NEWSLETTER

ALTA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

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Summer Reflection: By the Numbers

From hands-on stewardship events to engaging educational programs, the Alta Environmental Center (AEC) brought people together this summer to explore, learn about and care for Alta's mountain environment. Thank you to our wonderful partners who help bring these programs to life.

25
Stewardship & Education Events

2,228
Participants & Volunteers

8,631
Education Hours

577
Stewardship Hours

Restoration Progress

This summer, the AEC returned to the slopes to continue restoring the land. From P-Ridge to the edge of Catherine's, conservation efforts spanned the mountain, with four major projects: Upper Sleepy Hollow, Supreme Snowmaking Line, High Mambo and the Transfer Tow.

10,525
Plants Planted

1,145
Trees Planted

108
Acres Monitored

Upper Sleepy Hollow

Year 3 of 3





Regraded slope was restored with **4,543 plants** and **26 shrubs** this summer.

Supreme Snowmaking

Year 3 of 3



Replaced snowmaking waterline was restored with **927 plants** this summer.

High Mambo

Year 2 of 3





Regraded slope was restored with **1,017 plants** this summer.

Transfer Tow

Year 1 of 3



Replaced snowmaking waterline was restored with **2,000 plants** this summer.

Base Area

Each year, small-scale planting projects are carried out throughout the Albion and Wildcat base areas. This summer, a total of **2,038 plants** were planted at various locations.

Educational Adventures

Stewardship begins with building a meaningful connection to the land. Through fun, interactive educational experiences, our Junior Ranger and SKE-COLOGY programs inspire recreators of all ages to explore Alta's unique ecosystems, discover its rich history and deepen their appreciation for the natural environment all year long.



The **Junior Ranger** program connects young explorers of Alta with nature—inspiring the next generation of stewards that will shape Alta's future. Participants complete a booklet of conservation-focused activities before being sworn in as official Junior Rangers—pledging to continue learning about, care for and protect the environment both here and abroad.



SKE-COLOGY is a self-guided, educational scavenger hunt that makes learning in the mountains fun for recreators of all ages. In the summer, hikers can use a map to locate the ten interpretive signs hidden along the Upper Albion Meadows Trail. Each stop reveals fascinating facts about Alta's ecology, geology, wildlife and history—building connections to the land.

Checking on Alta's Forest Health

This July, Jen Melton and Anna Lee from the AEC and Alta's Ski Patrol Director Matt Leri joined U.S. Forest Service entomologist Ryan Davis to assess the ski area's forest pests and discuss management recommendations.

Subalpine fir mortality is occurring at a low but steady rate at Alta. This decline is often associated with a "mortality complex"—a combination of stressors such as drought, heat, root disease and insect activity. Evidence of several contributing factors was observed, but no single cause of mortality for this species could be determined during the visit. Warmer summers, prolonged droughts and declining snowpack may increase these pressures on our forest in the years ahead. Balsam woolly adelgid—an invasive insect recently confirmed at Alta—adds another concern for subalpine fir and will require continued monitoring.


BALSAM WOOLLY ADELGID

No spruce beetle activity was found in standing Engelmann spruce, but beetles were discovered beneath one downed log at Alta's sawmill. Following the visit, all wood at the sawmill area was promptly removed, transported down the canyon and chipped to reduce the risk of beetle populations building in felled logs.


SPRUCE BEETLE


MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE

A group of limber pines previously killed by mountain pine beetles was also identified, with no current attacks found in nearby trees. With mountain pine beetle-related limber pine mortality increasing at Alta and across Utah, these trees will remain a priority for monitoring.

Overall, no widespread beetle outbreak was identified in the areas inspected. We are grateful to Alta Ski Patrol and Summer Trail Crew for serving as additional eyes on the mountain and helping identify changes in forest health. An additional thank you to the U.S. Forest Service for sharing its expertise, technical resources and management guidance as we care for this part of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. Our goal is to take a proactive, informed approach to protecting forest health for current and future generations.



Ecological Society of America

The AEC welcomed the Ecological Society of America to Alta Ski Area for an educational field trip exploring the area's unique ecology and the rich biodiversity of Cecret Lake and Albion Basin.



Experts shared insights into the area's unique paedomorphic tiger salamanders, vibrant wildflowers, pollinator diversity and ongoing ecological restoration efforts by the AEC.

Paedomorphic tiger salamanders reach adulthood and reproduce without undergoing the typical physical changes—retaining external gills and finned tails while living entirely underwater.



Photo: USU Extension | Gary Nafis

The excursion brought together a total of 18 participants from around the world—including Brazil, China and Japan—offering a firsthand glimpse into the magic of summer at Alta.

Pass Recycling

The 2025–26 ski season marked Alta's first full winter—November through April—of collecting retired plastic ski cards as part of our ongoing efforts to reduce plastic waste. By the end of the season, we had gathered a total of **95.72 pounds of plastic ski cards**. That is roughly the same weight as:

10
Pairs of Skis

12
Pairs of Boots

13
Million Snowflakes

With the assumption that each card weighs roughly five grams, **approximately 8,684 passes were diverted from the landfill**. While this only represents a fraction of the passes put into circulation each winter, this effort marks a meaningful step toward reducing our environmental footprint.



Help reduce waste this season by reloading your existing Alta ski card on alta.com or at any ticket window. If your pass is at the end of its life, bring it to us to properly recycle.

2026–27 Winter Education

Branch out and explore Alta through a new lens this winter with the AEC's free, weekly educational events on skis and snowshoes from December through April. Registration requirements, age restrictions and skiing ability levels vary by event. Visit alta.com/environment to learn more.

Birding on Skis
First and Third Thursdays

Learn to identify Alta's birds by sight and sound while skiing with expert birders from Tracy Aviary.

Ski With a Ranger
Every Thursday

Explore Alta's ecology, geology, wildlife and history on the slopes with a naturalist ranger.

Trees and Skis
Second and Fourth Thursdays

Ski with an arborist to learn about the trees of Alta, conservation and the deep history rooted in the slopes.

Snowshoe With a Naturalist
Third Fridays

Explore Alta's high alpine ecosystems on snowshoes with a naturalist.

Journey Through Historical Snowscapes
Friday, February 26th

Discover how Alta has transformed from a bustling mining town to a renowned recreation hub.

Alta Earth Day
Saturday, April 17th

Celebrate, learn and take action to protect the place we call home.

