

The Mountain Ear

November 2020

President's Report

Happy November everyone!

Winter has arrived in the mountains. What a nice surprise! Around here, November usually refers to the shoulder season. It can feel cozy, warm or somewhat bleary. But most of us are jones-ing to play in the snow. With that said, for those recreating in the Backcountry, Missoula Avalanche recommends now to start watching the weather and continuously monitor how the snowpack is beginning to set up. For members new to the area, this is a great regional resource to better manage your own risk in avalanche terrain. Also, our Winter Conditioning Wednesday Sentinel Hill climb has been well attended. Come join us, rain, snow, or (moon)shine!

Susanna G Phillips,
President/Treasurer

Level 1 Avalanche Course- January 5-10, 2021

For the third consecutive year we are pleased to announce a LEVEL 1 AVALANCHE COURSE (Sponsored and Trainers provided by: West Central Montana Avalanche Center)

This course is available exclusively to members of The Rocky Mountaineers! Due to COVID the course will be structured a little differently this year. Instead of in-person classroom sessions, that portion of the course will be done on-line. Also, in order to keep group sizes smaller and keep folks more physically distant, the student to instructor ratio will be 4:1.

Course Description

Format:

2 part classroom component + 2 day field component

Date | Location:

Tuesday-Thursday Evenings (1/5 & 1/7) On-Line Classroom Component

Sat-Sun- All Day (1/9-1/10) Field Component | Lolo Pass Backcountry

Price: Discounted TRM member rate- \$300.00 (normally \$400)

Avalanche Level 1

The level 1 course is designed for current and aspiring backcountry travelers. This course focuses on developing a solid foundation in avalanche knowledge and backcountry travel skills. Following the American Avalanche Association (A3) curriculum instructors cover systematic approaches for sorting and prioritizing information in the complex environment of decision-making in the backcountry. Forty percent of the course is classroom based and the other sixty percent is field based. Participants will travel in the backcountry, in and around avalanche terrain.

This course focuses on the following:

- Basic avalanche terminology
- Recognizing avalanche terrain
- Travel procedures in avalanche terrain
- Formation of the mountain snowpack
- How weather changes the snowpack
- Human factors and how they can influence decision-making
- Interpreting the avalanche forecast and advisory
- Tour planning
- Avalanche transceiver use and rescue skills
- Field observations of terrain, snowpack, and weather
- Use and interpretation of stability tests
- Implementing systems for prioritizing information, working as a team
- Classroom decision-making scenarios to practice use of the checklist

RECOMMENDED READING

- *Snow Sense*, Jill Fredston & Doug Fesler
- *Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain*, Bruce Tremper
- *Avalanche Essentials*, Bruce Tremper

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What is included:

1. Professional instruction (4:1 Student/Instructor Ratio)
2. Course workbooks
3. Classroom (on-line) and field instruction

What is not included:

1. Transportation to and from the trailhead or ski area
2. Personal gear

3. Avalanche rescue gear
4. Food

TO REGISTER: Please contact Forest Dean (406-240-7612 mtnear1@gmail.com).
Payment (\$300) required to guarantee your spot.

COURSE LIMIT: 12 participants

COVID 19 ADAPTION - Course Participants will receive a \$50 paypal tuition credit if they can document that they have purchased an Allianz Travel Insurance Policy. When we priced several of these policies that cover late stage cancellations, we found that trip insurance could be purchased for close to amount of money we will refund you from your tuition payment. Different participant ages, travel itineraries, & coverage choices will affect the policy cost. If you feel sick we want you stay home, but we understand that the tuition cost can complicate that decision. Please feel free to explore this option more here <https://www.allianztravelinsurance.com/compare-plans>

Winter Conditioning Wednesdays

TRM Winter Conditioning Wednesdays: Join us for our weekly climb of Mount Sentinel. Hikes start at 6PM- bring your headlamp, traction crampons and/or poles. Start or continue conditioning for your favorite winter sports & activities, or come along just to get some fresh air midweek. All abilities welcome. Meet at 6pm at ASUM Gardens Parking Lot / M Parking Lot (will alternate every week). Leaders alternate each week- see website calendar for more details.

And, coming in January...we will start to offer weekly evening XC ski outings and "just for fun" Rando racing at Snowbowl! Stay tuned!

Winter Fest

Mark your calendar for Saturday, January 9th for "Winter Fest" at the Lolo Pass area! We will offer a slew of trips that day: backcountry and XC skiing, snowshoeing, beacon park practice, hot springing. In the evening we plan to gather (place TBD) and have a party with food, drink and RAFFLE PRIZES! More information will be coming on this real soon.

Upcoming Trips and Events

XC Ski- **Gold Creek Ski Trails**- Sat, Dec. 5
Ice Climb- **Hyalite Ice Climbing**- Thurs-Sun, Dec 10-13
XC Ski/Snowshoe- **Lolo Pass**- Sun, Dec. 13
XC Ski- **Chief Joseph Pass**- Weds, Dec. 16
BC Ski- **Ward Mountain**- Monday, Dec 21
Various Activities- **Lolo Pass Area**- Sat-Sun, Jan. 9-10
BC Ski- **Stonewall Creek (Lincoln Area)**- Sat, Jan 23
BC Ski- **TRM Cabin/Little St. Joe Peak**- Fri-Sun, Jan. 29-31

Please visit our website for all the details on these trips and more! Also scan further ahead in the online calendar to see some future listed trips.

www.rockymountaineers.com

TRM Business Meeting

Our next quarterly business meeting will take place at 6:00pm on Tuesday, December 1st. Due to COVID we will be conducting this meeting via Zoom. Certainly not the same or as fun as meeting in person, but it would still be great to see a few of your smiling faces! All members are welcome (and encouraged) to attend! For meeting log-in instructions, please contact Alden Wright (alden@wrightmontana.net).

TRM Path to 501c3 Status- Help?

We are continuing to (very) slowly pursue a path to a non-profit 501c3 designation. Slowly, because all of us that have been leading the charge the last few years either haven't had the time, or more importantly, the knowledge to head down this path. We would like to thank member Kris Cahoon for helping us get part of the way this past year. Reaching out here to see if anyone with experience in such matters would be interested in helping us get to this "promised land"? Please let us know!

Trip Reports

All reports from club trips can be found at:

<http://rockymountaineers.com/trip-reports/>

All future Trip Reports will be posted and archived on this site as well.

Club Officers

President- Susanna Phillips

Vice President- Fintan Maguire

Secretary- Elizabeth Moore

Treasurer- Susanna Phillips

Website- Alden Wright

Archivist- Julie Kahl

Newsletter - Forest Dean