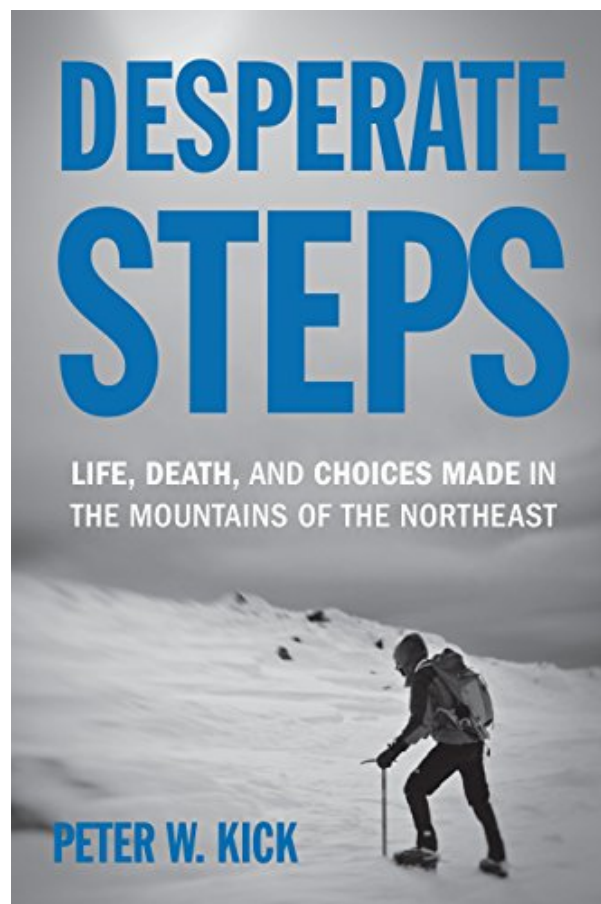


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# DESPERATE STEPS

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## About the Author

Peter W. Kick is a native of the Catskill Mountains, is a New York State licensed guide, and author of several hiking and cycling guides. His previous books with AMC include *AMC Catskill Mountain Guide*, *AMC's Best Day Hikes in the Catskills & Hudson Valley*, and *Discover the Adirondacks*. Kick's work has also appeared in *Backpacker*, *Sailing*, *Cruising World*, and *Adirondack Life*. He is a life member of AMC and an AMC trip leader. He lives in Saugerties, New York.

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## **PDF**

In the backcountry, a single piece of gear could mean the difference between a comfortable night under the stars and a harrowing tale to tell once you're home. Or it could mean that you don't make it home at all.

In this all-new collection from the publisher of *Not Without Peril* and *No Limits But the Sky*, author Peter W. Kick recounts twenty true tales of backcountry misadventure and misfortune, including incidents along the famed Appalachian Trail, and seeks the lessons learned in each. From close-calls to unsolved mysteries, these stories illuminate the realities faced by outdoorspeople across the Northeast. Weather is unpredictable. The best laid plans go awry. And in the worst of times, even the best decision may not be enough to turn the tides.

In the tradition of *Appalachia* journal's renowned "Accidents" section, Kick reports on the facts as they were known on the ground?with the help of first-hand accounts of victims, families, witnesses, and Search-and-Rescue professionals. As each story unfolds, Kick and his sources in the SAR community offer a retrospective analysis to help readers discover for themselves what went wrong and how disasters, big and small, might be averted in the future. Route maps and photos further bring each misadventure to life. Readers who immerse themselves in these near misses, methodical searches, and the gut-wrenching clarity of hindsight will be better prepared for whatever the wilderness brings.

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Terrific, especially if one learns some lessons on preparations ...

By Whenever, Wherever

Terrific, especially if one learns some lessons on preparations and actual hiking. I was hiking on Mt Katahdin in the summer of 1963. We met the Ranger stationed there. He was a terrific guy, who needlessly died because a woman didn't have the sense to stay on the trail. He couldn't save her, got caught in a blizzard, and just sat down and died after his futile efforts. I am so glad there are now fines and expected payments from those who disregard all the warnings, (see 2d story), and bring out a dozen others in a horrendous storm, and then do NOT even make a contribution for the efforts of these wonderful guides.

These stories make everything real, and can promote good habits. I became a Girl Scout leader, a Den Mother and was very careful with my own family, after reading of "our" Ranger back in 1963.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

The first chapter was published in the Appalachian Mountain Club ...

By E. Briggs

The first chapter was published in the Appalachian Mountain Club magazine, and it was so compelling that I purchased the book. As another reviewer stated, every chapter is riveting. I'm a search and rescue volunteer, and appreciated the in-depth analysis of how each mishap occurred, what the search and rescue response entailed, and lessons learned. The book clearly required a major investment of time and energy to thoroughly research each incident. A must-read for anyone who enjoys wilderness pursuits.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Highly recommend for any outdoors person

By M

I'm an AMC Lifetime member, avid trail runner, cyclist, skier, etc. and absolutely \*loved\* this book.

While the majority of stories are quite tragic the author does a very nice job analyzing the variables that factored into the circumstances whether human error or uncontrollable. Some of the stories were downright chilling, whether it's a group of close friends sacrificing their lives to save one another or a hiking being knocked out in Tuckerman Ravine and sliding into a crevasse (particularly since I happened to be there the following weekend). What's most surprising about the victims is that most of them had above-average outdoor experience. They generally weren't rookies overdoing it for the first time but people who might have been unprepared for bad luck or unintentionally made a bad decision.

The authors use of maps for most stories was very helpful and I found myself flipping back and forth between the pages to reference back to the maps as I read. I'm not a particularly fast reader but was able to finish it over the course of 4-5 sessions of reading.

I would strongly recommend this book for any AMC member, New England outdoors-person, or weekend warrior as an engaging, educational, and humbling read. The book was sobering / motivating enough that I actually bought a personal locator beacon (PLB) on Amazon halfway through the book:  
<http://amzn.to/1ojf5MR>

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