

SNOW INDUSTRY bulletin

exciting CHANGES for skiers in the west

Excerpted from *saminfo.com*

Ski Season Numbers

The National Ski Areas Association's has reported that U.S. skier visits for the 2013–14 season reached 56.2 million, a decline of 1.3 percent from last season and below the 10-year average of 57.3 million. The severe drought on the West Coast resulted in a drought of ski days as well.



photo courtesy Crystal Mountain

Crystal Mountain Avalanche

The bottom of the Crystal Mountain High Campbell chairlift was taken out by a large avalanche March 10, 2014. The area was closed and nobody was hurt. The avalanche was triggered by an explosive set by ski patrol at around 4:45 PM.

Idaho Updates Its Skier's Act

In an effort to reflect the changing landscape of the mountain resorts, Idaho is the latest state to update its bill that oversees ski areas.

The update expanded the skiing language to include snowboarding and other sliding devices. It also expanded uphill transportation to include wire ropes and conveyors.

New language regarding inherent risks was added in order to include, among others, avalanches, tree wells, snow-making mounds and freestyle terrain.

USFS New Summer Policy

The U.S. Forest Service has finalized policy guidelines that will open opportunities for ski areas to develop and offer a variety of year-round recreation activities on the National Forests. The revised directives stem from the Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act of 2011.

The guidelines will be used by agency administrators to determine which summer recreation activities and associated facilities will be allowed on ski areas operating on national forests. There are 122 ski areas on nearly 180,000 acres of public land administered by the Forest Service.

The guidelines also address the types of facilities that will be permitted, as well as management of other recreational uses within the operational boundary of ski areas by the non-paying public, such as snowshoeing and hiking.

The Act specifically includes ziplines, mountain bike terrain parks and trails, disc golf courses and rope courses. The Act requires that new activities are natural resource-based that encourage outdoor recreation & enjoyment of nature.

Vail Resorts was among the first to develop plans to put the Act into practice. ■

Bass sells majority SNOWBIRD

Texas oilman Dick Bass announced that he has sold his majority interest in the Little Cottonwood Canyon resort to Ian Cumming, a businessman whose family owns Park City Mountain Resort (PCMR). The price and terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Bass, who will remain chairman of Snowbird's board, said in a news release he was pleased that his family and Cumming's could join together to direct the resort's future development, including the long-discussed and highly controversial plan to build a restaurant around the Tram terminal atop Hidden Peak.

How the purchase of Snowbird by the Cumming family — but not by Powdr Corp. — impacts the PCMR-Canyons litigation remains unclear.

Last May, Talisker Corp. brought in Vail Resorts to run Canyons Resort and to take over the lead in a high-profile lawsuit against PCMR's parent company, Powdr Corp., that could result in PCMR losing access to most of its mountainside. ■



photo courtesy Brian Head Resort

With nearly two full seasons under its belt, the new ownership group at Brian Head Resort has decided to take the plunge and install a new high-speed detachable quad to replace the 4,840-foot long Giant Steps triple chair.