

### THE POWER OF A TEAM IS REAL

#### **Dear Friends and Supporters:**

This winter was a big one for Teton County: Jackson Hole Mountain Resort set a record with 595 inches of snow; Grand Targhee had a record with 576 inches; and the Town of Jackson set a record with over 9 feet in town. Winter rescues for TCSAR have always been correlated with weather—the more storms we get the more rescues we have. The relationship held true this year. Midway through May, we had 50 rescues since January 1. The Team had 20 rescues in February, and 19 in March. Winter rescues are usually more challenging for the Team; the conditions, urgency, and seriousness generally make for more intense and dramatic rescues.

We are not able to perform rescues by ourselves, as we cannot do them without our partners. This includes the 911 dispatchers who are always the first to get the call, our fellow first responders that we work with in the field, the many folks behind the scenes who help keep us rescue ready, and most importantly, our families that hold down the fort while we drop everything and take off to help those in need. The credit for a successful rescue goes to lots of folks behind the scenes—their quiet contributions make those of us on the front lines look good. We want to thank all of our partners.

We also want to be good partners to those who can use our help. Now, because of the helicopter program our Team has built over the past 25 years, we are in a better position to help our neighbors when things get tough. This past winter, we performed helicopter short-haul rescues for injured skiers at all three ski resorts in Teton County. We also assisted three neighboring counties to help rescue lost or injured snowmobilers in Fremont and Lincoln counties in Wyoming, and in Bonneville County, Idaho. I would like to think it is part of our Western culture to help out your neighbor when they need a hand.

Our most critical partnership is between our team of rescue volunteers and the TCSAR Foundation. The Foundation supports the Team in so many ways, and we could not do our work without this support. An obvious example of this is the successful completion of Mission Critical, in which the Foundation was able to fundraise for and buy a helicopter for Teton County. Our new helicopter program will be up and running by October 1 of this year. Building a strong helicopter rescue program from the ground up has been a huge undertaking for the Team. We are grateful for all the support we have had to get it done.

The power of a Team is real. A group of people with a shared goal moving in the same direction can get a lot done. At TCSAR, the shared belief in Team is the underpinning of everything we do—it is paramount. We all feel proud to be a part of something bigger than ourselves.

#### **CODY LOCKHART**

TCSAR Chief Advisor Volunteer #84

## TCSO SAR ADVISORS AND STAFF

CODY LOCKHART

CHIEF ADVISOR

AJ WHEELER, M.D. MEDICAL ADVISOR

**DOUG VAN HOUTEN** 

LOGISTICS ADVISOR

**ALEX NORTON** 

**PLANNING ADVISOR** 

KC BESS

MEMBERSHIP ADVISOR

**ANTHONY STEVENS** 

TRAINING ADVISOR

MIKE ESTES

TCSO SAR COORDINATOR

MATT CARR

**TCSO SHERIFF** 

## **OUR VOLUNTEERS**

TCSAR VOLUNTEERS ARE READY TO RESPOND 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK, 365 DAYS A YEAR.

Since the team's inception in 1993, TCSAR volunteers have spent thousands of hours honing their skills in all areas of rescue procedures, as well as donating their time at community events to increase backcountry safety education and awareness.

FROM DECEMBER 1, 2022, TO MAY 31, 2023, TCSAR VOLUNTEERS DEDICATED

**7,204 HOURS** 

TO THE FOLLOWING:

RESCUES 3,360 HOURS

3,431 HOURS

COMMUNITY EVENTS 413 HOURS

## **TCSAR VOLUNTEER TEAM MEMBERS**













**ALEX NORTON** 

ANDREW ARMINGTON

**ANTHONY STEVENS** 















**BROOK YEOMANS** 















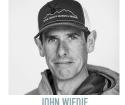










































**TCSAR EMPLOYEES** 



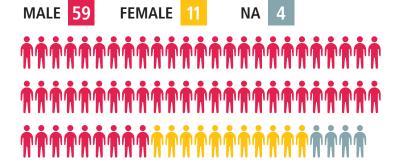
MATT CARR TCSO Sheriff



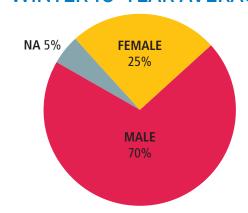
TCSO SAR Coordinator TCSAR RESCUE REPORT / 3



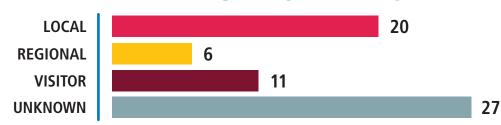
#### PATIENT GENDER BREAKDOWN



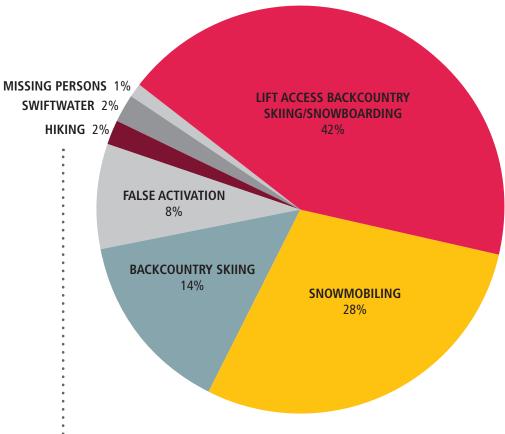
#### **WINTER 10-YEAR AVERAGE**



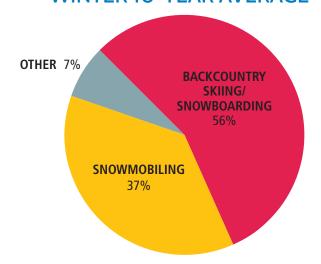
#### PATIENT RESIDENCE BREAKDOWN



#### **ACTIVITY BREAKDOWN**



#### **WINTER 10-YEAR AVERAGE**





## HOW TO CALL SEARCH AND RESCUE

#### **DIAL OR TEXT 911**

911 calls in Teton County go to local dispatch, which then contact the TCSAR Board of Advisors to formulate a rescue plan.

#### **UTILIZE HANDHELD** SATELLITE DEVICES

Handheld satellite devices, such as SPOT or Garmin inReach, have SOS capabilities that allow the user to connect with the International Emergency Response Coordination Center (IERCC), which can then connect to local dispatch.

### **BackcountrySOS**

BackcountrySOS is a free app developed by TCSAR Foundation that acts as a text to 911 with minimal cell service. These notifications go directly to dispatch. The app is available in 12 counties across the Intermountain West and provides emergency responders with your exact location, but does not allow two-way communication.

#### WHAT SHOULD YOU SAY WHEN YOU CALL 911?

- 1) Provide your location first in case the call gets dropped.
- 2) Provide the nature of the accident and condition of the person in need.
- 3) Try not to move around when speaking so that the call does not drop.
- 4) Unless you are in immediate danger, stay in your same location until Search & Rescue arrives.

## MIDYEAR 2023 **RESCUE REVIEW**



The goal behind sharing these incident summaries is not to cast shame or judgment on anyone who needs help. Rather, we include these stories to provide lessons learned and help everyone be aware and mindful of the importance of decision-making and preparedness in the backcountry.

#### **AVALANCHE ON RENDEZVOUS PEAK**

**DECEMBER 16. 2022 / 12:29PM DURATION: 2 hours, 31 minutes ATTENDEES: 26** 



WHAT HAPPENED: Two skiers entered the backcountry from the top of Teton Pass, with the goal of skiing north to Jackson Hole Mountain Resort. At midday, while using climbing skins attached to their skis, they crossed a southeastfacing slope on Rendezvous Peak when they triggered a large avalanche. One skier was caught and carried about 1,500 feet down the slope. He became buried up to his chest, keeping his head and arms above the snow. After he was recovered by his partner, he learned he had suffered a leg injury as a result of the avalanche. They made an initial call to Teton County Dispatch, reporting the incident but saying they believed they would be able to ski out on their own. In that conversation, they unintentionally provided inaccurate information about their location, believing they were in a different canyon.

About an hour later, the skiers had another conversation with TCSAR and recognized their need for a rescue.

With clouds swirling and moving in, TCSAR initiated a helicopter response, with ground teams as backup in case the weather deteriorated. The helicopter departed the TCSAR hangar with two SAR members and a pilot. The ship was able to land on the snow near the skiers, dropping off the two SAR members before lifting to fly around the scene. The SAR members arrived equipped with skis, warm clothing, shelter tools, and other 24-hour gear in case the helicopter could not return due to weather. The volunteers then provided initial patient care, and helped the injured skier to the landing zone. Once clear, the heli returned, the patient was loaded, and both skiers and SAR members were flown back to the hangar in Jackson.

#### **LOST SKIER IN GRAND TARGHEE BACKCOUNTRY**

**DECEMBER 17, 2022 / 2:00PM** 

**DURATION: 30 minutes** 

ATTENDEES: 0 - Grand Targhee Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: Grand Targhee Ski Patrol notified the TCSAR Board of Advisors (BOA) about a guick SAR mission outside the ski area boundary. A skier had gone under the boundary rope below Sacajawea and was heading down Mill Creek. Ski patrol caught up to the skier and brought him back up to the resort without issue.

#### LINCOLN COUNTY SAR HELI ASSIST FOR IPHONE CRASH NOTIFICATION

**DECEMBER 17, 2022 / 1:42 PM DURATION: 2 hours, 28 minutes ATTENDEES: 22** - Lincoln County Assist



WHAT HAPPENED: Dispatch received a request for the TCSAR helicopter to assist Lincoln County Search & Rescue for a call of an automated iPhone crash report. There were an unknown number of people, method of injury, or patient status. LCSAR had a ground team started but due to the distance to the subjects, they requested the ship for a faster response. The TCSAR heli left the hangar enroute to the coordinates. One group of snowmobilers was contacted but was not the party involved. Another group was contacted and were the individuals involved in the crash. The patient said he injured his shoulder but that he was OK. The heli and all TCSAR volunteers returned to Jackson.

#### INJURED SKIER IN GRANITE CANYON

DECEMBER 24, 2022 / 1:42PM
DURATION: 1 hours, 26 minutes
ATTENDEES: 7 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: JHMR Ski Patrol notified the BOA that it was responding to an injured skier in Granite Canyon but that no SAR assistance was required. At 1:16 p.m., ski patrol notified dispatch that the patient was at the Village Clinic.

#### **INJURED SKIER IN GRANITE CANYON**

DECEMBER 24, 2022 / 4:59PM
DURATION: 2 hours, 11 minutes
ATTENDEES: 7 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: Dispatch notified the BOA that the JHMR Ski Patrol was responding to a possible injured skier in Granite Canyon but were not requesting assistance. At 7:10 p.m., the BOA was notified that the skier was safely out of the backcountry.

## INJURED SKIER AND AVALANCHE AT ZERO G/SPACEWALK

DECEMBER 25, 2022 / 11:56 AM
DURATION: 1 hours, 5 minutes
ATTENDEES: 7 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: The SAR Board was notified of two 18-year-old males involved in an avalanche in Zero G/ Spacewalk. One person had been caught but was able to self rescue. JHMR Ski Patrol sent two patrollers and dogs to investigate. At 1:01 p.m., the BOA was notified that patrol had concluded their search and found no transceiver signals and no alerts from dogs and that patrol was returning inbounds.

## LINCOLN COUNTY ASSIST FOR MISSING SNOWMOBILER

DECEMBER 26, 2022 / 3:06PM DURATION: 31 minutes

ATTENDEES: 7 - Lincoln County Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: Lincoln County SAR called TCSAR for a

possible helicopter assist to find a snowmobiler who'd been missing for 24 hours. After a page went out to the TCSAR team, LCSAR reported that the subject had been located.

#### **FALSE ACTIVATION FROM LIFE360 ALERT**

DECEMBER 27, 2022 / 1:36PM DURATION: 1 hour, 8 minutes

ATTENDEES: 11 - Togwotee Snowmobile Guides Assist Board Call Only

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was notified by dispatch regarding a Life360 crash alert in the Togwotee area. Mapping placed the alert on the Continental Divide Trail south of Two Ocean Mountain. Two guides from Togwotee rode out to the location and found the subjects, who were just fine.

#### INJURED SNOWMOBILER UP GRANITE CREEK

DECEMBER 27, 2022 / 3:23PM DURATION: 3 hours, 7 minutes ATTENDEES: 24

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was alerted regarding an injured female snowmobiler two miles up Granite Creek. TCSAR responded with a snowmobile and tracked RZR teams. When they arrived at the location, the teams couldn't find signs of the patient or anybody that knew about an injured snowmobiler. The volunteers returned to the hangar.

## SNOWBOARDER CLIFFED-OUT IN GRAND TARGHEE BACKCOUNTRY

DECEMBER 30, 2022 / 1:41PM DURATION: 3 hours, 49 minutes

ATTENDEES: 8 - Grand Targhee Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was called for assistance regarding a male snowboarder who was cliffed out in the Grand Targhee backcountry. Ski patrol was handling the high-angle response but asked for assistance getting people out of Teton Canyon once the mission was completed. Two TCSAR volunteers responded to provide transport of ski patrol out of Teton Canyon and back to Targhee.

#### INJURED SKIER IN ROCK SPRINGS CANYON

DECEMBER 30, 2022 / 3:37PM
DURATION: 1 hour, 18 minutes
ATTENDEES: 7 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was notified by dispatch that JHMR Ski Patrol was responding out of bounds to a back injury in Rock Springs Canyon. No assistance was requested. Patrol notified dispatch at approx 5 p.m. that they were back inbounds and the mission was complete.

#### INJURED SKIER AT SNOW KING MOUNTAIN

DECEMBER 30, 2022 / 6:00PM

**DURATION: 7 minutes** 

**ATTENDEES: 3** - Snow King Ski Patrol Assist

**Board Call Only** 

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was called for an injured skier on Snow King Mountain after the lifts had closed. Other skiers in the area initially came upon the scene before ski patrol made it to the subject. Patrol handled the call and TCSAR stood down.

## REPORT OF POSSIBLE DOWNED AIRCRAFT IN MOSQUITO CREEK

DECEMBER 31, 2022 / 8:30PM

DURATION: 2 hours ATTENDEES: 9 Board Call Only

WHAT HAPPENED: A concerned citizen called dispatch to report a possible downed aircraft in Mosquito Creek. The witness reportedly saw red and green lights spiraling toward the ground. After dispatch checked flight plans in the area, there were no reports of missing aircraft. TCSO deputies searched Fall Creek Road for an ELT (emergency locator transmitter) signal, but nothing of the sort was found and the call stood down.

#### SOS SIGNAL INVESTIGATION

JANUARY 1, 2023 / 5:57 PM DURATION: 13 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 9** 

WHAT HAPPENED: A concerned citizen in Teton Valley,

Idaho, called dispatch to report a possible SOS signal between Darby Canyon and Housetop. After hearing from the RP (reporting party) that the lights appeared to be moving, the BOA determined no action was needed, and the lights were most likely from snowmobiles riding in the Darby/Pinnacle area after dark.

#### INJURED SKIER IN ROCK SPRINGS CANYON

JANUARY 10, 2023 / 11:28 AM DURATION: 43 minutes

ATTENDEES: 9 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: JHMR Ski Patrol called dispatch notifying TCSAR that they were responding to an injured female skier in the Rock Springs area. No SAR assistance was required.

## SKIER CLIFFED-OUT IN ROCK SPRINGS CANYON

JANUARY 11, 2023 / 12:59 PM
DURATION: 2 hours, 29 minutes
ATTENDEES: 8 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: Dispatch was notified that JHMR Ski Patrol was responding to a report of someone yelling for help in the Jersey Shore/M&M area in the backcountry south of the resort. Patrol sent two patrollers to investigate. RP stated that the person didn't look injured, just lost. Patrol found the subject and sent four additional patrollers with rope kits to assist the subject. Patrol called dispatch when everyone was back inbounds.

#### **INJURED SKIER ON FOUR PINES**

JANUARY 12, 2023 / 12:35 PM

**DURATION: 1 hour** 

**ATTENDEES: 10 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist** 

WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR volunteers responded to an injured skier in the backcountry area known as Four Pines, south of the Jackson Hole Mountain Resort. The skier, a local resident in his mid 20s, had skied over a small cliff and landed on a rock.

JHMR Ski Patrol initially responded to check on the skier's injuries, and subsequently requested a helicopter assist from *(continued)* 

## TCSAR Volunteers respond to calls 24/7/365.

# Thank you to these local employers for their flexibility and support of our volunteers!

AMERICAN AVALANCHE ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN AVALANCHE INSTITUTE
BERLIN ARCHITECTS
BLACK FOX RESCUE INSTITUTE
CAPSTONE CONSTRUCTION &
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FACTORY IT

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SEARCH & RESCUE FOUNDATION
TETON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

TETON MAPLE EXCHANGE

THE GYM @ JH INDOOR

TOWN OF JACKSON

WIND RIVER CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

WOUNDED BEAR MEDICINE



## OVERDUE SKIERS IN ROCK SPRINGS CANYON



## JANUARY 28, 2023/5:28PM DURATION:

8 hours, 30 minutes
ATTENDEES: 19
JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR volunteers were called to respond to help two skiers who'd become lost in the JHMR backcountry, resulting in a late night for search teams. The incident serves as a reminder to make sure skiers check the avalanche forecast, have the proper equipment and a plan before heading into the backcountry.

At 3 p.m. on Saturday, January 28, two skiers from Utah took the aerial tram to the summit with the plan of exiting into the backcountry to ski Rock Springs, an out-of-bounds, uncontrolled area to the south of JHMR. Instead, they mistakenly dropped into the top of Granite Canyon, a large avalanche-prone canyon that leads into GTNP. When the skiers did not show up to meet their friends after the lifts closed, one friend put in a call to Jackson dispatch at 5:28 p.m.

Unified command was set up with TCSAR, GTNP, and JHMR Ski Patrol to create a search plan. With the Tetons having received roughly 4 feet of snow the previous three days, the avalanche danger was rated 'high.'

Without knowing the exact location of the two men, unified command believed the risk was too high to send teams blindly into the field at night. But at 8:10 p.m., a friend received a call from one of the skiers, but the call quickly dropped. Searchers zeroed in on the coordinates from the phone call, putting the skiers' location in the area known as the Jersey Shore, a large and dangerous cliff band at the top of Rock Springs that has been the site of numerous accidents over the years.

In an interview, one skier said they realized their mistake after dropping into Granite and were able to hike back up to the saddle above Rock Springs. One of their phones had died, and they were trying to conserve the battery on a second

device. "It was five or six hours before we were able to get a hold of anyone," he said.

Tired and cold, they decided to wait until rescuers could arrive. The skier confirmed that they did not have avalanche safety equipment. "We knew that if we didn't get out of there, it might be game over," the skier said.

Only after knowing the skiers' location did TCSAR put volunteers into the field. "We felt that at that time, we could do it safely," said TCSAR Chief Advisor Cody Lockhart.

At 10:45 p.m., nine volunteers skied out the top gate equipped with avalanche safety equipment, extra layers, food, and energy drinks. They made voice contact with the two men at 11:06 p.m. To avoid putting themselves in avalanche danger, the volunteers persuaded the two skiers to walk straight up the hill a short distance to where they could greet them with warm clothing and food.

At that point, the volunteers put snowshoes on the men and helped them walk back up the ridgeline, reaching the top tram station at 12:50 a.m. The tram transported everyone down the mountain, where friends met the men and transported them to St. John's Health for further care. TCSAR volunteers returned to the hangar at 1:35 a.m.

During the post-incident interview, the skier was remorseful, apologetic, and expressed gratitude for the rescue teams.

"It really comes down to being overconfident in knowing the terrain, overconfidence in backcountry knowledge, and not having a plan," he said.

TCSAR appreciates the cooperation from JHMR and GTNP. In a statement, JHMR's Director of Risk and Safety Jon Bishop said, "It's a good reminder to have the appropriate knowledge, gear, a partner and a plan. We are thankful everything turned out OK."

TCSAR. Given the area's steep terrain, TCSAR decided that a short-haul operation was the best move.

The TCSAR helicopter inserted two volunteers onto the slope to provide patient care and package him for transport. The helicopter flew laps overhead during this brief process, and then returned to pick up both rescuers and the patient. After clipping into the rope, the volunteers and patient were short-hauled to the LZ (landing zone) and a waiting ambulance at the base of Teton Village.

#### **AVALANCHE ON ALBRIGHT PEAK**

JANUARY 16, 2023 / 11:41PM **DURATION: 3 hours, 6 minutes ATTENDEES: 10 - GTNP Assist** 



WHAT HAPPENED: A snowboarder was caught, carried and injured by a large avalanche on the west face of Albright Peak in Grand Teton National Park. The group's emergency call was picked up by GTNP dispatch, which transferred the call to Teton County Dispatch requesting helicopter assistance from TCSAR. The interagency mission included TCSAR volunteers and GTNP rangers, who were able to land near the patient for an internal heli flight out of the backcountry. The patient refused medical treatment from the ambulance and a member of his party drove him to the hospital for further medical care.

#### **LOST SKIERS IN GRAND TARGHEE BACKCOUNTRY**

JANUARY 28, 2023 / 2:00 PM

**DURATION: 1 hour** 

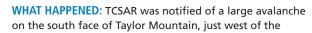
**ATTENDEES: 2 - Grand Targhee Ski Patrol Assist** 

WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR was notified that Grand Targhee Ski Patrol were assisting some skiers who had gone out of bounds and were headed into Teton Canyon. Patrol was able to contact the skiers before they got too far down and assisted them back into the ski area.

#### **AVALANCHE ON TAYLOR MOUNTAIN**

JANUARY 30, 2023 / 1:43 PM **DURATION: 52 minutes** 

**ATTENDEES: 14** 



summit of Teton Pass. TCSAR deployed a helicopter team to fly over the avalanche path to investigate and ensure that nobody had been caught or buried in the slide. The helicopter made numerous passes over the avalanche utilizing the RECCO SAR Helicopter Detector, which picks up RECCO transponders, as well as the heli beacon, which detects frequencies from avalanche transceivers.

These multiple efforts did not pick up any signals.

Meanwhile, a TCSAR volunteer on the ground at Coal Creek interviewed witnesses and spoke to the person who had accidentally triggered the slide. The person was confident that no one had been caught. The heli returned to the hangar and all teams stood down.

#### **OVERDUE SNOWMOBILERS** IN MOSQUITO CREEK

JANUARY 31, 2023 / 8:48 PM **DURATION: 2 hours, 45 minutes ATTENDEES: 8** 

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was notified about three snowmobilers who were overdue from a ride starting in Mosquito Creek. The group's plan was to ride up Mosquito Creek to Corral Canyon to Siddoway to Big Elk Creek to Smokey Hollow and back to Mosquito Creek. They started about noon and were expected to be out by 6 p.m. The group was prepared with avalanche gear, extra clothing and survival gear. The reporting party (RP) called 911 at 8:48 p.m. from the trailhead because the group's vehicle was still there. Attempts to ping the phone were unsuccessful. Contact was finally made with group around 10 p.m. They were moving slowly and were about an hour and a half out. The RP notified TCSAR at 11:30 p.m. to say the group was out of the field.

#### **LOST SKI NEAR EDELWEISS BOWL**

FEBRUARY 2, 2023 / 1:56 PM **DURATION: 27 minutes** 

**ATTENDEES: 6 Board Call Only** 

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was called regarding a female skier who had lost a ski at the bottom of Edelweiss Bowl and was concerned she wouldn't be able to get out of the

backcountry on her own. A TCSAR volunteer responded and was able to help the woman get out of the backcountry.

#### **OVERDUE SNOWMOBILERS** ON TOGWOTEE PASS

FEBRUARY 2, 2023 / 5:42 PM **DURATION: 1 hour. 23 minutes** 

**ATTENDEES: 8 Board Call Only** 

WHAT HAPPENED: Togwotee Mountain Guides called the BOA to request assistance in helping to find a party of five snowmobilers who were overdue. The guides and two U.S. Forest Service rangers were out looking for the party. Attempts to ping a subject's phone did not work. Fremont County was advised of an active search and asked their SAR Coordinator to be in touch. At 7:05 p.m., the missing party had been located and all stood down.

#### **OVERDUE SNOWMOBILERS AT WILLOW CREEK**

FEBRUARY 5, 2023 / 9:25 PM **DURATION: 4 hours, 35 minutes** 

**ATTENDEES: 5 Board Call Only** 

WHAT HAPPENED: Three local men were approximately three hours overdue from a snowmobiling trip in the Willow Creek area. A TCSAR volunteer went to the trailhead to set up forward ops, while friends of the group were searching. The missing party was found and everyone headed home at 2 a.m.

#### SKIERS CLIFFED-OUT IN ROCK SPRINGS CANYON

FEBRUARY 6, 2023 / 12:12 PM **DURATION: 1 hour, 54 minutes** ATTENDEES: 9 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was paged regarding two separate groups of skiers who were stuck in the Jersey Shore area of Rock Springs Canyon. JHMR Ski Patrol responded and did not require additional resources. The first group of skiers—two male and one female—had triggered a small slide with one person becoming stranded.

(continued)



The second group—three male skiers—skied above the first group and triggered a significantly larger slide on the same slope. Ski patrol deployed a rope to the stranded skier and were able to get him off the cliff. At 2:14 p.m., ski patrol notified the BOA that the mission was complete and everyone was back inbounds.

#### **INJURED SKIER IN GRANITE CANYON**

FEBRUARY 9, 2023 / 2:11 PM
DURATION: 3 hours, 19 minutes



ATTENDEES: 16 - GTNP & JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR was called with a request from JHMR Ski Patrol for a short-haul helicopter operation to help an injured skier in Granite Canyon. A woman had injured her knee while descending Endless, a 2,000-vertical-foot couloir that sits within Grand Teton National Park. TCSAR accepted the helicopter request, mobilizing a rescue plan that consisted of one TCSAR volunteer and two Jenny Lake Climbing Rangers. The interagency team was able to fly to the scene and successfully short-haul the patient to the landing zone (LZ) at the base of Teton Village.

#### **SNOWMOBILE CRASH AT TOGWOTEE**

FEBRUARY 10, 2023 / 2:36 PM DURATION: 4 hours, 9 minutes ATTENDEES: 16 - GTNP Assist



WHAT HAPPENED: A woman in her 60s was riding her snowmachine with a guided group on Togwotee when she reportedly hit a tree, suffering severe injuries to both legs. Given the nature of the accident and remote location, TCSAR decided that a helicopter response was the best option.

TCSAR assembled a short-haul helicopter team, which included a ranger from Grand Teton National Park. TCSAR volunteers also loaded up trucks and snowmobiles to drive to Togwotee as a backup ground response.

The initial report put the accident site about 4 miles from the highway on the Continental Divide Trail (CDT), but upon flying to the scene, the heli team was unable to find the reporting party at the given location. The heli circled the area and eventually spotted the injured party about 2 miles from the highway on the Continental Divide Alternative (CDA) Trail.

The heli team dropped two short-haulers off to rig the ship for a short-haul operation. The heli then lifted the short-haulers to the patient, where they packaged her for transport. The team then flew the patient and the rescuers to a landing zone (LZ) in the parking lot of the Black Rock Ranger Station, where the patient was transferred to a waiting ambulance. The teams made plans to return back to Jackson before sundown and drop off the GTNP ranger en route.

#### INJURED SKIER IN NO NAME CANYON

FEBRUARY 10, 2023 / 2:47 PM
DURATION: 2 hours, 13 minutes



**ATTENDEES: 19** 

WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR was alerted to an injured skier in the backcountry south of Jackson Hole Mountain Resort. The skier had triggered a small avalanche at the top of a steep, narrow couloir located on the south-facing slope of No Name Canyon. The slide carried the man, a local resident, through the couloir, depositing him at the bottom with an injured shoulder. Due to the steep and inaccessible nature of the accident site, TCSAR responded with a helicopter short-haul team. After arriving on scene, the helicopter was able to land on the snow on a nearby ridgeline, and two TCSAR volunteers helped the injured skier walk to the ship for an internal transport to the LZ at the base of Teton Village.

## MISSING SNOWMOBILER IN FREMONT COUNTY

FEBRUARY 11, 2023/9:30PM DURATION: 15 hours



ATTENDEES: 10 - Fremont County SAR Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: Fremont County Search & Rescue called TCSAR to get help in locating a missing snowmobiler near the Union Pass Road. Fremont County SAR had spent most of the afternoon looking for the man, and was requesting helicopter assistance for the continued search the following morning.

At first light, TCSAR dispatched the helicopter with three volunteers and the pilot. The team conducted an aerial search while utilizing LifeSeeker, an aerial cellular transmitter that can pick up mobile phone signals even where there is no service. The team was in the air for roughly an hour and a half before they spotted the man waving his arms. At that point, TCSAR was able to provide directions to the patient for a Fremont County SAR ground team on snowmobiles. FCSAR found the man, uninjured but very cold, and snowmobiled him out to a warming hut. The TCSAR team returned to the hangar in Jackson.

#### MISSING SNOWMOBILERS AT SLATE CREEK

FEBRUARY 13, 2023 / 2:18 PM DURATION: 5 hours, 42 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 18** 

WHAT HAPPENED: A group of five visiting snowmobilers became stuck in the Slate Creek area of the Gros Ventre Mountains. The men, all between the ages of 60-80 years old, started out from a guest ranch on the east side of Togwotee Pass and rode their snowmobiles into the Continental Divide Trail system. After entering the Slate Creek area, the men went down a hill where four of their five sleds became stuck. They managed to get an emergency call out on a cell phone, which initiated a response by TCSAR.

Four TCSAR volunteers dispatched on snowmobiles at Atherton Creek and drove up the Gros Ventre Road. They then crossed the ice-covered river and found the men a short distance above Slate Creek, about 10 miles from where TCSAR entered the backcountry. The men were uninjured but getting tired. They had one shovel but no avalanche safety gear. The men were driving trail sleds that were not designed to handle deep snow. TCSAR volunteers helped the men get their sleds unstuck and back up a hill to more manageable terrain. The volunteers then led the men and all snowmobiles back to Atherton Creek, where a TCSAR team member shuttled the men to Jackson and helped them find a place to stay for the night.

The volunteers returned to the TCSAR hangar, debriefed, and readied the equipment for the next mission.

#### **CRASH NOTIFICATION IN GRANITE CREEK**

FEBRUARY 13, 2023/10:47PM DURATION: 1 hour, 2 minutes

ATTENDEES: 7
Board Call Only

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was called regarding a crash alert in Granite Creek. A sheriff deputy drove to the trailhead to locate the subject. Attempts to ping the subject's phone were unsuccessful. The deputy encountered a group at the trailhead and confirmed that a man from Michigan did crash on his snowmobile but that he was OK.

#### INJURED SKIER AT EAST FORK MAIL CABIN

FEBRUARY 17, 2023 / 4:10 PM DURATION: 2 hours, 22 minutes ATTENDEES: 8



WHAT HAPPENED: A 34-year-old female skier injured her knee while skiing in the Mail Cabin area west of Teton Pass. TCSAR responded with a helicopter short-haul team, with a ground team of skiers as backup. The short-haul team was able to pick up the patient via short-haul, fly her to Windy Ridge, drop her there and then load her internally for a flight to the TCSAR hangar. Once back at the hangar, the team transferred the patient to a waiting ambulance.

## INJURED SNOWMOBILER ON TOGWOTEE PASS

FEBRUARY 18, 2023 / 11:08 AM DURATION: 2 hours, 22 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 8 - Togwotee Mountain Guide Assist** 

WHAT HAPPENED: Togwotee Mountain Guides alerted the BOA that they were responding to an injured snowmobiler about 1.5 hours away from the lodge. The call was informational only, and the guides were able to bring the patient out of the backcountry.

#### STRANDED SNOWMOBILER ON TOGWOTEE

FEBRUARY 18, 2023 / 2:41PM DURATION: 28 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 7 - Togwotee Mountain Guide Assist** 

**Board Call Only** 

WHAT HAPPENED: A call came in from a snowmobiler who was not injured but stranded in steep terrain in the Togwotee area. During a conference call, the RP texted back to say a local guide was assisting him and that no further assistance was required.

#### STUCK SNOWMOBILER ON TOGWOTEE PASS

FEBRUARY 20, 2023 / 1:33 PM

**DURATION: 42 minutes** 

ATTENDEES: 13 - Togwotee Mountain Guide Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA received an SOS beacon notification stating: "advised not life threatening, but needs help sent." Further investigation discovered that a guide was stuck in a creek bottom. Togwotee guides responded to the scene and no other assistance was needed.

## SKIER CLIFFED-OUT IN ROCK SPRINGS CANYON

FEBRUARY 23, 2023 / 4:21 PM

**DURATION: 47 minutes** 

**ATTENDEES: 8 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist** 

WHAT HAPPENED: JHMR Ski Patrol advised the BOA that it was responding to a skier who was cliffed-out in the backcountry south of the resort. No assistance was required from TCSAR.

#### **INJURED SKIER AT SKI LAKE**

FEBRUARY 24, 2023 / 12:35 PM

**DURATION: 10 minutes** 

**ATTENDEES: 21** 

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was called regarding a skier at Ski Lake who had a dislocated shoulder. As the team mobilized a response, the group called back to say they would be able to make it out on their own.

## AVALANCHE IN THE SNOW KING BACKCOUNTRY

PEBRUARY 24, 2023/12:47PM
DURATION: 2 hours, 13 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 24 - Snow King Ski Patrol Assist** 

WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR received an alert about an avalanche involving two skiers on an out-of-bounds run on Snow King Mountain. The skiers had exited a gate at the top of the ski area and were descending an area known as Scotty's Ridge when they triggered the avalanche. Both skiers were local residents on their lunch break and carrying avalanche safety equipment. They both were caught in the slide and lost their skis in the incident, with one skier partially buried and sustaining injuries.

TCSAR responded with a helicopter short-haul team. After assessing the situation, TCSAR short-hauled both skiers to a landing zone and a waiting ambulance at the START Bus Barn.

This accident serves as a good reminder that Snow King's backcountry is not avalanche controlled, and that the terrain should be taken seriously despite its close proximity to town.

#### **AVALANCHE IN TACO BELL COULOIR**

FEBRUARY 24, 2023 / 10:24 PM

**DURATION: 9 minutes ATTENDEES: 19** 

WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR was paged for an avalanche with a possible burial at the Taco Bell Couloir on East Gros Ventre Butte. Two skiers had triggered the slide, which poured into Flat Creek behind a restaurant. The RP contacted the other skier via phone and learned there was no burial. TCSAR stood down but the Town of Jackson issued a nexus alert regarding potential flooding from the avalanche-dammed creek.

#### INJURED SKIER IN NO NAME CANYON

FEBRUARY 25, 2023/2:42PM DURATION: 1 hour ATTENDEES: 22



WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR volunteers were called to respond to an avalanche involving a skier in No Name Canyon. The skier had been part of a guided group of three that had entered the backcountry from the JHMR boundary. There were no burials associated with the avalanche but one skier sustained injuries that prevented him and the rest of his group from exiting the backcountry on their own power.

TCSAR responded to the accident with a team in the helicopter, which was able to land near the site. The skiers were loaded into the ship and flown to the landing zone at the base of Teton Village. The helicopter returned to pick up the remaining SAR volunteers in the field before flying back to TCSAR hangar in Jackson.

## CLIFFED-OUT SKIER IN THE GRAND TARGHEE BACKCOUNTRY

FEBRUARY 28, 2023 / 2:08 PM DURATION: 1 hour, 45 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 8** 

WHAT HAPPENED: Grand Targhee dispatch notified the BOA that the resort's ski patrol was exiting the boundary to help a skier who was stranded above some cliffs. Patrol was able to get coordinates from the man's phone so they could bring him skins and help him walk back to the resort.

#### **UAV REQUEST FOR RED TOP MEADOWS**

MARCH 2, 2023 / 12:04AM **DURATION**: 41 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 4** 

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA received a request from Teton County Sheriff's Office to fly an unmanned aerial vehicle (drone) to help locate a 17-year-old male who was missing from Red Top Meadows. The boy was located before TCSAR could launch the drone, and the team stood down.

## HELICOPTER REQUEST FROM COEUR d'ALENE, IDAHO

MARCH 2, 2023 / 2:40PM DURATION: 20 minutes



ATTENDEES: 7
Board Call Only

WHAT HAPPENED: Kootenai County SAR in northern Idaho called TCSAR with a helicopter request to help extract a 25-year-old male who was injured in a logging accident. Air Med and the National Guard had already declined the mission because of weather. After reviewing the incident, TCSAR declined the mission due to time of day, distance, and weather.

## FALSE inReach ACTIVATION ON TETON PASS

MARCH 5, 2023 / 10:42AM **DURATION**: 10 minutes

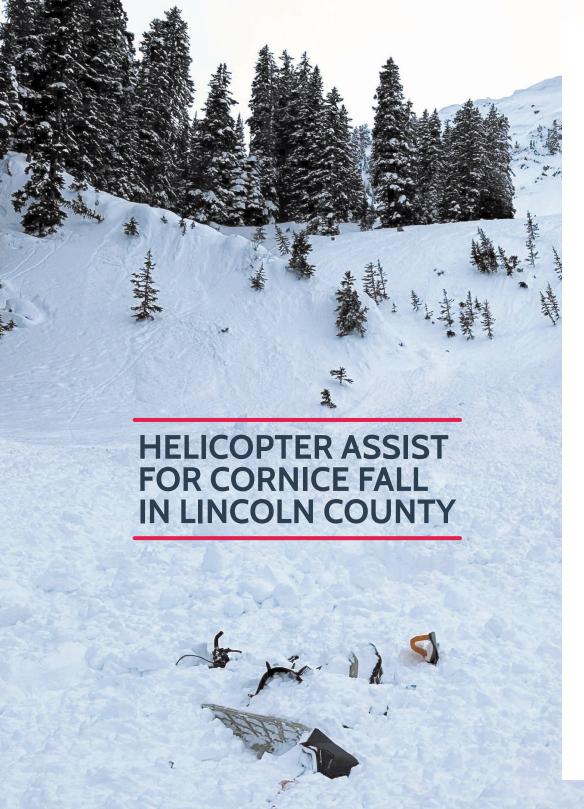
ATTENDEES: 8
Board Call Only

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was called regarding a Garmin inReach SOS activation on Teton Pass. Coordinates put the inReach at the parking lot on top of Teton Pass. A sheriff deputy was assigned to check the parking lot. While dispatch was on the SAR conference call, the deputy found the subject and confirmed that it was a false activation.

#### **AVALANCHE ON PUCKER FACE**

MARCH 5, 2023 / 1:32PM
DURATION: 1 hour, 14 minutes
ATTENDEES: 8 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: JHMR Ski Patrol notified the BOA that they were responding to an avalanche on Pucker Face. Two patrollers went out to meet the group and confirmed that one had been caught but not buried and no one was injured. Patrol updated dispatch that all were OK and back inbounds.



#### MARCH 5, 2023/3:29PM **DURATION: 3 hours.**

21 minutes **ATTENDEES: 23** 



Star Valley SAR Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: A Star Valley man used his snowmobile to access a steep ridge line with some friends in the Dry Creek area of the Salt River Mountains, outside of Afton, Wyo. The man was about 20 feet from the edge of the cornice on his snowmobile when it broke beneath him, sending him down into another drainage known as Swift Creek. During the approximate 1,200foot fall and avalanche over multiple cliffs, he managed to deploy his avalanche airbag. He ended up buried up to his shoulders, with his head out of the snow, at the bottom of numerous cliff bands. The man's snowmobile was nearby, also partially buried.

The man was equipped with a handheld BCA radio and was able to communicate with his partners still on the ridge. Due to the steep and unforgiving terrain, the group was not able to find a way down the ridge to get to him and they called 911, which alerted Star Valley Search & Rescue in nearby Afton.

Star Valley SAR deployed a team of volunteers up Dry Creek but immediately recognized that Swift Creek would be very difficult to access via a ground response. The combination of elevated avalanche danger, time of day, and remote location would make accessing the patient before nightfall extremely difficult, if not impossible, without air resources.

According to Clint Erickson, Captain of Star Valley SAR, the team first called an air ambulance in Rock Springs, but that organization informed rescuers they

would not be able to dig the man out of the snow for an effective operation. Erickson then called Teton County Search & Rescue, which accepted the mission at 3:43 p.m.

The TCSAR helicopter departed the Jackson hangar with a pilot and four volunteers just past 4 p.m. As the team approached, they were able to see the man's orange air bag on the snow. The helicopter landed near the man and volunteers were able to dig him out of the snow. The volunteers packaged the man in a full body vacuum splint, and carried him about 30 feet to the ship. They loaded the patient internally and transported him to a landing zone and waiting ambulance at the Osmond Elementary School parking lot in Afton at 5:30 p.m.

"We're extraordinarily grateful for TCSAR jumping on this call and completing it with a favorable result," said Erickson. "Without the helicopter resource, this incident would have had a much different outcome."

During the operation, additional TCSAR volunteers drove the fuel truck down to Alpine to ensure a safe flight home for the air crew. The weather cooperated, and the heli was able to fly all the way back to Jackson without ground assistance. All volunteers returned safely.

A couple of things made this rescue successful. The patient helped himself by being equipped with an avalanche air bag and being able to communicate via radio with his partners. TCSAR is grateful to be able to share the helicopter resource with surrounding communities in matters of life or death. TCSAR also appreciates the partnership with Star Valley SAR to help bring this mission to a successful close.

#### INJURED SKIER IN MOSQUITO CREEK

MARCH 7, 2023/10:04AM DURATION: 1 hour, 56 minutes ATTENDEES: 17



WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR was notified of an injured skier deep in the Mosquito Creek area. The skier, a 16-year-old local male, needed rescuing after he aired over a natural cliff feature and upon landing, struck an object beneath the snow. The skier and a partner had used snowmobiles to access the area that morning and were about 7 miles from the trailhead.

At the time of the accident, TCSAR volunteers were already in the rescue helicopter getting ready for a training operation with Grand Targhee Ski Patrol and avalanche dogs. Just as the ship touched down at Grand Targhee, the team got the call. They lifted up and flew to the site in Mosquito Creek.

TCSAR decided the best way to extract the patient was via short-haul. Once on scene, the volunteers assessed the skier's injuries, packaged him for short-haul, and flew him to a landing zone and waiting ambulance near Fall Creek Road.

## FALSE APPLE CRASH NOTIFICATION ON TOGWOTEE PASS

MARCH 8, 2023 / 10:29AM

DURATION: 8 hours, 16 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 21** 

WHAT HAPPENED: Dispatch notified TCSAR about an Apple crash notification from a 25-year-old male in the Togwotee area. User was out of cell service and dispatch was unable to contact. No emergency contacts were associated with the phone number. Coordinates placed the phone near the CD trail. Dispatch called Togwotee and Lava rental companies to check if he had rented through them but he hadn't. Due to the number of false alerts that have originated from iPhones, the BOA decided to hold until they received confirmation of injury. Almost three and a half hours later, the phone sent another crash notification from the same location but now the battery was between 31-60%. The BOA was called again and determined that a team should be sent to the location and verify if there was an actual

crash. A snowmobile team traveled to the location and gave a wide search, but no injured persons or phone could be found. It was presumed the the phone had fallen out a snowmobiler's pocket and set off the alert.

## LOST SKIER IN GRAND TARGHEE BACKCOUNTRY

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MARCH 9, 2023 / 11:55AM DURATION: 2 hours, 33 minutes



**ATTENDEES: 12** 

WHAT HAPPENED: A man in his early 80's got lost after ducking a rope in the Grand Targhee backcountry. Ski patrol followed his tracks and found him. Patrol determined that due to his location, fatigue, and technical terrain, the best action would be a helicopter rescue. TCSAR sent a ship with two short-haulers and was able to bring the subject back to a location where he could ski back down with two other patrollers to the base of the ski area.

#### STRANDED RAFTERS ON THE SNAKE RIVER

MARCH 11, 2023 / 12:55 PM DURATION: 3 hours, 50 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 13** 

WHAT HAPPENED: A husband and wife from Twin Falls, Idaho, launched a rental raft from the Wilson Bridge of the Snake River and soon determined that they would not be able to make it to their destination several miles downriver.

Recognizing they'd gone as far as they could safely go, the couple parked their raft along the side of the river next to the levee and called for help. TCSAR volunteers responded by driving snowmobiles down the levee to the waiting couple. The volunteers lifted the raft out of the water and towed it behind a snowmobile back to a private road where the couple could pick it up later. The couple were given a lift on snowmobiles back to the Wilson Bridge.

This incident is a good example of why it's important to call Search & Rescue before a situation escalates into a more challenging or dangerous scenario—not just for yourself but first responders as well. TCSAR was happy to help out this couple and bring this incident to a safe conclusion.

## FATAL SNOWMOBILE CRASH ON TOGWOTEE PASS

MARCH 12, 2023 / 2:45 PM DURATION: 4 hours, 30 minutes



**ATTENDEES: 23** 

WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR received a call about a snowmobiler who had been trapped under his machine in deep snow. A 42-year-old man from Casper was riding with a partner when the two lost sight of each other on Togwotee Pass. They had been riding near the X Trail, which is a spur of the larger CD Trail near the top of the pass. The partner eventually found the man from Casper pinned under his sled in the snow. The partner was able to send out an SOS alert on a satellite device, which mobilized first responders.

TCSAR responded via snowmobiles and the helicopter. Multiple partner agencies also responded to the effort, including Teton County Sheriff Deputies and Jackson Hole Fire/EMS. Unfortunately, the man did not survive the incident.

#### INJURED SKIER IN ROCK SPRINGS CANYON

MARCH 17, 2023 / 2:56PM **DURATION**: 42 minutes

ATTENDEES: 10 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: JHMR Ski Patrol notified the BOA that they were responding to a female skier with a knee injury in Rock Springs Canyon. Patrol was able to bring the woman back inbounds, and no additional SAR resources were needed.

## HELI ASSIST FOR MISSING SNOWMOBILER IN BONNEVILLE COUNTY, IDAHO

MARCH 18, 2023 / 1:07PM DURATION: 6 hours, 32 minutes



ATTENDEES: 29 - Bonneville County SAR Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: Bonneville County Idaho SAR contacted TCSAR for a helicopter assist in the search for a missing snowmobiler in the Palisades area of the Snake River Mountains. A 50-year-old man had gone missing after riding his snowmobile up Pole Canyon, outside of Victor,

Idaho, the previous day and had not been seen or heard from since. Teton County Idaho SAR was involved in the hours-long search on snowmobiles. Air Idaho, a private helicopter ambulance, joined the search from the air.

TCSAR's heli team searched for more than two hours from the air. The team eventually spotted the man; he was alive but stuck in extreme terrain. The heli landed and volunteers were able to reach him and help him board the ship for a flight out of the backcountry. TCSAR's heli team was able to get back to the hangar in Jackson at 7:15 p.m., about 20 minutes before sunset.

TCSAR appreciates the coordination from the different SAR teams and agencies involved to help find this missing snowmobiler and get him back to safety.

#### SKIER FALL DOWN CENTRAL COULOIR

MARCH 18, 2023 / 1:32 PM
DURATION: 1 hour, 58 minutes
ATTENDEES: 31 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: A witness called 911 after watching a skier fall about 700 feet down Central Couloir on Cody Peak.

The skier, a woman from Salt Lake City, lost her balance about halfway down the couloir. She tumbled down the couloir and over a cliff band at the bottom, sustaining multiple injuries. Her partner, a man from Victor, Idaho, was still up in the couloir.

JHMR Ski Patrol were first on scene while TCSAR mobilized a response with a team in the helicopter. The helicopter was able to land in Cody Bowl, where ski patrollers and SAR members helped load the patient inside the ship. Then, she was flown to a landing zone (LZ) and waiting ambulance at the base of Teton Village.

The woman's partner was able to collect her skis still in the couloir. He pitched them over the cliff at the bottom before he jumped the mandatory exit cliffs to the field of snow below. He was able to ski out of the backcountry on his own power.

## INJURED SNOWMOBILER ON TOGWOTEE PASS

MARCH 20, 2023 / 10:44 AM
DURATION: 3 hours, 16 minutes

ATTENDEES: 22 - Brooks Lake Lodge & BTNF Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: The BOA was paged for a 37-year-old male who sustained numerous severe injuries after crashing on his snowmobile on Togwotee Pass. TCSAR responded with a medical team and two snowmobile teams. Brooks Lake Lodge sent two WFR's (wilderness first responders) on snowmobiles, while a ranger from the Bridger-Teton National Forest also responded with one additional person and a rescue toboggan. The patient was splinted and treated on scene and transported to a waiting ambulance on the highway.

#### INJURED SKIER IN NO NAME CANYON

MARCH 22, 2023 / 12:06 PM

DURATION: 5 hours, 39 minutes

ATTENDEES: 28 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: A male skier became injured while descending a steep, very narrow southeast-facing couloir known as Mini Gothic in No Name Canyon. The 37-year-old had accessed the area after entering the backcountry through a gate at JHMR. The accident left the skier in significant pain and unable to ski or walk. The rescue involved members of JHMR Ski Patrol and TCSAR volunteers.

After careful analysis of the weather, TCSAR decided to deploy a helicopter for a short-haul operation to extract the patient. Ski patrol was already on scene with two members who were tremendously helpful in coordinating the response. The helicopter flew to the accident site and dropped off two TCSAR volunteers to care for the patient at roughly 9,600 feet. The helicopter lifted off and left the crew in the field before landing on Fish Creek Road to rig for short-haul; this step is mandatory to attach a rope to the bottom of the helicopter that is used to pick up the patient and rescuers for a short flight out of the backcountry.

Meanwhile, TCSAR sent a ski team of eight volunteers to the aerial tram at JHMR as backup. As the ski team went up the tram, inclement weather grounded the helicopter on Fish Creek Road. At approximately 2:10 p.m., the ski team entered the backcountry from a top gate at the resort and began making their way toward the patient. The helicopter eventually was not able to fly due to icing, leaving the full response to the ski team.

At roughly 3 p.m. ski patrol and TCSAR volunteers packaged the patient and together transported him down the mountain in the rescue sled.

The teams guided the sled down 2,800 vertical feet over roughly two miles and variable terrain to Fish Creek Road, where the patient was handed over to an ambulance with Jackson Hole Fire/EMS at 4 p.m. The various members of ski patrol and TCSAR closed the mission and headed back to their respective bases.

#### **INJURED SKIER ON FOUR PINES**

MARCH 23, 2023 / 2:30PM
DURATION: 2 hours, 35 minutes
ATTENDEES: 27 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: Dispatch received a call from a backcountry skiing party on Four Pines south of JHMR reporting that a 50-year-old female was injured after striking a tree. JHMR Ski Patrol responded to the scene, while TCSAR deployed a helicopter team. A ground-based team was also dispatched to the aerial tram to serve as backup if weather prevented a helicopter rescue, as had been the case the previous day. The weather cleared long enough for the helicopter team to complete a successful short-haul extraction to the Teton Village LZ, where the patient was transferred to a waiting ambulance.

## INJURED SNOWMOBILER ON TOGWOTEE PASS

MARCH 28, 2023 / 1:27PM
DURATION: 3 hours, 48 minutes

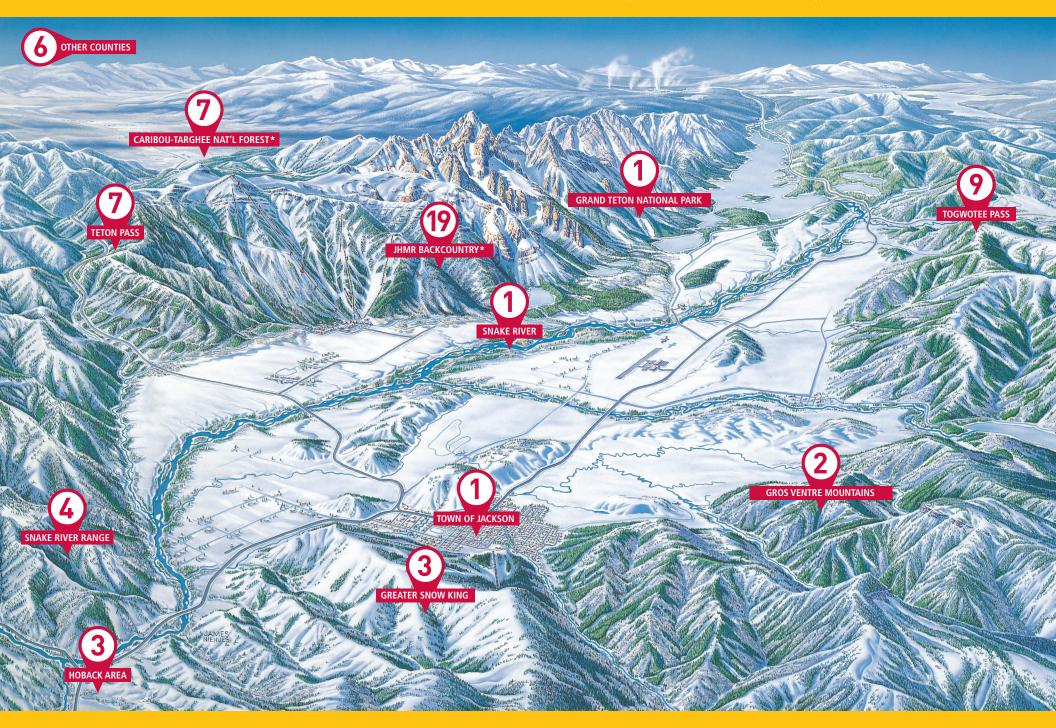


ATTENDEES: 13

WHAT HAPPENED: A man in his mid 50's sustained injuries when he rolled his sled during a guided snowmobile trip. The initial page also concerned a missing person from the same party who had become lost after trying to sled out of the backcountry to get help. That person was eventually located while TCSAR mobilized a ground team on snowmobiles and a team of volunteers in the helicopter. The heli team flew to the accident site and volunteers were able to load the patient internally for a short flight to a

(continued)

## **SEARCH AND RESCUE LOCATIONS / DECEMBER 1, 2022 – MAY 31, 2023**



landing zone (LZ) and waiting ambulance with Jackson Hole Fire/EMS at the Blackrock Ranger Station.

#### SKIER WITH MEDICAL ISSUE IN MAIL CABIN

MARCH 29, 2023 / 11:47 AM DURATION: 2 hours, 43 minutes ATTENDEES: 14



WHAT HAPPENED: A skier called 911 to report that his partner was having a medical issue in Mail Cabin on the west side of Teton Pass. The skier had to leave his partner behind on the trail in order to ski out to find cell phone service. TCSAR initiated a helicopter response, with ground teams as backup in case the helicopter could not fly, and to secure an LZ at a parking lot or on Hwy 22. The team also put in a request for Air Idaho, a private air ambulance based in Driggs, in case the patient needed a flight to a regional hospital.

Initially, the TCSAR heli team could not pinpoint the exact location of the patient due to thick timber and steep ravine features of Mail Cabin. After circling the area numerous times, the team spotted the patient near a meadow about one mile from the Coal Creek parking lot.

Teton County Sheriff Deputies were instrumental to help briefly close the highway as TCSAR volunteers rigged the ship for short-haul. Meanwhile, volunteers packaged the patient for flight and short-hauled him to an LZ on the highway, where he was transferred to an ambulance with Jackson Hole Fire/EMS.

#### **INJURED SKIER IN ROCK SPRINGS CANYON**

MARCH 31, 2023/3:08PM

DURATION: 1 hour, 4 minutes

ATTENDEES: 9 - JHMR Ski Patrol Assist

WHAT HAPPENED: JHMR Patrol notified the BOA that they were responding to the Why Not area of Rock Springs for an adult male with a broken leg. No additional resources were needed, and patrol completed the mission.

## LOST SKIER IN GRAND TARGHEE BACKCOUNTRY

APRIL 3, 2023 / 11:00 AM DURATION: 1 hour, 27 minutes

**ATTENDEES: 9 - Grand Targhee Patrol Assist** 

WHAT HAPPENED: Grand Targhee Ski Patrol called dispatch with a report that they were following a skier who had gone out of bounds and was headed to the bottom of Teton Canyon. Patrol was requesting if someone from TCSAR would be able to meet them and the subject and tow them out to the trailhead via snowmobile. As one TCSAR member responded on a snowmobile, ski patrol made contact with the skier and brought him back inbounds without assistance.

#### INJURED HIKER IN GAME CREEK

MAY 11, 2023 / 11:00 AM

**DURATION: 2 hours, 30 minutes** 

**ATTENDEES: 19** 

WHAT HAPPENED: TCSAR was paged regarding an injured woman in her 50's who was about 1.5 miles up Game Creek. The patient had slipped on the snow and reported a suspected lower leg injury. She was unable to remove her shoe to assess for bleeding and had two large dogs with her. One team member responded directly to the trailhead while a RZR team responded from the hangar. The RZR team made contact with the patient, applied a splint to her ankle, and transported her to the trailhead.

## **THANK YOU**

We are grateful for the partnerships that help our team to be successful in the field.

#### WITH GRATITUDE

Teton County Sheriff's Office and Dispatch, Fremont County SAR, GTNP Jenny Lake Climbing Rangers, USFS Blackrock Ranger District, Jackson Hole Fire/EMS, JHMR Ski and Mountain Patrol, Grand Targhee Ski and Bike Patrol, Lincoln County SAR, Snow King Mountain, Star Valley SAR, Teton County Idaho SAR, Bonneville County Idaho SAR, Wyoming Department of Transportation, Bridger-Teton Avalanche Center, and Togwotee Mountain Lodge.















### TCSAR USHERS IN NEW LOGO

Since it was founded in 1993, Teton County Search & Rescue has seen many changes. Technology, gear and equipment now allow the recreating public to go faster and farther into the backcountry, placing new demands on rescuers.

As of this summer, another change includes the team's logo, the third such iteration in TCSAR's 30-year history. The new logo is intended to be clean, modest and instantly recognizable, with the silhouette of the Tetons as the anchor. A red sky represents "Rescue Ready," and helps tie in the colors and heritage of the previous logo that represented the team for three decades.

A specific skill or rescue profile was avoided on the new logo due to the many different ways the team responds. While TCSAR has become known for its helicopter operations, that alone would ignore all other rescue skills the team possesses. **Encompassing all of what TCSAR** does and has accomplished after 30 years is a difficult task, but ultimately, the Tetons remain the bedrock for the team and its unbreakable connection to the community.

TMBR, a Jackson-based creative agency, designed the logo in coordination with a small group of TCSAR volunteers and Foundation staff.

TCSAR's first logo was brought on by Alan Merrell, who started the team in 1993 at the direction of

Roger Millward, the Teton County Sheriff in the early 1990s. That first logo included a bugling elk. It lasted only a short while before local artist and TCSAR member Diane Benefiel designed what many consider to be the original TCSAR logo.

Benefiel, a graphic designer and artist who worked at the Jackson Hole News from the late 1970s until 2000, became a TCSAR volunteer in 1993 along with her husband, Keith.

Soon enough, Alan asked Diane to design a new team logo. One of her original designs included a compass with the Indian Paintbrush, Wyoming's state flower. (These were similar themes considered during the new logo design process.) Alan was not convinced, and asked her to go back to the drawing board and include a climbing rope with a double fisherman's knot, and an image of a high-angle rescuer in the Tetons.

"The reason he wanted a highangle rescuer was he felt it was indicative of the difficulty and high level of skill the team could perform," Diane said. "He knew that if we as a team could master high-angle rescue, we could do any rescue."

As Diane recalls, Alan also believed that by dedicating training to high-angle rescues, everyone on the team would have a job, which would help the young team build

structure, trust and unity. "When it came to the knot," she said, "they knew that a correctly tied knot would save someone's life, and that symbolized the trust everyone had for each other."

As a rescuer, Diane knew the knots and how to draw them.

"I've always liked bright colors," she said. "The ropes are bright colors for obvious reasons, and the black was just for contrast. I liked the circle because I liked round patches. In the end, Alan liked it, too, and the team adopted it."

Ever since. Diane's illustration has represented TCSAR on all teamissue gear and apparel, mission equipment, stickers and letterhead, social media, snowmobiles, UTV's, trucks, and a helicopter. The patch even made a pilgrimage to space aboard the International Space Station.

Diane appreciates and understands why the team would want a new logo after 30 years. "It's a new team, it's a new look," she said. "People forget the old, but if you keep a record of it in the hangar, people will be able to remember it and feel the nostalgia."



The very first TCSAR logo.



The first 30 years logo by Diane Benefiel.



The new TCSAR logo by TMBR.

## TCSAR CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF GIVING BACK

Teton County Search & Rescue was founded in 1993 with an original class of 30 volunteers. Of those, three team members continue to serve: Mike Moyer, Mike Estes, and Tim Ciocarlan.

In this year of reflection, we recognize and give thanks to all volunteers and their families for the sacrifices they have made for the betterment of our community. We all stand on the shoulders of those who came before us, and we are immensely grateful for your service. Please stay connected through our newsletter, social media, and events as we bring you more stories of the past 30 years.

#### **MIKE MOYER**

"From my earliest years on the team and up through the present, what I treasure most about the team is the honor and privilege of doing hard things with good people; deploying into tough rescue settings to help people on their worst days alongside some of the very finest people I have ever worked with."

#### **TIM CIOCARLAN**

"I have been asked when I will hang up my SAR hat, but interestingly, no SAR teammate has ever asked that question.

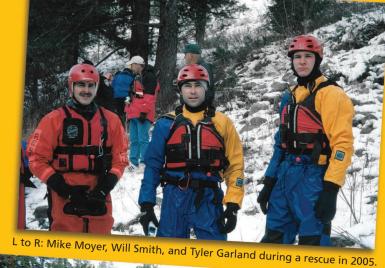
I think it's because they know that being on this team is part of who you are and what you do for your community, helping others, and your amazing teammates.

Thirty years of training and rescuing is just something you do, but nobody can do it without a team. And it's fun."

#### **MIKE ESTES**

"My best friend was killed in a climbing accident when he and I were both 18. We had moved to Montana in the fall and worked at Bridger Bowl during the winter. The next summer, our neighbor took us climbing and rappelling for the first time and we were hooked. When the accident happened, I was back home visiting family in Wisconsin. I always felt like, 'Would things have been different if I had been there?'

"The next year, I took a mountaineering course with NOLS so I could learn the right way to use ropes and climb in the mountains and that really started my path in recreation teaching and leading climbing, ski, and bike trips. After college, my wife and I moved to Jackson, and when the announcement came out about the start of the SAR team, one of my friends encouraged me to apply for it. After a couple of years with the team, I realized that I was now in a position where I could actually make a difference in somebody's life. And I think I have staved on this long because I have been able to be there when people need help and I am surrounded by teammates who feel the same way."





Tim Ciocarlan from an early rescue.



TCSAR volunteers and others at a team party in 1994.

Front row, left to right: Todd Cedarholm, Ray Coleman, Cindy Budge, JC Whitfield, Alan Merrell, Mike Estes, Diane Benefiel, Jane Hilt.

Second row, left to right: Tim Ciocarlan, Craig Harmening, Glenn Messersmith, Doug Meyer, John Grant, Ray Shriver.

Back row, left to right: Lenny Cusamano, Dave King (Fremont County), Mike Delaney, John Krick, Suzie Kirvinskee, Rich Troy, Jeff Stratton, Don Perkins, Lindsey Moss, Keith Benefiel, Lou Scarlett, Richard Van Gytenbeek.



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## **SHRIVER SOCIETY**

RAY SHRIVER served on the Teton County Search & Rescue team from its inception in 1993 until his death in 2012. Ray died on February 15, 2012, in a helicopter crash while on a Search & Rescue mission. The Shriver Society was created in his honor. Your long-term gift with the Shriver Society augments training, equipment and other ancillary support, directly impacting TCSAR's mission.



Ray Shriver, right, was a tough and passionate leader who helped build TCSAR into what it is today.

## The Shriver Society is a group of dedicated supporters of Teton County Search & Rescue who make a long-term, significant contribution to the volunteer team.

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- 2 Donates hats for TCSAR's ecommerce site and gloves for JHMR Backcountry Gate Survey Volunteers.
- 3 Feeds the Team in holiday style at the December training dinner.
- 4 Cooks the team a delicious Thanksgiving meal every November.
- **5** Generously supplied wine and NA beers for Mission Critical events, and raised funds for TCSAR through in-store promotions.



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## THANK YOU FOR 13 YEARS: A LETTER FROM RETIRING ED STEPHANIE THOMAS

#### Dear Friends,

The Teton County Search & Rescue Foundation has truly been my life's passion: As you may know, I helped found the organization in 2010, three years after I joined TCSAR as a volunteer. After giving so much of myself to this cause for so long, I am pivoting away from my work at the Foundation to focus my TCSAR energies on being a volunteer. Last summer, when TCSAR volunteers asked the Foundation to raise funds for a year-round rescue helicopter, I let our Board of Directors know that upon steering this essential campaign to completion, I would be stepping down as Executive Director. That time came on May 31, 2023.

As the founder of this nonprofit, I am grateful to be leaving behind an incredible board and amazing staff to continue the work. I have no doubt of their future successes and can't wait to cheer them on. Leaving this organization with satisfaction about work accomplished but not burned out was always my goal, and I'm so glad to be able to say that has been achieved. I truly believe we need more leaders to showcase leaving when satisfied to demonstrate that change and progress is something to be celebrated.

The friendships, community partnerships and connections I've had the privilege of creating and being part of during my 13 years at TCSAR Foundation are what I hold onto dearly; they have made my time as ED an absolute joy. I'm honored to have you all in my life in many ways, and hope we can continue our friendships, brainstorming sessions and problem-solving moving forward.

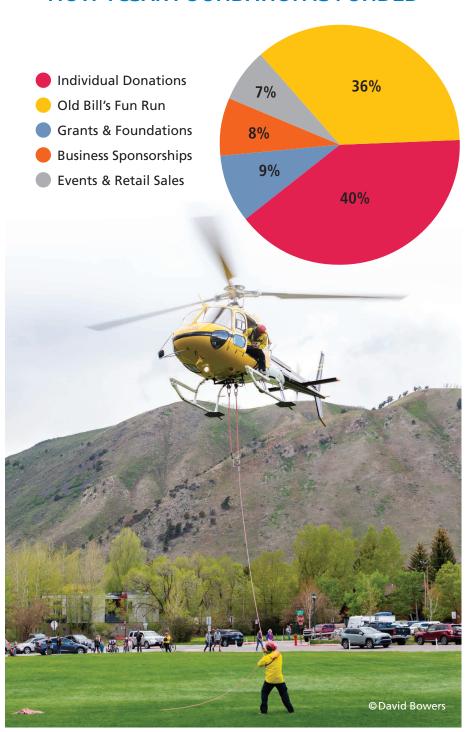
The Foundation is well positioned to make this transition and I am so excited that as of June 1, Liz King will be serving as Interim-Executive Director and Matt Hansen will continue as our Director of Communications. When we hired them in 2019, I could not believe my luck to be able to work with such incredible professionals who wanted to stand alongside me in bringing this organization to the next level. I am grateful for all those I've worked with at the TCSAR Foundation and am so glad to be leaving the leadership positions in their hands for this transition.



As for me, I don't quite know what's next. I'm planning on taking some time to tend to my community garden plot, responding to rescues as a volunteer, and hopefully put my mountain bike to good use this summer. But I also love a challenge, so when the next one arrives, I'll be sure to let you know where it's taking me. Please enjoy the beautiful summer I'm sure the Tetons have in store for us.

Until our trails cross again, **STEPHANIE THOMAS** 

#### **HOW TCSAR FOUNDATION IS FUNDED**





TCSAR volunteer Terri Romanowski helps build backcountry safety awareness during Winter Trails Day on Teton Pass.

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#### FROM THE TCSAR FOUNDATION

The mission of the Teton County Search & Rescue Foundation is to support TCSAR through direct volunteer support, community education, and advocacy.

This support manifests in many forms. Training and outfitting the SAR volunteers are our primary goals, but one of the more pertinent initiatives is preventative search and rescue, or PSAR. Our efforts to provide education, information and outreach are intended to foster a more informed community of outdoor enthusiasts, something that benefits us all when we recreate in our collective backyard in Teton County.

I want to extend my gratitude to the Jackson Hole community for enabling us to provide Search & Rescue team support year after year. This year, we accomplished one of our most ambitious fundraising goals to date: Mission Critical. Thanks to all of you, Mission Critical is now a Critical Success. The goal to have a full-time, year-round, SAR-dedicated helicopter in Teton County has been achieved. We asked, and the community showed up, turning a longtime TCSAR dream into reality.

I'm proud to live in a place that can support a bold idea like purchasing a helicopter for the benefit of the entire community. No one ever plans on having a day where you need to be rescued, but it happens, and it can happen to anyone. From personal experience, I can say that having a helicopter on your side is a game-changer.

TCSAR Foundation is blessed to have a deep pool of talent, both on staff and on the Board of Directors. Our staff is dedicated and community focused. The work they produce is professional and relevant. This amazing group didn't miss a beat with community education and programming while tackling the largest capital campaign in the history of our organization. I am always in awe at the depth of knowledge on our volunteer Board. We have diverse representation from all walks of life in our community and expertise in law, finance, governance, education, and nonprofit management. The combination of dedicated volunteers and ultra-competent staff produces positive outcomes that benefit us all. I want to say thank you to everyone at the Foundation for an amazing year.

We are also entering a period of transition. Stephanie Thomas, the Foundation's Executive Director for the last 13 years, has retired from the Foundation and is moving on to new challenges. We are grateful for her creativity, vision and passion for the SAR mission. Steph has helped put TCSAR on the world map and created a nonprofit model that the SAR community at large looks up to.

With the talented and hardworking staff and Board at the Foundation, along with the incredible dedication of all TCSAR volunteers, I have no doubt that we will continue to meet our mission.

Thank you for supporting TCSAR.

JESSE STOVER

**TCSAR Foundation Board President** 

