

Doug Allen, Vice President of Mountain Operations, Steamboat Ski & Resort Corporation

Presentation Overview:

I have been spending a majority of my time since last December dealing with weather related issues beginning with the forth lowest snowfall in the past 33 years which taxed our snowmaking abilities, our staff and our equipment in effort to maintain the snow surface that our resort community relies on. Our industry relies on snowfall to attract visitors to the resorts that provide income and employment not just at the ski areas but all the support businesses, hotels, restaurants, retail shops, etc. within the community.

Last winter our industry saw a 15.7 percent decrease from the previous winter in skier visits nationally with the 41 percent decrease in average snowfall. This is particularly discouraging as our business had continued to grow even with the recent economic downturn. Last winter's 51 million skier visits was the lowest participation in our sport since the winter of 1991/92. It was the worst season in the past twenty years flowing the best season in twenty years, all attributable to the lack of snowfall.

Our weather concerns didn't end with the ski season as we endured some of the highest potential for wildfire in the resort's history driving the need for unprecedented emergency preparedness. As fall draws near, there are major concerns around the industry centered on the availability of water for snowmaking as we see the water in reservoirs disappear and river flows at historic lows.