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The Potomac Mountain Club

Formerly the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club - Mountaineering Section

(Note: This is a temporary transitional logo)

New Year - New Club

Welcome to The Potomac Mountain Club! That's right, we have a new name (sorta) as we are now a fully independent club as of January 1st.

Throughout 2025, the leadership of PATC and our section (now club) had many discussions about the needs of each organization as part of the regular recertification process. This discussion was not new. As the oldest section, Mountaineering was a cornerstone of PATC throughout its history. Similar to Ski Touring, the section was highly autonomous for a long time with a vibrant culture promoting safety in all manner of climbing. As climbing has become a mainstream sport, the popularity of the Mountaineering section has grown. Rock climbing is inherently dangerous, no matter how much safety is practiced, PATC was not equipped organizationally to handle such a large community engaged in such activities. Simply put, the needs of the community grew apart. While our legal ties are changing, our friendship is not. We are finalizing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to memorialize our continued partnerships. On December 18th, ExCom formed the Potomac Mountain Club, Inc. as a tax-exempt non-stock corporation in Maryland. On January 1st, PATC decertified the PATC-MS.

So what does this mean for you? Nothing for right now. The first thing ExCom did was grandfather all members of PATC-MS into the PMC, honoring everyone's membership renewal date. ExCom is rapidly working to transition financial operations etc., and have established agreements with PATC to ensure a smooth transition. As part of establishing fully independent operations, the PMC will have some moderate additional liabilities.

New Roles

One of the key changes coming to the club is an expanded coordinators structure. While several members have already been recruited to support the clubs operations, there is more than enough work to go around: Membership coordination, communications, gear, events, external relations, elections, grievance, and some interests specific groups (Trad, MCon, Women & Gender Expansive, etc.). If you are interested in supporting these efforts, let ExCom know.

Logo

As part of establishing the club, we are taking this time to revamp our logo. ExCom invites all of our graphically inclined members to submit none-AI generated ideas. While we would like to establish a new logo sooner than later, we want to make sure the club doesn't rush into a new design. The logo used above is meant to help us transition from PATC-MS. If or when we have multiple qualified designs, ExCom intends to solicit membership feedback. Carol Clayton has generously offered to collect member submissions. Email her at carolclayton@gmail.com with the subject PMC Logo

Gear Locker

In 2025, we modernized our gear managed system, which allowed us to confidently replace some worn out expensive gear. The club now uses GearLog to manage gear reservations so that it will be available for your next adventure. GearLog does NOT automatically notify the Gear Meisters when you reserve items. You must complete all steps below to receive gear.

How to Request Gear

- Create/login to your Gearlog account
- Reserve the gear for your trip dates in GearLog
- Email gearmeister@potomacmountainclub.org to schedule pickup
- A Gear Meister will reply to confirm and arrange pickup.

Reservations without an email will not be seen.

Insurance

A somewhat perineal issue, the question of insurance and risk was a critical issue underlying the separation from PATC. During the year, ExCom, with the support of membership, researched many climbing organizations throughout the country. While not yet settled, our research uncovered viable solutions to cover the exact concerns raised by the club members organizing, leading, and participating in our outings. We have quotes in with underwriters and expect that our 2026 adventures and beyond will have a level of coverage we never clearly had while we were a section of PATC.

Waiver

Relatedly, ExCom has updated the waiver as part of establishing the new club. With the amazing assistance of our volunteer IT support, we have a new automated process on the website for collecting and managing waivers. Everyone will need to sign the new waiver, so please be sure to log into the website soonest to sign the waiver so that you aren't slowed down while registering when the next trips get posted.

Membership Types and Dues

As previewed last year in our members survey, becoming an independent club will increase our annual outlays. At the same time, the club has not increased dues in many years, let alone update the membership structure. Given the overwhelming feedback received during the annual meeting, ExCom will be developing a new membership dues schedule to reflect these new realities. Any dues increase will be published in advance and will be applied at time of renewal.

Sunday Meet Ups

We haven't had the warmest winter, but that doesn't mean you can't get in your sends and keep training for the 2026 season. Join us every Sunday at 10am at the Sportrock Rio facility. This is a no-host event, but be sure to sign in at the front desk and wear your vintage club shirts!

Trip Update: DAKS

While it might have been too cold for most of us, it wasn't cold enough for some of our members who decided to head north in the search for ice and snow on our annual Adirondacks ice-climbing weekend. Twenty-seven club members made the long drive to reach our palatial accommodation at Rock and River in Keene, New York. Ice conditions were good, weather was reasonable, and there weren't as many other climbers as there have been in earlier years. Over the weekend, club members made ascents of various classics at Chapel Pond and The Cascade Pass. Some members new to ice climbing arranged guide services. On the non climbing front, conditions were also great for ski touring and snowshoeing with some touring at Wright Peak and snowshoeing directly from Rock and River to Pitchoff Mountain.

And of course there was the Sunday evening pot luck! We've already reserved our accommodation with Rock and River for MLK 2027.

