

Mt. Ashland Grant Report

2017 ECTS Grant from the City of Ashland

The City of Ashland awarded a \$11,600 grant to the Mt. Ashland Association in 2017 to support operation of the Mt. Ashland town shuttle for the 2017-18 ski season. Because of our shortened ski season (due to lack of snow), the Ski Hopper operated 23 days in February through March 2018. The total amount paid to the contractor operating the Ski Hopper for the ski season was \$18,400. Southern Oregon University contributed \$5,000 and Mt. Ashland (with the help of the \$11,600 City of Ashland ECTS grant funding) paid \$13,400.

Ski Hopper service included two trips up to the ski area from Ashland and two trips back down each day of operation. Bus stops included SOU, the Ashland Hills Inn, Callahans Mountain Lodge, and the ski area.

In the 2017-18 ski season, town shuttle service was once again offered for free. The Ski Hopper gave 742 rides in the 17-18 season, preventing more than 14,000 pounds of CO₂ from being released into the atmosphere.

Mt. Ashland estimates that 20% of shuttle riders were from areas outside of Ashland, based on data collected from all guests during the ski season. The shuttle offered convenient access from local lodging establishments to and from the ski area on weekends. That means that 148 visitors to the area used the service.

Mt. Ashland estimates that this translated into 68 overnight stays, 39 of which were at local lodging facilities (57% of our guests reported overnight stays in local lodging establishments, versus staying with friends and family).

One can naturally assume that the number of hotel room nights attributed to offering the Ski Hopper service is low, given the fact that guests knew of the availability of the shuttle service and made plans to visit, knowing that the service was available. Once the guest arrived, they could determine whether or not they wanted to drive to the ski area on their own or take the shuttle-based on the day's road conditions.

It is difficult to establish how many jobs were created or maintained as a result of Ski Hopper service. Regardless, Mt. Ashland assumes that three jobs included the Ski Hopper driver, the Ski Hopper reservation agent, and the Ski Hopper local small business owner. There were also hotel front desk clerks and housekeepers who had additional employment that winter as a result of the uptick in business. Mt. Ashland was able to accommodate numerous additional cars on days that the parking lots filled to capacity. On those days, the ski area was able to serve up to 80 more people, positively contributing to the ski area's income for the day.

Mt. Ashland was awarded STOKÉ certification in 2017, partially as a result of offering the Ski Hopper service. Offsetting more than 14,000 pounds of atmosphere-polluting carbon dioxide is no small feat and the Mt. Ashland Association is grateful to the City of Ashland for being such a strong partner in helping accomplish this.