



PHOTO COURTESY OF CASEY DAY

Tamara Jacobi skis one of Powderhorn's famous tree-skiing areas.

Powderhorn growing into regional resort

Guest services, glade skiing propel Grand Mesa ski area

BY DREW SETTERHOLM
DAILY PRESS STAFF WRITER

Powderhorn Mountain Resort is more than a local favorite for Grand Junction area skiers and snowboarders; prided on its guest services and best-in-the-West glade skiing, Powderhorn is pushing to become a regional hub for powder hounds.

Located on the northern edge of the Grand Mesa, Powderhorn is situated on 1,600 acres of skiable terrain, 600 of which is groomed trail. The summit elevation of 9,850 feet gives way to 1,650 feet of vertical drop.

The resort is just a 45-minute drive from Grand Junction, which has made it a local attraction for years. More recently, though, Powderhorn has become a regional attraction for visitors on Colorado's

Western Slope and into Utah.

"We've been trying to expand and reach out to more people down in the Montrose area, over to Moab and heading out west toward Rifle, too," Marketing Manager David Smith said. "We're going from a local to more of a regional recreation area."

Attracting a region-wide base of skiers and snowboarders depends on top-notch guest services — a quality Powderhorn takes pride in.

"We've had rave reviews on our guest services," Smith said. "It's a very, very friendly place to be — a lot of smiles — and happy people make a fun place to visit."

Once visitors are up on the mountain, Powderhorn's unique and attractive skiing takes care of the rest.

The resort sees average annual snowfall of 250 inches of light, dry powder and is usually one of the earlier resorts to get hit with winter storms. With a good base of snow, Powderhorn opens up its renowned tree-skiing and glade areas to let skiers and

boarders dig into the fresh powder.

"One thing that we are certainly known for is our glade skiing," Smith said. "We have some of the best glade skiing in the West, really in Colorado, with many different areas for people to just jump into the trees that are pretty wide open and get some fresh powder and enjoy their time off the trail."

For those who might not yet be comfortable with glade skiing, the resort offers a wide range of beginner trails at the base of the mountain, and intermediate and expert trails toward the top.

Powderhorn also offers a "Learn to Ski and Ride" package that is hard to beat in its affordability. For children 5 and older for skiing and 7 and older for snowboarding, a \$149 package covers three days of lift tickets, three days of lessons and three days of equipment rentals.

Graduates of the program also receive half-off lift tickets, rentals and future lessons. "We really want people to

Leading up to the 2014-15 ski season, the Daily Press will present weekly preview articles featuring regional ski destinations and other winter activities.

Powderhorn Mountain

Season dates: Dec. 11 through March 29, 2015
Permitted acres: 1,600 (600 groomed)
Trail classification: 20 percent beginner, 50 percent intermediate, 30 percent advanced and expert.
Average snowfall: 250 inches
Lifts: 5
Lift hours: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Season passes on sale through Nov. 11.

have the first three days of really good experience and really enjoy themselves, and then give them an affordable way to continue to grow in the sport," Smith said.

The family-friendly resort also recognizes its neighbors in the agriculture world and strives to provide as much local food and beverages as possible.

"We try to keep as much stuff local as possible and give back to the community that supports us," Smith said.

Powderhorn's affordability and accessibility to Western Slope skiers sets it apart from other destinations in the region.

"The affordability and, as much as we hate to say it, the lack of lift lines really brings a different atmosphere up here. ... The glades is certainly something that sets us apart, but the big thing for us is the value," Smith said. "We're reasonably priced, very affordable for people to come up and enjoy a day."

Get yourself and your ATV ready to go

Whether you are planning an early morning quick summer ride or an extended trip that may involve an overnight stay, you would do well to make sure your machine is properly packed and up to the task.

Many of us use our all-terrain vehicles during the hunting seasons and with the rapid weather changes having your machine prepared is a good idea.

Here we shall discuss a few things to consider before you go.

An ATV is just like a car in that it requires preventative maintenance. The night before my trip I always start with a visual inspection. Aside from the fluid levels, fuel, oil and coolant, I check everything over; making sure nothing is broken, loose or missing.

I will make sure that the tires are also properly inflated. Be certain that you check the owner's manual for the proper tire pressure and not off the sides of the tire. Too much air can cause a "ballooning effect" which can turn the machine over.

Lastly, I check the cables, brakes and lights to be sure all else is in working order.

Most machines have boxes or bags that you can carry some equipment in. I know that I carry more than is needed but it sure is nice to have it during an emergency. Here is a list of the basic items I carry in mine.

- Water, enough for drinking during the day plus extra
- First aid kit
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Tow strap and a length of strong rope
- Tool kit with tools fitted to your ATV



Mark Rackay

Tips from the Posse

- Tire repair kit with small compressor or CO2 fill kit
- Extra warm clothes and rain poncho
- Cell phone and GPS
- Jumper cables
- Leatherman tool
- Roll of duct tape.

You can customize your kit to fit the needs of the trip being taken. I may add such things as MRE (Meals Ready to Eat) just to have some extra food along. I keep a small shovel and an axe strapped under the rear rack of my machine. All of these items can be stowed away neatly and securely with a little practice with your own quad. You will want to be sure there is room for the lunch, snacks, fishing gear and whatever else is needed for your excursion.

Before you go on your trip, take some time to study a map and familiarize yourself with the area. You might also find some places to stop and rest along the way that may provide something interesting or scenic to do. Also, be sure to tell someone where you are going and when to expect you to return. This person should be instructed to call the sheriff's office if you do not return by a given time. This simple step of preparedness has saved countless lives.

Remember that there are things that simply cannot be repaired on the trail. Because of this, it is most important to have at least one other person and quad along with you — not only for safety but it is more fun to share a ride with friends. See you on the trails.

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CPW issues reminders for fall boating

BY MANDA WALTERS

COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE
Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Boating Safety Program reminds boaters and paddle boarders to take precautions to protect themselves from heightened dangers of sudden, unexpected cold water immersion while on late season boating outings, especially on small boats.

Take precautions to avoid being thrown overboard, swamped or stranded in cold water.

Sudden immersion in cold water can cause gasping and inhalation of water and hypothermia, resulting in unconsciousness or swimming failure as muscles become numb. Wearing a life jacket will keep your head above water and support your body should your swimming ability fail or you become unconscious.

CPW officers have noticed a lot of people overestimate their ability to "swim out of a problem" and recommends anyone out on the water wear a life jacket, even though state law only requires life jackets be worn by anyone under the age of 13.

CPW recommends the following to boaters heading out on the water this fall:

- Always wear a properly fitted life jacket. A life jacket will help keep your airway clear of water and keep you floating if you start to numb. (It happens a lot faster than you may realize.)
- Dress for the weather: Consider wetsuits or layer your clothing to reduce loss of body temperature should you end up in the water;
- Avoid boating alone, but in any case let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Bring a cell phone or VHF radio, in a water-tight bag, should you need to call for help;
- Properly equip and carry essential safety gear, signaling devices and whistles;
- Don't use alcohol, and
- Bring something along to help you get back in your boat in case you fall out.

Finally, CPW recommends that all boaters take a boating safety class. In Colorado, everyone 14 and 15 years of age must pass a CPW boating safety course

before operating any kind of powered vessel, including personal watercraft.

Regardless of age, it's important for everyone to take a boating safety course. In 2013, 88 percent of operators involved in a boat accident had no known boat safety education.

Seventeen fatalities in Colorado were associated with recreational boating in 2013. The only fatal boating accident on a lake directly involved not wearing an life jacket.

Should you ever find yourself in the water it is recommended that you stay with - and preferably on top of - your boat.

Also consider bringing along a way to get back in your boat, such as a ladder, a knotted rope or at least a plan. Cold muscles and wet clothes make it very difficult to get over the side and sometimes even the back of a boat.

Never overestimate your swimming ability. All too often people underestimate the distance to shore or the effects of cold water and unfortunately drown while attempting to make it to safety.