



**TAHOE BACKCOUNTRY**  
ALLIANCE

**BACKCOUNTRY SAFETY DURING COVID-19**

**April 6, 2020**

The Tahoe Backcountry Alliance hopes that everyone in our community is staying safe and healthy during this very challenging time. It's been a wild year that started strong, went into drought and has now been cut short by COVID-19, just as the snow began to fall again.

TBA's mission is to be the voice of the human-powered Tahoe backcountry community, advocating sustainable winter access and stewardship of public lands in the Tahoe Sierra. In the spirit of stewardship and in solidarity with our local health care providers, TNSAR Team, and community--and in accordance with state and local orders--we ask the backcountry community to refrain from backcountry skiing and taking unnecessary risk in this time of crisis. Limited rescue and medical resources in our community are strained and should be reserved for those who are ill until the crisis passes.

As lovers of the Sierra, we understand the desire to recreate in the mountains. More than ever, our individual actions can have a direct, collective impact on our community. If you do head out this spring, please keep the following in mind:

1. Governors of both California and Nevada have implemented shelter-in-place orders in both states.
2. Practicing social distancing in the mountains is just as applicable as in town. Spread out and maintain at least 6 feet from others at the trailhead, on the skin track, and during breaks. Until social distancing orders lift, don't carpool; take individual vehicles.
3. Crowded trailheads make social distancing difficult, if not impossible. Consider spreading out and heading elsewhere if you encounter crowds.
4. Typical medical resources are being reserved for critically ill patients. Normal rescue and medical response times may be longer than usual or unavailable.
5. Rescues expose SAR responders to additional risk of illness and can quickly deplete their ability to respond to future emergencies should they fall sick and/or require weeks long quarantine.
6. We're all trying to maintain our health and well-being during this crisis the best we can. Be kind and courteous. It's a stressful time for all and we're in this together.
7. More than ever, our individual actions can have a direct, collective impact on our community.

Stay healthy and be well.

Your friends at the Tahoe Backcountry Alliance