



# Newsletter

April 2018

Issue 77

Alta Environmental Center  
PO Box 8007 • Alta, UT 84092  
environment@alta.com  
801.832.1700



## Waist Deep in Food Waste—By Etienne Arent, AEC Intern

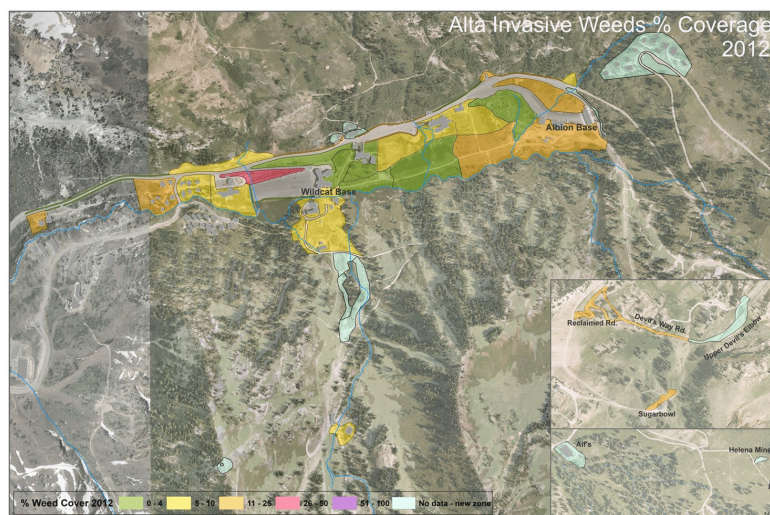
*Etienne is a skier completing his degree for the Department of Parks, Tourism and Recreation at the University of Utah with this internship for the Alta Environmental. From the beginning his self-designed project-base internship has been aspiring and focusing on a comprehensive food waste feasibility study and preliminary wind-energy audit.*

This winter I have been lucky to be given the opportunity to help continue Alta's efforts to increase the ski areas sustainability and environmental stewardship by helping to put together a food waste management system proposal. Over the past few months we have completed a food waste audit at all four of the restaurants and cafeterias at the ski area where myself, along with restaurant employees, separated and weighed all food waste from general landfill waste. We then compared these weights to overall trash weights in order to estimate the amount of the ski areas waste that could be food waste. At this point I have moved into more of the cost analysis portion of the project to try to estimate how much starting this system would cost and how much it could potentially save Alta in the long run. Working on this project has taught me a lot about what it takes to put together the necessary information to validate, and identify positive motives for initiating a food waste diversion system, and it takes quite a bit.

This project has given me a great perspective on the unique community that makes Alta feel like a home away from home for so many of us. It has also allowed me to get to know some of the people that are so supportive and motivated to continue to move Alta in a sustainable direction and protect the environment we all enjoy recreating in. It has been an amazing learning experience for me the last three months and I hope to continue to work on projects like these in the future. If it all goes well, here's hoping Alta Ski Area will be diverting tons of waste from the landfill in a couple years.

## From Field Data to Virtual Data – GIS Internship Experience—By Shelby Sly

This winter I have been working as the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) intern for the Alta Environmental Center. This involved working in the field with GPS devices gathering data, as well as extensive time on the computer processing, manipulating, and inputting the spatial data in various programs to produce and update maps, later to be utilized for future field work, public environmental education, and long-term sustainability studies. After two summers of field work as an intern for Friends of Alta and the Alta Environmental Center, it has been rewarding to utilize skills I had gained as a Geography major at the U and to work with the data I helped to collect each summer, and then to showcase the projects visually. This opportunity to take spatial data from collection in the field, to a final finished map is hard to find at the entry level, especially in the realm of sustainability and environmental management. I'm grateful to have had this special chance to learn and develop my skills in GIS and as a cartographer in a place like Alta.



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When one tugs at a single thing in nature,  
he finds it attached to the rest of the world.

—John Muir

### GIS Internship Experience *continued*...

In my time as Alta's GIS Intern, I have received the opportunity to make maps for a wide variety of projects from simple updates to our Breeding Bird Survey and Revegetation Monitoring Program maps, to a full revamp of our Tree Survival Study files and a large multi-page map of all Alta Ski Area Utilities for use by many different departments. Each project posed a diverse set of challenges and learning opportunities. When working on updating our Invasive Weed Monitoring Program maps, I had to teach myself how to utilize Photoshop to create an animation (GIF) to show how each weed monitoring zone in Alta has improved over time since we began the program (represented in the map images to the right, which definitely show great improvement). Beyond this, I was surprised to see how much more proficient I became with the GIS programs. Like learning a language, I found the only real way to solidify my education in GIS was by using it. Overall it has truly been a pleasure working for the AEC and Alta Ski Area this past year, and I feel fortunate to have such an amazing experience under my belt moving forward as I enter graduate school in Montana continuing my environmental science career.

### Alta's Hands on Learning Internship Programs

The Alta Environmental Center (AEC) works hard to set up their interns with quality hard work. The goal, to provide an opportunity for the intern to apply academic lessons so as to build skill sets that are highly sought after by employers. These internships are meant to provide on-the-job-training with skill building that focuses on working independently and time management, team work and collaboration, customer service and public relations to name a few. The AEC encourages students pursuing degrees in environmental science or studies to find a way to follow their interests by way of symbiotic outcomes. That being said the AEC is excited to announce they are now hiring for the [2018 Summer Stewardship Internship](#), applications are **due May 4th**. If you are the real adventurous type, you may want to check out the [Project-based Internship Program](#).



With that, we give a big thank you to Shelby and Etienne for being great sports, hard workers, and for helping make a positive impact on Alta!

### Sustainability Events Coming Soon!

Though we don't have any events listed this month, we wanted to remind you that April 22nd is Earth Day. As Alta seeks to celebrate Earth Day everyday, we encourage you do the same. Get your vegetable garden ready for the summer, find some local events to pull weeds and plant trees, help repair the trails you hike or bike on, advocate for a cleaner and healthier earth, or just enjoy nature's offerings with respect. Whatever you choose to do, enjoy yourself, and share it with your community, but don't wear yourself out this spring. Come June, Alta will have a long list of environmental education and stewardship activities to help keep Alta green and to help you escape the heat. To stay up to date, follow us on Facebook, Instagram or check out a full sustainability calendar at [alta.com/alta-environmental-center](http://alta.com/alta-environmental-center) with Alta events and opportunities throughout Utah.

