



AAC Publications

Stranded — No Equipment, Off Route

New York, Adirondacks, Mt. Colden

The Trap Dike starts in a dike gully (pictured here) before exiting onto a slab leading to the summit of Mt. Colden. This popular route, part scramble and part technical climb, has been the scene of many rescues. Photo: NY State Dept. of Environmental Conservation.

On October 12, dispatch received a call from two climbers on the Trap Dike. The pair was unable to move due to steep rock and wet conditions. New York State Police Aviation was called to fly three forest rangers to the location to perform a technical rope rescue. It was too wet and unsafe to rescue the pair from below, so rangers climbed to the top of the dike and rappelled down to the subjects.

At 5:30 p.m., rescuers reached the two scramblers who were from Québec. After the climbers were secured, they were lowered. Rangers warmed and fed them, took the pair across the lake by boat, and hiked with them to Marcy Dam. The subjects reached their vehicles at the trailhead at 2:45 a.m.

ANALYSIS

The Trap Dike is a 2,000-foot-long moderate climb with a 30-foot technical rock step near a waterfall. In winter the route becomes a technical ice and snow climb. It is the scene of recurring rescues when scramblers exit the 4th-class dike too early and end up stranded on 5th-class slabs. Typically, the people who are stranded do not self-identify as climbers. However, in this case the two subjects (male, 42, and female, 43) were climbers but had not intended to do a technical route and thus had no equipment. (Source: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.)

Images



The Trap Dike starts in a dike gully (pictured here) before exiting onto a slab leading to the summit of Mt. Colden. This popular route, part scramble and part technical climb, has been the scene of many rescues over the years.

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