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AMC Research Receives National Conservation Award

The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) recently received the prestigious Achievement in Publications Award from the Natural Resources Council of America (NRCA) for its report titled "An Ecological Atlas of the Upper Androscoggin River Watershed," authored by AMC Senior Scientist and Assistant Director of Research Dr. David Publicover.

Publicover and AMC Executive Director Andrew Falender attended the NRCA's 19th Annual Conservation Community Award Banquet in Washington, D.C., to accept the award Sept. 17.

"The AMC bases its conservation policy initiatives on sound science," said Falender. "It's exciting to see the efforts of our dedicated research staff recognized by experts in the field."

The NRCA was created in 1946 as an association for the leaders of a growing movement of nonprofit organizations dedicated to conservation and sustainable management of the Earth's natural resources.

The 88-page ecological atlas, released in February 2003, presents a history and detailed description of the natural landscape of the watershed upstream of the confluence of the Androscoggin and Webb rivers in Dixfield, Maine.

"The AMC developed this atlas to provide an educational resource and planning tool for those with an interest in the area, both to help people understand the landscape and to help foster a 'sense of place' based on natural rather than political boundaries," Publicover explained.

"The upper Androscoggin watershed is a magnificent place. It encompasses the rich and complex story of the Northern Forest -- its ecological character, its history, and the social and economic pressures facing the region. It is a place where people embrace the past, but where citizens are coming together to build a future based around sustainable use of the natural landscape," said Publicover, noting the formation of the Androscoggin River Watershed Council as an example.

The atlas's 20 chapters and 35 full-color maps cover the ecological characteristics of the region (including geology, soils, vegetation, wetlands, lakes, rivers, and wildlife), human impacts (such as dams and timber harvesting), land-use history, and land conservation. Information is presented on a wide range of topics, including old-growth forests, the development of bogs, extirpated wildlife (wolf, cougar and caribou), and soil development. A detailed appendix provides information about many sources of additional information for those wishing to pursue specific topics in more detail.

The atlas is available on CD-ROM. A limited number of printed copies are also available. To obtain a copy of the atlas, please contact Dr. Publicover at (603) 466-2721, ext. 200, or via email at dpublicover@amcinfo.org. Information about the AMC is available at www.outdoors.org.

Founded in 1876, the Appalachian Mountain Club is the oldest conservation and recreation organization in the United States. With more than 90,000 members in the Northeast and beyond, the AMC promotes the protection, enjoyment, and wise use of the mountains, rivers, and trails of the Appalachian region.

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