and lungs as I near the end of my seventh decade. It's a lot easier to climb a 4,000- than a 5,000- or a 6,000-footer at this age!

I had never intended to repeat what I had accomplished in the summer of 1971. But various visits to New Hampshire with my wife, Linda, to visit our two daughters and a college friend and his wife who own a summer home in the Whites have resulted in climbing many of the peaks for a second (or third, or fourth) time. Several years ago I realized that I had climbed half of the peaks at least twice. I listed a few that I wanted to climb again, which I went about climbing with Linda and my friends over the ensuing summers. But it wasn't until I reached number 30 a couple of years ago that I thought I should try to complete the list.

Repeating these climbs as I approach my 70th birthday requires some caution and judgment, which I apparently had less of 46 years ago at the age of 23. Do I remember hearing a weather forecast as I entered the Pemi for the last hike that summer? What about the stream crossings of Franconia and Lincoln Brooks, which can be dangerous in high-water conditions? On my hike 46 years ago, I really don't remember the crossings, although they were likely inconsequential on the day I hiked in, before the rain started.

On yesterday's hike, I changed into water shoes for one of the crossings, but otherwise hiked in dry boots for the remainder of the day. But last night it rained, was still raining when I awoke and broke camp this morning, and I have just waded the streams in my boots all the way out. I probably feel somewhat like I felt 46 years ago on this same trail.

I am now at number 40 and will not be able to complete the peaks in the week I have in the mountains, before I return to my home in Georgia in a few days. I will have to be patient; I may have to wait until next summer. In a way, it doesn't matter. I'm in no hurry.

—Jon Kaplan

Editor's note: Since he wrote this, Jon Kaplan has finished the 4,000-footers in New Hampshire for a second time. He celebrated by ascending Mount Carrigain (for the third time).