

Avalanche Fatality Near Local Ski Resort

By Kera Erickson

On Sunday, February 18, a seventeen year old male from Massachusetts, became victim to a deadly **avalanche**. The **avalanche** occurred in the backcountry just outside of Snowbasin Ski Resort's boundaries.

The boy, along with his brother and father, were in Utah for a ski vacation.

All experienced skiers, they rode up the Mt. Allen Tram. On the ride up guests are warned, "Traveling outside the marked ski area boundary is not recommended." In addition, after leaving the tram, there is an "Are you Beeping" sign, and the Forest Service Utah **Avalanche** Center daily **avalanche** advisory that is visibly posted. **Avalanche** danger was posted as "considerable" on the morning of February 18, meaning that human triggered **avalanches** were probable. In addition, Utah **Avalanche** Center had issued press releases on Friday, as

well as the morning of the accident, warning the public of especially "tricky and dangerous avalanche conditions for the backcountry." Two Utah residents had lost their lives in **avalanches** triggered by snowmobiles just the day before.

After exiting the tram, guests ski a short distance, and then a small hike is required to access Hell's Canyon backcountry gate. There is another sign, the standard Forest Service sign, at this gate that again warns skiers of potential **avalanche** danger.

While skiing in the Hell's Canyon the family got separated. At the bottom of the canyon the father and his younger son met up, but they never saw the 17-year-old exit the canyon. Meanwhile, some snowboarders coming down through the canyon noticed a new **avalanche** that they hadn't seen earlier in the day. They also spotted a helmet and

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