

BRIDGER BOWL

November 2, 2020

Bridger Bowl Association Members,

This certainly has been a year to remember and hopefully move on from with grace. Nobody expected to roll into the ski season with so much going on locally and internationally. When we closed on March 15th, it was unprecedented and took all of us to accomplish. Then, fire came and was almost a part of our future landscape. Now, with early cold temps and snow on the ground, it seems the season is off to a raucous start.

Late summer 2019, we entered into discussions with Entabeni Systems to provide Bridger Bowl with a single point Customer Resource Management (CRM) enterprise. Entabeni was able to provide a beta version of their rental system and get it in place for most of the past season. Before COVID-19 hit the ski industry in mid-March, Bridger had committed to a relationship to provide RFID passes and tickets along with Rental/Retail and Snowsports solutions for the coming season. Our 2020/21 reservations-based system to control the crowds and hopefully keep Bridger Bowl safe and open for our guest and employees, is built upon this CRM architecture.

The decision to run our operations on a reservation-only platform was not an easy one to make. During these unprecedented times, Bridger needed a flexible platform for scaling up and down our skier visits based on local and national requirements and conditions. Our first concern has always been keeping the ski area open for pass holders and ticket purchasers. After all, Bridger is really selling skiing and riding; that's our product. Snowsports, Rental/Retail and Food & Beverage are part of the experience to enhance that product. To get the area open and have any of these services, we need to conform to the Gallatin County-City Health Department and State of Montana regulations. The strict reductions regarding building capacities and controlling group sizes has a direct effect on the capacity of the mountain. Furthermore, building space availability could severely impact the slopes, putting more skiers and riders on the hill and in the lift lines.

More people outside means longer and more congested lift lines if we don't control the number of skiers and riders visiting Bridger. This is where the flexible yet controllable reservations system allows Bridger to scale up and down our skier and rider visits to fit our ability and comfortable capacity on the mountain. Our passholder count far exceeds our comfortable capacity and while other resorts have made the call to allow all passholders to ski at any time, Bridger cannot bank on the idea that ¼ or less of the passholders of record will show on any given day. With our system, Bridger will have the ability to scale up and down the number of skier visits available, how they are distributed between passes and tickets, and open up movement between the groups as visits dictate.

For example, if Bridger decides to open at 2000 skier visits for the first week, 80% (or 1600) reservations will be for pass holders and 20% (400) reservations will be tickets and other users. As we scale up our operations to larger numbers of skier visits, we can alter these groups' percentage totals on a daily basis to fit the crowd and known previous skier visit distributions. Another example: Bridger will have the ability to move a higher reservation percentage to tickets over the Christmas holiday if we are not "selling out" our passholder reservation numbers. Bridger is doing all of this to control the crowding at the lifts, in the lodges and on the slopes. If passholders are willing to ski more on weekdays and less on weekends, that will help spread the skier visits more evenly among the projected 122-day season.

It's easy to overlook how many skier and rider days are truly available at Bridger. Last season we averaged 2,450 guests per day, with the vast majority of days well under 1800 visits/day. Our hope is to get skier and rider visits into the 3,000 range as soon as feasible within the restrictions we are working under. With that in mind, weekends will continue to be the greatest challenge for Bridger and we ask that you be flexible and allow for those who can't ski during the week to make reservations for the weekends. If any passholder does not feel they want to ski and ride Bridger under these conditions, we will refund their purchase at any time up to November 20th.

To help control both infection from and of Snowsports participants, we have suspended our weekend Snowsports programs for children and weekday programs for local schools. This frees up a significant number of reservation slots on Saturday and Sunday alone. Bridger will offer limited numbers of smaller group lessons for those who want to ski within cohort groups. These lessons are available by reservation right now. Rentals will also operate on a reservation-only basis and can be made via the same ecommerce portal where tickets and lessons are being offered. All rental operations will be found in the Saddle Peak Lodge. The Jim Bridger Lodge (JBL) rental space will be utilized for retail and repair use only. The space previously used for retail will be an enlarged shoe and bag check for the season. Bridger will not offer overnight storage of any bags, skis or boots and we will be removing all bags left inside any lodges to the JBL shoe and bag check. Please leave your bags in your car this season as they create an increased risk to all of us.

Lift operations will be requiring all guests to wear masks while in line, loading and unloading, along with on the ride up the hill if you are not loaded with those you came with. Bridger will not be asking anyone to ride with someone they don't know or that they do not feel comfortable riding with. The singles line will be non-existent for the season; if you arrive alone, plan to ride alone. Ghost lanes will be incorporated into every lift line maze as needed to spread the distance between groups. Scanning of Bridger Bowl Cards will be accomplished thru your jacket or pants; just let the checker know the basic area to scan for your card. Our scanners are handheld devices and will allow the operator and the guest to have a contactless interaction. Bridger has the ability to scan at every lift this season. A great rule of thumb will be "Arrive together, Ride together". The more compliant everyone is with the rules, the smoother the lines will run and more skiers and riders we can allow on site. Please note, those not willing to wear a mask, or those without a reservation, will be required to leave the property.

Food and Beverage will operate in all four lodges with limited seating, grab and go options for food, and access to the restrooms. We are encouraging everyone to think of their car as their lodge this season for warming up and eating as possible. While we are encouraging use of cars in this manner, we are also restricting parking to operational hours between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. No overnight camping or après ski parties will be allowed in the lots. We ask that everyone act in the spirit of cooperation and please stay safe while on the property and safely head home at the end of the day.

Cold temps are already here and we've started making snow. The long-range forecast is looking good for keeping the snow we already have on the ground. As we learned in 2017, that can change pretty fast, so we won't be committing to opening up for skiing any time earlier than December 4th, currently posted. In the meantime, the uphill parade is in full effect. Snowmaking is up and running while the colder than normal temps we are experiencing will support it.

All pre-season skiers and riders should be aware that backcountry conditions exist on all Bridger Bowl terrain until opening day. The Ski Patrol is not performing daily avalanche or rescue work. If you are injured or caught in an avalanche, your partner, as always, is your best option for rescue. Please remember to be especially careful during thin snow conditions and use a little extra caution during early season to help avoid getting seriously injured, falling on roads or other obstacles hidden by a thin layer of snow before the season even starts.

Everything the staff at Bridger Bowl is undertaking to get the ski area open and running is being done with the upmost consideration for employee and guest safety. We acknowledge that mistakes will be made and Bridger Bowl staff will adapt and change as needed. It will take the whole community of skiers and riders working together to keep the ski area safe and open. I sincerely hope that we will not be required to close.

Regards,
Bob Petitt, General Manager