



BACKCOUNTRY SAFETY DURING COVID-19

October 12, 2020

The Tahoe Backcountry Alliance hopes that everyone in our community is staying safe and healthy during this very challenging time. The Tahoe Sierra experienced record numbers of visitors and backcountry users during the spring and summer months, and we expect similar trends to continue into winter 2020-2021.

TBA's mission is to be the voice of the human-powered Tahoe backcountry community, advocating sustainable winter access and stewardship of Tahoe's public lands. In the spirit of stewardship and in solidarity with our local health care providers, TNSAR Team, and community, we ask the backcountry community to remain vigilant to the evolving situation, heed all official health guidance, and practice good backcountry etiquette this coming winter.

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 winter, please keep the following in mind:

1. 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.
2. Wear a face covering at trailheads, summits, or any gathering point where people congregate.
3. If you fall ill, get tested and stay home until you're well and produce a negative test result.
4. Crowded trailheads make social distancing difficult, if not impossible. Consider spreading out and heading elsewhere if you encounter crowds.
5. Typical medical resources are being reserved for critically ill patients. Normal rescue and medical response times may be longer than usual or unavailable.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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