

Sugarloaf Announces Expansion and Development Plan

Carrabassett Valley, ME – A longtime dream for many Sugarloafers became a reality on Tuesday, when officials at Sugarloaf announced a massive terrain expansion onto Burnt Mountain, the resort's neighboring peak. Sugarloaf also unveiled a comprehensive, ten-year vision for development at the resort, called Sugarloaf 2020.

Stephen Kircher, President of Boyne East, joined Sugarloaf General Manager John Diller in making the announcement on Tuesday. In attendance were several local business leaders and Maine tourism officials.

The terrain expansion to Burnt Mountain was the centerpiece of today's announcement, and will create up to 270 acres of new terrain for the upcoming season, and 655 new acres when the entire project is complete. This will double Sugarloaf's current skiable acreage and make it the largest ski area east of the Rocky Mountains.

The new terrain will all be gladed, "sidecountry" terrain, offering skiers and riders a one-of-a-kind backcountry-style experience, with the security of patrolled, inbounds terrain. A glade refers to any wooded area where trees have been thinned, rather than cleared like a traditional trail. The expansion will be completed in three phases, the first of which will be the 270 acre "Brackett Basin" area, which will begin to open during the upcoming season. The second phase will encompass 135 acres, including the summit of Burnt Mountain, and will open a second above-treeline area to accompany Sugarloaf's legendary Snowfields™. The third and final phase will be 250 acres, and will open the north face of Burnt Mountain. When the expansion is complete, skiers will enjoy a vast, 655 acre glade and an experience unlike anything else in the East.

Access to the new terrain on Burnt Mountain will be via a cross-cut from the top of the existing King Pine Quad. At this time there are no plans to install lifts on Burnt Mountain, thus preserving the backcountry-style, wilderness experience. The new terrain will feature different styles of terrain, from tight, steep eastern tree skiing, to wide open western style glades, to cliff bands and more. With an entire mountain to explore, skiers will experience quiet solitude in the vast wilderness area, providing the sensation of a true backcountry experience, similar to what one would expect at a large western resort.

"This is really a revolutionary type of ski area expansion, and uniquely Sugarloaf," Diller said. "No grooming, no snowmaking, no real estate - just pure skiing, which is what we think the core Sugarloaf skiers and riders are ultimately looking for."

Although the Burnt Mountain expansion was the biggest piece of today's announcement, officials also unveiled a new, comprehensive ten-year vision for the resort, called Sugarloaf 2020. The vision outlines future plans for capital improvements at the resort, including new chairlifts, huge upgrades to the resort's snowmaking system, base lodge and facility improvements, as well as plans for summertime offerings including the popular new zip lines, which were installed this summer.

Renovations to the exterior of the Sugarloaf Base Lodge are currently underway, as are several snowmaking improvements, including over 600 feet of new snowmaking lines to key areas such as Lombard Crosscut and Tohaul, which will allow the resort to open terrain on the east side of the mountain earlier in the season.

"Since we joined the Sugarloaf family in 2007 we've spent lots of time getting to know the place, and what makes Sugarloaf so unique in this industry," Kircher said. "Now that we feel we have a good grasp on what that is, we think we have a very solid vision for the future. Every resort is unique and what works for one doesn't necessarily work for another. In the Sugarloaf 2020 plan we're confident that we have a good vision, uniquely tailored to fit the true DNA of Sugarloaf."

The massive expansion of terrain and plans for future investment are expected to make Sugarloaf a more noticeable destination for skiers, providing a boost to the local economy and to the Maine winter tourism industry.

"There's no question that this is a game changer," said Brad Larsen, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Sugarloaf. "With this new terrain Sugarloaf becomes the largest ski area in the East, with some of the most unique terrain and an unrivaled overall experience. It instantly puts us on every skier's 'must-do' list."

The first phase of the expansion is expected to open this winter, as soon as natural snowfall allows.

For more information on Sugarloaf's terrain expansion and the Sugarloaf 2020 vision, please visit sugarloaf2020.com.