Haines Avalanche Center 2021-2022 season stats:

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HAC webpage visits: 18,228
HAC webpage users from Haines: 914
HAC social media channel reach: 80,470 user sessions
193 Haines forecasts published on 92 days of the season
9 Haines classes taught
135 Haines students directly reached via hands-on training (all ages)
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Haines Avalanche Center Season End Report, submitted to the American Avalanche Association May, 2022:

Haines enjoyed a spectacular early season this year, with a stable October base and ample deep powder November through January. The October base was so stable that we had a noticeable lack of large avalanche activity throughout most of the winter, even after some significant storm cycles and a few warm(ish) periods. The snow just seemed to bond nicely with regular maritime storms, a warm snowpack, and cold periods that were not long enough for significant faceting.

By January we had built up deep snowpack in starting zones but without some of the natural avalanche activity that we typically see. This combined with the presence of a few mid-elevation rain crusts had us worried that a deep and destructive cycle could occur if the weather brought in a major thaw / rain event. But this year that just didn't happen.

In the last issue of TAR, we had submitted a photo of an isolated deep slab that occurred in early February. This was our only data point for this deep layer, and I asked the question, "is this a one-off event or a harbinger of a future deep slab problem?" It turned out to be a one-off.

By the time of our usual busy season in February-March, concerns were changing to new surface hoar layers in the upper pack, and large cornices that were occasionally failing and triggering huge slides.

The surface hoar issue did lead to some human avalanche involvements, including one full burial (he was dug out uninjured) and another slide that led to severe trauma (he also survived).

Eventually the good snow conditions became wrecked by some cold April NW winds, and the season wound down before a wet slide cycle would begin in early May. We are currently seeing that cycle play out while most users have left the mountains in favor of paddling, travel, or gardening.
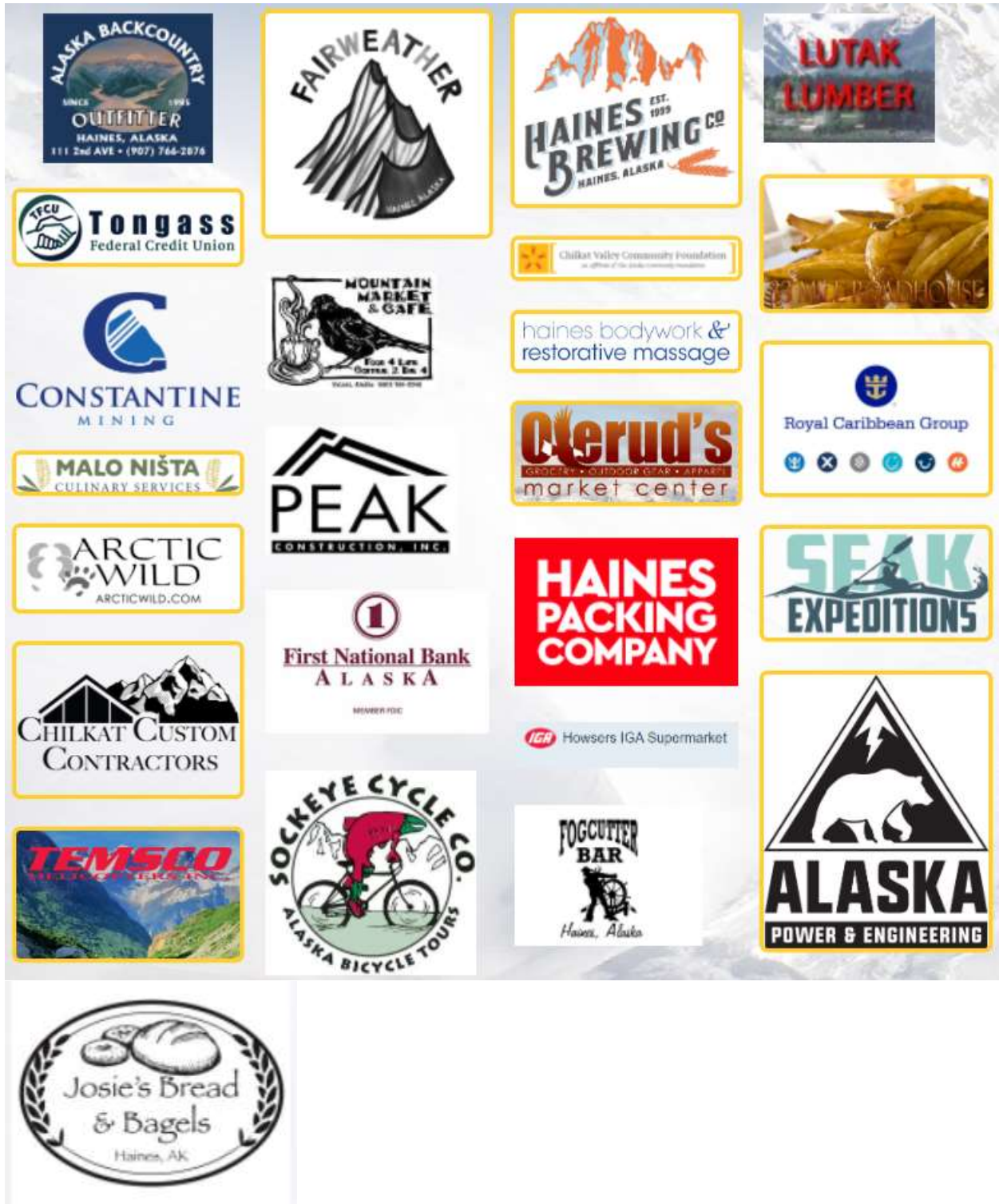
See below for a series of photos from this year's season.
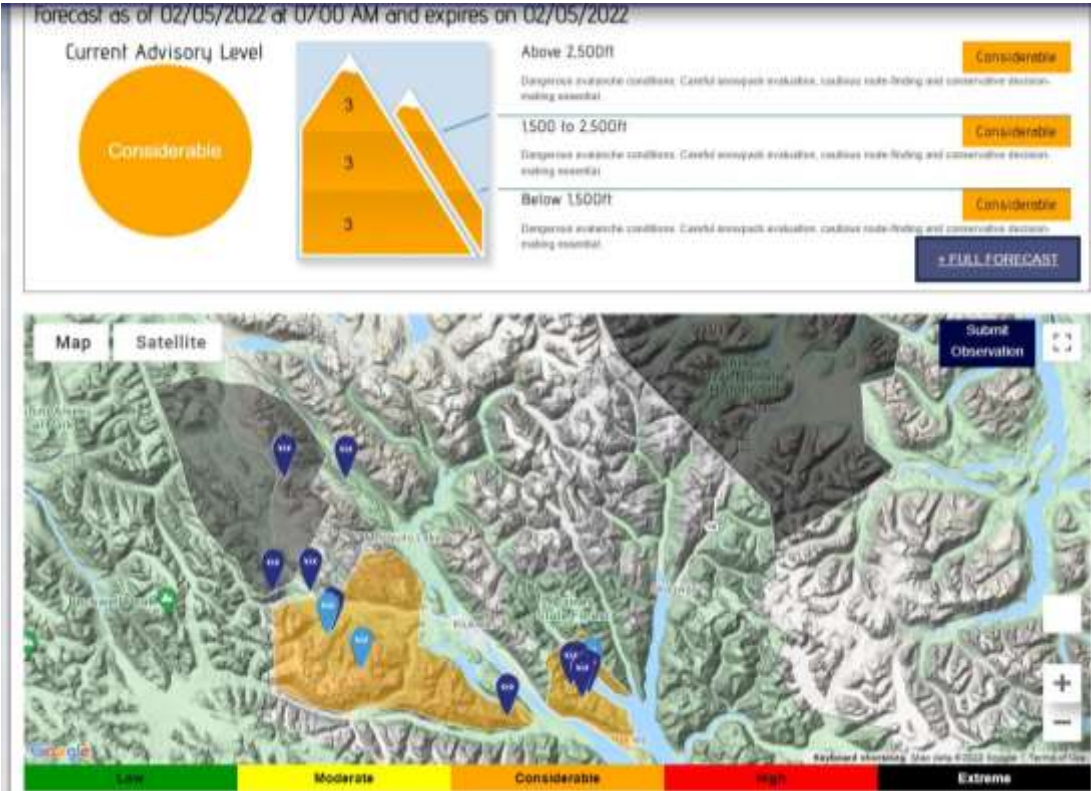
Sincerely,

Erik Stevens

Director and Forecaster

Haines Avalanche Center

Haines Avalanche Center would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to all of its supporters, sponsors, and contributors this year!

Caption: This skier-triggered avalanche on Old Faithful March 21st, 2022 is a good example of a close call that could have had deadly results. Luckily, nobody was injured in this slide. This was from a group of local recreationalists.

Caption: We received great public participation this year, with several periods of public observations pouring in. This week in early February 2022 had 12 public observations submitted (blue markers on the map)

Caption: Data from field tests like this one are crucial to alert recreationalists about unstable conditions. This HAC staff snowpit from February 2022 found a reactive layer 18" deep that could easily cause a human-triggered avalanche.

Caption: HAC Forecaster Jeff Moskowitz observed this natural avalanche caused by a cornice failure in the Lutak zone in March 2022.

Caption: In January 2022, Haines was nearing record snow loading values on roofs that hadn't shed all winter. HAC began sounding the alarm on Social Media and assisting the public with assessing their roofs. Unfortunately, there were multiple roof collapses that occurred subsequently in Haines.

Caption: Kids learning avalanche rescue at a Snowburners snowmachine event, taught by HAC

Caption: Students learning snowpack evaluation in an HAC Level 1 avalanche class this year

Haines Avalanche Center Staff:

Erik Stevens
Forecaster and Director

Erik has been mentoring backcountry riders and teaching avalanche courses since 2007. His experience includes snowboard first-descents on obscure peaks, and a Master's degree in Remote Sensing, Earth, and Space Sciences, with certificates in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences and Oceanography. He has worked for the National Center for Atmospheric Research, Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Science, and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. He holds an AAI Level 3 Certification, and an AIARE Level II. He's a Professional Member of the American Avalanche Association. He has been a ski guide for Alaska Mountain Guides, and a forecaster with 11 seasons of experience in Haines.

Jeff Moskowitz
Forecaster and Educator

For twelve consecutive winters in the backcountry around Haines and a lifetime skiing, Jeff's fascination with snow and avalanches has led him to work professionally as both a forecaster and educator. His focus these days are on mentorship, risk management, the human factor, snowpack assessment and public observations. He is an American Avalanche Association (A3) Pro member, Pro 2 certified, holds a WFR, is an AIARE instructor and teaches for the Alaska Avalanche School.

Tim Thomas
Forecaster and Educator

Originally from Colorado and Texas, Tim now calls Haines home. In 2004 he started his professional career in the snow world as a helicopter ski guide. As an American Avalanche Association (A3) pro member, Pro 2, Pro Rescue and WEMT, he has now turned his skills and interest to avalanche education mainly focusing on the progressive evolution of the motorized user groups.

Brady McGuire
Forecaster and Educator

For almost three decades, Brady has been in pursuit of the perfect snowflake. A childhood fascination with snow has led him to a life of outdoor adventure and education. After studying Outdoor Recreation Leadership at Colorado Mountain College, Brady moved to Alaska to begin a professional guiding career. He guides for Alaska Mountaineering School and Alaska Mountain Guides leading high altitude and ski expeditions in Alaska, Canada, Argentina and Nepal. He is an American Avalanche Association (A3) Pro member, Pro 1 certified, and a WEMT. His interest and focus is tailored towards connecting people with austere environments and creating an inclusive learning environment for all.