

Resorts place greater emphasis on snowmaking

By Danny King, Travel Weekly

For most of the history of snowmaking technology, the ski industry has viewed it as a plan B effort: filling in bare spots on an occasional warm, dry day in the mountains, especially late in the season. But global warming has changed that view. Increasingly, snowmaking is becoming a ubiquitous component of the ski experience at U.S. resorts large and small.

In announcing its first capital improvement budget since its founding last year, Alterra Mountain Co. made sure to earmark a sizeable part of that budget for snowmaking equipment designed to pick up where Mother Nature leaves off – or has already left off.

Alterra, which owns Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, declined to say exactly how much of the \$555 million it has budgeted for its dozen North American resorts within the next five years will be dedicated to upgrading the snowmaking systems.

As of today, snowmaking machines can cover about 22 percent of the acreage at U.S. ski resorts, according to the 2016-17 Kottke National End of Season Survey released by the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA).

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