# PUBLIC RELATIONS IN WINTER SPORTS AT MOUNT HOOD

by

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#### PREFACE

The author wishes to offer gratitude to James P.

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Bull Run Ranger District, Mount Hood National Forest,

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Bill Parke, recreational specialist for Region 6,

Portland, and Ralph Wiese, ski mountaineer and veteran

Mount Hood Ski Patrol officer, go the writer's thanks

for their assistance in developing the project.

Public relations in winter sports has no recorded background. Thus the author has been obliged to combine the recognized principles of public relations and the accepted practices of winter sports with his personal knowledge of the Mount Hood area in analyzing the developments of this phase of forestry.

It is sincerely hoped that some of the observations and recommendations brought forth herein are concrete enough to be of some value in effecting a more practical winter sports program in the world-famed Mount Hood snow playground.

-W.C.W.

Corvallis, Oregon

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#### INTRODUCTION

The most-used winter sports area on public land in the entire United States is the Mount Hood Recreational Area in Northwestern Oregon. Within one hundred miles' radius of this great winter playground live nearly three-fourths million people. Government officials of Oregon and Washington believe it is only a matter of time until this figure will be increased to over one million inhabitants.

Therein lie the facts which make all far-sighted individuals conscious of the growing importance Mount Hood
will assume in providing winter and summer recreation for
countless thousands of outdoors devotees. One needs only
examine the record to see that skiing, "the sport of millions," is rapidly becoming the major outlet for most of
the restless, adventurous, and fun-seeking Americans who
live within traveling distance of any slopes bearing snow
during the winter months.

Mount Hood, long recognized as one of the most beautiful and most accessible snow-grounds in the world, has so grown in popularity that at the time of this writing its facilities are far inadequate to handle the winter throngs. With this meteoric rise in fame and fortune of Mount Hood itself has increased the duty and responsibility of United

States Forest Service in caring for winter sports public.

The carrying-out of these duties and responsibilities lies in the hands of a comparatively few men on the staff of the Mount Hood National Forest.

Since the south side of Mount Hood in the vicinity of Government Camp and Timberline Lodge is the most readily accessible individual area on the forest, this paper will be concerned only with the development of that general location. This is in no way an attempt to overlook the excellent snow-grounds found northeast of the summit in the Cooper Spur region, accessible from Hood River on the Columbia River Highway. The "North Side" has its own peculiarities in topography, geography, climate, and administration and should, in any study, be considered apart from the "South Side," although it lies quite within the forest boundaries.

Administration of this recreational subdivision falls into the hands of the Bull Run District Ranger and his staff; headquarters at Zig Zag, some twelve miles west of Government Camp on the Mount Hood Loop Highway, Oregon 50, and at the regional office in Portland.

Nearly every recreational development in the area can be traced to cooperation between the United States Forest Service and various civic, sport, or promotional organizations interested mainly in the expansion and intensification of winter sports. In every case the guiding principle

employed by the Forest Service has been its creed of longstanding: "...and where conflicting interests must be
reconciled, the question will always be decided from the
standpoint of the greatest good of the greatest number in
the long run." (1) The efficiency of this cooperation
with the public is based on the policy that "...all the
resources of the forest reserves are for use, and this must
be brought about in a thoroughly prompt and businesslike
manner." (1)

Nationally, the Forest Service is in an enviable position among governmental agencies. Every administrator on every ranger district in the national forest structure is a trained forester with the serving of the public uppermost is his mind. He is not misled by personal prejudices or steered afoul by pressure groups. As a result. the Service has a long and clean record of public devotions; there have been no blaring headlines in America's newspapers about internal squabbles, and only a minimum of external skirmishes with sister agencies or the citizenry. Indeed, there is naught but praise for the wearers of the "Pine-tree shield" on the lips of the great majority of persons who have ever had dealings with them. Appreciation of the forest service by winter sports fans was expressed by Fred H. McNeil (2), a member of the National Ski Association executive council, when he wrote, "Western Skiers in the main feel fortunate that most of

the sport is on the national forests. Forest policies have been quite broad and friendly."

Future success of Forest Service negotiations with the general public depends upon the professional ability, tact, diplomacy, and attitude of all personnel who deal in any way with private citizens of that general public whose very support keeps the Service alive. Deductively, then, continued and sustained success in maintaining high standards in Mount Hood winter sports depends upon the performance of duty of the personnel of the Bull Run District of the Mount Hood National Forest. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the details of the public relations on the part of these key men, to critically evaluate them, and to recommend changes, additions, and future innovations.

## I. MOUNT HOOD. THE MOUNTAIN

If the problem of attracting large numbers of people to Mount Hood were an important part of public relations in winter sports, it would need no effort on anyone's part to be solved. One look at Mount Hood is the best publicity agent the mountain could possible have. One look at Hood convinces any resident Oregonian or Washingtonian that Mount Hood is HIS mountain; to see it is to love it, and to set ski or foot on its slopes is to feel its intimacy... and Hood places no limit on her family of friends.

The sparkling beauty of Mount Hood has so enchanted

visiting authors that they have been forced to pen their appreciation of it that others in other states and other countries could share the sight. One such transient literate, Dallas Lore Sharp, viewing "Wy'East" (Indian-given name for the glacial peak) from the hills west of Portland was moved to write: (3)

"For pure spirituality, for earth raised incorcuptible and clothed upon with holiness of beauty, Mount Hood, as seen in the heavens from the heights of Portland, is incomparable. As its snow-crowned summit, touched with the warmth of the closing day, was first unveiled before me, my soul did magnify the Lord, for the vision, to my unaccustomed eyes, was all divine.

"There are loftier mountains; there are peaks that fill with awe and that strike with terror, while Hood only fills the soul with exultation, with the joy of beauty, of completeness and perfection. Hood is but little over eleven thousand feet high, and easily climbed. Its greatness is not physical, not height nor power, but form rather, and spirit, and position. Mount Hood is one of the perfect things of the world.

"I look down from Council Crest upon the growing city and see the present moment of my country hurried, crowded, and headlong. Then I lift my eyes to Hood, serene and soaring in the far-off Heaven, and lo! a vision of the future! not the Mountain that was God, but a summit that is song."

Mount Hood is one of the very few snow-capped peaks in the world that stands alone and visible from every point of the compass. (4)

# II. MOUNT HOOD, THE WINTER SPORTS AREA

The development of the winter sports recreational area on Mount Hood is approximately parallel with that of evol-

ution of skiing in the United States. It can be traced to two important individual developments: (1) the popularity of the automobile, making possible mass transportation at low cost and great convenience, and (2) the building of all-weather highways to the snow-grounds. Up until 1932 skiing at Mount Hood was done by a comparatively small group of the hardier local and valley folk. In that year, however, skiing received a tremendous impetus from the World Winter Olympics, held at Lake Placid, New York. Immediately the sport spread-eagled itself into the public's eye; it has been growing ever since and shows no signs of stopping for years to come.

Cascade Ski Club's big jumping hill on Multorpor Mountain was one of the first drawing cards for spectators and competitors alike and served as the center of tournaments drawing national interest. Forest Service construction of the Alpine ski trail from timberline to the Loop Highway was an early development, and the Ski Bowl on Tom, Dick, and Harry Mountain proved to be the finest area for slalom courses in the West (5). These early ski runs eventually were supplemented by several more ski-grounds until today, when there are dozens of well-patronized slopes.

In general the Mount Hood winter sports area can be divided into three areas as follows: Timberline Lodge

and surrounding terrain, Government Camp and the area back from the Loop Highway on either side, and the slopes between the two where wind several trails.

Timberline Lodge at an elevation of 6,000 feet gets its first snow long before Government Camp, usually in October, and has a season extending until well into May. The main ski run at Timberline is the Magic Mile, fed skiers by the world-famous mile-long electrically-operated chair lift, the "Mile" is a fairly wide, superbly set run straight down the side of Mount Hood and usually outdraws every other ski run on the mountain. Salmon River Canyon, Otto Lang Hill, and the beginners' slope east of the Lodge, all serviced by tows, are extremely popular runs, each providing a challenge to a different class of skier. West Glade, back of the Lodge, and Pucci's Glade, on the Lodge's "Front-yard," are not served by tows but are much used in fair weather.

Plagued by irregular snowfall early in the season, ski runs at Government Camp are unsurpassed when snow conditions are favorable. Multorpor Mountain, one-half mile south of Government Camp village, has a steep, tricky slope suitable for experienced skiers, with a fast funicular upski; adjacent slopes offer excellent terrain for beginners and will be serviced by a tow in the near future. Cascade's Class A, B, and C jumping runs stand aside the

main slope. West of Multorpor and approximately one mile from the Loop Highway is the famed Ski Bowl on Tom, Dick, and Harry Mountain, scene of many important ski tournaments, including the Olympic tryouts and national slalom championships in 1939. The Ski Bowl is recognized as probably the best individual ski area at Hood, and when a T-bar lift is completed from the highway to the Bowl, use of its two fine existing tows will be notably heightened. One-quarter mile east of the village and adjacent to the highway is the Summit Ski Area, serviced by three tows. This location is mostly on private land and includes a toboggan hill, the only one in use on the mountain. Three-fourths of a mile up Blossom Ski Train from the village is the new Blossom Ski Tow Area, which, although small, can accommodate hundreds of novices.

Some of the finest trail skiing in the country is available on the many cleared snow paths starting at Timberline Lodge and twisting westward to the Loop road.

The Forest Service has built, maintained, and improved these trails to the point where they offer the chance for probably more enjoyable, more thrilling, and more skillful skiing than is found on any other one ski run. (See map.)

Each trail appeals to a certain class of skier, from novice to expert; no beginners are advised to attempt descending any of the trails. The names are: Glade, Alpine,

Blossom, Cascade, and West Leg road.

Winter mountaineering, whether it be touring above timberline or ascending the peak of Hood itself, is not a very important part of winter sports at Mount Hood, but its ramifications are such that it cannot be overlooked in any recreational analysis. Summer climbing is a recognized and encouraged pastime, but the treacherous weather of winter has prompted the Forest Service to discourage winter ascents as much as possible. Still, however, some hardy alpinists insist on making these off-season climbs. The physical mechanics of climbing are usually easier by winter than by summer because climbers can take advantage of crusted snow and ice and avoid alternate patches of loose rock and mush snow. Forest Service motives in urging against winter climbs are well founded: the Forest Service is responsible for all persons using their lands and they have no desire to see an adventurous party perish in one of the flash blizzards which are so much a part of Mount Hood by winter.

The Forest Service would agree, at least in part, with an editorial in The Oregonian some years ago which stated, "There is no objection to mountain climbing as a recreation for an adventurous party of pleasure—seekers when the summit chosen for the experiment is relatively easy of access, but the ascent of the steeper acclivities

and more lofty peaks of volcanic mountains should be left to sturdy men who brave the perils and fatigues of the ascent in the interest of science and for the purpose of adding, by their observation, to the world's stock of knowledge." (6)

#### III. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND THE FOREST SERVICE

Recreational use on the Mount Hood National Forest has become so heavy that now it has an important place in management planning Service-wide. Over one million recreation seekers either visit or pass through the forest annually, and devotees may now enjoy the nationally known areas which have been developed for the last twenty years.

(7) Of these more-than-a-million visitors per year, approximately one-quarter million come to the Government Camp-Timberline Lodge snowgrounds during the months November to June.

The import of the recreational phase of forest use was perceived early by Forest Service officials. A long time Mount Hood Forest Supervisor, A. O. Waha, writing in the "Public Contact Guide, Mount Hood National Forest," explained how public contact was important: "There is immediate need for rendering more personal service to our visitors and for establishing direct contacts with them. Such personal service need not be nor should it be elaborate, but it should be so rendered that the recipient will rec-

ognize it as a definite and legitimate Forest Service contribution to his enjoyment and welfare.

"The public has a right to expect such services, and it judges an organization very largely by these representatives with whom it comes in contact. The Forest Service is no exception to this rule."

"Forest guards must be carefully trained by the Forest Service to make public contacts in the proper way, and their work must be closely supervised so that, neatly uniformed, they will meet people easily, confidently, and intelligently. Such combination of practical experience and specialized training in public contacts will fit our Forest Guards to become unusually valuable Forest officers."

"Public relations," a vague and mis-used term, must of necessity be defined here in a manner that will permit intelligent and logical expansion and a faster route to the crux of the situation. The simplest definition for public relations, as applied to the Forest Service, is: the sum total of all contacts, attitudes, impressions, and opinions that constitute the relationship between the public and the Service. (8)

There should be a differentiation between public relations and publicity. "A public relations program is concerned with the shaping of policies and practices, which, if successfully presented, will result in goodwill.

Publicity is merely one of these media through which these policies and activities are presented to the public. It is only ONE PART of the program." (9)

Further, public relations as applying to winter sports at Mount Hood can be assigned a similar but more precise definition: the sum total of all contacts, attitudes, impressions, and opinions that constitute the relationship between the winter sports public, its various representative organizations, and others concerned directly or indirectly with Mount Hood and the personnel of the Mount Hood National Forest (in the Zig Zag district). This relationship is broadened to include dissemination of information to periodicals, newspapers, and radio stations; reports on snow and road conditions; contact with the general public; training program for personnel; ski tournaments; ski associations; ski schools; mountain rescues and ski patrol; and posting of signs.

No attempt will be made to overstep the bounds of Timberline Lodge. The Lodge is operated by a staff of persons hired by the organization of Timberline Lodge, Incorporated, and employs its own publicity director. The Forest Service is the actual owner of the Lodge but leases it out to the corporation.

# IV. OBJECTIVES OF A WINTER SPORTS PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

Few if any of the old-time Forest officers remain active in the Service today. The early ranger who lived in a log-cabin, rode the range on horseback, cooked in a Dutch oven, and slept on the ground not only was close to the job but was friendly with everyone and respected by even his enemies. He needed no public relations program because he lived and breathed cooperation and amicable intimate contact with Forest users every day of his job.

Today, however, the picture is vastly different.

Today the Forest officer is often charged as being dictatorial, bureaucratic, uninterested in community and civic affairs, big-headed and unfriendly. This accusation does not apply to all officers but it does indicate a trend, and a major part of this change of attitude may be directly traced to Service public relations, or lack of same. (10)

This condition, then, necessitates that public relations be a year-round program, whether formal or informal, on the part of all Service officers. In order that these officers may intelligently point their public relations efforts to a worthy end, there must be a set of objectives to guide them. The following general objectives are taken from a public relations course given by officers

of the Division of Information and Education, California Region, 1941:

"The objective of a public relations program is to create and retain goodwill and improve the relation—ship between the Forest Service and the public. But what does this mean? The commonly accepted explanation is that good public relations exist when the attitude of the public toward the Service is one of confidence, respect, and approval. But there are two important exceptions to this statement of objective.

"Public relations embraces a two-way relationship. No public relations program can be successful
in securing favorable public attitude toward the
Service without also fostering among Forest officers
an attitude of respect and goodwill toward the public. A government agency that shows no respect or
friendliness toward the public is seldom rewarded
with public support.

"Second, in any public relations program we must consider the methods and means of achieving the desired objectives. It is agreed that the objective is to secure a friendly relationship based upon mutual respect, confidence, and goodwill. But it does not necessarily follow that we must use tricks and glad-handed tactics to achieve our end. Good public relations can be fairly earned by practices that are in themselves worthwhile and need no apology."

With these over-all objectives in mind, the author herewith presents his analysis and evaluation of public relations in winter sports on the Mount Hood National Forest.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS IN WINTER SPORTS AT MOUNT HOOD

#### I. NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS.

#### A. NEWSPAPERS

Unlike many government agencies and certainly unlike every commercial resort, the Mount Hood Forest does not sponsor a progaganda office. There would be much value in having a full-time publicity man dishing out printable newsstories on the one thousand and one newsworthy items that are available just for the asking, but the United States Congress would be somewhat unreceptive in granting a request for funds for such activity, had the Forest Service gumption enough to ask for it.

The Pacific Northwest, including Portland is very national forest-minded. Portland's two major daily news-papers are good friends of the Service and at every opportunity will give credit as is due to any activity or development worthy of space. Both The Oregonian and The Oregon Journal employ sportswriters who devote much of their time to writing news and feature stories on skiing at Hood. These men are in close contact with the district ranger at Zig Zag and have come to learn the problems and the work of the ranger and his staff.

Throughout the winter season both papers carry yards of pictures, oftentimes giant cuts on page one, of snow

activity on the mountain. The wide range of distribution of the Oregonian and Journal insures that hundreds of thousands of Oregon and Washington residents will learn to know Mount Hood even if they care to move no further than the front doorstep every morning or afternoon.

The various mountain tragedies and near-tragedies which have occurred all too frequently down through the last few decades have all been creditably chronicled in Port-land's papers. These reportings serve two fine purposes:

(1) they give to the general public the inside facts on the operation of rescue parties and the part played by the Forest Service and (2) tell enough of the background story to educate the public, letting them know how duplications of the disasters can be avoided.

Matters of general policy and developments of more than minor importance are handled through the regional Forester's office in Portland. A recreational specialist is attached to the regional office and makes direct contact with the press when bigger stories "break." In most instances, newspecialist regional Forester with authority for the announcement of news even though cause for the news may be work of his recreational assistant.

Present arrangement of news dissemination is entirely satisfactory and credit must be given both to the Portland newspapers and the Zig Zag personnel for excellent coverage of all interesting and important news and developments.

(Forest Service men refuse to take the blame for unsatisfactory weather conditions, a favorite "crack" by the
ski writers.) Only conceivable recommendation for the
future is for increased coverage as the area increases
its capacity for winter recreationalists.

#### B. MAGAZINES

Nearly every major "slick" magazine in the nation has at one time or another carried a feature article on Mount Hood as a winter fun spot, especially since the completion of Timberline Lodge in 1937. In a February 1948 issue, LIFE magazine devoted its cover and fifteen pages in full color to Mount Hood skiing and the Lodge.

District personnel in cooperating with magazine writers and photographers have somewhat limited responsibility in other than chauffering them about the snow area and providing all necessary facts and figures. However, their contact alone can greatly influence a writer in giving the playground a favorable or unfavorable write-up to be read by millions.

Future times will find more and more unsolicited publicity being given Hood and the ranger should keep himself well enough informed to be able to present any information a visiting journalist should want was well as to insure that his stay is comfortable and his personal needs fulfilled. No one less than the ranger would be likely to be host to a touring editor or writer.

#### C. PAMPHLETS

All pamphlets, brochures, folders, maps, and printed material originates in the regional office in Portland; however, some of the distribution is effected through the Zig Zag ranger, who is in convenient contact with most of the establishments where visitors congregate.

One of the most widely known leaflets is one entitled "Winter Sports Area" (see appendix) with a ski map and rules contained. These receive much attention and serve to implant in skiers' minds the lay of the land and the right and wrong thing to do on the mountain. The Forest Service supplies the map and rules and commercial companies sustain the printing costs, embellishing the finished product with advertising. This project should be encouraged and the map and information kept up to date.

The regional office will furnish pictures and information to any commercial concerns who may want them for advertising purposes:

Newsreel cameramen who infrequently visit Hood should be shown the same treatment as magazine men. Novelists who plan to use Mount Hood as a setting should also be treated with the customary courtesy; however, the ranger should recognize crackpots and quasi-penmen who would infringe on his valuable time for their own personal vanity. Tact and diplomacy should rule in the latter case, such as referring them to the regional forester.

#### II. SNOW AND ROAD CONDITIONS REPORTS

Relaying of current reports on snow and road conditions is more or less a routine duty and needs little in the way of critical analysis. The Zig Zag Ranger station broad-casts at nine every morning to the supervisor's office in Portland the latest weather and snow report. Timberline Lodge and Government Camp report prior to nine each day and give the skiing conditions at the moment.

The U. S. Weather Bureau in Portland calls directly to the station for the most recent information. It is in turn passed on to Portland newspapers who print the daily reports during the season. Certain sporting goods houses feature the snow reports in their newspaper ads; this practice is perfectly permissible and is encouraged by the Forest Service.

Highway signs warning motorists of dangerous stretches of roadway or impassable snow blockades on Oregon 50 are the responsibility of the State Highway Department and are no concern of the Service. Oregon State police officers assume the task of stopping motorists at vantage points along the highway for tire chain inspection.

At Timberline Junction the Service maintains a check-

ing station for all motorists headed for the Lodge. On weekends and during week days of heavy traffic a forest officer checks chains and warns visitors of any danger spot on the six-mile highway climb. Large organe and black signs are placed along the apron of the road's start to warn of snow conditions on the road above.

### III. THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Dale Carnegie, in his best-selling book, "How to Win Friends and Influence People," asks the question, "Why read this book to find out how to win friends? Why not study the technique of the greatest winner of friends the world has ever known?...you know that behind his show of affection...there are no ulterior motives..." Who is this great friend-winner? Why, the dog, of course!" Sincere friendliness and desire to know others can win many friends for the Forest Service.

The Forest Service in the long run depends for its prosperity and usefulness upon what the public thinks of it. What the public thinks will depend very largely on the type of service rendered them and the forest officer's ability to make that service known (11). In fact it has been said (12) that satisfactory relations with the public are as important a part of a forest officer's job as the right handling of national forest resources.

There is no record of any public relations course

designed especially for winter sports area personnel. Fundamentals in public contact in any summer recreation program will not be radically different from those of a winter program; only the nature of the contact will be
changed.

The Zig Zag district is suffering from a shortage of personnel. This problem arises because of lack of funds and is not within the present means of the region to be solved. As time goes by and even greater popularity of Hood occurs, added personnel will be a sheer necessity.

Winter sports fans may have occasion to contact forest officers at any one of several points on the highway and mountain. (See map in appendix.) Mount Hood Forest's boundary crosses the Loop highway at Zig Zag, site of the district ranger station. Many newcomers and others desiring to learn ski conditions above stop here. Forest officers are a familiar sight at Government Camp and meet large numbers of the recreationists there. Summit Guard Station does not operate in the winter except as a headquarters for the equipment crew assigned to the Timberline road. A guard, as aforementioned, is posted at the Timberline Junction station on week ends and during heavy traffic at other times. Timberline is base for a full-time recreational specialist and an assistant recreation guard and is frequented by the Zig Zag ranger and certain members of his staff. Since the Forest Officers have numerous duties to perform and are on constant call for emergency, they are usually not found very far from the Loop highway or the Lodge, except during ski tournaments and on their "off" days.

Forest officers are easily recognized in their "forest green" ski uniforms with the large USFS patch on the arm. A standard in foul-weather outer garment should be established so that the public will recognize a forest officer even in poor visibility.

Many people of the general public stop in at the ranger station at Zig Zag for various reasons, mainly for snow information. Skiers who have lost or who have had stolen their skis and other articles on the mountain often ask station personnel to help them in recovery. Others want information on winter and summer homesites and are handled as necessary. Long distance phone calls from Portland are frequent at the station; they want to know ski and driving conditions in advance.

Although much of the time spent by station personnel in answering phone and personal calls is not materially productive, it serves as a valuable morale builder for the public. There is nothing quite so authoritative as "the latest word from the ranger at Zig Zag." Accuracy and honesty here should be the cardinal points to stress in dealing with the public first hand.

In the ski areas on the mountain, the Forest Service

record for cooperation is good. The public confronts the ranger and his subordinates with questions and requests of all kinds; usually it is satisfied with the answers and actions. The great demand on the public's part to seek advice and answers from the Service necessitates that all personnel keep informed of snow, ski, road, tournament, first aid and ski patrol, and geographical data that they might need to further impart.

Even though Timberline Lodge is operated under permit, the Service devotes much time to public relations there.

The Lodge is on Forest Service property and the great number of people congregating there dictates Service support.

A full-time guard and a part-time assistant are maintained at the Lodge for many kinds of duties.

Caring for the public is virtually integrated between the Service and the Lodge staffs, and there is no fine line drawn between the duties and actions of the two parties.

Traffic to the Lodge proper and parking in the guests' area is handled by a Lodge employee, while a Forest Service man, usually the assistant recreational guard, conducts the gigantic parking lot for the general skiing public.

There is no sacrificing of the interests of the general public.

Forest Service employees should be vested with enough power to eject any person causing a nuisance or jeopardiz-

ing the safety of others. (13) In cases of other than breaches of ski etiquette, the State Police logically is the agency to maintain law and order. Their biggest problem lies around the taverns in Government Camp.

### IV. SKI TOURNAMENTS

Ski tournaments and exhibitions are one of the best advertising mediums a winter sports area could have. At Mount Hood they annually begin in November and last through to the Golden Rose race in June. Ski races are thrilling to watch, esthetically as well as for the excitement of the competition itself. (14) Racers are racing against a time clock and not against each other; each skier tries to run a course in the shortest possible time. The Forest Service has an inevitable tie-up in all major ski tournaments and is noted for its magnificent cooperative spirit. Races are the main drawing card for bringing people long distances to ski on Hood's slopes, and the radius increases with the importance of the event.

As soon as a youngster learns to ski well enough to be noticed by the older people on the mountains, he is immediately encouraged to begin entering competition. There are competitive classes to provide for every type of skiers from novice on down to expert and there are several kinds of ski races to provide enough variety for all who aspire to take home cups: slalom, downhill,

cross-country, jumping, trail, and giant slalom. Racing advances the sport of skiing by encouraging all who wear the slats to improve upon their skill, promotes development of better ski equipment and facilitates the interchange of competition and companionship between clubs, cities, sections, states, and nations. The publicity attending the 1948 Olympic Winter Games hald at Saint Moritz, Switzerland, testifies to the general public acclaim given high-class racing.

Next to development of better facilities for more people, the skiing governing body, the National Ski Association and its regional associations, devotes most of its energies to the promotion of racing and jumping competition. Officers and members of the National Ski Association wield a giant ax in matters dealing with the relations of its hundreds of member clubs; they maintain a close relationship with the Forest Service. In fact Service officers are an important part of every national and regional N. S. A. convention; they are personal friends of most of the sponsors of ski tournaments and probably are needled a little more for assistance than they otherwise would be if they remained apart in relationship.

Because of the nature and importance of ski tourneys, the Service lends its personnel and equipment. It furnishes two-way radios for starting and timing the racers; it furnishes toboggans for emergencies; it lends men to act as

gate-watchers, course provers, judges, course setters, and counsels.

This gracious assistance and cooperation is a great molder of good public relations and the Forest Service cannot afford to overlook its opportunities to serve the public and advance skiing.

The history of skiing at Mount Hood shows that racing and jumping were partly responsible for attracting wide-spread publicity and great throngs of visitors who came both to see and to ski. United States national slalom championships were held in the Tom, Dick, and Harry Ski Bowl in 1939; the downhill title race was held above timberline at the same time. Since that date there have been born many famous annual racing events as well as many state and sectional championships.

Because competition is an integral part of advancing skiing at Mount Hood, the Forest Service should look ahead to the increased demands it will some day be faced with. The agency should not be caught short and lay itself open to any reputation-damaging criticism. Fred McNeil in his "Wy'East THE Mountain," wrote the following:

"All forecasts that have been made in the past about the winter sports movement at Mt. Hood have been short of what actually occurred. It would be reckless to venture any estimate of what it may attain in the future. With the USFS thoroughly alive to the importance of the winter sports activities, developments are under way now that were undreamed of a few years ago. If the public response to these endeavors continues to be as quick

as it has in the past to efforts to "open" Mt. Hood to winter travel, the region then is destined to become a winter sports center of ranking import with the greatest establishments in Europe. The reason the Old World resorts are so widely popular lies in their accessability — that and "good" snow. Mount Hood has the snow for a long season each year and roads and facilities for public conveniences are being improved steadily."

#### V. SKI SCHOOLS

Skiing will never become a safer and more enjoyable sport without the aid of ski schools, and the Forest Service, recognizing this fact, is giving the ski school movement all its support. At Mount Hood there are several recognized schools operating on government land.

Operators using this land must first obtain permits from the Service. Under this procedure only competent instructors will be teaching the novices the fundamentals of skiing.

The Pacific Northwestern Ski Association certifies qualified skiers as "registered instructors" and thereby gives the Service a chance to tell who is really competent.

In several well-skied areas large-scale schools have been set up on a yearly basis. At Hood, the Portland Junior Chamber of Commerce sponsors a four-week instruction period which enrolls hundreds of beginners of all ages, many of whom travel as far as one hundred miles to the snow. This type of program is gaining popularity and will be used to a greater extent in the future.

Forest officials are overjoyed by such set—ups because they teach controlled skiing to such a large number of skiers that the accident and emergency possibility is measurably cut down.

In issuing permits to school operators the Service insists that every student gets his money's worth; it wants no gyppo instruction under its jurisdiction. The Forest men cooperate in a general way with all schools but want to see the younger set in ski classes as much as possible. A well-reared skiing youth is a valuable asset to the entire sport.

Some years ago there was talk of the Forest Service offering free instruction on the slopes to all who would receive it. This is more of a pipedream than anything else, since the Service has enough difficulty obtaining funds for general recreational activity. Such an agency—sponsored program would not cut down the customers of any commercial ski school, since it would teach only basic controlled skiing. Learning the elements of control, skiers would naturally seek polish in a more advanced school and stream to them in profusion.

The big item Forest recreational men could improve upon is routine "area administration." Region 2 has such a set-up. Alta, Utah now employes a "snow guard" whose duties include supervision of who will ski where; the main

danger at Alta is avalanches and an experienced slide man is invaluable.

But like in all "want" schemes, money and personnel are just not available for instructional skiing or in sufficient quantity for any extensive "area adminstration."

# VI. MOUNTAIN RESCUE, SKI PATROL, AND CLIMBING EXPEDITIONS

ies and hardships, most of which were results of storms.

Terrifically treacherous storms on Hood arise and release their fury in a relatively short time, especially at the upper altitudes where the wind is high and the cold is intense. The Forest Service requests that all climbing parties register either at Summit Guard station or at the Lodge; it further asks that no one attempt the ascent alone. The security reasons are obvious. The Service is responsible for everyone using land under its jurisdiction; unless it knows the whereabouts of all land-users at all times; it cannot assume that responsibility effectively and in cases of emergency it is practically helpless in carrying out a search or rescue plan.

To date there has not been formulated any plan of action for mountain rescue that is at all practical. It is nearly as common to find members of the rescue party wandering around needlessly as it is to find them concretely engaged in effective deeds. The Mount Hood Ski

Patrol is perhaps the only active rescue agency; there are some private organizations who help out in rescue, but they are not functioning rescue outfits.

In the months of February and April 1948 there occurred two mishaps on the mountain which have given valuable on-the-job training for personnel on the Mount Hood Forest. A completely avoidable tragedy took place on Sunday, February 1, when Armand Burt Suprenant, a novice skier, alone ventured too far down-mountain from Timberline Lodge, got lost in the deep snow, and because he was clad in very light clothing, ultimately froze to death. The Forest Service and many volunteers went into action late that day when we was reported missing; they searched all night, passing near the man's body several times, and located it the next morning near Phlox Point, but a few hundred yards from the well-traveled Timberline road. A "Sno-cat" (mobile ski tractor) owned by the Forest Service was utilized in the search, but final discovery was made by ski patrolmen on skis.

Early in April, on Sunday the eleventh, the air National Guard pilot in a light plane crashed on the northeast
side of the peak near Cooper Spur. The pilot had flown
down from McChord Field, Washington, on a search mission
looking for a lost plane. The eventual rescue of the flying lieutenant was a model of how men on the ground and
in airplanes can cooperate to an effective high degree in

a search-rescue operation in good weather. Hazards of weather and low visibility around the mountain would probably be prohibitive in most searches.

The lieutenant was found by the Service "Sno-cat" a couple of hundred yards from the Loop Highway. Shortly afterward a party of "Crag Rats" from Hood River joined the others. Success for this remarkable and different rescue can be attributed to radio; a low-flying plane spotted the survivor and relayed his position on the mountain to the approaching search groups. The small chance that a similar accident will occur in the future does not lessen the practical nature of the airplane, and Forest Service officials should include aircraft as searchers in any search plans.

Mr. Ralph A. Wiese, graduate of Oregon State College, 1948, wrote his baccalaureate thesis on the topic, "Mountain Rescues." Wiese has long been identified with the Mount Hood Ski Patrol, having served as president of that group and as a chairman of one of the national divisions, and was a director and key man in several of the most widely publicized searches ever held on Hood. His dissertations on the subject explain the function of efficient search parties and outlines a workable program. With the greatly increased winter population Mount Hood will assume in the next few decades, an integrated, intelligent search plan should be prepared and followed. This project in

itself would be great public relations for the national forest.

In 1938 the National Ski Patrol System was organized. Today there are over 200 local patrols, 800 national patrolmen and women, and local membership in excess of 2500. The ski patrol has but one aim: to make skiing safer. Ski patrolmen are famed for their first aid work, but they work hard trying to prevent ski-haps before they happen.

At Hood there is a large, well-integrated patrol of volunteer expert skiers and first aid men and women. Their connection with the Forest Service is somewhat intimate. They use Service equipment; toboggans, splints, first aid supplies, housing facilities, transportation, telephones, radios, headlights. At Timberline Lodge there is a special patrol room on the ground floor lounge, center of most activity on the mountain; at Government Camp, ski store proprietor Everett Darr has given over a special room in his large modern building for exclusive use of the patrol.

It is in conjunction with ski patrol activities that many Service officers come in contact with the public, the injured skiing public. Officers can do a wonderful job of selling the Service by showing earnest sympathy and interest toward injured skiers who wind up in the patrol rooms; tactfully they can discover causes of

accidents first hand, a much better method than by consulting written reports. Without the helf of the Service, the ski patrol could do little more than offer token assistance in emergencies. Therefore it is imperative that the district ranger and his assistants be on the very highest level of friendly relations with the ski patrolmen and their superiors. Portland newspapers are very partial to giving space to ski patrol activities and most skiers are well acquainted with the blue—and—yellow armbanded experts who spend their week ends working for the other man.

Sustained cooperation with ski patrolmen to maintain safer skiing conditions should be the continuous goal of Forest Service personnel. Skiers lives depend upon it.

#### VII. SIGNS

Signmaking and signposting are important parts of every Forest Service public relations program. The Zig Zag ranger station maintains an adequate sign shop; it is complete enough to construct any type, size, or shape sign that may be needed in the district. The nature of the signs used at Mount Hood may be classified as follows: road signs, ski trail markers, directional signs, and informational signs.

The State Highway Commission furnishes and maintains

all of the signs used on Oregon 50. These include snow blockade warnings placed several miles on either side of the snow area to inform motorists of any road closures or danger spots.

As soon as one day's ski tracks are snowed over, a ski trail becomes just another anonymous path in the wilderness. On the many trails and connecting trails between Timberline and Government Camp, the Forest Service originally maintained triangular orange signs to designate the correct directions. These markers were hard to see because of their small size and in time their lettering became too badly deleted to be read. During the pre-season months of the 1947-48 season, volunteer skiers from Portland University cooperated with the district ranger in erecting a whole new set of trail markers. The new signs were emblazoned with large black numerals on an orange background and an identifying single letter of the alphabet. Besides serving as excellent trail directors. these signs designate the approximate location of a skier on a specific trail. Ski patrolmen recognize them as an invaluable aid in telephone reports to the first aid rooms when the exact whereabouts of injured skiers needs to be known. The weakest part of the trail marking program is in the original few signs near the lodge; there are only a few small and inconspicuous signs and skiers have great

difficulty in finding the starting points of some of the more hidden trails. Larger and more pertinent directional signs should be erected.

Repetition of the Armand Burt Suprenant tragedy can be avoided by placement of several large orange and black signboards at strategic points near Timberline Lodge showing in simple detail the layout of all the ski trails on the south face of the mountain. Any skier motoring up the Timberline road would not be able to avoid notice of a large sign and would of course know what the sign showed; then as he neared the parking area he would be confronted by a similar structure. After parking, when he walked up to the Lodge he would find a replica of the other two. A few seconds perusal of any of the boards would give him a pretty fair idea of the layout of the ski trails.

A few warning signs declaring the inadvisability and actual real danger of skiing without proper warm clothing, of skiing alone, of skiing a trail or in an area with natural or man-made hazards, of wandering away from the main-skied slopes when a storm is imminent or the visibility is low, and of all other dangerous practices, should be posted where all who ski and should know of such things can easily so learn.

An explanatory sign to tell the mechanics of the numbering of the ski trail signs should also be posted so

that any passing skier can relay the position of an emergency case to the ski patrol.

Every first aid and ski patrol station should be unmistakably marked with large eye-catching characters. The same goes for telephones and emergency radios.

These foregoing recommendations go for all areas on the mountain, including the Lodge, the trails, Government Camp, and all adjacent areas.

The "Replace Your Divots" campaign in golf is carried on the whole year round and achieves at least a fair degree of success; its counterpart on the ski slopes is a "Fill In Your Sitzmarks" campaign. (A "sitzmark" is a large hole in the snow formed by the body of a falling skier. It is a very great hazard for other skiers to catch their tips in and take a serious spill and probably break a ski or two.) Filled-in sitzmarks mean better and safer skiing and a lighter load on the backs of the ski patrol.

# VIII. THE NEW AERIAL TRAMWAY

A development which will completely alter the whole concept of winter sports at Mount Hood is the new aerial cable tramway, construction of which was supposed to be begun in the spring of 1948. Plans call for a 15,500 foot right of way from a point near the highway about a mile below Government Camp up of the side of the mountain to a

point slightly west of Timberline Lodge at the 6000-foot elevation mark. The advance of prestige of Mount Hood as a winter sports area will be as great from the new tram as it was from the installation of the mile-long chair lift on the slopes above Timberline Lodge.

Increase of population of the Portland metropolitan area and sustained patronage of Hood's recreational resources means that the new aerial tram will be assured of success; and with this success will come greater responsibility for the Forest Service in its administrative and public relations duties. A whole new sphere of contact will be built up simultaneously with the birth and growth of a village on the highway at the lower terminus of the cableway. In time there will probably be a group of ski shops, lodges, restaurants, and automotive stations.

Final completion of the gigantic project (operators of the tram estimate fall 1948 as the date of start of carrying passengers; additional facilities will be finished sometime later) will find large numbers of skiers and winter visitors congregating at the lower terminus and still others thronging to the upper end. Promoters estimate that the passengers can be conveyed from one end to the other at the rate of approximately 500 per hour; therefore the number of skiers descending the ski trail, counting this 500 and the many additional who will reach

the top of the tram ski trail via the Timberline road, will mean several hundred more persons strewn all along the way for the three miles.

Thus the Forest Service must enlarge its public relations to include adequate jurisdiction over the three new areas: the upper terminus, the lower terminus, and the three-mile ski trail in between the two. Their new responsibility will be provided mainly by extension of existing facilities. Of course new signs of all types, new phone lines, new ski patrol equipment and first aid rooms, and arrangements for reporting of snow conditions and all allied details will have to be provided.

Back in the 1920's winter sports organizations were all set to erect an aerial tramway to the summit of "Wy'-East," but an edict from the Secretary of Agriculture to the effect that a "precedent of reducing the esthetic value of outstanding natural wonders should not be allowed" slowed down the project promoters.

The secretary's committee which made a study of the possibility of an aerial tram stated in a report ".... greater direct values from the area and greater fame for it (Hood) could in the long run be secured without a tram and cableway to the summit than with it; and that if, instead of aiming consistently at the very best results that can possibly be got out of the area as a whole, a beginning is now made, sacrificing some of the

best values for the sake of an immediately popular detail, a precedent will be set for the gradual frittering away of extraordinary possibilities of the area." Date of the report is Summer 1929. (15)

Further comment was offered the following year from
Secretary of Agriculture Hyde in regard to the tram and
its values. He said, "With our larger leisure and growing
cultural standards, the place and part of nature as a
source of mental and physical stimulus is significant.

It would be a serious mistake to commercialize and debase
any great natural heritage, such as Mount Hood, without
regard to the human service which may be derived from it
in future ages. (16)

Carrying about 30 passengers, individual cars will travel on tower-suspended cables; gas engines in each car will provide motive power and safety devices will insure longevity of all skiers wishing to use the "Skiway."

Skiers will be offered one of the most fantastic ski runs imaginable. Tram operators plan to clear a 150-foot wide ski trail down the length of the three-mile route. The 2000-foot drop will allow gravity plenty of leeway in helping to build up the skier's speed, and at night giant floodlights will make "moonlight skiing," a highly exciting but exceedingly dangerous form of amusement a thing of the past.

# IX. TRAINING PROGRAM FOR FOREST OFFICERS

It is by comparison quite simple for the layman to propose what he believes to be a sound public relations program, but the success of any plans or ideas must of course come directly from the efforts of the district personnel, from the ranger on down to his last seasonal employee. Because of the perennial lack of funds, any training activity given the Mount Hood personnel cannot assume the proportions of a formal schooling. Instead training must be given and received at the convenience of the training officer and the winter sports officer.

Every spring on the Mount Hood Forest there is conducted a fire camp where all the seasonal personnel are indoctrinated in the latest Forest Service techniques and given a series of lectures on Service policy in fire protection as well as overall policies of the agency.

Most of the year-round sub-professional employees are in protection work in the summer months and absorb a certain amount of technique and policy during that time. The same forest officers who administrate the winter sports area usually take over some type of instructional duty during the guard school and are fairly well acquainted with the overall and general picture of Service public relations.

For the special aspects of public relations in winter

sports, however, the forest officer should be exposed to some sort of specialized training. In the regional office in Portland is a staff of experts who make studies of personnel problems and intelligently work out solutions and interpret them for the district personnel. These regional office men should make contact with the various officers on the district and spend single days at suitable and convenient intervals with them in studying the winter sports public relations problems.

Because of the important nature of the Mount Hood area, it is essential that every person be "smart." There is nothing that the public respects more than a snappy forest employee. This is one of the principles that the Park Service has adopted and with notable success. Nearly everyone who has ever been to a national park is impressed by the smart, snappy appearance of the park rangers; the Park Service demands intelligent and snappy minds in its employees, so their uniforms and smartness cannot truthfully be considered a "front."

With an eye to the utility and good insurance of having all-round personnel on winter sports duty, the Forest Service could do well to select men who have a practical knowledge of winter woodsmanship and skiing and ski mountaineering. These skills are not acquired overnight and any new employee who already is a proficient skier would probably prove much more valuable in the long run.

Similarly any persons working on the district who are not at all at home on the skies should be encouraged to become more proficient in the science and art soon.

The district ranger includes in his dynamic work a very close watch on his part and encourages on the part of his men a very close watch on the feeling of the public and their demands and then tries his best to act accordingly their interests insofar as the availability of personnel allows. Here the ranger can do the job of explaining to his subordinates that they must be on their toes at all times, good-appearing, friendly, courteous, and with a knowledge of the facts.

The following is from THE PROGRAM FOR TACTFUL HANDL-

"Men should be selected for public contact on the following points: (1) general appearance (good habits, looks intelligent, voice, hearing, cleanliness); (2) background (experience, knowledge - forestry and local, good reputation, and courteous); (3) mental qualities - should reflect a good Forest Service attitude; (4) personnel - a good mixer, pleasant, good first impression, meats public well. It should also be noted that all these qualities can be improved by training.

"The public is entitled to and should receive courteous treatment. Thoughtful considerate answers should be given to the many questions they ask. With this should be coupled a ready and willing service which is a Forest Service tradition."

On-the-job training is an integral and necessary part of the overall training program. All official (and unof-ficial) literature pertinent to the job should be made

available to all employees so as to keep them well-informed.

To reiterate the importance of public relations training, these are the words again of former Mount Hood Supervisor A. O. Waha, "Forest guards must be carefully trained by the Forest Service to make public contacts in the proper way, and their work must be closely supervised so that, neatly uniformed, they will meet people easily, confidently, and intelligently. Such combination of practical experience and specialized training in public contacts will fit our Forest Guards to become unusually valuable forest officers."

PUBLIC RELATIONS IN WINTER SPORTS AT MOUNT HOOD

## CONCLUSION

Public relations in winter sports at Mount Hood all adds up to this: any program for the area must be a flexible and dynamic undertaking in integrated coordination with the more concrete activities of caring for the winter sports public. Certain phases of the public relations scheme must of course be planned ahead of time or they would be truly in vain with too little too late. As one winter month merges into another and one winter sports year gives way to the next, so must the winter sports public relations be adjusted to account for any changes that may have taken place or are obviously about to occur.

In the next decade Mount Hood will undergo several changes that will necessitate altered and additional administration. The following will be the major developments: (1) a new all-season road from the Loop Highway to Timberline Lodge, actually to be an extension of Oregon Highway 50, shortening the distance and allowing greater accessability to the Lodge ski area; (2) the new aerial tramway, bringing with it a whole new ski village on the Loop Highway, thousands more visitors to the mountain, and the longest continuous ski run on Hood; (3) construction of several new organizational lodges near Government Camp, which will be accompanied by new ski runs and more skiers scattered over larger areas; (4) completion of the lift from the Loop Highway into the Tom. Dick. and Harry ski bowl, opening up the best ski area on the mountain to the masses; (5) possible developments of new ski areas at heretofore unthought-of sites, indoor ice rinks, toboggan runs; and (6) visitors will be on the mountain in greater numbers than ever before, because of the huge increase of population in the Portland area every year.

One other factor to consider is the increase in size and number of winter sports organizations. Even the tiniest of Willamette Valley towns has a ski club now, as well as nearly every high school, college, and many civic

organizations.

As long as the Forest Service continues to function as such, it will always be plagued with a shortage of funds. Recreation is not a recognized activity as far as considerate congressional appropriations are concerned; public relations and education and information are likewise caught short of really adequate funds to carry out any sort of an active program. Should the Congress in Washington ever decide that the Forest Service needs more funds for recreation, there will be need for more planning, more personnel, and a lot of new ideas. Actually the day when the Service has more funds for this activity may not be too far away; at the present time there is a strong movement among the organized ski interests to lobby for increased appropriations for recreational development, and should they be successful in the next few years, changes will be imminent.

Regional planning men and the district personnel, however, should not set about to make any drastic or revolutionary changes unless they have first tested and measured the public opinion regarding the changes. When the way is set for any innovations or renovations in winter sports at Mount Hood, Forest Service men should "plan for a definite purpose and aim at concrete results." (18)

Mount Hood men know that public relations is a real

and worthwhile job. And in return they will find increasingly in the future as they have already found in the past
that "there are no dividends quite so large and pleasing,
or so sure, as those that accrue to them and the Forest
Service from a united public goodwill." (19)

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  March, 1948.

## MOUNT HOOD NATIONAL FOREST

OREGON

# WINTER SPORTS AREA

SOUTH SIDE

### 1947

#### SKIING LOGIC

For the keenest enjoyment of skiing:

- 1. Exercise and strengthen the muscles most subject to strain BEFORE THE FIRST SNOWFALL. It's a strenuous sport.
- 2. Get the proper equipment as far as boots and bindings are concerned.
- 3. Begin the season with lessons under competent instructors. The expert's grace and ability didn't come without hard work. Be sure your instructor teaches you how to fall correctly.

4. Learn control and use it, for it is the hallmark of the good skier.
A controlled fall is a safeguard.

- 5. Don't ski difficult terrain until you can ski any practice hill under control.
- 6. DON'T SKI ALONE.

To increase the pleasure of skiing for all:

- 1. Give the other skier a fair break by filling your own sitzmarks and footprints.
- Climb skiing surfaces only on skis and don't linger in the middle of the trail on blind corners.
- 3. Heed the cry "track." The other skier may be out of control and need all the room he can get.
- 4. Cooperate with all Ski Patrolmen. They are only volunteers ready to help you if you need them.

Safety in skiing seems to be only a combination of common horse sense and normal good sportsmanship.

The National Ski Patrol System.

#### SAFETY FIRST

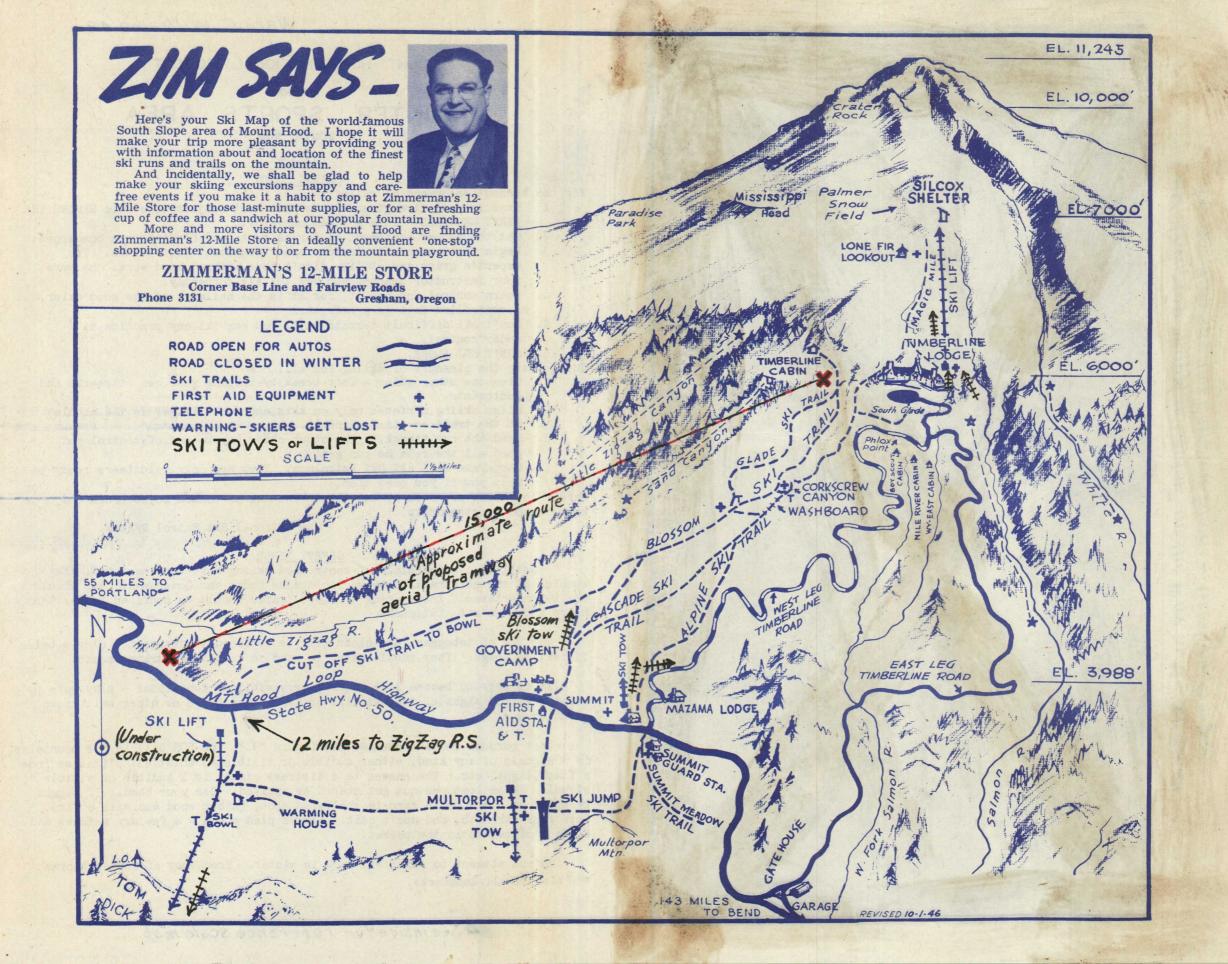
Until the fundamentals of controlled skiing have been mastered, the running of the ski trails between Timberline Lodge and Government Camp should not be undertaken. The running of these trails should be confined to daylight hours and when not fatigued.

The use of toboggans and sleds will be confined to designated slopes below Timberline Lodge. They should never be used on roads and parking areas.

It is easy to become lost under poor visibility conditions - play safe by staying within sight of the ski lift or Timberline Lodge or other well known structures.

Lost persons should remember the figure "3." The SOS call in the mountains is 3 signals of any kind, either audible or visible—3 whistles, 3 flashes from a flash light, etc. The answer to a distress signal is 2 audible or visible signals. When lost, do not get scared or excited. Use your head. If caught by night or storm, make camp in sheltered spot, gather wood and make a fire. Save your strength, and don't quit. Always plan ahead — a few dry matches and a piece of candle in the pocket.

Do not attempt to climb Mt. Hood in winter. Frequency of sudden storms may obscure all landmarks.





Your "One-Stop Shopping Center" on the Way to Mount Hood Corner Baseline and Fairview Roads --- Gresham, Oregon