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## **‘Comeback Kid’ Ski Areas Greening Up Their Act**

***New Ski Area Environmental Scorecard finds some past offenders becoming industry leaders in environmental protection and resource conservation.***

SIERRA NEVADA, CA - What do Mammoth Mountain, Squaw Valley, Telluride and Park City have in common? These ski resorts used to be at the bottom of the class on the annual Ski Area Environmental Scorecard. Not any longer. Four resorts who previously received low grades on the scorecard are now receiving As and Bs as a result of improving their environmental stewardship.

For example, Squaw Valley scored a D for several years after illegally filling streams and altering stream channels, impacting wetlands and violating water quality standards. Now Squaw Valley is scoring an A for the first time, because they haven't been cited for any further water quality violations, and they've reduced their energy footprint through programs such as retrofitting old buildings, using biodiesel in their fleet, and investing in more energy-efficient snow guns.

The story is similar at Mammoth Mountain, which never scored more than a low C for snowmaking and real estate projects and a lack of green programs. This year Mammoth scored it's first B for adopting a variety of new resource conservation programs and policies, such as using solar and geothermal energy and supporting an expansion of the nearby Hoover Wilderness.

“These ‘comeback kid’ resorts are now biting at the heels of the ski industry’s environmental leaders,” notes Autumn Bernstein, Land Use Campaign Director for Sierra Nevada Alliance, a member of the Ski Area Citizens Coalition. “We’re thrilled to highlight resorts such as Squaw Valley and Mammoth that are making a turnaround. The goal of the Ski Area Scorecard has always been to promote change, not beat up on the industry’s worst. I think these ‘comeback kid’ resorts are simply listening to their customers.”

“The Comeback Kid story is not an industry norm,” explains Ben Doon, Research Director for the Ski Area Citizens Coalition. “Resorts like Kirkwood, Northstar, and Colorado’s Breckenridge and Copper, are continuing their outdated, destructive practices and have ranked amongst the poorest environmental performers on the Scorecard since 2000. Others, like Idaho’s Sun Valley, seem to get worse each year. “

(more)

Grades for California ski resorts are listed below:

Resort	Score	Grade	Resort	Score	Grade
Alpine Meadows	73.8	A	Snow Valley Mountain Resort	64.9	C
Squaw Valley USA	70.7	A	Snow Summit Mountain Resort	64.6	C
Mountain High Resort	69.8	B	Sierra Summit Mountain Resort	63.1	C
Boreal Mountain Resort	68.9	B	Sugar Bowl Ski Resort	60.5	C
Mt. Shasta Board and Ski Park	66.7	B	Dodge Ridge	50.7	C
Bear Mountain Resort	66.2	B	Heavenly Mountain Resort	50.2	C
Mammoth Mountain Ski Area	66.2	B	Northstar-at-Tahoe	48.5	D
Sierra-at-Tahoe	65.8	B	Bear Valley Mountain Resort	47.1	D
Homewood Mountain Resort	65.3	B	Kirkwood Mountain Resort	37.8	F
Mt. Rose - Ski Tahoe	65.0	B			

To view each resort's score and details on their environmental management practices, visit: [www.skiareacitizens.com](http://www.skiareacitizens.com). Skiers and snowboarders can easily send emails to resorts through the website, thanking resorts for their environmental stewardship or encouraging them to improve their environmental policies and management.

Since 2000, the Scorecard has evaluated 77 ski resorts throughout the western United States. New for this year, 14 ski resorts in Western Canada have been added as that region gears up for the 2010 Winter Olympics. Research on Canadian resorts has been conducted by Scorecard-partner Under the Sleeping Buffalo Research in Banff, Alberta.

"The story here is pretty clear to me," said Ryan Demmy Bidwell, Executive Director of Colorado Wild, another member of the coalition. "Cleaning up your act, and improving your score, is very possible. But it does require more than lip service and marketing rhetoric. Being a good environmental steward requires a shift in ideology and an honest commitment of resources."

The Ski Area Environmental Scorecard, published for the eighth consecutive year by the Ski Area Citizens' Coalition, is the only independent review that gives skiers and snowboarders a way to assess the environmental performance of their favorite resorts. Resorts are scored on a comprehensive suite of criteria such as protection of old growth forests, alpine wildlife and water resources, along with proactive steps such as carpool programs, recycling and using green energy. More detailed descriptions can be found on-line at [www.skiareacitizens.com](http://www.skiareacitizens.com).

Scorecard data is obtained from an annual survey, public records from government agencies, and from the resorts themselves. Freedom of Information Act and Public Records Act requests are filed with appropriate land managers to identify ski area development projects and management plans each spring. Resorts are also asked to fill out surveys and regarding their on-mountain environmental programs. All source documents can be viewed on the website.

**For the full 2007-2008 Ski Area Scorecard visit [www.skiareacitizens.com](http://www.skiareacitizens.com)**

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