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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**NSP and U.S. Forest Service sign Memorandum of Understanding**

Lakewood, Colo. –The National Ski Patrol (NSP) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that documents mutual benefits and interests between the two organizations in improving public awareness of safety issues with winter recreation in backcountry settings and helps NSP provide trained patrollers who can assist with search and rescue on USFS lands.

"I am very pleased to sign this MOU with the U.S. Forest Service," said NSP Executive Director Tim White. "Currently, over 100 ski areas operate on USFS land, and there are also numerous NSP backcountry patrols that work with local USFS offices in support of public safety. This document provides a framework for how NSP and the USFS can work together more effectively in serving the recreating public."

The MOU formalizes an ongoing collaborative relationship between the two organizations, and states that NSP shall work with the USFS to raise public awareness on backcountry safety issues, offer educational programs relevant to recreation safety, and develop possible cooperative service ventures. It also states that the USFS will provide information to help NSP further develop its education programs and collaborate with NSP in conducting safety and rescue education.

According to Jim Bedwell, the Forest Service's Director of Recreation, Heritage and Volunteer Resources, "We are excited to have formalized our long-standing relationship with the NSP. We see groups like the NSP as an excellent way to leverage agency resources in helping to improve public safety in the backcountry."

**About the National Ski Patrol**

The National Ski Patrol is a federally-chartered nonprofit membership association dedicated to serving the public and the mountain recreation industry. For 75 years, the NSP has been at the forefront of safety and emergency care education programs. The association's 28,000 members represent 98 percent of the nation's patrollers. For more information, access [www.nsp.org](http://www.nsp.org).

For further comments or interviews regarding the NSP, please call NSP Communications Director Candace Horgan at (303) 988-1111, x2625.

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