

THE AMERICAN ALPINE CLUB



June 1, 2019

To AAC Members and the Climbing Community,

Since my early days of climbing in Tulsa's Chandler Park, I have climbed on every sort of terrain and all over the world. Throughout my time in the mountains, I have witnessed more extreme mountain weather, retreating glaciers, and increased danger from avalanches, rockfall and mudslides. You'll see in our upcoming American Alpine Journal (AAJ), Accidents in North American Mountaineering, and throughout the pages of the news, that climbers are witnessing unexpected hazards affected by the changing climate in the mountains. Whether you boulder, sport climb or spend your time in the high alpine, climate change is one of the greatest threats to our sport, our lives, and our planet.

Around the world, mountain regions are warming at roughly twice the pace of the global average. I'm concerned by how this rapid warming trend will impact all of us. Our members are concerned too— of the 4,500+ climbers we surveyed this spring, 94% believe that climate change poses a risk to the places we climb and ski. The vast majority believe that climate change is happening mainly because of human activities. At the Club, we are especially concerned about how a changing climate disproportionately impacts poor and marginalized communities.

With the guidance of our Climate Task Force (which is comprised of climbers who are internationally recognized climate experts), the American Alpine Club is asking our federal, state and local governments to limit greenhouse gas emissions and to mitigate the causes of climate change. We are also making internal commitments to curb our own climate impacts, to increase funding for climate policy research and advocacy efforts and to enable individual climbers to make good choices as they plan trips and expeditions.

You can find out more about what we're doing on our climate webpage. There you'll see our policy position statement, stories from climbers about their experiences with climate change around the world, additional survey data and opportunities to get involved.

It is clear to me and our team at the American Alpine Club that the voice of the climbing community is critically important in today's environmental and social efforts. I'm proud to be part of a committed group of people who are advocating for the health and sustainability of mountain environments, the ecosystems that house them, and the planet as a whole. We stand ready to do more to address climate change and we hope that you'll join us; together, we're stronger.

Sincerely,



Phil Powers, CEO American Alpine Club