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TBCA 2021 Spring Newsletter

In spite of pandemic restrictions and crowded parking lots, it was a good winter for backcountry skiing and riding in the Tetons. As many of you hang up your boards for the season, the TBCA Steering Committee is reflecting on the year and looking ahead to winter 2021-22. Below are notes on what is happening and what TBCA is up to.

Inter-Group Radio Channel: An “Inter-Group Radio Channel” for the Tetons is now established at frequency 2.2. Like other mountain regions in the US, this channel is for groups to communicate with other groups in the event of a special need (e.g., to share important information such as a recent avy observation or the need for a nearby group to help in the event of an accident). The channel is NOT for chatter or small talk by a party or between parties.

The TBCA Volunteer Backcountry Ambassador Program Proved

Successful: Seven volunteers worked the Teton Pass area this winter. Tom Hallberg wrote a great article about the program in [JHNG](#). All seven volunteers are planning to return next year, which will allow for better pre-season training and preparation. Special thanks go to the volunteers, BCA and Stio for their contributions to the program.



Photo: Kobe Gordon

OLD BILL'S FUN RUN



Remember TBCA for Old Bills!

The 2021 Old Bill's giving season kicks off August 13 and closes on September 17. In 2020, this event is *vital* for generating the funding needed to support TBCA activities. **TBCA needs your contributions! We ask that ALL winter BC skiers and boarders give what you can.**

Coal Creek Beacon Park Purchased: TBCA was successful in raising the funds necessary to purchase the beacon park equipment for Coal Creek. The park will be installed there again next year in partnership with Yöstmark. We thank those who made contributions to the fundraiser, to BCA for selling TBCA the Beacon Park equipment at a discount, and to Lynne Wolfe for her great energy in making it all happen.

Targhee Expansion: The plans for expanding operations at Targhee are moving forward and we anticipate that the Draft EIS will be released late summer or early fall. TBCA's focus here is on possible impacts to wildlife, backcountry skiing, and the overall wilderness qualities of Teton Canyon. With support from Winter Wildlands Alliance and others, TBCA will be holding one or more public meetings before the release to raise public awareness of what is proposed. The public's engagement in this issue is critical to making a good outcome. Stay tuned for more information about when and where the informational gatherings will occur.

Togwotee Backcountry Talks Initiated: TBCA is now in discussion with the Togwotee Backcountry Alliance and USFS staff in the Togwotee Pass area about ways to reduce conflicts between skiers and snowmobilers. The current trend is more and more sledders encroaching on terrain that has traditionally been used mostly by skiers. At present, TBCA is exploring how to reduce those user conflicts and thwart a growing trend impacting human-powered backcountry skier opportunities.

Guidelines for Hybrid Skiers: As easy-access areas become more crowded, more and more skiers are using snowmobiles to access remote terrain for untracked snow. Snowmobiles have been used for ski access for decades, but not at the expense of wilderness values and the adventure and challenge of climbing a mountain under one's own power. But today, hybrid skiers are riding snowmobiles deep into pristine country and sometimes right to summits. TBCA is working with AMPL and the USFS to create a backcountry ethic that will sustain the tradition of human-powered backcountry skiing in the remote parts of the Teton region.

Film on Tour: The film [Denizens of the Steep](#) , co-sponsored by TBCA, addresses the stewardship of Teton Bighorn Sheep and the possible impacts of backcountry skiing. The film will be presented at several film festivals this year and plans are underway to organize a public showing in Jackson.

JHMR Requests More “Side Country” Guiding: JHMR's request to double the user days on its backcountry guiding permit raises a number of questions. What are the potential impacts to Teton Bighorn Sheep? How will that increase affect the quality of experiences of non-guided skiers and boarders? How will it affect use of the tram? TBCA encourages backcountry users to learn more about this issue and share their opinions with BTNF.

Backcountry Portal Posted: TBCA has posted a listing of key web resources for winter backcountry users. [Link to TBCA Backcountry Portal](#). Check it out and bookmark the page for easy reference.

Videos on Responsible Winter Recreational Use. Five 3-minute videos were produced this spring to help visitors and others learn more about responsible winter use. [Click here to view the short films](#). One of these is focused on winter recreation on Teton Pass.



Photo: Molly Grove