1) **Fellowship Summary**

This proposes a process to award Fellow status to select Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group (AMRG) members. This would recognize a combination of:

a) length of service as an AMRG member, and

b) service to AMRG
   i) in internal leadership roles,
   ii) in relations or service to our parent organizations (ASRC and MRA), or
   iii) in relations to affiliated external organizations (e.g., regional public safety, National Cave Rescue Commission, regional or state SAR councils or associations).

2) **Reasoning**

   a) Some AMRG members have served long periods in leadership roles with a heavy administrative load. At some point, such members tend to move out of their formal leadership roles, adopting a less formal mentoring role. Fellowship provides a method for recognizing this continuing service and the members’ prior leadership contributions.

   b) We anticipate that such a formal program will encourage administrative leaders to participate fully in the AMRG leadership transition program, by providing recognition of their ongoing mentoring role. This should help prevent burnout in our more experienced members.

3) **Background: AMRG Leadership Transition**

   In 2014-15, to deepen the leadership pool, and to prevent administrative burnout, the AMRG Board of Directors implemented a leadership transition process.

   a) Every Officer position will have a designated Assistant Officer.

   b) The assistant will serve as an understudy, ready to assume the Officer role should the Officer become unable partially or completely unable to continue the duties of the office.

   c) The assistant will also serve as officer-elect, with the expectation of assuming the full officer position, generally within a year or so of “apprenticeship” in the assistant position.

4) **Background: Emeritus and Fellowship**

   a) To fit our needs, we can look at two common models in the academic and medical fields: Emeritus status and Fellowship.

   i) Emeritus status is primarily for those who are at the end of a distinguished career, and are allowed to continue to use their academic title (e.g., “Professor Emeritus of History”) and given a pension.

   ii) Fellowship seems more appropriate than Emeritus for our needs. We might want to provide an “emeritus” retired honorary membership for those who are no longer active, but that’s not the primary focus of this proposal.

   iii) The concept of Fellowship is described in some detail in the Wikipedia section entitled “Fellow.” Reading that will provide some background for the following discussion.

b) **Medical College Fellows**

   i) Wikipedia doesn’t currently mention the difference between the British and American medical models of fellowship in specialty societies/colleges, which is relevant to our discussion.

   ii) With most specialty society/college Fellowships, the Fellowships are awarded primarily to those who are still actively practicing in the specialty. Some specialty societies/colleges also have a retired category, and an honorary category, both with reduced or no dues.

   iii) Most specialty societies/colleges offer Fellowships only to members, but a few offer at least honorary Fellowships to distinguished non-members who have contributed to the medical specialty.

   iv) **British Medical College Model**

   This is provided to avoid confusion between the British and American medical college models.

   (1) To become a member of one of the British Colleges (for instance, the Royal College of Physicians), the following steps are required:

   a) Complete a medical degree from an approved medical school.

   b) Complete a residency program in a specialty field (e.g., emergency medicine).

   c) Complete additional training as required by the specialty college.

   d) Pass a written and oral examination administered by the specialty college.

   e) Gain an approved number of years of experience in the specialty.

   f) Complete a term of service (e.g., one year) in a leadership role within the specialty college.

   g) Complete a period of continuing education and maintenance of certification.

   1 This is quite distinct from the postgraduate medical training fellowship, for instance Jerry Escajeda who worked with us during the recent AMRG Kane Woods exercise. A postgraduate medical fellow has completed medical school, has completed residency in a medical specialty such as emergency medicine so as to be eligible for board certification in that specialty, and is serving another year or two in a subspecialty training program to be eligible for board certification in the subspecialty. For example, EMS is a subspecialty of emergency medicine.
of Physicians (RCP), London, or the RCP, Edinburgh), an applicant has to complete medical school and postgraduate training and then pass a (very hard) exam. Those who complete this process become members and can put "MRCP" (member of the Royal College of Physicians) after their name.

(2) Members of one of the Colleges may also be elected to Fellowship, and use FRCP after their names. FRCP is awarded only for significant achievement in the field, and is considered quite prestigious.

(3) The Royal Colleges of Surgeons (there are three: London, Glasgow and Edinburgh) are different; both MRCS and FRCS require an examination and are considered certifications rather than FRCP which is basically an honorary degree.

v) American Medical College Model

American medical specialty societies/colleges handle Fellowship quite differently than the British.

(1) For example, the American College of Emergency Physicians allows anyone who is certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine (a totally separate organization) to join.

(a) Unlike the British model, the certification exam and membership are separate.

(b) There is no other tie between ABEM certification and ACEP membership.

(c) ACEP offers Fellowship essentially as an honorary degree.

(d) If you are chosen for fellowship, you can use FACEP after your name, such as: Keith Conover, M.D., FACEP.

(2) Here are the requirements to become a Fellow of ACEP. Fellows of the College shall meet the following criteria:

(a) Be active, life, honorary, or international members for three continuous years immediately prior to election and must have been certified in emergency medicine at the time of election by the American Board of Emergency Medicine, the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine, or in pediatric emergency medicine by the American Board of Pediatrics. Maintenance of Fellow status requires continued membership in the College. In addition, the following requirements demonstrating evidence of high professional standing must be met by candidates some time during their professional career prior to application. At least three years of active involvement in emergency medicine as the physician’s chief professional activity, exclusive of training, and:

Satisfaction of at least three of the following individual criteria during their professional career: active involvement, beyond holding membership, in voluntary health organizations, organized medical societies, or voluntary community health planning activities or service as an elected or appointed public official; active involvement in hospital affairs, such as medical staff committees, as attested by the emergency department director or chief of staff; active involvement in the formal teaching of emergency medicine to physicians, nurses, medical students, out-of-hospital care personnel, or the public; active involvement in emergency medicine administration or departmental affairs; active involvement in an emergency medical services system; research in emergency medicine; active involvement in ACEP chapter activities as attested by the chapter president or chapter executive director; member of a national ACEP committee, the ACEP Council, or national Board of Directors; examiner for, director of, or involvement in test development and/or administration for the American Board of Emergency Medicine or the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine; reviewer for or editor or listed author of a published scientific article or reference material in the field of emergency medicine in a recognized journal or book.

(b) Provision of documentation of the satisfaction of the above criteria is the responsibility of the candidate and determination of the satisfaction of
these criteria shall be by the Board of Directors of ACEP or its designee. Fellows shall be authorized to use the letters FACEP in conjunction with professional activities. Fees, procedures for election, and reasons for termination of Fellows shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

c) The American medical specialty college system seems most appropriate for AMRG. The following proposal is based on the ACEP Fellowship model.

5) AMRG Fellowship Proposal

a) We will offer an honorific: FAMRG (Fellow of the Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group). We will suggest to the ASRC Board of Directors that they consider a similar honorific at the ASRC level: FASRC.

b) To be considered for FAMRG status, a member must:
   i) Be an Active Member of AMRG for a minimum of ten continuous years immediately prior to election and must be certified as a Field Team Leader (FTL) at the time of election.
   ii) The following requirements, demonstrating evidence of high standing in AMRG and the affiliated SAR community in general, must be met by the candidate at some time during his or her AMRG membership, prior to application.
   iii) Satisfaction of at least three of the following individual criteria during the member’s tenure with AMRG:

   1. active involvement, beyond holding membership, in voluntary SAR organizations, organized SAR societies, or emergency planning activities or service as an elected or appointed public official in a SAR-related capacity;

   2. active involvement in the affair of AMRG-affiliated organizations, such as serving as a Delegate, Officer or Board of Directors member of the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference, the Mountain Rescue Association, or the Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council, or a teaching staff or instructor appointment with Eastern Region, National Cave Rescue Commission as attested by AMRG or ER-NCRC records;

   3. extensive active involvement in the formal teaching of search and rescue or preventative search and rescue (e.g., Hug-a-tree) to AMRG members or others;

   4. extensive active involvement in the administrative activities of AMRG, such as serving as an Officer, Committee Chair, or Board of Directors member;

   5. active involvement in preventative search and rescue such as teaching Hug-a-Tree;

   6. research in search and rescue;

   7. serving as reviewer for or editor or listed author of a published scientific article or reference material in the field of search and rescue or in a recognized journal or book.

c) In recognition of AMRG Fellow status, members may use “FAMRG” after their names.

d) Maintenance of AMRG Fellow status.

   i) Maintenance of active AMRG Fellow status requires continued membership in AMRG.

   ii) AMRG fellows who retire from AMRG with AMRG Fellow status shall be changed to Sustaining Member status. Retired Fellows shall not be considered members of AMRG for rosters, shall have no right to vote in AMRG, and shall pay no dues. Retired AMRG Fellows may use “FAMRG (Ret.)” after their names.

e) Nominations for FAMRG status shall be submitted to the Group Training Officer with written supporting documentation, which shall be retained in the AMRG records.

   i) Nominations for AMRG Fellow status may be made by any AMRG member. Nominations are encouraged to include a narrative detailing the nominee’s experience, accomplishments, and achievements.

   ii) Nominations shall be reviewed by the Group Training Officer. The GTO may request additional documentation to support the application.

   iii) The GTO shall examine the nomination and make a positive or negative recommendation to the AMRG Board of Directors.

   1. The Board of Directors shall consider the nomination.

   2. Nominations that obtain a positive vote by the BOD shall be submitted to the Membership for vote at the next regularly scheduled business meeting.

   3. Nominations that do not obtain a positive vote by the BOD shall be returned to the GTO to return to the member submitting the nomination.

   iv) The Group Training Officer may provide a certificate to the Fellow, which contains at a
minimum:
(1) the full name of the Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group;
(2) the AMRG logo;
(3) the name of the member granted the Fellow status;
(4) the date of the Fellowship vote; and
(5) the signature of the Group Training Officer and Commander.