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Mountain Capital Partners & Sandia Peak Ski Area Announce Joint Venture

The largest ski resort management company in the Southwest adds its third ski area in NM

Durango, Colo. – Mountain Capital Partners (MCP) and Sandia Peak Ski Company have announced a joint venture agreement for the operation of Sandia Peak Ski Area, located near Albuquerque, New Mexico. This is the company’s third New Mexico ski area, bringing the total portfolio to 14 ski, bike and golf resorts across the Southwest, Oregon and Chile.

MCP managing partner James Coleman said his work in the ski industry began in New Mexico back in 2000 when he purchased Sipapu Ski and Summer Resort near Taos. He continued expansion into New Mexico in 2015 when MCP began operating Los Alamos’ Pajarito Mountain Ski Area, and he said he looks forward to bringing his trademark “Skiing First” philosophy to Sandia Peak.

“The foundations of our company were built on the lessons we learned from skiers and snowboarders in New Mexico,” Coleman said. “Sandia Peak presents an incredible opportunity for us to bring the best practices we’ve learned for the benefit of Albuquerque and visitors from around the region.”

Located in the Sandia Mountains just 35 miles northeast of Albuquerque and operating on Cibola National Forest, Sandia Peak is known for its close proximity to the Duke City - the ski area and city are connected by the Sandia Peak Tramway, an aerial tramway with the world’s third longest single span. The Tramway and adjoining TEN 3 Restaurant are not included in the Sandia Peak Ski Area special permit and will continue to be operated by Sandia Companies under the direction of the Abruzzo family.

Sandia Peak Ski Area offers three double chairlifts, one surface lift, 35 trails and 300 skiable acres that feature 1,700 vertical feet. Resort upgrades are still being considered, although MCP confirmed Sandia will introduce a new season pass lineup that’s headlined by MCP’s flagship product, the Power Pass. Power Pass Core guests will enjoy unlimited access to Sandia Peak, Sipapu and Pajarito, with limited access at Purgatory Resort and more. Power Kids, the



no-strings-attached-FREE season pass for kids ages 12 and younger, will include access to Sandia Peak in addition to MCP's 11 additional ski areas and bike parks.

Staffing shortages and weather challenges have kept the ski area closed since 2022, and resort officials are actively working on their operating plan, Coleman said.

"Like many skiers in and around Albuquerque, the number one question we have is not if - but when - Sandia Peak will open, and we're exploring this now," he said.

Sandia Peak general manager Ben Abruzzo said MCP was a natural choice for him and his team as they considered who would continue the family business. Abruzzo's grandfather, adventurer and hot air balloonist Ben L. Abruzzo, purchased the ski area in 1958. The Abruzzo family owns and operates Ski Santa Fe, Sandia Peak Tramway and TEN 3 Restaurant.

"Skiing in the Southwest offers unique challenges that have been amplified over the last several years. This partnership will help address those challenges and provide a future for skiing in Albuquerque," Abruzzo said.

"Sandia Peak didn't just introduce skiing to Albuquerque, this ski area brought our sport to the entire state," Coleman said. "Generations of skiers have been recreating at Sandia since 1936, and I am honored to continue that legacy while building on the many successes that Ben Abruzzo and his family have cultivated."

All Sandia Peak Ski Area staffing will remain in place, and MCP is actively recruiting for key leadership roles. Open positions and their job descriptions will be posted at mcp.ski.

For more than two decades, MCP, the Southwest's largest ski resort management company, has strengthened its position in the region, acquiring, building, developing and successfully growing resorts in New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Texas and, most recently, Lee Canyon Resort, located outside of Las Vegas, Nevada. One year ago, MCP introduced a new geographical region to the company with the addition of Willamette Pass Resort in Oregon, and added its first international resort in March 2023 when MCP became the majority owner of Valle Nevado near Santiago Chile, the largest ski resort in the Americas.

For more information, please visit mcp.ski.

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About Sandia Peak Ski Area

Sandia Peak Ski Area, originally La Madera Ski Area, is located in the Sandia Mountains in the Cibola National Forest. It is New Mexico's first ski area, opening to skiers in 1936 and has long been where Albuquerque learns to ski and ride.

[Click here](#) for Sandia Peak Ski Area high resolution images

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About Mountain Capital Partners

Headquartered in Durango, Colo., Mountain Capital Partners (MCP) owns and manages 14 ski resorts, bike parks and golf courses: Purgatory Resort (CO), Arizona Snowbowl (AZ), Brian Head Resort (UT), Sipapu Ski & Summer Resort (NM), Nordic Valley Ski Resort (UT), Pajarito Mountain Ski Area (NM), Hesperus Ski Area (CO), Willamette Pass Resort (OR), Valle Nevado (Chile), Lee Canyon (NV), Sandia Peak Ski Area (NM), Spider Mountain Bike Park (TX) and Colorado's largest snowcat skiing operation, Purgatory Snowcat Adventures (CO). In spring 2023, MCP announced its purchase of Silver Creek Golf Course (AZ), which includes the oversight of neighboring Bison Golf Club (AZ). In total, the ski and bike resorts feature 8,000 acres of terrain; more than 500 trails, 70 and 20 terrain parks; and over 35,000 acres of backcountry snowcat skiing. Since 2015, MCP has invested more than \$75 million at its resorts, including new chairlifts, snowmaking and other capital improvements. For more information, visit mcp.ski.

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