



MOUNT WASHINGTON AVALANCHE CENTER

**2024 | 2025
Impact Report**

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Introduction

The Mount Washington Avalanche Center is a public-private partnership between the White Mountain National Forest and the Mount Washington Avalanche Center Foundation, a 501c3 non-profit organization.

The Mount Washington Avalanche Center (MWAC) has deep roots in the New England mountain community and in the history of avalanche forecasting. In 1959, the Mount Washington Snow Ranger Program published the first backcountry avalanche advisory in the United States. Over the next 65 years, MWAC has grown and developed to meet the needs of the growing population of skiers, climbers, and hikers who travel in New Hampshire's avalanche terrain.

In 2025, the availability of advanced gear, accessibility of information, and the growing popularity of mountain sports mean an increased number of people traveling in dangerous avalanche terrain during all months of the winter season.

For us, this underscores the importance of accurate, timely, and publicly available avalanche information and mountain safety resources. Each year, our team works to make these resources more accurate and more accessible to a broader audience with the hopes of reducing backcountry accidents and fostering an informed, responsible, backcountry community.

None of our progress and success would be possible without you - our partners, donors, volunteers, snow observers, event attendees, guides, educators, and friendly faces on the trail.

Director's Note

"The close of the 2024–2025 winter season offers a moment to reflect not only on the snowpack, from an early start in Tuckerman Ravine to a short-lived but active persistent weak layer, but also on the evolution within our backcountry community. Over the past few years, we've seen a growing willingness among all of us to openly share information, whether about snowpack observations, route choices, or candid reflections on close calls and the decision-making that led to them.

This positive shift toward collective responsibility and collaborative knowledge sharing has been inspiring. It affirms that our work extends well beyond daily avalanche forecasts and into fostering a deeply engaged community. To support and encourage this sharing, we have expanded the observation zones beyond our immediate forecast area, actively incorporated greater transparency into our daily avalanche forecasting process, and invited industry professionals to share their insights and experiences through our Ledge Talk Series and ESAW. We value and respect the decisions each individual makes in avalanche terrain, recognizing that there is always more to learn from one another.

We invite you to continue building on this momentum - share your insights with the community at future MWAC events, consider becoming a mentor, and openly discuss both your successful and challenging decisions. Sharing not only the good decisions but also the difficult ones, including moments when turning back or changing plans, is equally valuable and truly a win. Together, let's inspire, educate, and support each other even more in the mountains.

This spirit of openness and shared learning aligns closely with our refined mission statement adopted this spring, particularly its emphasis on collaborative knowledge sharing to help others make safe decisions in avalanche terrain.

We've got a good thing going, thanks for being a part of it."

Jeff Fongemie, MWAC Director

Meet the Team



Jeff Fongemie



Patrick Scanlan



Charlotte MacDonald

U.S. Forest Service Mount Washington Avalanche Center



Mouna Goyette



Aaron Hubbell



Jake Risch



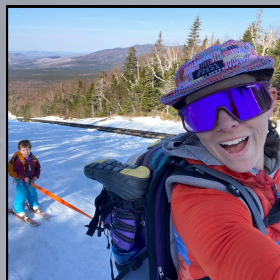
Dan Houde



Ben Leoni



Melanie Kulick



Bethann Swartz



Jon Erikson

Mount Washington Avalanche Center Foundation

The Mission

MWAC

The Mount Washington Avalanche Center works to **reduce the risk and impact of avalanches** in the White Mountains through **accurate forecasting, public education, search & rescue, and collaborative knowledge sharing.**

MWAC Foundation

To support the Mount Washington Avalanche Center by **enhancing and expanding avalanche education** opportunities, advocating for **responsible and sustainable backcountry recreation** in New Hampshire's unique alpine ecosystems, and **expanding the reach** of US Forest Service avalanche forecasts and messages.

Our Vision

We envision a community of backcountry users who are aware of avalanche risk and mountain hazards, make informed decisions, and return home safely.

24 | 25 Forecasting

Our daily avalanche information products empower backcountry users to make informed decisions that increase individual and collective safety.



111

Forecast Products Published

320

Forecaster Field Days

42

Professional MWAC Observations

7

Additional Observation Zones

Highlights

Over 75% of forecast readers report “**very strong**” levels **of trust** in the accuracy of the avalanche forecast.



Research shows our readership (~**2000 readers/day**) is increasingly using the forecast as a **critical tool to make informed & calculated decisions** in avalanche terrain.



Weekly snowpack summaries added to the list of forecast products.



24 | 25 Reach

We strive for our safety products and messages to reach far and wide across the backcountry community.

731,000

Unique Website Views

36,000

Social Media Followers

300,000

YouTube Views

700+

Live Event Participants

2200

Avy App Users



Highlights



Adoption and **use of the new Avy mobile app ranks #3** across 10 U.S. avalanche centers.



7 new observation zones reached community members traveling in avalanche terrain in **Maine, Vermont,** and the **greater White Mountains.**

24 | 25 Community

Our community is the backbone of our forecasting operation. The actions and information from our community enhance MWAC operations and promote a safer mountain environment.



36

MWAC Volunteers

2500+

Volunteer Hours

175

Public Observations

48

Avalanche Courses Reached

15

Live Outreach Events

Highlights

MWACF awarded **4 avalanche education scholarships** to students advancing their recreational or professional skillset, totaling \$4259 going directly to local community members and guide services.



Our **15 free or low-cost outreach events** reached over **700 people** in-person, furthering our impact on avalanche & mountain safety.



The Eastern Snow & Avalanche Workshop was regarded as the **best event in its 13 year history!**



24 | 25 Rescue

MWAC maintains search & rescue (SAR) authority and responsibility for the east side of Mount Washington. All 911 calls from the Cutler River Drainage are routed to MWAC staff to execute a safe & efficient emergency response.

6

Major SAR Incidents

58

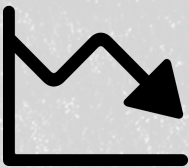
Responder Hours

6

Emergency Services &
SAR Partner Organizations



Highlights



Preventative SAR efforts have appeared to reduce rescue volume. We observed a **50 - 60% decrease in rescue volume** compared to 2022, 2023, & 2024 seasons.



Developed comprehensive **resilience programming** through the Responder Alliance and American Avalanche Association to **support responder mental health**.

24 | 25

Financial Impact

Financial support from the MWAC Foundation is critical to maintaining an effective, sustainable, and forward-thinking avalanche center.



\$4,259

Scholarship Dollars Awarded

\$1,700

Toward Forecaster Education

\$4,300

Toward MWAC Operations

\$27,500

Donations and grants received for film project production

Highlights

MWACF supported continuing education for the forecasting team through medical certification upkeep and avalanche science continuing education.



MWACF continues to financially support the ongoing **MWAC film project**.



MWACF funded new forecaster uniforms, weather station infrastructure, remote cameras, and digital tools.



Film Project

MWAC is partnering with Warden Co. to create a groundbreaking film that aims to raise awareness about the hazards and potential consequences of backcountry skiing on Mount Washington. Our goal is to spark a cultural shift that prioritizes safety, knowledge, and preparation in the ski mountaineering community leading to awareness and accident reduction.



Progress Report

Expected release date: Fall/Winter 2025

4 days of filming with MWAC staff

Ongoing **interviews with accident victims**

Teaser reel premiered at ESAW 2024



MWAC x MWOBS Internship

In partnership with the Mount Washington Observatory, MWAC supported a joint internship program for the second year in a row. Our intern split time between the MWAC forecasting operation and the MWOBS forecasting and research operation between January and April.

“On the weeks I’m not on the summit, I’ve had the awesome opportunity to work with the Mount Washington Avalanche Center! This involves a lot of time in the field gathering observations on and around Mount Washington, and has allowed me to explore the mountains I grew up in from a new perspective. Since avalanche conditions can vary significantly depending on the aspect, elevation, and location of a slope, deciding where to go and which observations will be most valuable to the MWAC team and to the public can be a challenge.”

Marin Macdonald, 2025 Intern

Research Effort:

Explore Solid-Liquid-Ratio measured at the summit in relation to different weather variables including temperature, wind, and seasonality to better understand the weather and climate on the northeastern United States’ highest peak and analyze climatological averages and trends.

More information about this year’s intern research can be found here:

<https://mountwashington.org/research/current-research-projects/solid-to-liquid-ratio-analysis/>

We couldn't do what we do without support from our partners.



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION



AVSAR



AMERICAN
AVALANCHE
ASSOCIATION



Dartmouth
Health

Thanks for an incredible season!

A Note from the Chairwoman of the MWAC Foundation

Our success in supporting MWAC—and, by extension, our backcountry community—has been made possible through your generous financial contributions, commitment to educational programming, and willingness to share valuable snowpack information. The strength of our partnership with MWAC is deeply enriched by our broader connection to the community.

One standout example of this collaboration is the success of the new Avy App and the addition of seven new observation zones. These achievements were significantly enhanced by those of you who submitted observations and photos. Together, we've made a powerful impact here in the White Mountains. The information you've shared has been instrumental in improving MWAC operations and mountain safety for all users.

I am incredibly proud of what our volunteer organization has accomplished over the past year, and I'm honored to highlight a few key programs:

- Our flagship educational event, the Eastern Snow and Avalanche Workshop, was regarded as one of the best in its 13-year history. It was truly wonderful to see so many of you there!
- In partnership with John Donnellan and East Coast Avalanche Education, we were thrilled to offer four individuals scholarships for their avalanche education.
- For MWAC, supported continuing education and gear for the forecast team, helped fund the long sliding fall film project, and contributed financially to weather station improvements.
- Our main fundraiser, the Tuckerman Inferno, featured a successful new course this year—and racers were treated to a picture-perfect day!

We're already looking forward to next winter and can't wait to kick off the season with you next fall at ESAW. We're also excited to announce that this summer we'll be recruiting volunteers for board subcommittees, further strengthening our connection to the community.

Once again, we extend a heartfelt thank you to all our donors, partners, and volunteers. Your dedication and support mean the world to us, and we are truly grateful.

Warmly, **Mouna Goyette**



Mount Washington Avalanche Center Foundation

PO Box 1438

Intervale, NH 03845

www.mountwashingtonavalanchecenter.org

snow@mountwashingtonavalanchecenter.org