

Colorado Backcountry Winter Safety Awareness Week (Dec 7 - 13) key messages:

- Outdoor agencies across Colorado have reported an increase in visitation and off-grid winter recreation.
- Skiing and winter sports are a vital driver to Colorado's economy. During the pandemic, some ski areas may have limited capacity and reservation protocols which could result in more people recreating in Colorado's backcountry.
- Backcountry recreation can be dangerous and requires certain safety precautions and equipment to ensure a safe outdoor experience.
- In an effort to reduce any increased impact on Colorado's natural resources and search and rescue teams- Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado Tourism Office, Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry, Colorado Avalanche Information Center and Colorado Search and Rescue Association developed a [backcountry safety pledge](#) and [educational online resource](#) to promote the diverse winter outdoor opportunities that exist in our state and how to recreate responsibly.
- The goal of the campaign is to inspire Coloradans and visitors to take the Backcountry Winter Safety Pledge and balance safe outdoor recreation with mindful conservation.
- First-time visitors to the backcountry are encouraged to complete safety training and hire a certified guide if they do not possess the skills to safely explore the backcountry.
- Governor Jared Polis proclaimed Dec. 7-13 "Colorado Backcountry Winter Safety Awareness Week". Throughout the week, we ask outdoor recreation agencies and stakeholders to promote important backcountry winter safety messages.

How to Participate

- Take the Backcountry Awareness Pledge: <https://www.colorado.com/BackcountryPledge>
- Share the Backcountry Winter Safety video, website, and pledge on your organizational channels (website, newsletter, podcast, listservs, etc.)
- Promote the Backcountry Winter Safety Awareness Week themes on your social media account and tag #KnowBeforeYouGo, #LiveLifeOutside, #RecreateResponsibly, #CareForColorado
- Re-share a post from the @COParksWildlife, @visitcolorado, @COReIndustry social media accounts and put your personal twist on it.
- Make your own post! Share your backcountry experience as it relates to each principle. (i.e. avoiding closed trails, checking avalanche forecasts, emergency gear, etc.)
- Consider donating to the [Colorado Search and Rescue Association](#), which coordinates and advocates for Colorado's all-volunteer backcountry search and rescue teams.

Backcountry Winter Safety Awareness Week social media themes:

Day 1 (Dec. 7) - Know Before You Go/Choose Your Destination Wisely

Day 2 (Dec.8) - Recreate Responsibly/Avoid Activities Beyond Your Skill Level

Day 3 (Dec.9) - Care for Colorado/ Trash the Trash

Day 4 (Dec.10) - Know Before You Go/Check Avalanche Forecasts and Danger Ratings

Day 5 (Dec.11) - Recreate Responsibly/ Bring Proper Safety Equipment

Day 6 (Dec.12) - Care for Colorado/Keep Wildlife Wild

Day 7 (Dec.13) - Take the Backcountry Winter Safety Pledge

Resources

Colorado Backcountry Winter Safety: <https://www.colorado.com/WinterBackcountrySafety>

Care for Colorado Principles: <https://www.colorado.com/articles/leave-no-trace-care-colorado>

Recreate Responsibly Winter Edition: <https://www.recreateresponsibly.org/>