



AAC Publications

STRANDED – Off Route

New Hampshire, Cannon Cliff

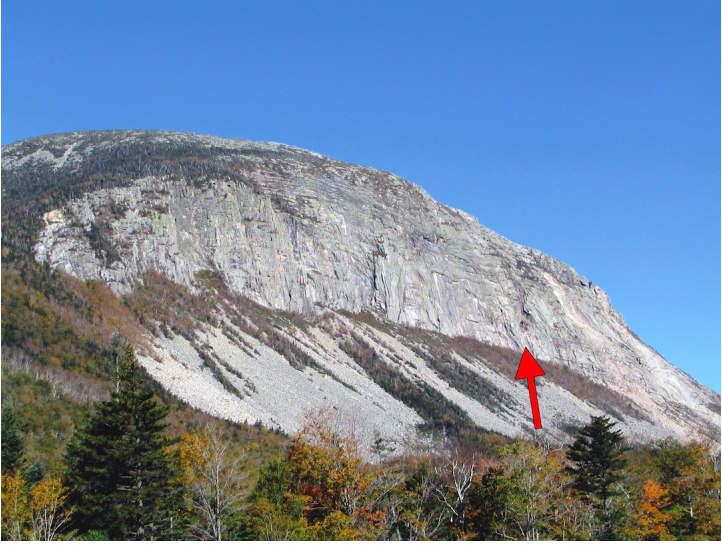
On Saturday, June 25, WD (male, 28) and GT (male, 27) were climbing Moby Grape (7 pitches, 5.8 PG-13). They got off route near the top of the climb when attempting to bypass a slab section. After an unsuccessful attempt to self-rescue, the party called 911 at 9:15 p.m., requesting assistance.

New Hampshire Conservation Officers and a member of the Pemigewasset Valley Search and Rescue Team (PVSART) responded. They hiked up the climber descent path to locate and establish an anchor point above the stranded climbers. The PVSART member descended by rappel to reach the climbers, and the party then ascended the rappel rope back up to the anchor point. The climbers and responders walked down and reached the base without injury by 3:50 a.m.

ANALYSIS

Although Moby Grape is very popular and well described in guidebooks and online, it is not unusual to get off route. In particular, the top pitch is a slab with discontinuous sections of scrambling and short sequences of 5.8. Text descriptions of terrain like this can be hard to follow. A paper or digital copy of a photo showing the line of the route drawn against the rock features is helpful. Given the length of its routes, complex terrain, and loose rock, Cannon is a good cliff to allow extra time and caution, **regardless of the technical grade.** (Source: Officer James Cyrs, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.)

Images



Cannon Cliff with the start of Moby Grape marked. Carrying a detailed photo showing the line of ascent could have helped the party avoid getting lost.

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