



Intro Question Block



**Are you a backcountry skier or snowboarder?
We want to hear from you.**

The University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine and Montana State University are collaborating on a survey of backcountry skiers and snowboarders to learn if, and how, our backcountry use has changed during

the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope the survey results will inform the recreational and avalanche educational community during the pandemic. Look for results to be reported in the avalanche related media sometime in the near future.

The survey will take about 10 minutes. Participation is voluntary and all data will be treated confidentially. You can quit the survey at any time, without any consequences. The data will only be used for scientific research, and we will only present data in aggregated form such that no individual can be identified.

After the survey, we invite you to submit your email for possible follow up purposes and to qualify you for spot prizes. This will link your email to your survey and is entirely optional.

No identifiable information of individuals will be collected or become public, unless you choose to submit your email at the end of the survey.

Please complete this survey only once per season. You must be 18 or older to participate. We ask that you carefully read the following consent statement before you proceed.

Any questions may be directed to backcountrystudy@med.unr.edu, or to the project co-directors directly. We are immensely thankful for your participation.

David Fiore, MD, University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine ([contact](#))

Jerry Johnson, DA, Montana State University ([contact](#))

Jordy Hendrikx, PhD, Montana State University ([contact](#))

Liability Release and Express Assumption of Risk for Participants in Research. *Please read each paragraph*

I am aware of the inherent dangers in skiing/riding and that "skiing/riding" is a general term which includes snowboarding and riding a snowmobile, as well as other means of moving through snow. I recognize that I, and I alone am responsible for my choice of activities and any injury or damage which may befall me while engaged in and in transit to and from any such activities related to this research.

No Released Parties may be held liable or responsible in any way for any injury, death, or other damages to me or my family, heirs, or assigns that may occur as a result of my participation in this research or as a result of any negligence of any party or any party associated with University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine or Montana State University.

Marking “Yes, I agree” on this survey signifies my understanding and agreement with the above conditions to be an active participant in the research and that **I am 18 years or older**.

By marking “Yes, I agree”, I also give allowance to use my answers for scientific research in line with the rules of the Institutional Review Board at [Montana State University](#) and the [University of Nevada, Reno](#). You may view the complete informed consent document [here](#).

I am aware that I can stop my participation at any time by leaving the survey.

- Yes, I agree
- No, I do not agree

The first few questions ask about your skiing/riding habits and skills.

Please note that anytime you are out of the boundaries of a patrolled ski area we will refer to that terrain as "backcountry".

Please use the following scale to answer the question below. The description is meant to apply to both your in-bounds and backcountry skill set.

- **Level I - Novice.** Working to develop balance, body position and speed control on flat to moderate terrain.
- **Level II - Intermediate.** Can negotiate all moderate runs confidently with appropriate equipment. Can negotiate most out of bounds terrain with confidence.
- **Level III - Strong.** Can negotiate most all terrain on the appropriate equipment using using a variety of skills such as traversing, side slipping and kick-turns if necessary. Proficient at self arrest.
- **Level IV - Advanced/Expert.** Can negotiate 90% of the terrain encountered with confidence. Can handle all snow conditions in all weather. Proficient with terrain management skills such as ski cutting or steep terrain up to 50 degrees.
- **Level V - Extreme.** Can negotiate extreme terrain in all conditions. Completely comfortable and confident on long descents up to 50° with other potential challenges such as highly variable snow conditions and extreme weather. Proficient with rope skills and moderate climbing if necessary.

Using the scale above, how would you describe your **skiing/riding abilities?**

	I. Novice	II. Intermediate	III. Strong	IV. Advanced / Expert	V. Extreme
In-bounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Backcountry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How many seasons have you been skiing and/or riding each of the following?

	Just this season	Since last spring	2–3 seasons	4–6 seasons	7–9 seasons	10 or more seasons
Ski resorts (in-bounds)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Backcountry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In a typical year, approximately **how many days per season** do you ski or ride...

The backcountry

Resort (in-bounds)

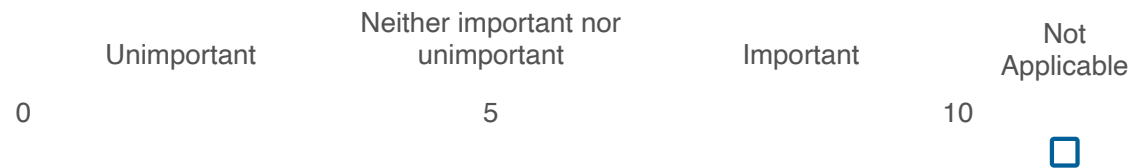
When you ski or ride in the backcountry, how often do you access the backcountry from a ski area versus a trailhead?

100% from a Resort			Equally from both			100% from a Trailhead		
-100	-75	-50	-25	0	25	50	75	100

Which is the highest level of avalanche training that you have completed?

- No avalanche education
- Informal education online, or from friends
- One or more avalanche awareness nights such as Know Before You Go
- One or more avalanche workshops, including 1 day avalanche field session
- One or more recreation level courses (US Rec Level 1 or 2, AIARE 1 or 2, CAA AST1 or 2,)
- One or more professional level courses or higher (AvPro, Pro 1 or 2, Professional Rescuer, CAA Avalanche Operations 1 or 2)

If you pursued avalanche education **after February 2020**, how important was the COVID-19 pandemic in influencing that decision?



Which items do you have with you ***while in the backcountry*** (mark all that apply):

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avalanche Beacon | <input type="checkbox"/> Helmet | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Rescue Beacon (Garmin inReach, SPOT Messenger, etc) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Probe | <input type="checkbox"/> Airbag Pack | <input type="checkbox"/> Radios |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel | | |

How confident are you in your knowledge and ability **to assess avalanche risk** in avalanche terrain?

Not confident at all



Confident in simple conditions and terrain



Confident in moderately complex conditions and terrain



Confident in all conditions and terrain



When it comes to skiing and riding in the backcountry, **how willing or unwilling are you to take risks?**



How important are **this season's avalanche fatalities and snowpack instability** for your decision to go into the backcountry?

During the COVID
pandemic

Logic block

Please respond to the following statements by indicating how much you agree with each of the following statements...

I first got into backcountry riding because of:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Ski area closures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Covid risk at ski areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The unknown nature of ski area operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limited access at ski areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write my own...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

During COVID, I tour...

- Closer to my normal access points
- About the same distance from my normal access points
- Further from my normal access points

During COVID, I notice...

- Fewer other backcountry users
- About the same number of backcountry users
- More backcountry users

During COVID, I'm skiing/riding the backcountry...

- More than I used to
- About the same
- Less than I used to

During COVID, I ski with...

- Fewer partners

- About the same number of partners
- More partners

Please indicate how you **gauge the relative risk** between skiing/riding at a ski resort compared to riding in the backcountry currently.

	Inbounds much riskier		Equal risk		Backcountry much riskier		
	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Risk of getting Covid							
Risk of getting injured							

This final set of questions asks you to tell us something about yourself. They are optional.

What is your **gender**?

- Male
- Female
- Gender non-binary
- I prefer not to state
- Write my own...

What is your *home Postal Code*?

What is your *home Zip Code*?

What is your *age*?

Thanks for completing the survey!

Please let us know if you have any comments on the survey or would like to expand on any of your answers.

A special thank you for completing the survey...

If you would like to be entered for the raffle and to receive the results of our study please enter your email address. ***This will link your email to your survey and is completely optional.***

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