

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2020



Keeping people on top of the Greatest  
Snow on Earth for 40 years.

# DIRECTORS' MESSAGE

We feel like we have been on a roller coaster ride for the past couple of months. The winter started out great with above-average snowfall throughout the state, then the sky seemed to dry up in late February and brought mostly dry conditions through the spring. The COVID-19 pandemic caused resorts to close and pushed many new users into the backcountry in March and April. The season ended with a snowpack 109% of average across the state. Unfortunately, there were two avalanche fatalities this season. Similar to last year, both parties were missing critical pieces of avalanche rescue gear. These accidents highlight the need for us to expand and continue delivering basic avalanche awareness messaging and programs. We are planning new and expanded programs to reach more users next season to prevent unnecessary fatalities.

After an amazing 28 year career at the UAC, Evelyn Lees retired in December. The staff is sad to see her gone, but excited for both the fun travel and play schedule Evelyn has planned. We hired a new forecaster, Nikki Champion, in November and are really happy to have her on board. The UAC also hired Hannah Whitney as our first Development Director and brought past intern and contractor Andy Nassetta onto the staff to coordinate the KBYG program, manage the trailhead signs, and teach our on-snow classes.

In these times of uncertainty, we are incredibly grateful for the amazing financial support of the backcountry community, local businesses, and state and federal programs. Without this support, the UAC would not be able to provide the forecasting, awareness, and education programs that the community relies on. Thank you to everyone who provided support this season.

We have a busy summer determining how to host fundraisers, hold events, and deliver programs like the Utah Snow and Avalanche Workshop virtually. We are developing a new trailhead avalanche awareness program and working closely with retailers on how we can reach more users with basic avalanche awareness information. A full list of events as they are scheduled will be posted at [utahavalanchecenter.org](http://utahavalanchecenter.org).

We don't know what the winter will look like, but we know that it will snow, there will be avalanches, and the need for forecasting, education, and awareness will be as strong as ever.

Sincerely,



Mark Staples  
Director,  
Forest Service UAC



Chad Brackelsberg  
Executive Director,  
Nonprofit UAC



**UAC Staff at USAW 2019**

# Utah Avalanche Center 2019-2020 Season Review

The Coronavirus changed everything this spring and sent a huge number of people into the backcountry in March and April

**109%**  
OF AVERAGE  
SNOWPACK

**314**  
human  
triggered  
avalanches

**28**  
people  
caught

**15**  
people  
buried

**2**  
killed



**\$\$\$**

**\$1,013,000**  
statewide budget

**32%**  
from federal,  
state and  
county govts

**68%**  
private  
sponsorship

**53%**  
spent on  
forecasting



**14**  
employees

**449**  
field days

**1,197**  
avalanche  
forecasts  
posted



**2.8 Million**  
page views

**242**  
videos  
produced

**2.1 Million**  
video views



**151**  
classes or  
presentations

**6,937**  
class or  
presentation  
attendees

Keeping people on top of the greatest snow on earth for 40 years!

# POINTS OF INTEREST

## **New Staff Members**

This winter we hired a new Avalanche Forecaster, Development Director, and Education and Awareness Coordinator

## **Amazing Community Support**

The backcountry community provided amazing financial support to the UAC

## **3.1 Million Contacts**

The UAC surpassed 3M annual contacts for the first time

## **Extensive Media Coverage**

Avalanche danger and the UAC received coverage by state media over 120 times throughout the season

## **23% Increase in Social Media Followers to 81,000**

Social media continues to be a key way the UAC delivers information to the community

## **First Statewide Avalanche Awareness Week**

20 avalanche awareness events from December 2-8 reaching over 700 people

## **New KBYG Presentation Materials**

We updated the KBYG presentation for Utah and the US and created a European specific KBYG presentation

## **50 Human Triggered Slides Reported in 48 Hours**

The combination of an April storm cycle, good riding, and more people in the backcountry after ski areas closed, resulted in many close calls with avalanches but fortunately no major accidents

## **Pebble Creek Avalanche Fatality**

UAC staff investigated and produced a detailed report on an avalanche fatality in Southeast Idaho adjacent to the Pebble Creek Ski Area on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest

# WHO WE ARE

**History** In the mid 1970s, avalanche information was recorded on a phone line in the Salt Lake District Office of the Wasatch National Forest. The UAC officially started nearly **40 years ago** in 1980 when the Forest Service and the National Weather Service (NWS) signed an agreement to formally establish the Utah Avalanche Forecast Center at the NWS office in Salt Lake City with three basic charters - to issue avalanche forecasts, provide avalanche education, and issue mountain weather forecasts. **30 years ago** in 1990, the nonprofit Friends of the UAC was formed to bridge the gap between the available funding and the actual expenses of running the avalanche center and assure long-term sustainability. The collaborative partnership between the Forest Service and the non-profit, collectively known as the **Utah Avalanche Center**, has grown to a staff of 14 working across 8 regions of Utah delivering avalanche forecasts, awareness, and education.

The Utah Avalanche Center provides avalanche forecasting, awareness, and education in the State of Utah giving backcountry travelers the tools they need to make wise decisions in the backcountry.

**Avalanche Forecasts** Our forecasts inform the public about what types of avalanches to expect, where they might occur, how big they may be, how sensitive they are, and how to avoid them. The forecasts are the most widely used UAC product. We forecast for 8 regions from Moab to Logan. The public accesses these advisories in the following ways:

- UAC Desktop and Mobile website
- UAC IOS App
- Recorded telephone message updated each day at 7:30 a.m.
- Early morning "Dawn Patrol" telephone message updated each day at 5 a.m.
- Live interview on KPCW public radio each morning at 8:06 a.m.
- E-Mail

Backcountry Observations: Forecasters, pro observers and the public published 1,021 field reports that were viewed over 600,000 times. These observations include details about what people are seeing out in the backcountry and are the second most used source of avalanche information on our website. These field reports are a crucial source of information used by the forecasters to create the daily avalanche forecast.

**Awareness** The UAC released the Know Before You Go Avalanche Awareness Program in 2004 after the tragic death of 3 teenagers at Aspen Grove on December 26, 2003. KBYG is now globally recognized as the standard for avalanche awareness, has been translated into 12 languages, and is being used in over 30 countries. The UAC offers this program free of charge to schools, youth groups, and community organizations. The UAC also provides public avalanche safety information and presentations at community events and in retail shops.

**Education** The UAC's on-snow avalanche education program focuses on providing backcountry users with introductory classes. Our core classes include Introduction to Companion Rescue and Introduction to Avalanches (Backcountry 101, Motorized 101) classes. In addition, we provide Recreation Level 1 and 2 and Avalanche Rescue classes as needed to fill community demand.



**2019 UAC Staff Meeting**

# Evelyn Lees

In December, after 28 years, Evelyn Lees retired from the Utah Avalanche Center. Some of her early experiences with avalanches came from climbing big mountains in Nepal, Tibet, Pakistan, Peru, Bolivia, Canada, and Alaska. During the summers, she worked as a senior guide for Exum Mountain Guides in Grand Teton National Park. Most of us get into avalanche forecasting because we love skiing. There's no doubt Evelyn loves skiing, but one thing that kept Evelyn coming back year after year was the challenge. She routinely said that she was never bored because the snowpack and weather were different every winter. According to Evelyn, "you've got to be on your toes, and you're constantly looking at something new in the snowpack every day." After remaining vigilant for so many winters she was ready to let other people worry about forecasting snow and avalanche conditions so she can simply go skiing for the fun of it. This fall we continued to try to convince Evelyn to keep working because of everything she contributes to our community, but it was her time to retire. Evelyn and husband Rick Wyatt already had many plans for the winter to visit friends and family and go on ski trips around the country.



*Evelyn on an "average" day doing field work*

DN Monday, December 23, 1991

## Lees Shares Her Avalanche Expertise

By Craig Hansell  
THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

Evelyn Lees has approached her job from both the ground up and the summit down.

The 35-year-old Maryland native is the newest member of the Utah Avalanche Forecast Center team. This experienced snow scientist carries impressive credentials.

With a dual degree in geology and soil from Oregon State University, Lees has lived in Salt Lake for nine years. Instead of studying the stratigraphy of rocks, Lees now examines the stratigraphy of snow layers and how well they bond together.

She began her meteorology work in the Tushar Mountains and on the Wasatch Plateau working with the Utah cloud seeding project collecting snow samples and doing water-content research.

Lees is married to Utah native Rick Wyatt who has long been active in the avalanche forecast business. Wyatt is now the head Utah Department of Transportation forecaster for Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Lees and Wyatt have climbed in Nepal, Tibet, Pakistan, Peru, Bolivia, Canada, Alaska and Europe as well as in the lower 48 states.

She said she prefers long alpine climbs to strictly rock



Evelyn Lees

climbs but owns impressive credentials in both.

Lees lists a route called Black Elk on War Bonnet Peak in the Wind River Mountains of Wyoming and another in Black Canyon near Gunnison, Colo., as favorite climbs. But one of her favorites is a knife edge called Condoriri in Bolivia. Lees has climbed to 25,500 feet on the north face of Mount Everest in 1987.

"That is where I learned

about avalanches, on big mountains," said Lees. "The biggest avalanche I have ever seen was on Nanga Parbat in Pakistan. It started up high, crossed a valley and ran up the other side. The avalanche path must have been 8,000 feet long. The dust cloud alone was 3,000 feet high — enough to bury Snowbird from top to bottom."

Although she began skiing with her parents when she was about four and even spent a week in Switzerland at an early age, she credits Utah with providing her with a skiing career.

She keeps busy with the details of keeping Utah backcountry users safe. Lees is quick to point out the secret to mountain travel is not getting caught in avalanches in the first place.

"Thirty percent of the [avalanche] cases don't survive the ride," Lees said of the need to avoid the hazard rather than deal with it after the fact.

She said the increasing number of snowboarders and some of the terrain they pick for their recreation is of increasing concern.

The Utah Avalanche Forecast Center and Wasatch Backcountry Rescue is trying to make snowboarders as well as the rest of the winter backcountry users aware of safe route finding and the need to be equipped with beacons.

This winter, we added a new route, "Lees Fork," to the Wasatch Backcountry Skiing Map. The route ascends a gully in Big Cottonwood Canyon between Reynolds Peak and Tom's Hill. Retired forecaster Tom Kimbrough coined the name initially because Evelyn used that route so often for fieldwork. What is unique about this route is that it is not an avalanche path. So often, avalanche paths are named after people who are caught in the path. In this case, Evelyn's route was named after her because, for 28 years, she used that route to help people avoid getting caught in avalanches. Evelyn has been the foundation for avalanche forecasting in the Salt Lake office since her arrival in 1991 and her impact at the UAC is immeasurable. She has been a mentor to all our staff including our newest forecaster this fall. Evelyn's impact upon the broader backcountry community is also immeasurable. She ran women's avalanche courses offered by the UAC and has taught countless aspiring backcountry users. Even this winter, though she was retired, Evelyn continued to check in, offering her support and guidance and keeping us organized and inspired.

**Newspaper article from December 1991 announcing the start of Evelyn's career at the UAC**

The Utah Avalanche Center is a partnership effort between the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest and the nonprofit Utah Avalanche Center. Two-thirds of the total program funding is raised through the nonprofit from personal and business donations, grants, and fundraising events. The remaining funding comes from the Forest Service, State of Utah, Utah Division of Parks and Recreation, Utah Division of Emergency Management, Utah Department of Transportation and Salt Lake County.



## UAC Staff

- **Chad Brackelsberg:** Executive Director - Nonprofit UAC
- **Mark Staples:** Director - Forest Service UAC
- **Andrew Nassetta:** Education & Awareness Specialist - SLC
- **Bo Torrey:** Program Director - SLC
- **Brett Kobernick:** Forecaster - Manti Skyline
- **Craig Gordon:** Forecaster - Uintas
- **Drew Hardesty:** Forecaster - Provo/SLC/Ogden
- **Eric Trenbeath:** Forecaster - Moab
- **Evelyn Lees:** Forecaster - Provo/SLC/Ogden
- **Greg Gagne:** Forecaster - Provo/SLC/Ogden
- **Hannah Whitney:** Development Director - SLC
- **Nikki Champion:** Forecaster - Provo/SLC/Ogden
- **Paige Pagnucco:** Forecaster/Program Manager - Logan
- **Paul Diegel:** Special Projects Director - SLC
- **Toby Weed:** Forecaster - Logan
- **Trent Meisenheimer:** Forecaster/Educator - Provo/SLC/Ogden

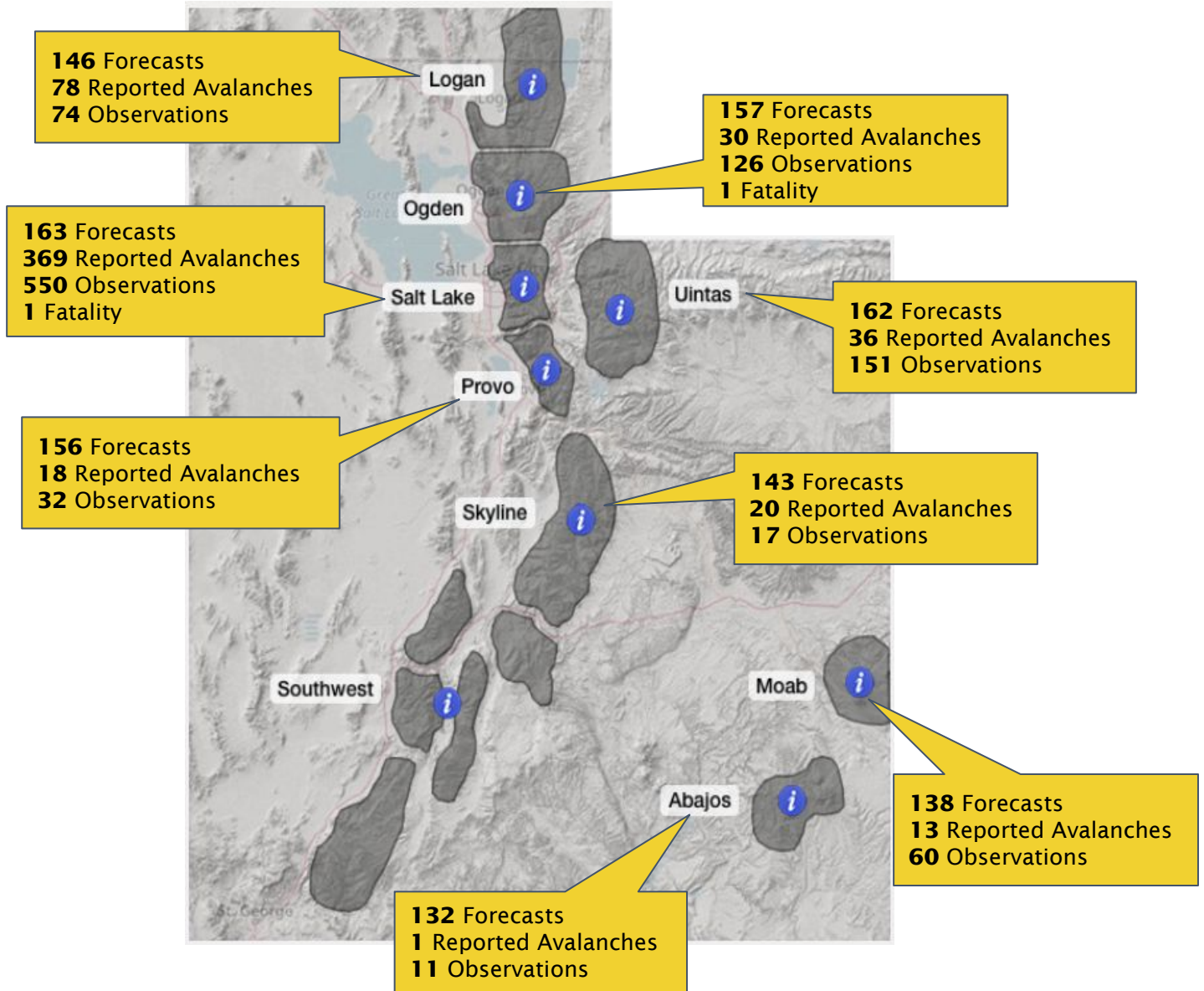
## UAC Board of Directors

- |                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| ● Kate Bowman - President        | ● Jacob Splan   |
| ● Michael Brill - Vice President | ● Kim Reid      |
| ● Ted Roxbury - Treasurer        | ● Michael Brehm |
| ● Nicole Sumner - Secretary      | ● Michael Shea  |
| ● Alan Richards                  | ● Rich Mrazik   |
| ● Caitlin Hansen                 | ● Sara Gibbs    |
| ● Christian Schauf               | ● Tyler Hansen  |
| ● Dara Cohen                     | ● TJ Kolanko    |
| ● Eric Quilter                   |                 |



**Top to bottom: Andy Nassetta teaching avalanche class; Avalanche Beacon Training Park, Nikki Champion digging snowpit; Avalanche accident investigation**

# AVALANCHE INFORMATION TO THE STATE OF UTAH




**1,197** Total Forecasts  
**1,021** Total Observations

“Thanks for the great work that you folks do. I especially appreciate the work of Toby Weed and Paige Pagnucco in keeping us informed up here in the Logan area. Brett Adams, Logan”  
 - **Logan Backcountry User**

“Thank You UAC: Snow Science, Forecasting, and Education BOSSES! One of the greatest parts of our community”  
 - **SLC Based Outdoor Photographer**



# SNOW & AVALANCHES

AVALANCHE INCIDENTS 2019-2020	UNINTENTIONALLY TRIGGERED	CAUGHT	BURIED	KILLED
	<b>314</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>

**This spring of 2020 was unlike any end of a winter season that anyone has ever experienced.** It was as if COVID-19 not only shut down the ski resorts in mid-March but shut down the storm tracks as well. It was the driest April in the mountains in 20 years. Salt Lake City “enjoyed” the driest April on record with a total of 0.26" of precipitation for the month. The old record was 0.45" in both 1981 and 1934. Except for a snowy January, each month was below average for snowfall and the Alta Guard measured 84% of normal stacked up against numbers going back to 1944/1945. In terms of water amounts, or snow-water equivalent, the snowpack by April across the state was at 109% of average.

Like many seasons, late fall and early winter snowfall created a persistent weak layer at the ground in the mountains of northern Utah for subsequent storms in November and December. This weak layer existed on the shady, north-facing slopes and kept most backcountry skiers and riders on their toes. Most chose to recreate on low angle slopes or avoid these north-facing slopes altogether. Unfortunately, the season’s first avalanche fatality occurred on December 15<sup>th</sup> in the backcountry area of Dutch Draw near Park City after 18" of snow had fallen.

This troublesome layer and the recent new snow avalanche activity gradually became dormant and unreactive by the end of December into early January. Finally, backcountry riders enjoyed some of Utah’s finest powder and generally stable conditions for a few weeks.

A similar layer formed in the Skyline region of central Utah, but it was never overloaded. This region had the most days in a season with a Low danger and the least number of reported avalanches.

Further south near Moab, the snowpack was generally deep and strong through January. In that area, a dry February weakened the snowpack which then produced many avalanches when snowfall returned in March.

A very interesting weak layer formed in the mountains of northern Utah in January. The right combination of cold temperatures and just a little bit of sunshine created an ice crust with a weak layer of faceted snow adjacent to it. When more snow fell on this crust/facet layer, numerous natural and human triggered avalanches occurred. What was unique is that this layer formed on south-facing slopes that had previously been safe. The north-facing slopes that had previously been dangerous became safe. This unique situation became a challenge because it was not a normal pattern.



**Mark Staples examining layers in snowpit.**

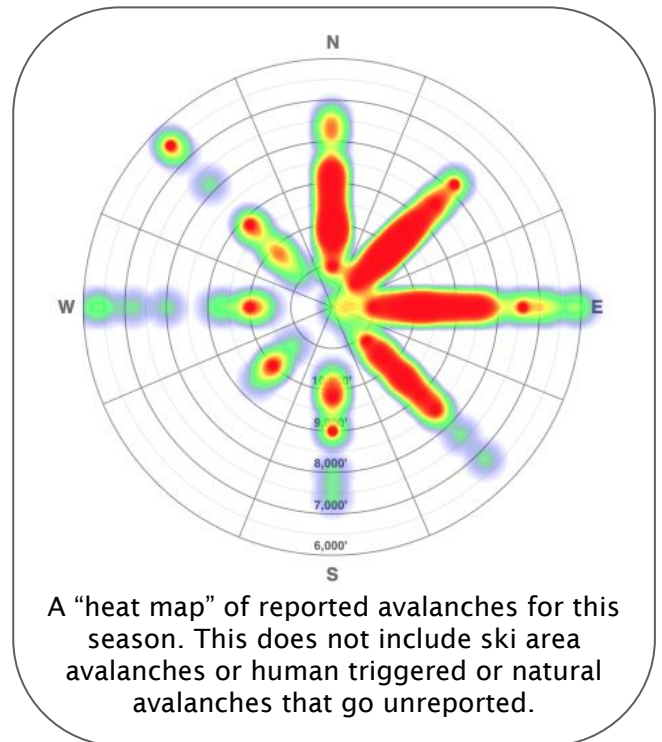
Tragically, the second avalanche fatality occurred on January 18<sup>th</sup> in the Farmington Lakes area above Farmington Canyon.

A notable storm occurred February 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> and wreaked havoc in Little Cottonwood Canyon. A nearly 50-hour period brought both sustained snowfall and sustained westerly winds with the bull's-eye on upper Little Cottonwood Canyon. Snow fell at a rapid rate of ½ to 1 inches of snow per hour for most of the 50 hours. This may be the longest sustained snow and wind in recorded history for Alta. The storm produced 30"-41" of snow (5.52" - 6.79" water) averaging 16% density (7-8% is normal) and led to numerous natural, human, and explosive triggered avalanches. Over 20 avalanches crossed the Little Cottonwood Canyon road which was closed for 54 hours. Inter-lodge was in effect for a similar amount of time, and the public was barred from leaving their hotels or lodging. Miraculously no one was reportedly injured during that time.

The COVID-19 era accompanied a rather sub-par two months of snowfall in March and April. While we are uncertain what may happen in the future, we do know that snow will again begin to fall in autumn ahead of another winter season. See the section near the end of this report regarding UAC operations this spring.



**Looking at the fatal Farmington Lakes avalanche.**



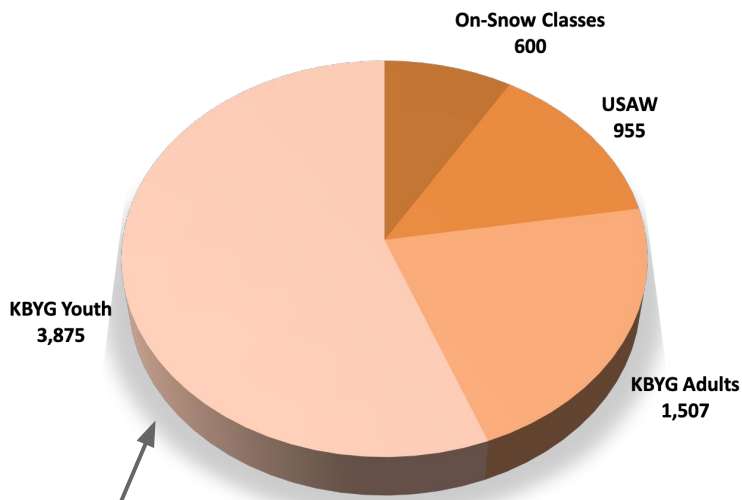
A "heat map" of reported avalanches for this season. This does not include ski area avalanches or human triggered or natural avalanches that go unreported.



**Avalanche in Little Cottonwood triggered by UDOT with explosives.**

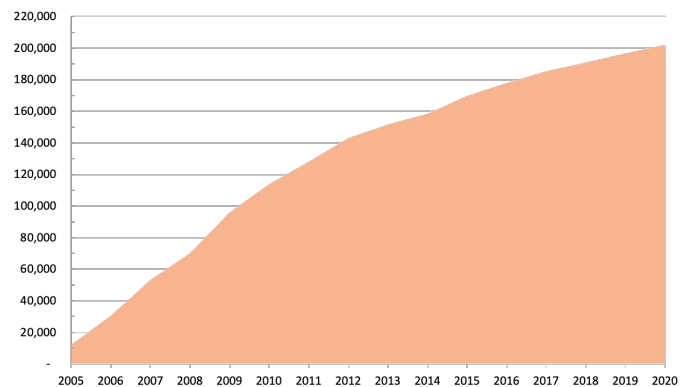
# AWARENESS & EDUCATION

**2019-2020 UAC Education Attendees**  
Total Students: 6,882



~55% of students were under 18 years old!

**Total KBYG Participants in Utah**



**UAC Backcountry 101. Photo: WellGood Media**

## ON-SNOW EDUCATION

This season the UAC delivered **34 on-snow classes to 600 students.**

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

The Know Before You Go (KBYG) program continues to be the flagship avalanche awareness program throughout Utah and the United States. Noteworthy KBYG accomplishments:

- We surpassed 200,000 Utahns reached with a KBYG message since the program started in 2004. This season we presented KBYG to **117 groups.**
- The [Know Before You Go eLearning Modules](#) continue to be a popular way for people to learn new skills and refresh existing skills. With the cancellation of in-person classes this spring, online education became even more important to help the UAC deliver our avalanche awareness message.
- We started providing remote KBYG instructor training this season. We provided training for groups in the Alps, Pyrenees, and in the US.

## ADDITIONAL AWARENESS PROJECTS

- The UAC produced **242 videos** receiving over **2.1M views** this season.
- We completed **2 avalanche awareness programs** for **US Ski and Snowboard** for their athletes and coaches. The first program was released in November 2019 with the second program being released May 2020.
- The UAC attended over **50 awareness** events from October to December providing avalanche information to attendees.

# AVALANCHE FATALITIES



***Matt Tausik's tracks circled above the avalanche crown.***

## ← Dutch Draw - Dec 15

Matt Tausik was killed in an avalanche in Dutch Draw off of Silver Peak on a slope called Conehead. Before the avalanche he had been riding in the Canyons Village area of Park City Mountain Resort with his wife and son. While they waited for him, he rode the 9990 chairlift and exited the resort. He was alone and not carrying avalanche rescue gear. Members of the public spotted the avalanche and part of Matt's snowboard sticking out of the snow and dug him out approximately 35 minutes after the avalanche. [Read the full report here.](#)



***The Farmington avalanche ended in an abrupt transition (terrain trap) that caused a deep burial***

## Farmington Lakes - Jan 18 →

Chase Adams and his father were riding in Farmington Canyon when Chase was caught, fully buried, and killed on a slope just above Farmington Lakes. He was buried about 6 feet deep. His father did not have an avalanche transceiver but Chase was wearing one. Other people riding in the area spotted the avalanche. Using their avalanche rescue gear, they were able to locate Chase and dig him out but it took approximately 50 minutes before they recovered him. [Read the full report here.](#)

## A note about recent avalanche fatalities in Utah

In the past two winters there have been six avalanche fatalities, four in 18/19 and two in 19/20. What stands out in all of these tragic events is that the people involved have been lacking critical pieces of avalanche rescue gear. These critical items are an avalanche transceiver, probe, and shovel which need to be carried by every member of the group.

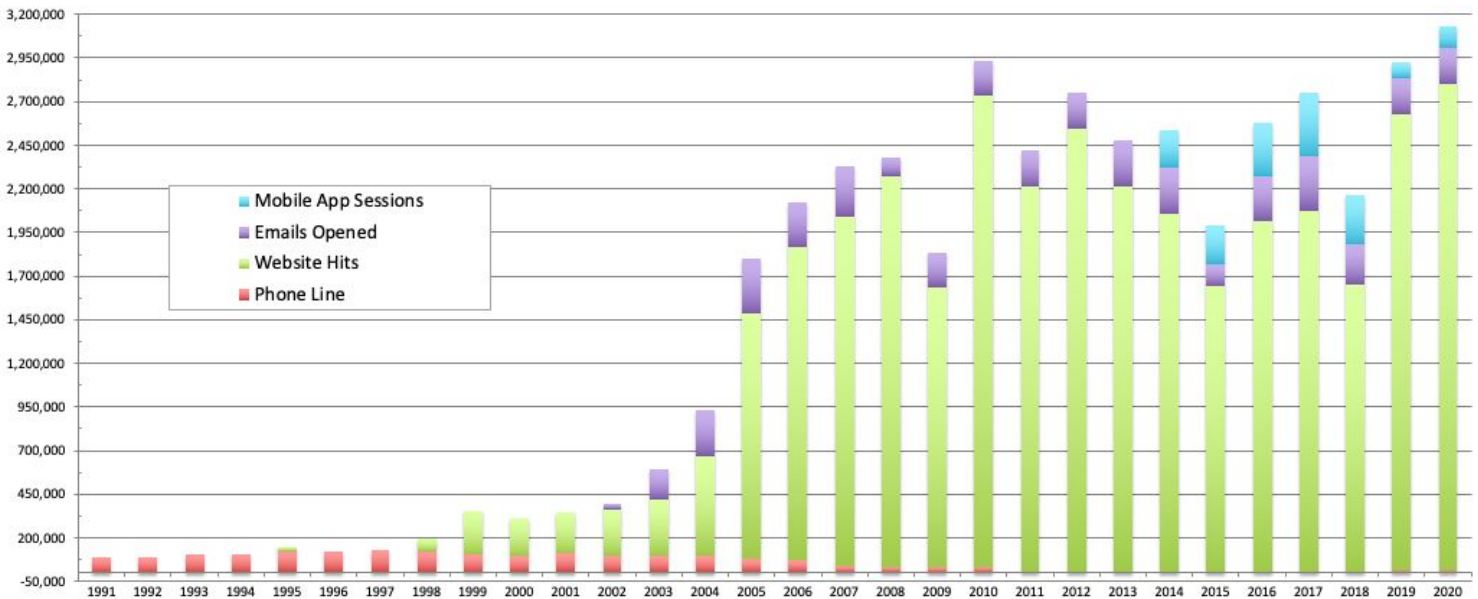
An avalanche transceiver is an electronic device that both transmits and receives a signal. It allows someone to find the approximate location of their buried partner. A probe is like a collapsible tent pole with which someone can poke into the snow until they hit the buried partner, thus pinpointing the location. The shovel is used to dig out the buried partner.

Avalanche airbag backpacks can prevent burial or limit burial depth but do not always work, thus they are considered recommended gear. Chase Adams had inflated his airbag backpack, but it did not work as intended because of the shape of the terrain.

# CONTACTS & OUTREACH

The following figures summarize how the UAC provides information to the public by medium and how that has changed over the years. In addition, the UAC regularly broadcasted advisories by daily call-ins to KPCW radio and distributed avalanche-related news and education via weekly Fox 13 news appearances.

## 7% increase in contacts over last season



It's great to get world-class training right at home!  
Very happy with the training. Also, thanks for the  
few recess times to keep us going.

**- Logan Moto BC101 Class Participant**

Thank you for equipping my friends and others with  
indispensible information in order to get out there and  
enjoy the beautiful UT backcountry

**- UAC Supporter**

# Social media continues to be a critical communication medium for the UAC

The UAC uses social media to deliver avalanche information and educational content. The importance of using social media to deliver information continues to increase.

During the 2019-2020 season, across the four platforms, the UAC's social media followers increased by **23%**.



## Instagram

Overall UAC: [@utavy](#)  
Logan: [@utavy\\_logan](#)  
Uintas: [@utavy\\_uintas](#)  
Skyline: [@skyline\\_avalanche](#)  
Moab: [@utavy\\_moab](#)

## Facebook

[@Utah.Avalanche.Center](#)

## Twitter

[@UACWasatch](#)



*Brett Kobernick investigating an avalanche in the Skyline*

# We are making a difference in people's lives

**The average avalanche fatality rate** in Utah for the last 5 years is 1.6 fatalities per year and the average over the last 25 years is 3.4 fatalities per year. Backcountry use has grown an estimated 20 times in that time. Backcountry users are better educated and better informed than ever before which is helping keep the average annual fatality rate flat and even decreasing.

I am a Marine and instructor at the USMC Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, CA. As a person who has spent a great deal of my personal and professional time dedicated to the mountains, I understand the gravity that exists when operating in them. However, for most of the personnel that come here to receive training, that gravity can be intangible at times. The after-incident videos that UAC has been producing recently have been an extremely impactful means to convey that gravity as well as the takeaways from these accidents. UAC is helping me better teach service members how to safely operate in these types of environments. I just wanted to thank you guys for the work you're putting in to make them happen.

**- US Marine Mountain Warfare Educator**

The field day was especially powerful.... I learned so much from the UAC instructors, admired their teaching style, and [I] came out of the field day with more practical knowledge and confidence to make good decisions and having a handful of inspiring women I can look up to as I continue my journey in backcountry education and experience

**- Women's Backcountry 101 Attendee**

I attended a KBYG presentation Tuesday evening at the Wasatch Fitness Academy. I thought I would let you know the instructor did an awesome job presenting the material. Well done.

**- KBYG Attendee**

Thanks for keeping us on top in a wild year! We appreciate the hard work.

**- Provo Backcountry User**

Feel lucky to have you guys as a resource. Love what you provide and the community you are building.

**- Wasatch Backcountry User**

# COVID-19



*A skier enjoying good powder*

**Sales of avalanche rescue and backcountry equipment** shot up as people found their way into uncontrolled and unpatrolled avalanche terrain for the first time. Multiple strong spring storms arrived and, combined with more people than ever in the mountains, created a plethora of human triggered avalanches; luckily with no major accidents. All told, between mid-March and the end of April, there were over 100 human-triggered avalanches across the state with four of those being close call accidents.

**The UAC responded with regular avalanche forecasts** through late April with no interruptions in service. There was some question of whether we could or should continue issuing avalanche forecasts. After consultations internally and with many county Sheriff's Offices and Search and Rescue groups, we made the decision to continue issuing avalanche forecasts. We worked from home and made some alterations to our field operations but were able to continue monitoring the snowpack safely and effectively.

**The backcountry was overwhelmed** by people enjoying winter outdoor recreation this spring. By all accounts from mid-March to mid-April, trailheads were packed with new and returning users looking for ways to recreate safely. With Utah ski areas closed, the only option for skiers and snowboarders was the backcountry. Snowmobilers flocked to the backcountry as well, and motorized trailheads were busier than ever.



*Trent Meisenheimer analyzing the snowpack in Big Cottonwood Canyon*



*Andy Nassetta in the Western Uintas*



**The UAC responded** to this rapid increase in backcountry use with social media output to provide basic avalanche knowledge to entry-level users. We live-streamed education talks, increased messaging about the danger of avalanches, conducted media interviews, and provided information about online avalanche education opportunities. The UAC gained over 1000 new Instagram followers in just the last week of March!

**The UAC launched a Spring Awareness Campaign** to offer a way for supporters to join our team and show their support for our mission. The three main components of the campaign were to learn, donate, and share. An overwhelming response from the public demonstrated our ability to respond to needs of our users as well as their incredible support for the UAC. Thanks to hundreds of donors, In two weeks we surpassed our fundraising goal and raised almost \$54,000. This support was especially meaningful in such uncertain times.



**Mark Staples doing an interview with KSL**

**Avalanche forecasting, education, and outreach are critical safety products** for people recreating in the mountains in winter. In the last 20 years, Utah has averaged about three avalanche fatalities per year. According to estimates from the National Avalanche Center, if avalanche fatalities had risen at the same rate as increases in backcountry use, there would be almost 30 avalanche fatalities per year in Utah (over 200 per year in the U.S.).

**Next winter holds many uncertainties.** However, we know that there will be snow, avalanches, and many people venturing into the backcountry. We suspect there will be more people than ever before because of all those who ventured into the backcountry with new gear for the first time when the ski areas closed this spring. Prior to this winter, backcountry usage was already growing rapidly. Manufacturers reported that the fastest growing segment of the industry is the backcountry portion. The UAC is busy this summer preparing our education and awareness programs to be able to reach these new backcountry users with our important safety message.



Utah Avalanche Center

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**Spring Awareness Campaign**

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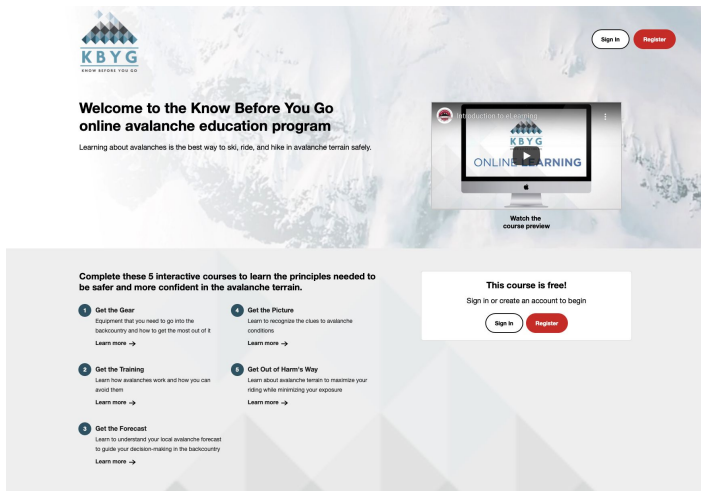
Be a part of our team  
Support the Avalanche Center  
**Learn. Donate. Share.**



[www.UtahAvalancheCenter.org](http://www.UtahAvalancheCenter.org)



**Investigating snowpack layers near an avalanche above Farmington Canyon**



**The free, online, eLearning platform that launched in Fall 2018**

**The UAC began working to meet the need for avalanche awareness over 15 years ago.** It started with the Know Before You Go program which was designed to target new users. The KBYG program was originally designed around in-person presentations. Since then the UAC has embraced new technology and changing ways in which people seek out information. In the fall of 2018, the UAC launched a free, online learning platform. This spring the UAC immediately responded with virtual presentations, and we have already started planning a virtual Utah Snow and Avalanche Workshop in coordination with the American Avalanche Association and other major avalanche centers.

**When the first snow arrives** this fall, the need for the UAC will have never been greater. All of us will continue venturing into the mountains seeking a little peace from all the uncertainty of the world. **The threat of avalanches will remain, but so will our Dedication to saving lives by giving people the tools they need to make good decisions and travel safely in the backcountry.**



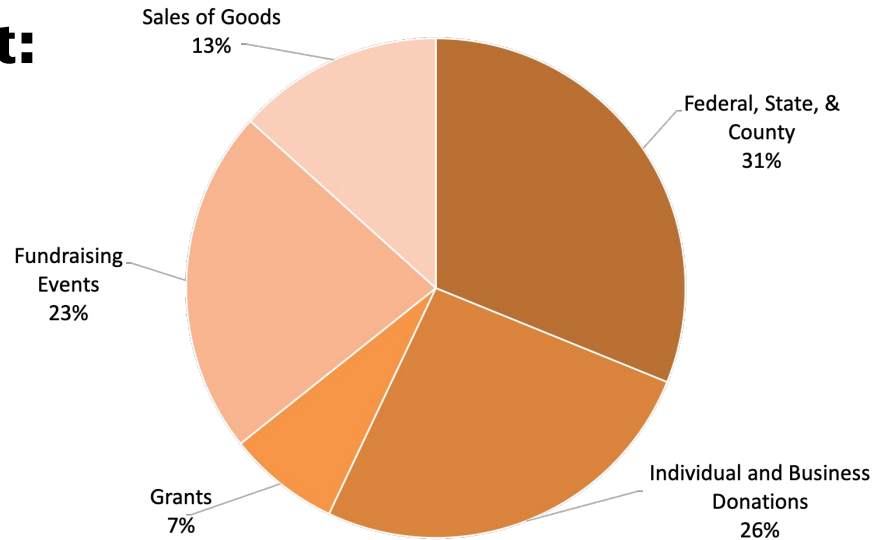
**The entire UAC staff in a video message**



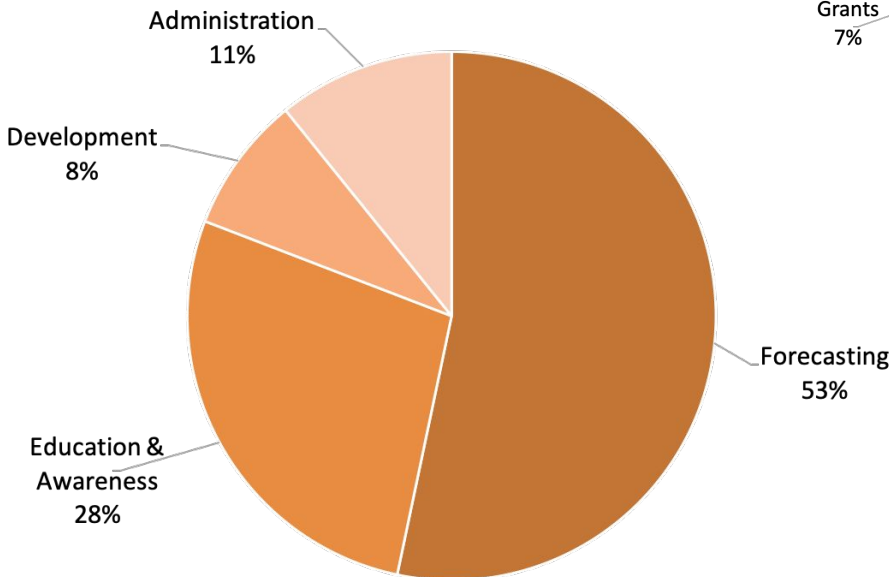
# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

**Total program budget:  
\$1,013,000**

## Revenue

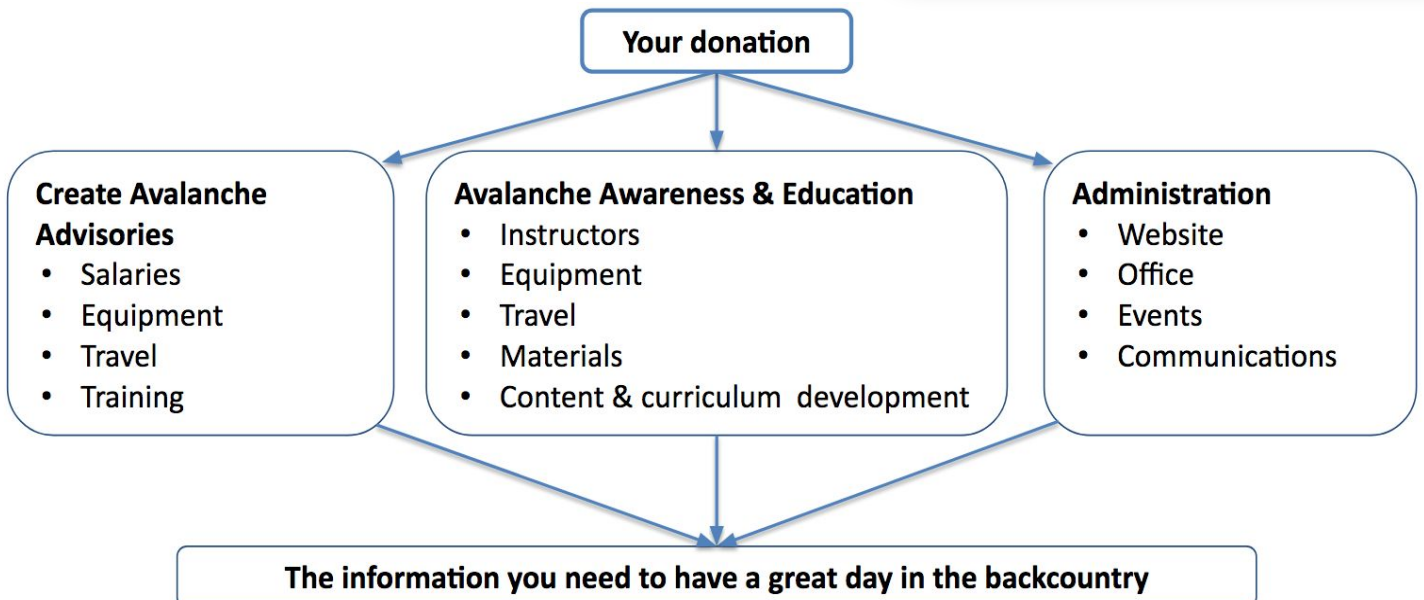


## Expenses



The nonprofit UAC raises  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the total cost to run the programs of the UAC with the remaining  $\frac{1}{3}$  coming from government sources.

**Thank you to everyone who contributed through the season to support the UAC. We could not do this without you!**



# PARTNERSHIPS & SPONSORS

Thank you to all of the UAC partners, individual donors, and sponsors who allow us to sustain operations and deliver our forecasting, awareness, and education programs across the state of Utah.

**We could not do this without your support!**

## SKI RESORT PARTNERSHIPS

Utah ski resorts once again graciously donated lift tickets to the UAC. The tickets were sold through Backcountry and Park City Sports. We continue to enjoy a great relationship with the Utah resorts, communicating regularly on snow conditions and cooperating on avalanche education for professionals and the public. Participants include: Alta, Beaver Mountain, Brighton, Deer Valley, Park City Mountain Resort/Vail, Powder Mountain, Snowbasin, Solitude, Sundance and Snowbird.

## SNOWMOBILE PARTNERSHIPS

The generous support of local dealerships is crucial in providing the UAC with the ability to get into the mountains during our field days and to provide motorized avalanche classes. Tri-City Performance and Polaris donated two 2020 Pro RMK's for the season. Weller Recreation and Ski-Doo donated a 2020 Summit. Northstar of Logan and Polaris donated a 2020 Pro RMK. Karl Malone Polaris donated a Polaris Pro RMK. We use these machines to monitor the snowpack across the state of Utah. We also use these machines to teach life-saving classes.

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## FOUNDATION SUPPORT

George S. and Dolores Dore  
Eccles Foundation

Chris and Ellen Rossi  
Charitable Fund

Janet Q Lawson  
Foundation

Jennifer Speers  
Family Trust

JoAnne L. Shrontz Family  
Foundation

Park City Community  
Foundation

Steiner Foundation

Steven B. Achelis Foundation

US Ski & Snowboard

W.L. Eccles Foundation

## Extreme Sponsors (\$10,000-\$19,999)



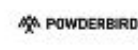
## High Sponsors (\$10,000-\$19,999)



## Considerable Sponsors (\$4,000-\$9,999)



## Moderate Sponsors (\$1,000-\$3,999)



## Low Sponsors (\$500-\$999)

