

Dry winters cost ski industry \$1 billion

By J. Weston Phippen, *Outside*

It's been a bad winter for skiing. And more than just being a drag on weekend plans or limiting some resorts to operating with only a few runs (if any), less snow on the mountains is a big hit on the economy. People make fewer trips to the resort, which means resorts hire fewer staff. The local restaurants, bars, and hotels all feel a little empty.

A new report by Protect Our Winters (POW), a climate advocacy group based in Colorado, says a low-snow year can cost the ski resort industry more than \$1 billion and 17,400 jobs, compared to an average season. These numbers result from comparing snowfall records with spending habits from 2001 to 2016, so they don't even account for this winter, which has been the worst along the Rockies since the 1960s, when researchers started keeping detailed snowpack records. POW's data has serious implications for the snow-sports industry. As climate change worsens and snowfall becomes less reliable, resorts see less business. If it gets too bad, some resorts might close altogether, which would have economic consequences far beyond the slopes.

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