



PACIFIC NORTHWEST DIVISION – NATIONAL SKI PATROL

March 2026

## DIVISION DIRECTOR REPORT

By Andy Bechdolt, PNWD Director [andy.bechdolt@nsp-pnwd.org](mailto:andy.bechdolt@nsp-pnwd.org)



Patrollers at Willamette Pass are among those in the PNWD making the best of a low snow season.

### Uniting, adapting, and thriving through challenging conditions together

Greetings PNWD. As we navigate this incredibly low snowpack (according to some models it is the lowest snowpack in decades), I want to remind all of you that you are the backbone of safety, education, and camaraderie across our legendary mountains. Together, we uphold the standards that keep our slopes safe, no matter what the weather brings. As those who spend countless hours on the snow, you know better than anyone that, even in the Pacific Northwest, big powder days cannot always be taken for granted. The reality of this low snow year has become a challenge we face as a team, requiring all the ingenuity, flexibility, and commitment that define our division.

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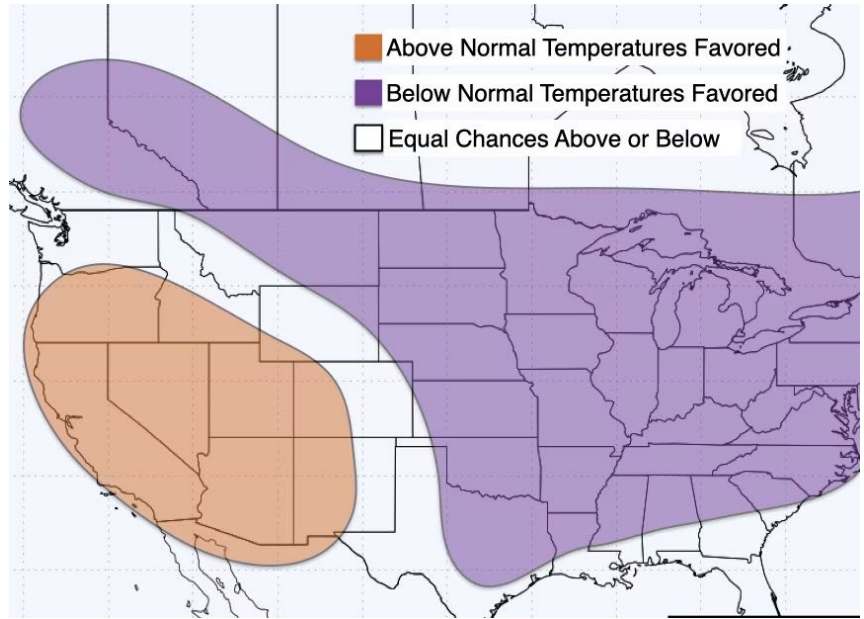
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## DIVISION DIRECTOR REPORT – continued

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This low snow season has shaped our work in unique ways. With thinner snowpacks, fewer open trails, and more concentrated skier traffic, our vigilance is more critical than ever. You know how quickly rocky patches, exposed roots, and changing conditions can appear. Marking hazards, adjusting rope lines, and updating signs become daily priorities. Your willingness to put in the extra hours patrolling, re-routing, and communicating with guests is what keeps everyone as safe as possible – even when the coverage is less than ideal.



As a division, we rise to these challenges by investing in our skills. In seasons with limited snowfall, the focus sharpens on early-season rescue techniques, such as navigating toboggans over unpredictable terrain and treating injuries more often related to slips and hard-packed surfaces. Through safety clinics, online resources, and in-person outreach, your expertise helps educate our guests and one another, reinforcing the culture of safety that sets the Pacific Northwest Division apart.

Low snow years can also test our spirit. Many of us joined NSP for a shared love of skiing and service. When the runs are limited and the season feels short, it's easy to become discouraged. That's why we continue to build community off the slopes. Through workshops, equipment days, and fundraising events, we keep our bonds strong and our sense of purpose clear. Every gathering, large or small, is a reminder that the NSP is about much more than skiing – it's about supporting each other and the mountains we love.

Change also sparks innovation, both at our resorts and within our division. Snowmaking, alternative winter activities, and creative guest offerings help fill the gaps left by Mother Nature. As patrollers, we're often called to support tubing, snowshoeing, or mountain biking, and our adaptability ensures that guests stay safe, no matter the activity or the weather. By embracing these new opportunities, we expand our skills and keep our mission relevant year-round.

Your resilience and dedication in the face of unpredictable winters are what keep Pacific Northwest resorts running and guests returning year after year. Know that your efforts – on and off the snow – matter deeply. As our climate continues to change, our ability to adapt, support one another, and lead by example will only become more important. Thank you for all you do, and for being the heart of the Pacific Northwest Division of the National Ski Patrol.

You may not be aware, but Eric Geisler of the Southern Idaho Region and the Payette Lakes Patrol (and several secondary patrols) is now the assistant PNW division director. Eric has a very long history with ski patrol. Eric is also a member of the NSP Hall of Fame, a Nordic Master and a National Appointment holder. Based on NSP records, Eric had his first (recorded) NSP course when I was just learning to ski. He holds numerous instructor certifications and several NSP awards. Please welcome Eric!

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## DIVISION DIRECTOR REPORT – continued

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We also have a new division registrar, Steve Barnett. Steve is an Alumni based out of Washington, but is affiliated with the Mt. Hood Ski Patrol. Steve comes highly recommended and I am excited to work with him. Please welcome Steve!

We also have three newly confirmed region directors. Eric Brittingham is the Oregon Region director (still). Eric took my role as RD when I was mid-term and was elected as division director. Eric is a patroller at Mt. Bachelor and holds instructor and IT certifications in OET and OEC. In the Northwest Region, we have Rick King. Rick is a patroller at Summit Central. Rick holds instructor certifications in OET, OEC, MTR and Nordic/backcountry; he is also the recipient of several NSP awards. At Wy'East, Heather Van Houten will continue as director. She has been involved in many roles for more than two decades, including as an OEC and OET

instructor and coordinator of women's toboggan clinics. She currently patrols with Mt. Hood Ski Patrol. Please welcome Steve, Eric and Heather!

I would be remiss if I didn't thank the people who previously held those roles. Blaine Price has been the PNW registrar for as long as I can remember. Blaine has been through at least three division directors and has more institutional knowledge than I'll forget. Thank you so much for your service and support, Blaine!

John Coulon is the outgoing Northwest RD. John has had tremendous impact, not only on his region, but on the entire division. Of note was the division convention held last year in Everett, Washington, that he and his incredible team led. Thank you so much for your service and support, John!

Be on the lookout for upcoming registration opportunities for the 2026 PNWD Convention being held in August in Boise, Idaho.

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## OET REPORT

*By Joe Harwood, PNWD OET Advisor*

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The continued lack of snowfall has made toboggan training this season frustrating for most ski patrols in the Pacific Northwest. Despite the thin snow depth, I've been impressed with the creative and irrepressible approaches our sled instructors have taken.

Limited advanced terrain for toboggan refreshers? No problem. We'll find ways to throw in some additional challenges this season with an eye toward ramping back up to our rigorous standards next year. Haven't you ever wanted to run a loaded sled blindfolded? This dreary season could give you the chance. (Maybe not.)

We have a large cadre of rabid rookies foaming at the mouth to learn how to run sleds, but mountain managers early in the season limited sled training because they were trying to preserve what little coverage they did have. Call off training? No way. We can live with a bit of a delay. Sure, having to extend rookie training into March and April is going to screw up some plans, but flexibility is the foundation of resiliency.

While many ski areas in Washington are faring better than their peers in Oregon and Southern Idaho, I'm seeing motivated patrollers across the division taking the lemons this winter is throwing at us and making

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## OET REPORT – continued

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The dismal coverage at Willamette Pass and other resorts shut down much of this season's toboggan training.

lemon drops in martini glasses.

While we've all tried to remain positive and optimistic, there are some hard realities that we cannot ignore: The lack of sled training opportunities on appropriate terrain has led four out of the five regions in the Pacific Northwest Division to first cancel scheduled Senior OET clinics, and later, to call off Senior OET evaluations altogether.

The lone exception might be the Inland Empire Region, which is planning to hold a Senior OET evaluation March 21-22 at a ski area to be determined. As of this writing, conditions through the first week of March deteriorated to such an extent that cancellation is a real possibility. Shout out to George White, region OET advisor, and his team for conducting training under adverse conditions.

Extended forecasts into late March and April are looking favorable for strong spring snow conditions.

The Wy'East Region and the division are planning to hold the 25th Annual Nuts & Bolts Clinic at Timberline June 5-7. There are still three months of potential snow to accumulate on Mt. Hood's Palmer snowfield, and historical data shows the heaviest snowfall occurs between mid-March and mid-May.

Jeffrey Weitz, founder of the annual June celebration of skiing, boarding and sled-running, and a member of national's OET Program Committee, said the show will go on.

"Yes, we will have Nuts & Bolts even if it's on dirt, because Nuts & Bolts is about camaraderie and good times," Weitz said. "So, put your high heels on and get your snow dance going!"

Stay positive!

# OEC REPORT

By Marianne Becker, PNWD OEC Supervisor

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I am currently working on a Senior task force for NSP with a group of individuals from around the nation to improve all aspects of our Senior program – bike, Nordic, patroller and Alpine patroller. We are working on how this will be presented on the NSP site as well as trying to develop more incentive for individuals to become interested in doing the Senior program. I am excited about this project, as the Senior program is a passion for me. This program helps to develop leadership skills in our patrollers. It increases their competence in handling more complex scenarios and hones their skills in bike, Nordic and Alpine patrolling. This helps create more accomplished and well-rounded patrollers for your patrol base.



Recently, Kathy Lee and I traveled to Mt. Hood and also to White Pass for their OEC midterm evaluations. We continue to work with trainers and evaluators to standardize our program in the PNWD.

At the Mt. Hood clinic, there were several new evaluators from the Oregon Region who came to help evaluate the candidates. The candidates were all from the Wy'east Region. The Oregon and Wy'east regions generally collaborate to do their midterm and final exams. This helps with resources for both regions. I appreciate their willingness to work together and support their candidates as well as each other.

The next weekend, Kathy and I traveled to White Pass for the Northwest Region's midterm evaluation. I had not been to White Pass before; it was great to be there, and I got a beautiful look at Mt. Rainier when traveling to the motel where I stayed. Again, we continued to work with evaluators, station managers and candidates. It was fun to meet some new people and help the candidates with their journey through OEC MSP.

I have to say, all three of these regions are adopting our OEC MSP (Module of the Senior Program) very well. I am happy to see their interest and how well everyone is doing, from the candidates to the evaluators, station managers and helpers. It is appreciated.

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## OEC REPORT – continued

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In March, Kathy and I will be traveling to the Southern Idaho and Northwest regions for their OEC MSP finals.

We held a Zoom session with Southern Idaho to work with some of their group for evaluating and training. They all did a great job, and we again appreciate them adopting the suggestions and becoming more prepared for the Senior evaluation. Southern Idaho is the host this year for the PNWD Convention, and we have been asked to give a presentation on Friday for OEC MSP. We will continue to train our wonderful group of Senior OEC MSP trainers and evaluators at this event.

In April, Kathy and I will be traveling to the Oregon Region for the Wy'east OEC MSP final.

I wish all of the OEC MSP candidates the best on their final. You've all got this!

If you are interested in the Senior program, there are resources on the PNWD website under the Senior tab. I realize the Senior program can be daunting and yes, it is time consuming. But it is a very rewarding program and builds lasting relationships and fulfillment in your patroller career. It is also a way for you to continue to grow in your skills: most patrollers go through their candidate year, train and then only do yearly refreshers. This is a way to continue to keep your skills sharp. You can become involved with the program once you pass your final exams and meet all of the elective requirements for you to become a Senior patroller in bike, Nordic, patroller or Alpine patroller.

The Senior program takes a lot of preparation and begins in the fall. You will need to sign off on some skills and also fill out an application to begin the process. Most of the instructors in the Senior arena like to know how many people are interested in the program so they can allocate resources to help.

Please let me know if you are interested in the Senior program and I can direct you to the proper people in your area or region.

As most of you are aware, NSP is adopting a new way to do OEC refreshers. We are going away from the A,B,C cycle and doing a yearly refresher with some standard topics as well as some yearly new topics. This mainly has to do with making it easier for the NSP education office to track whether people are compliant or delinquent with their refreshers. Currently, I am looking through all of the delinquencies and will be reaching out to some of you or your region OEC advisor to make sure we are getting missed refreshers for 2023, 2024 and 2025 made up before May 31. This will keep you current. This is our grace period. After May 31, individuals go into a status where they may have to take OEC again. I would hate for anyone to have to do this if we can rectify your OEC status before then. Sometimes you may be missing the skills portion of the refresher and some of you may be missing the online portion. Both of these items need to be done before you can be fully signed off for your refresher for the year. I would highly recommend you complete the online portion of your refresher before you go to the hands-on session. This helps you prepare for your hands-on session and also keeps you in compliance with our OEC refresher status.

As always, please reach out to me if you need help with anything or need assistance.



## **SOUTHERN IDAHO REGION REPORT**

*By Thad Murata, Southern Idaho Region Director*

*tmurata3@yahoo.com*

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Greetings from Southern Idaho. This year has been very difficult throughout the region with the warm temperatures and lack of snow. Hopefully everyone has been able to get out and make some turns or tracks this season.

With the lack of snow we have had to shuffle some dates of clinics and Senior evaluations, but we were able to complete the clinics and have moved Senior OEC evaluation to March 14 at Soldier Mountain. We cancelled the Senior OET evaluation planned for March 15 at Soldier Mountain. We considered moving it to another date and location; however, with the warm weather forecasted and lack of snow, we made the difficult decision to cancel this season's Senior OET evaluation. We will make plans to hold the Senior OET evaluation for this year's candidates prior to the Senior banquet next season.

The ski enhancement seminars held at Bogus Basin and Soldier Mountain were well attended. We had 12 participants for each seminar, and received excellent instruction from our clinician, Grady Beck. With feedback from the group, we may look at other options for next year to make the experience more valuable and expand it by multiple days.

We have a new instructor development advisor for the region: Robin Ulrich. I would like to thank Amy Swiger for her years of serving as the instructor development advisor.

The PNWD Convention is coming to Southern Idaho Aug. 7-9. Planning has been underway; I am looking to get involvement from all patrols in the Southern Idaho Region. If you are interested in helping, please contact me. We will need the support from all patrols. Please plan to attend. Registration information will be coming out soon.

I hope everyone is making the best of their season. Please be safe and have fun!

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## **OREGON REGION REPORT**

*By Eric C. Brittingham, Oregon Region Director*

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The Oregon Region has held three meetings since August. We have nearly all our positions filled except Medical Lead and Nordic Senior. Warner Canyon has been removed from the region due to not having enough active NSP patrollers. Mt. Bachelor Nordic has been added to the region.

As of late February, most resorts in the Oregon Region were open with limited terrain, but at least open after some snowfall. At least one has since paused operations. We are working on updating the website and hope to have a new format in place for next season thanks to Vincent Zmach and Linda Beltz. Mt. Bachelor finally started OET on Feb. 21 and hopes to have that wrapped up by mid-March. As usual, we were blown off the mountain on Feb. 22.

Unfortunately, with the late season starting, OET Seniors are not going to be able to run this season – just not enough time to be fair to patrollers to train. However, Mt. Bachelor still plans to have our Oregon Region Nuts and Bolts March 28 and 29. More information is forthcoming from Darrin Wittwer, Oregon Region OET advisor.

I didn't receive any additional reports from Mt. Ashland, Willamette or Santiam Pass. However, the Senior OEC MSP will be held April 18 at Santiam Pass.

Finally, I thank the Oregon Region representatives for their support over this past season.

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## WY'EAST REGION REPORT

By heather Van Houten, Wy'east Region Director

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What to say... Let it snow! Let it snow! Let it snow! Please! I said that in the last article and I am still saying it along with all of you.

A couple of Mt. Hood resorts were minimally open over the holidays. Tubing at Skibowl opened on Christmas Day. Then Skibowl opened the mountain for alpine skiing and closed for alpine skiing, all in January. The tubing hill is still open on the weekends. Usually, this time of year Palmer at Timberline is closed because the towers are buried in snow. Not this year – it's a weird feeling riding the Palmer chairlift and going up over Midway in the middle of January! So, Timberline is running the upper mountain chairlifts when weather permits. Mt. Hood Meadows is the same, running Cascade as much as they can and patching cat tracks with snow so people can get over and around on Vista. It finally cooled down near the end of February and the areas got some snow. We just need, like, 15 feet to put us back to where we need to be.

Onhill training has been a challenge to say the least, but we are making it through the best we can with apprentice (candidate) training, OET refreshers, Senior OEC and Avy. We've had to skip certain training weekends due to resort requests because of the lack of snow, but we're still "centimetering through it." I can't really say "inching through it" because at times it's been sooo thin.

OET Seniors has been put on hold due to the conditions. With Skibowl being open for a few weeks, we were only able to get one day of OET refreshers done there. We are holding make-up refreshers to help get everyone through, so MHSP patrollers who have not done their OET refresher, sign up on Dispatch. By the time this article comes out, there will be one last make-up day March 14 at Mt. Hood Meadows, as long as we still have snow.

OEC Seniors did have their mid-season training weekend with the Oregon Region in Government Camp at the end of January. Cleo reports it went well but of course it would have been better if we had more snow! Wy'east has three Senior candidates and they got "a hint of how they will be evaluated at the OEC final in April." They received additional feedback from region evaluators who offered lots of constructive knowledge. There are also three mentee evaluators from the Oregon Region who are working on becoming full trainer evaluators (T/Es) for OEC. With six T/Es from Wy'east and four from Oregon regions, there were lots of learning opportunities for everyone. Best wishes to all OEC Senior candidates this season!

The avalanche training crew finished Avy 1 for the season and are in the middle of Avy 2 training. There were five people who joined the Avy 1 training from Willamette Backcountry Ski Patrol. A couple of them were NSP and a couple were with the Forest Service. It was great to have others from out of the area come over and join us for training!

Nordic/MTR will be offering a MTR 1 and MTR 2 course this spring from April 1 through May 10. The Zoom portion of the courses will be held April 1, 8, 15 and 22. The daylong field sessions will be April 25 and May 2, and the mandatory overnight campout session is May 9-10. If anyone is interested in participating in either of these courses please reach out to Tom Clarke - [nordicdirector@mthoodskipatrol.org](mailto:nordicdirector@mthoodskipatrol.org) or Steve Potter - [mtradvisor@nsp-pnwd.org](mailto:mtradvisor@nsp-pnwd.org)

Praying for more snow as we slide into March to keep the dream alive. Hang in there everyone!

# NORTHWEST REGION REPORT

By John Coulon, NWR Director

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I would like to begin by offering my congratulations to Rick King from the Summit at Snoqualmie and Summit Nordic patrol, who will be assuming the position of our new Northwest Region Director. Rick has a strong background in patrolling and leadership in the region, and I have confidence he will do a great job supporting and leading the Northwest Region going forward. I know he will receive the same strong support and encouragement from the region that I have come to rely on and have benefited from during my tenure as region director. Congratulations, Rick.

The Northwest Region has experienced a sparse winter like most of the division with respect to snowfall. As a result, some of our programs including Seniors have been greatly curtailed or canceled altogether this season. The resulting down time has created other opportunities to move forward and keep our patrollers active. I am aware of several OEC courses that have been moved forward and begun early to take advantage of the down time and keep our patrols involved this season. Thank you to all those who have stepped up to make this possible.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to our upcoming Region Awards Banquet scheduled for the evening of April 25. This year it will be hosted by the Hyak Ski Patrol and held at the new Snoqualmie Casino Hotel just east of Seattle. More information about this event will be available soon. For those wanting to make a night of it, we will be arranging for a discounted block of rooms for this event. This is a beautiful venue and an opportunity to not only attend our Region Awards Banquet but to also enjoy an evening away with your patrolling friends.

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## REGISTRAR'S REPORT

By Blaine Price, PNWD Registrar

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Registrations for PNWD patrols and their members are now complete except for spring new member candidates and transfers.

### 2025-26 Patrol counts are as follows:

**PNWD totals:      2,053 Returning**  
                          39 Transfers  
                          174 New Members  
**2,266 Total**

<b>Total Patrol byRegion:</b>	<b>Return</b>	<b>Trans</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>Total</b>
IE Region .....	458.....	7 .....	40 .....	505
NW Region .....	775.....	9 .....	39 .....	823
OR Region .....	270.....	3 .....	24 .....	297
SI Region .....	307.....	10 .....	35 .....	352
W'E Region .....	243.....	8 .....	36 .....	287
PNWD Admin .....	2.....			2
	2,053.....	39 .....	174....	2,266

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# REGISTRAR'S REPORT – continued

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Comparing the past two seasons.....	2024-25	.....	2023-24
Returning .....	1,988	.....	1,998
Transfers.....	40	.....	17
New .....	183	.....	132
Total .....	2,211	.....	2,147

We are slowly growing as a division, but lack of snow this year may impact member counts for 2026-27.

**2025-26 host unit counts:** In addition, host members are now traditional members and pay division dues, plus region dues in Inland Empire Region only. (At 50 percent of what patrollers pay.)

### Host Unit Counts for Units Paying Dues

IE Region .....	46
NW Region ....	71
OR Region .....	25
SI Region .....	32
Total Hosts .....	174 (for Units Paying dues)

### Canadian affiliate units:

There are 138 members of Canadian BC affiliate groups in the PNWD who are registered with NSP in order to take OEC classes and do refreshers.

### Spring candidates:

Patrols that bring on new candidates later in the season, including in the spring, and have them in training in any manner, or have them joining patrollers on the hill for other than an initial ski-along to determine compatibility, must do an additional dues submittal for region and division dues. The dues must be submitted by June 30.

### Late fees:

At this point all PNWD members should have paid national dues online of \$102.90. Those who haven't done so as of Feb. 1 are subject to a late fee of \$10.00. If not paid as of that date, they are suspended in the system for anything but going in to pay those dues. That means they won't be able to register for classes or make use of the NSP store or pro deals until paid. If not paid by June 30, they will be subject to a \$20.00 late fee with a last chance to pay by the following Dec. 31, after which they are removed from membership. If they then come back and pay dues after that, they will start over in years of service at zero years.

PD/PRs should monitor their online rosters and take action with any patrollers not paying on time. You are encouraged to monitor your roster for 'Paid Through Date' and not allow patrollers on the hill after Feb. 1 until those dues are paid.

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## REGISTRAR'S REPORT – continued

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### **Annual national dues increase:**

National dues now increase at 2.5 percent annually, or at the Consumer Price Index, whichever is higher. This year that was 2.9 percent. PNWD and our regions determine their own dues, and as an opt-out division, those division and region dues are collected at the patrol/host unit level to be submitted to the PNWD registrar to audit and then submit to our treasurers.

### **New PNWD registrar: Steve Barnett**

This is my last submission to the Nor'Wester as PNWD registrar. Steve Barnett is the new PNWD registrar. Steve is an alumni and secondary with Mt. Hood Ski Patrol where he is an active OET instructor. He has been their region registrar the last few years. He is an excellent choice to take on this role. I will assist Steve in the coming year as needed as assistant PNWD registrar, but future communication should be with Steve at:

Steve Barnett  
PNWD registrar  
607 Lake Farm Road  
Port Angeles, WA 98362  
503-805-3395 Cell  
Jstephen.barnett@gmail.com or at registrar@nsp-pnwd.org

It has been a pleasure and an honor working with our DDs, RDs, PD/PRs, unit reps, and registration reps over these past 13 years.

### **By Steve Barnett, incoming PNWD registrar registrar@nsp-pnwd.org**

I'll make this short, as I am sure all of you would rather be out skiing or doing snow dances. I appreciate the opportunity and look forward to the challenge of serving the many patrols in the division. I will try my best to be helpful and make the process as painless as possible.

I do want to thank Blaine for his many years of service to the PNWD. As I have recently discovered, it is a lot of paperwork and a fair amount of patrol wrangling. Fortunately for both you and me, Blaine will be assisting as I try to fill his rather large shoes.

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## INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT REPORT

*By Kathy Alexander, PNWD ID Advisor*

*katalexander911@mail.com*

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First, I would like to say welcome and thank you to Robin Ulrich who is the new Southern Idaho Region ID advisor (robin.j.ulrich@gmail.com). And second, Happy mid-ski season to all: It's not too late to check your NSP profile to see if your instructor certification expires this Dec. 31! Plan ahead to 1) take the Instructor Skills Review (ISR) online; 2) have teaching records for the last three years; 3) attend a discipline specific ICE course; 4) be observed by an IT at least once every three years (form is on the NSP website, in Education under General forms). And finally, enjoy the rest of the season: be safe, stay well, have fun, and thank you for all you do for the NSP education programs!

# OUTDOOR RISK REPORT

By Joseph Ferraro, PNWD Outdoor Risk Management Advisor

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Outdoor risk management continues to be in the news for many different reasons. Oregon is still struggling to keep their ski areas insured. The liability waivers are no longer valid in Oregon, and the battle with the legislature has been going for quite some time. Lawmakers have sent a bill to the governor that some believe is a positive step. Another concern for NSP and NSAA (National Ski Area Association) is the “unseated passenger” issue that continues to be a significant problem for many ski areas.

In addition, the risk of using snowmobiles during a ski area’s hours of operation is of great interest to the NSAA. There have been recent six- and seven- figure lawsuit settlements in cases where a snowmobile impacted a person.

Finally, during the past few months we’ve seen a large spike in avalanche danger and avalanche fatalities. This season, our weather has been warm and wet with little snow accumulation in the Cascades and western Rockies. With this type of winter, the snow accumulation on top of a very hardpack base causes dangerous situations. There have been a number of fatalities, including Ski Patrol members, in the West due to avalanches.

Most of these concerns are well known to the ski area industry, however we seem to continue with never-ending issues of high risks taken during obvious dangerous conditions.

The following articles and websites thoroughly address several of these safety issues. Please take the time read or visit: <http://skisafety.us>. Avoid Snow Immersion Suffocation (<https://skisafety.us/tree-well-and-deep-snow-safety>).

## WHAT IS DEEP SNOW OR TREE WELL IMMERSION?

Skiing and snowboarding off the groomed runs and in deep powder is one of the most exciting and appealing parts of our sport. However, if you decide to leave the groomed trails, it is important to understand the risk of a deep snow immersion incident. A deep snow or tree well immersion occurs when a skier or rider falls into an area of deep loose snow (these naturally form next to tree wells) and becomes immobilized.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BUDDY SYSTEM

A tree well/snow immersion suffocation can happen when a skier or snowboarder falls, usually headfirst, into a tree well or deep, loose snow, and becomes immobilized and trapped under the snow. Breathing becomes difficult, especially when you are headfirst in the snow, as the loose snow fills in around you. Without immediate help, you may suffocate. Always ski or ride with a partner within viewing distance of you.

## SKI SAFETY RESOURCE

Deep Snow Safety is designed to help you learn about the risks and prevention of deep snow and tree well immersion accidents. Learn more at the button below. Watch these powerful videos from B.A.S.I.C.S. and Ski California for more information on deep snow environments. <https://deepsnowsafety.org/what-is-a-snow-immersion-suffocation/>

## HOW TO REPORT A SIS

Follow this step-by-step guide to ensure accurate and timely reporting of a Snow Immersion Suffocation incident. <https://deepsnowsafety.org/report-a-snow-immersion-suffocation/>

Stay alert and keep safe!

# HISTORY

By Shirley Cummings, PNWD Historian

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A ski jumper at Milwaukee Ski Bowl with the Milwaukee train in the background. Almost no one came by automobile. People came by train not so much to ski as to watch the jumpers.



The Tally-Ho Ski Boggan ferried passengers up and down the hill to watch ski jumping events.

Are you in “skiing mode” at your area with all systems go? Or are you still praying for more snow? My ski area needed lots more snow. I was home sick for a while, so I watched the Olympics guilt free. Do you have a favorite Olympic competition? My favorite events are all the skating competitions. They remind me of my kindergarten days when my mom made matching hot pink corduroy skating outfits for me and my sister. We thought we were oh-so good. After all, we could go forward and backward, turn around and around, and do a fast stop.

Actually, having learned to skate backwards was a good skill to have, mostly when teaching my kids to ski. I could hold their ski tips together and ski backwards down the hill. (Pre-racer-chaser days). Edging, skiing backwards and the fast-stop are almost the same in skating and skiing. Little kids seem to learn both sports naturally. But my little gremlins soon surpassed me in ski skills, and showing no loyalty, switched to snowboarding!

My second favorite Olympic sport is the ski mogul competitions. My son’s good friend, Mike Hattrup (superb skier), was a forerunner of the moguls event the first year it was introduced at the Olympics. We’ve watched the mogul and dual moguls ever since. It almost hurts to watch the impact on their knees as they bounce down the hill. Ouch.

Ski jumping has a history at my ski area, so I usually watch that. It began mostly as a spectator sport. The date on the photo below is 1938; it was taken from one of the Nordic trails at the Hyak Ski Area (Summit East) which is a few miles south of Snoqualmie Pass. Evidence of the old ski jump, a national qualifying site for the pre-Olympics, is still there. In those days, people came from all over to watch the ski jumping competition. It was a long hike uphill and skis then were heavy, very long and had no metal edges. Maneuvering both uphill and downhill was hard.

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## HISTORY – continued

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The Tally-Ho Ski Boggan was invented to solve that problem. Gradually, some skiers would ride uphill and ski down. This was about the same time that chairlifts were invented (1936 Sun Valley, and rope tows in many places). Soon there were more skiers than observers and the sport changed direction.

Ski mountaineering (SkiMo) is the newest Olympic sport, added just this year. SkiMo can be a relatively short but intense run uphill. Sometimes with skis on, sometimes carrying skis, sometimes multiple runs. What a big change from my short-lived exposure to ski mountaineering. But “in the olden days” to become a Senior or a National (can’t remember which) we had to have both the avalanche and ski mountaineering badges. For ski mountaineering, we’d hike out early in the morning, build snow caves and sleep out overnight. We tied a lot of knots, belayed a toboggan up a cliff, and thought we were having a great time. My patrol was so wonderful – at first. They hiked out to our campsite to cook us a steak dinner with baked potatoes (instead of the hot dogs we had planned). Lovely right? Well, then those yahoos went back to the patrol building and just after we went to sleep, they made sounds over the radios they had hidden. They repeatedly sent sounds like flushing a toilet, running a faucet, opening a pop can... Seemed like it went on all night. They must have had a recording or been alternating shifts. Anyway, it was memorable – but nothing like the ski mountaineering requirements today.

Have you thought any more about which is your favorite Olympic sport? Have you thought about what the oldest winter Olympic sport is? When did types of skiing come in? Well, that is a big topic, better save it until next time. Have any of you ever been to an Olympics? Ever patrolled at one? I remember in the days before patrollers wore helmets, there were a lot of different styles of hats, some worn at the Olympics. Some patrollers worked at “toboggan stations” at various gates on the courses. If you have been at or patrolled at the Olympics, please write and tell us about it.

Also, please let me know if I can help with your patrol histories.



An empty Ski Boggan – showing standing area for passengers to hold onto.

# AWARDS ADVISOR REPORT

Sue: [baker7780@gmail.com](mailto:baker7780@gmail.com)

By Sue Baker and Pam Carson, PNWD Awards co-chairs Pam: [mamachinsk@hotmail.com](mailto:mamachinsk@hotmail.com)

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Outstanding award season is rapidly approaching, so now is the time to begin thinking about those deserving patrollers/patrols for award nominations.

PNW patrols and patrollers earned amazing national recognition last year; of the 12 nominations submitted, five patrols and patrollers received Gold Merit Stars as best in the nation, five patrollers received Silver Merit Stars as runners-up, and two patrollers received Yellow Merit Stars as nominees:

## **Gold Merit Stars/First in the Nation 2025:**

- Outstanding Patroller: John Howard, Wy'East, Mt. Hood Region
- Outstanding Mt. Host Unit Director, Don Reiman, Bogus Basin, Southern Idaho Region
- Outstanding Mt. Host Unit, Bogus Basin, Southern Idaho Region
- Outstanding Patrol Representative, Patrick Arnold, Bogus Basin, Southern Idaho Region
- Outstanding Large Alpine Patrol, Bogus Basin, Southern Idaho Region

## **Silver Merit Stars/Runners up in the Nation 2025:**

- Outstanding Administrator, Jodie Jeffers, Santiam Pass, Oregon Region
- Outstanding Alpine Patroller, William Lee, 49 Degrees North, Inland Empire Region
- Outstanding Alumnus, Nancy Unruh, Willamette Backcountry, Oregon Region
- Outstanding Instructor Non-OEC, Mike Levis, Wy'East, Mt. Hood Region
- Outstanding Nordic Patroller, Keith Schultz, Mt. Spokane, Inland Empire Region

## **Yellow Merit Stars/Nominees 2025:**

- Outstanding OEC Instructor, Jeff Canfield, Bogus Basin, Southern Idaho Region
- Outstanding Paid Patroller, Michelle Anderson, Crystal Mountain Pro

Every patrol has some truly outstanding individuals who can and should compete for national recognition. The deadline to submit Outstanding nominations to your region advisors is early April, but please reach out to them to confirm.

You may also have patrollers who fulfill requirements for a National Appointment, MSA or DSA. These awards, including Merit Stars, can be submitted anytime. We prefer sooner so that they can be presented at the division convention in August. Here is information that you need to be aware of now as you're preparing:

Pam will be overseeing new award nominations, including all Merit Star submittals and last year's Outstanding winners from Southern Idaho, Oregon, and Wy'East/Mt. Hood regions.

Sue will be handling new award nominations and last year's Outstanding winners from the Inland Empire

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## AWARDS ADVISOR REPORT – continued

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and Northwest regions along with all national, LCA, and DSA nominations.

New award nomination forms can be found on the NSP website. After logging in, click on Resources at the top directly below the search bar, click on Document Library and then Award Forms. All the different award types are located there. The Outstanding forms were rewritten in fall of 2025, so please make sure to use the updated 2025 documents. The National Awards Committee worked hard this past season to improve the award documents, so please read the instructions carefully and follow the examples provided.

The deadline to submit Outstanding nominations to the division (Sue or Pam) is April 15. As a reminder, the following are award categories NSP recognizes:

### **Group:**

- Outstanding Large Alpine Patrol – 41 or more members
- Small Alpine Patrol – 40 or fewer members
- Outstanding Nordic/Backcountry Patrol – The patrol must be registered as a Nordic/Backcountry Patrol
- Outstanding Bike Patrol – The patrol must be registered as a Bike Patrol
- Outstanding Mountain Host Unit
- Outstanding Bike Host Unit

### **Individual:**

- Outstanding Alpine Patroller – Any active volunteer alpine patroller minus youth
- Outstanding Young Adult Patroller
- Outstanding Patroller
- Outstanding OEC Instructor – must have been a credentialed OEC instructor for at least three years, and actively instructed for the last two years. If the nominee is a paid patroller, only teaching activities done as a volunteer are considered toward the award nomination.
- Outstanding Instructor – an NSP instructor in any NSP educational programs other than OEC. Must have been a credentialed instructor for at least three years, and actively instructed for the last two years.
- Outstanding Alumni
- Outstanding Bike Patroller – must be registered as a Bike Patroller either as a primary or secondary patroller.
- Outstanding Bike Host
- Outstanding Mountain Host
- Outstanding Nordic/Backcountry Patroller – must be registered as a Nordic/Backcountry Patroller either as a primary or secondary patroller.

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## AWARDS ADVISOR REPORT – continued

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- Outstanding Administrative Patroller – a patroller who has made an outstanding administrative contribution to the NSP beyond the patrol level. (Region/Division contributions)
- Outstanding Patrol Representative – aka Volunteer Patrol Leader
- Outstanding Paid Patrol Director
- Outstanding Paid Patroller
- National Appointment (NA)/Leadership Commendation Appointment (LCA)
- Distinguished Service Award (DSA)
- Meritorious Service Award (MSA)

The perpetual plaques for last year's Division Outstanding winner and Division Director's winner need to be returned by June 1. (If you or one of your patrollers received a PNWD Outstanding Award last season, they will have a perpetual plaque that will need to be returned.) So make note of where they are now. Please send them securely packaged and well-padded so they make it to Boise intact. Return to Sue if she is closer: Pam Carson (preferred) 3491 S. Weathered Ave., Boise ID 83706, 208-860-0407, mamachinsk@gmail.com or Susan Baker 2742 Quarry Brown Lake Rd., Chewelah WA 99109, 509-998-3574, susan-baker7780@gmail.com.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to your amazing region awards advisors and us for any questions. If an award question wakes you up in the middle of the night, please go to the NSP website, look up the Policies and Procedures manual, Chapter 12 (Awards), and review the information and requirements for the award you seek; there is more information in there than on the nomination form, which has been abbreviated. Some of the categories received no submissions last year even though we know there were people out there doing excellent work. Let's do better this year and get people the recognition they deserve!

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## PATROLLER WELLNESS AND SAFETY REPORT

*By Jodie Jeffers, Patroller Wellness Advisor*

*[jodie.jeffers@nsp-pnwd.org](mailto:jodie.jeffers@nsp-pnwd.org)*

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As we near the end of a low-snow season, complacency can quietly settle in. Fatigue builds, terrain narrows, and the rhythm of reduced operations can make it tempting to coast toward closing day. In patrol work though, shortcuts compound risk, especially when conditions are thin, variable, or unpredictable. The final weeks of the season are not a time to ease standards, but an opportunity to learn from, sharpen and share them.

Late season is also the ideal time to reflect and recalibrate. Rotate who is delivering the message to keep engagement high. Debrief incidents with honest questions: What went well? What nearly went wrong? Where were we lucky? Track near misses, communication breakdowns, and fatigue trends, especially during long spring shifts. Just as important, train for what you don't see often: complex scenarios, evacuations, boundary response, and guest de-escalation. If practice feels slightly uncomfortable, it's probably targeting a need.

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## PATROLLER WELLNESS AND SAFETY REPORT – continued

“Out of sight, out of mind.” We can use the close of a lean snow year to prepare intentionally for the next season. Document lessons you learned, identify equipment and messaging needs early. Consider scheduling off-season training. Encourage peer check-ins to guard against burnout and protect wellness. A low-snow season can test morale, but it can also strengthen our culture. By resisting complacency now, we build sharper habits, stronger teams, and a more resilient patrol that is ready for whatever the next winter brings.

Your feedback matters. What worked well for you this season, and where can we improve? Connect with your team, share your thoughts, and help us strengthen next year’s approach. Ensure your email is correct with NSP so that you stay up to date on announcements, training, etc.

Please review the division’s website ([www.nsp-pnwd.org](http://www.nsp-pnwd.org)) for information and resources on both Safety & Wellness. Here are direct links to those pages:

<https://www.nsp-pnwd.org/safety-information.html>

<https://www.nsp-pnwd.org/safety4all.html>



### Award Descriptions

#### BEST OVERALL (UP TO 2 WINNERS BASED ON OVERALL VISITS)

Comprehensive programs that demonstrate effective safety education and prevention to establish a culture of safety among employees and guests.

#### BEST YOUR RESPONSIBILITY CODE PROGRAM

Efforts that excel at promoting the updated Your Responsibility Code’s 10 tenets through both internal training and guest education.

#### BEST COLLISION PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

Campaigns that communicate the critical message of collision awareness and prevention most effectively, including efforts specific to #RideAnotherDay.

#### BEST GUEST SAFETY PROGRAM

Standout programs that promote awareness of important factors like wearing a helmet and using chairlifts and terrain parks safely

#### BEST EMPLOYEE SAFETY PROGRAM

Exceptional initiatives that put staff safety front and center every day and keep employees educated on safety best practices and programs.

#### SAFETY CHAMPION

A ski area employee who shows dedication toward helping employees and guests learn about safe skiing and riding, and advocates for safer work practices and healthier behaviors.

#### BEST LIFT SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

This new award highlights efforts to maximize safety for chairlift riders, whether it’s reminders and reinforcement to lower the restraint bar and raise it at the right time, ensuring guests load and unload surface lifts properly, or maintaining maze and line structure so that unseated passenger incidents become even less likely.

### NSAA Safety Awards

Safety initiatives are critical to the industry in retention, conversion and overall growth. The safety awards highlight the creative, innovative and quantitatively-effective methods that keep guests and employees safe on the mountain. Safety awards honor programs centered around the Your Responsibility Code, collision prevention, guest safety and more. Read below for the full award descriptions. Award finalists will be recognized and the winners announced at the National Ski Area Association’s 2026 National Convention & Tradeshow on May 6.

The application deadline is 11:45 PM on March 20. [www.nsaa.org](http://www.nsaa.org) (programs->awards->safety)

Have questions on how to submit? Please reach out prior to March 20.

# NORDIC/BACKCOUNTRY REPORT

By Eric Geisler and Matt Strauser PNWD Nordic program supervisor and ast. supervisor

Eric: [EricSgeisler@Yahoo.com](mailto:EricSgeisler@Yahoo.com)

Matt: [syntereo@gmail.com](mailto:syntereo@gmail.com)

Skimo! What do you think about ski mountaineering in the Olympics? Are you going to run out and buy some race boots, bindings, and skis? Plus, you need that backpack clip so you can store your skis in a hurry! Don't forget that the race rules require that your bindings have working brakes.

Speaking of brakes, I recently broke a brake. (see photos.)

I repaired the brake. This experience reminded me of skills 13, 14, and 15 from the 50(70) N/BC skills list – the same list we check off each year as part of our annual Nordic skills refresher. Skills 13-15 ask us to repair a binding or a ski pole. Fortunately for me in this case, I was only a quarter mile from the lodge. What if I had been in the WAY-backcountry?



Before



After

I would enjoy hearing some of your equipment repair stories. Feel free to email us.

The N/BC refresher can be a wonderful experience for your skiers and instructors. Let Eric or Matt know if you would enjoy a joint refresher planning session. Or maybe you would like a guest IOR. This is a good time to plan for next year.

Here is a reference to the skills list: <https://santiampsp.org/n-bc-50-70-skills-list/>

N/BC 50 (70) Skills List – Santiam Pass Ski Patrol



Photo courtesy of Willamette Backcountry.

Nordic clinics were somewhat affected by the low snow this winter, but most Nordic areas had enough snow to operate the majority of the season. We had successful clinics at White Pass and Willamette Backcountry this year.

The last Nordic clinic for the season will be at Teacup on Mt. Hood March 28 with a ski clinic on March 29, if there is still enough snow for that.

There is a Nordic Master evaluation at Anthony Lake on April 25-26, and we are looking for a couple of backcountry type skiers (Nordic or Alpine) to be a safety team for the overnight search. Patrol building lodging and free food are supplied. Contact Eric Geisler at 509-220-4712 for details.

The national program is working to revise the Nordic refresher for 2026 and beyond. The new approach will be scalable to fit the needs of the local patrol.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

By Jodie Jeffers, Patroller Wellness Advisor

[jodie.jeffers@nsp-pnwd.org](mailto:jodie.jeffers@nsp-pnwd.org)

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## **PNWD Website:**

- Lots of great information including the home page with updates, keep yourself current!
- Have questions or needs? Contact the various Advisor leads and/or webmaster.
- [www.nsp-pnwd.org](http://www.nsp-pnwd.org)

## **Help Needed! History & Awards – In Search of Past Records!**

- If you have or know of others that have past years of records, we are in search of:
- Past Region/Division/National Officers; Newsletters; Minutes email webmaster.
- Looking to preserve and bolster our history and be able to access important information.
- Further questions? Reach out to PNWD Awards Advisor(s) Sue Baker/Pam Carson

## **Missed Feb 4th's NSP Wellness Task Force Tools for Peer Support Workshop?**

- Go the SafetyCulture4All page.
- There is the PPT presentation and wrap up summary prints on Tools for Peer Support.
- Questions, contact Wellness Advisor Jodie Jeffers.

## **SafetyCulture4All Past Workshop videos are available to watch/listen to.**

- The last was a great update by Dave Byrd, from NSAA. (Feb 17th).
- He shared an excellent article on Chairlifts from the CEO of NSAA.
- That can be found both on the Safety Page and the front page of the PNWD website.

## **PNWD SafetyCulture4All on March 17th Workshop is cancelled.**

- See you at the next on Tuesday April 21st!

## **New Safety Coloring Pages are now available!**

- They can be found both on the Safety Page and front page of the PNWD website.
- Contact Jodie if you want to use your logo and contact information on the pages.

## TAHOE TOBOGGAN CLINIC

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The Palisades Tahoe National Ski Patrol Senior Toboggan and Ski Spring Clinic returns March 20, 21, and 22, 2026. The clinic is a three-day Senior level toboggan handling and ski instructional event led by PTNSP's top toboggan, and professional, level 3 PSIA ski instructors.



- Location: Palisades Tahoe (Olympic Valley), Lake Tahoe
- Dates: Friday, Saturday and Sunday – March 20-22
- Cost: \$125 per clinic-goer
- Maximum number of clinic-goers: 24
- Included will be a Friday evening get-together at PT's legendary apres ski venue, Le Chamois, and a hosted dinner on Saturday in the Village.

The clinic is geared toward group and individual learning and instruction, and is an excellent opportunity to review toboggan and ski specifics, emphasizing general and fine-point concepts. Each of the three days is broken into a half-day of toboggan handling and a half-day of ski instruction. This is the clinic to attend for current and future toboggan instructors, Senior and patroller candidates, or if you want to advance these disciplines.

There are four NSP Learning Center courses we'll cover. Please choose one or two of the four courses below and email us at [seniorclinic@palisadesnsp.org](mailto:seniorclinic@palisadesnsp.org) to let us know what you've chosen. We'll sign you up on the NSP Learning Center.

- Senior Evaluation Alpine Toboggan (required for NSP Senior level sign-off)
- Senior Evaluation Alpine Skiing (required for NSP Senior level sign-off)
- Toboggan Enhancement Seminar (for NSP credit)
- Alpine Ski Enhancement (for NSP credit)

To register, click on this link to access the registration and payment form: <https://sn-wbl.it/AECIhj> Please, no partial payment for adjusted clinic attendance. An additional \$20 cash for the ski instructor(s) for each clinic participant every day of instruction is expected and appreciated.

For questions or concerns contact us at the email above. Clinic-goers will get an email detailing meeting place and time, and what to wear and bring, as we get closer to the date of the event.



# OREGON REGION NUTS & BOLTS

By Joe Harwood, PNWD OET Advisor

[oetadvisor@nsp-pnwd.org](mailto:oetadvisor@nsp-pnwd.org)

Mt. Bachelor National Ski Patrol and the Oregon Region will hold a Nuts & Bolts event March 28-29 that will feature PSIA ski and snowboard clinics as well as some unique toboggan clinics.

This isn't just another training weekend; it's an opportunity to level up your toolkit and enjoy some fine spring turns with fellow Pacific Northwest Division patrollers.

Saturday is primarily dedicated to PSIA ski and snowboard clinics, taught by some of the top instructors in the Northwest. Participants are eligible for skier enhancement seminar credit with NSP. Sunday is dedicated to toboggan training. This year, there are two clinics that are somewhat unusual.

Jeff Doughty, division OET snowboard advisor, will work with OET instructors who want to expand their toolkits when it comes to teaching snowboard candidates how to run toboggans. Many OET instructors are skiers. Jeff is a snowboarder and a physicist who can break through the barriers and provide tips and solutions for instructors who want to improve their skills.

A second Sunday clinic will focus on the skills alpine patrollers need to earn a senior OET certification or to become instructors. Call it a senior-level development clinic aimed at future OET instructors and those seeking to up their game by becoming OET seniors. Taught by Joe Harwood, Jack Ramsey and Darrin Wittwer, long-time OET instructors and OET instructor-trainers.

Depending on demand, there may also be traditional toboggan enhancement seminars with Edge Rescue toboggans along with Cascade 100 and 350 sleds. The Sunday clinics will all provide an opportunity for TES enrollment and credit.

There is no fee to register. Deadline to register is March 21. Lift tickets are 50% off with your NSP card or a letter from your patrol director. Patrollers who are not affiliated with Mt. Bachelor should not wear their patrol jackets. Civilian gear only.

The Saturday PSIA ski and snowboard clinics will cost \$40 if you enroll.

To register, email Darrin Wittwer [df\\_wittwer1@hotmail.com](mailto:df_wittwer1@hotmail.com) or Eric Brittingham [ebrittingham03@gmail.com](mailto:ebrittingham03@gmail.com).



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# OREGON REGION NUTS & BOLTS

Join us at Mt. Bachelor on March 28 & 29, 2026 for the Oregon Region Nuts & Bolts event. This isn't just another training weekend – but an opportunity to level up your toolkit and enjoy some prime spring turns with your fellow Patrollers.



**Sat, Mar 28th  
Sun, Mar 29th**

**PSIA Ski &  
Board Clinics**

**OET Instructor /  
Senior  
Development  
Sessions**

**Toboggan  
Enhancement  
Clinics**

**RSVP BY MARCH 21**

**TO:**

Darrin Wittwer  
df\_wittwer1@hotmail.com

Joe Harwood  
joehwood6@gmail.com

Eric Brittingham  
ebrittingham03@gmail.com

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**Saturday, Mar 28**

8:00 AM - Registration / Welcome @ Lower level – West Village Lodge

9:00 AM - Load Pine Martin Chair

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM - PSIA Ski / Board Clinics

12:30 PM to 1:30 PM - Lunch @ Pine Martin Lodge

1:45 PM to 3:30 PM - PSIA Ski / Board Clinics (cont.)

6:00 PM - Social in Bend (TBD)

**Sunday, Mar 29**

8:00 AM - Registration / Welcome @ Lower level – West Village Lodge

9:00 AM - Load Pine Martin Chair

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM - Toboggan Enhancement Clinics (Cascade 100, 350, Edge)

Or

OET Instructor / Senior Development Sessions

12:30 PM Lunch @ Pine Martin Lodge

1:45 PM to 3:30 PM - Toboggan / OET Instructor Sessions (cont.)

- **Ski/Board Clinic size limited to twelve (12) each. Cost is \$40 per. RSVP by March 21<sup>st</sup>.**
- **50% off day passes for Patrollers with NSP card and / or letter from Patrol Director.**
- **All weather dependent. Heavy snow, wind events limiting MtB operations are not unusual.**





THE NOR'WESTER  
PACIFIC NORTHWEST DIVISION,  
NATIONAL SKI PATROL  
960 SUNMIST CT SE  
SALEM, OR 97306

SERVICE  
and  
SAFETY

The National Ski Patrol (NSP) is a federally chartered non-profit membership association dedicated to serving the public and the mountain recreation industry by providing education services about emergency care and safety.

NSP also reaches members through nationally funded education materials and programs, division newsletters, and local clinics. Through its divisions, NSP conducts training events to supplement training provided by the ski areas. This cooperative effort ensures that members are serving the needs of area management while staying in tune with a nationally standardized system.

*Vision Statement: The Pacific Northwest Division is the foremost ski patroller association comprised of volunteer and paid patrollers in the host ski areas, dedicated to maintaining performance standards in the ski patrol environment. The main purpose of the ski patroller is to deliver updated first aid and rescue services to the skiing and outdoor-recreation public. The Pacific Northwest Division is an integral part of the National Ski Patrol Systems, Inc.*



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

[www.nsp-pnwd.org](http://www.nsp-pnwd.org)

Newsletter editor:  
Ian Doremus  
Willamette Pass Ski Patrol  
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**Article deadline for the next NorWester is May 20, 2026**