

Ski resorts offer summer fun

By Paul McHugh, Sacramento Bee

Each fall, California ski areas hop to a big list of tasks – bringing in supplies, hiring “lifties,” spraying a base of manmade snow.

But many resorts become almost as busy as they prepare to devote resources to summer recreation.

They’re also getting creative. The 2012 menu of summer activities goes past staples such as concerts or mountain biking on ski trails to include flat-water paddling, disc golf, star-gazing, skateboarding, zipline rides and even wacky pursuits such as obstacle races through mud.

“Summer programs for resorts have become vital to our business,” said Bob Roberts, director of the California Ski Industry Association. “Fewer places are putting a chain across the road and closing up. Summer revenue helps a resort cover fixed costs and provides jobs for employees you want to keep.”

It’s true for resorts small or large. At the Bear Valley Cross Country ski area on Highway 4, founder Paul Petersen morphs his business into the Bear Valley Adventure Co. in late May. Summer activity today constitutes around 20 percent of his business.

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