

Backcountry.com Donation Keeps the Utah Avalanche Center Open Through April

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Today, Backcountry.com will donate \$6,300 to non-profit Friends of the Utah Avalanche Center (FUAC) to restore and extend backcountry avalanche forecasting through April 24. Backcountry skiers, snowboarders and snowmobilers can breathe a sigh of relief.

“There’s too much snow in the Wasatch and there are too many people still in the backcountry. We need the UAC,” said Dustin Roberston, Chief Marketing Officer at Backcountry.com. “We made a call to find out what it would take to get them to stay open. It was within our power to make it happen, so we’re going to make it happen.”

The UAC had barely enough money left in its normal budget to reopen this past weekend, but avalanche advisories moving forward will be funded by the donation from Backcountry.com. The UAC will resume issuing its standard morning avalanche advisories for the Wasatch Mountains for the weekends and afternoon advisories will be issued four to five times a week. Uinta and Logan mountain range forecasts will be issued on the weekends. Although this year is the earliest the UAC has ever closed, Backcountry.com’s donation will allow the forecasting organization to remain in service longer than it has in recent years.

“For Backcountry.com to step-up like this is truly amazing and we couldn’t have done it without them. They have been one of our biggest supporters for years and are a key part of the backcountry community,” said FUAC Executive Director Paul Diegel. “We are headed into a big storm cycle, we’re still dealing with a complicated snowpack, and this is going to be a huge benefit for the backcountry user community. It’s still full-on winter here.”

The UAC is funded by a number of separate entities: the U.S. Forest Service, the non-profit FUAC – who this year has raised \$270,000 through fundraisers, donations, grants and education programs - Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation, Utah Department of Public Safety and Salt Lake County. This year, the budget came up short because of a combination of above average early season snowfall, increased costs and decreases in other funding sources. The UAC had to choose between termination of forecasts for an existing area in Utah and closing early. They felt that they could provide the best public service by choosing the latter.

The Forest Service Utah Avalanche Center was founded in 1980 to provide public safety in avalanche terrain through avalanche advisories, avalanche warnings when necessary, avalanche education and outreach. Founded in 1991, the FUAC supports and contributes to the avalanche education and forecasting activities provided by the Forest Service Utah Avalanche Center. Together, they operate as a very successful partnership called the UAC.

About Backcountry.com:

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categories, including backpacking, camping, cycling, hiking, climbing, trail running, paddling, skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing and adventure travel. Backcountry.com also operates Bonktown.com, Chainlove.com, SteepandCheap.com, Dogfunk.com, WhiskeyMilitia.com, Departmentofgoods.com, Realcyclist.com and Hucknroll.com. Backcountry.com is a controlled subsidiary of Liberty Media Corporation attributed to the Liberty Interactive Group (Nasdaq: LINTA).