

# Alumni Frequently Asked Questions

**Question:** Who is eligible?

**Answer:** Alumni membership is available to anyone who has been registered with the NSP as an active patroller for a minimum of one season. This does not include the candidate season. There is no time limit to make the decision to go from active patroller to an alumni member.

**Question:** What is an alumni?

**Answer:** Alumni is a special NSP registration category for people who no longer want to provide emergency care or rescue services, but wish to be involved with the National Ski Patrol. NSP created the alumni category in 1977. Currently, there over 5,000 alumni members of the NSP.

**Question:** What is the cost to be an alumni?

**Answer:** Alumni dues are \$35 annually. Active NSP patrollers who are lifetime members automatically retain their lifetime status after becoming alumni members. New and continuing alumni members who wish to become lifetime alumni members can do so for a one-time fee that helps support the NSP Endowment Fund. Alumni members with 50 years of continuous service are eligible for a free lifetime membership. This must be verified with the national office.

**Question:** Why should I become an alumni?

**Answer:** As an alumni, you can maintain your involvement with the NSP after you have hung up your skis. You will not be required to maintain skill or educational requirements, but you can maintain your status as an instructor, and also become a valued part of ski area and patrol operations. Alumni receive a subscription to *Ski Patrol Magazine*, access to the member side of the NSP website, can shop the *NSP Fall Ski Patrol Catalog* and *NSP Summer Ski Patrol Catalog*, participate in NSP-sponsored events, can be listed on the secondary roster of their home patrol with area's permission, vote in NSP Board elections, and even have their dues be tax deductible.

**Question:** How do I become an alumni?

**Answer:** Fill out the "Become an Alumni Member Today!" on the alumni page of the member website and send it in with your membership dues.

**Question:** Upon receiving my initial alumni registration card, I noticed that all my previous accomplishments are no longer shown.

**Answer:** Alumni cards do not show your information at this time. However, you still have everything listed online. Go to your printer friendly profile to view.

**Question:** If I am still instructing as an alumni member, does NSP track cumulative years of service as an instructor?

**Answer:** NSP does not track instructor years of service. You may want to check with your region or division for that information. You may recall that as an instructor, you have certain obligations to fulfill. The person you had to hand in your instructor information to should be the one who tracks years of service for that discipline.

**Question:** If an alumni is currently an instructor that requires him/her to perform on-hill instruction at various ski areas (i.e. Toboggan Instructor, Senior OET TE, Toboggan IT, etc.), can that/those instructorships also be retained? Keep in mind that Toboggan instructors routinely train candidates and "local" patrollers at their home areas, and the season-long training/recertification is not necessarily part of a registered NSP course such as a Toboggan Enhancement course or a Senior OET clinic.

**Answer:** If you continue to keep up the requirements to retain your instructorship(s) with NSP and the local area wants you instruct, there is no reason why you can't. An alumni membership does not limit what you can do with the local area's permission. Again, your local patrol and area management are the deciding factor here on what you can and can't do.

**Question:** What are the limitations regarding the types and levels of instructors, ITs, TEs, which an alumni member can become or retain?

**Answer:** I don't believe that NSP has limitations. You are welcome to attend NSP classes and other NSP functions as a member of the National Ski Patrol. You paid dues to do so. Any limitations, I believe, may come from your patrol or the patrol hosting the functions. Sometimes there are limits on the number of participants, etc.

**Question:** The *NSP Policies and Procedures* states that alumni are authorized to wear sweater pin #126; it does not state the authorization of National Appointment Alumni to wear pin #136. Was this an oversight?

**Answer:** Changing your status to alumni membership does not remove any of your NSP accomplishments. Please see section 5.7.4.5 of the *National Ski Patrol Policies and Procedures* (available online). It specifically states, "Awards and honorary appointments, e.g., merit stars, National Appointments, will continue to be recognized..." Yes you may continue to wear your National Appointment pin, and any other pins and patches to show your accomplishments.

**Question:** The *NSP Policies and Procedures* states that alumni are not authorized to wear the official NSP uniform. Am I correct to assume that the term UNIFORM means duty parka/vest (whether it is the NSP-approved red in its various iterations, or whatever style/color a particular ski area/patrol has authorized), and an approved aid belt or pack? If this is correct, I must also assume that the term UNIFORM does not apply to other items which may carry the NSP logo, such as sweaters, turtlenecks, gloves, caps and hats, luggage, decals, sunglasses, and any of a number of miscellaneous items found in the NSP catalog. May the alumni member in fact wear/use those types of items?

**Answer:** Alumni may not wear the "official NSP uniform" that your area uses to designate an active patroller. Any costume or form of dress that may confuse the public and make them think you are an active patroller is not allowed. As far as the NSP shield on miscellaneous items goes, yes you may wear that as a National Ski Patrol member.

**Question:** A number of NSP-registered events that require on-hill participation (e.g. Toboggan Enhancement Clinic) mandate that both participants and instructors wear their patrol parka and packs. This is for two reasons: a) running inside the handles of a toboggan with a bulky pack or belt adds more reality to the actual discipline; and b) wearing the patrol parka is often a method used to get a patroller on the hill for the clinic without the necessity of buying a lift ticket and having to go through the lift line. Any thoughts on how an alumni member can overcome this potential obstacle (i.e. wearing an alumni chest patch)?

**Answer:** Check with your area and patrol to find out if there might be an alternate jacket color for alumni members (perhaps black or yellow if you area wears black to patrol then red) with an alumni patch. Some mountains have Mountain Hosts, greeters, and basic patrollers that have a different color jacket and appropriate designations that make them identifiable and invaluable. Instead of the NSP, they can wear the logo for the mountain and the alumni patch. I suggest you discuss these possibilities with the appropriate person for your area.

**Question:** I have heard talk of the possibility of allowing alumni to maintain their registration with their former patrol. Personally, I like the idea. However, please be aware that some areas limit the number of members of their patrol. I doubt that they would prefer to use an available opening for an alumnus rather than for an active patroller. Are alternatives/options being addressed?

**Answer:** As an alumni member, you are not registered on the patrol roster as an active patroller and should not be included in the number of active NSP patrollers for the area. If you are interested in staying connected with your former patrol, this must be approved by the area and your patrol representative/director. He/she then registers you on their patrol electronically as an alumni on their secondary roster. Your primary and secondary registrations are as an alumni member. There are no additional NSP dues for a secondary registration. NSP alumni dues are **\$35, of which \$10 is sent back to your division**. There may be additional dues required within your division.

By joining as an NSP alumni member, you are certifying that you are not an active patroller with any NSP affiliated patrol.

**Question:** How do I get added as a secondary to my patrol being an alumni?

**Answer:** You must first satisfy the requirement of being a patroller for a least one year. Then, you must be registered as alumni and have paid your \$35 to NSP. At that time, you may request to be added to the secondary roster. Only after the permission of the area and your patrol representative/director will you be added per registration directions listed online.

**Comment/Question:** Although this is my first season registered as alumni, I have been active with my patrol, my region, and my division for quite a few years. I have noticed that many retiring patrollers initially register as alumni. However, most (not all) have little to do, other than to attend "Alumni Days" at the various areas (usually held on weekdays when those who are retired or have extra time can attend). Few, if any, advisers, staff members, etc. seem to think of, or ask to utilize, the alumni's knowledge, skills, and experience in their programs. Many do not even know that this type of assistance is available to them. Alumni are more often than not just "put out to pasture" like old thoroughbreds, once-great patrollers who aren't really thought about much anymore. You know -- out of sight, out of mind. I haven't seen any methods developed to keep the names and expertise of these alumni exposed. Hopefully this can and will change.

**Answer:** NSP is aware of the value of these patrollers and has reinvested in the development of a program to educate and inform both the patroller and the patrols of how to utilize our members through the Alumni Program.

The difficulty is that some alumni want to continue to be active, and others do not. How we utilize the alumni members differs widely across the country. My patrol has always encouraged patrollers to become alumni when they were making ski patrol "stay or go" decisions. We have a number of alumni that make great contributions to our patrol. Our board allows the alumni to develop a plan on how they want to contribute/participate in our patrol. Some alumni are very active, and some like to come to the social activities. Whatever the involvement in our patrol is their decision.

As the NSP National Alumni Advisor, I am charged to educate and recruit alumni. This also means educating the area patrol directors, region, and division administrators on the roll or the potential roll of the NSP alumni. The alumni roll is diversified and not easily compartmentalized. This program should be dynamic and allow each person to design their program, as well as fulfill the needs within the area.

Finally, I am a proponent of the theory that “the squeaky wheel gets the grease”; if you seek to continue to be active with your patrol (or region or division), either as an interested, active party or as an active, involved alumni with patrol (or region or division) responsibilities, make sure you let the patrol representative/director and/or region or division director know your interest.

Thank you,

**Tim Viall**

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