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Snowland Resort Secures New Special Use Permit, significantly expanding skiable area and services

Historic Fairview Canyon ski area begins construction on new lift as it prepares for the 2026–27 season

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After nearly 60 years of history and a remarkable community-led effort to bring back public skiing, Snowland Foundation Inc. (a Utah 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization) has officially secured a new Special Use Permit with the United States Department of Agriculture-Forest Service. The newly signed permit provides for the continued operation and development of the historic ski area in Fairview Canyon.

And the work begins immediately. Construction of Snowland's new Ridgeline Express surface lift will begin mid-October, with the goal of having it completed in time for the December 2026 ski season (subject to cooperative weather). The new lift will expand access to 107 acres and complement Snowland's existing and expanded Main Street rope tow.

“This is a tremendous milestone for Snowland,” said Brent Lange, Chairman of the Snowland Foundation. “The signing of this permit gives us the opportunity to move forward and continue building on the incredible work that has already been done to bring Snowland back. We're excited about what this means for the mountain and for the community. We especially want to express our appreciation to the Manti La Sal Forest Service and the related Forest Service representatives for their extraordinary help in expediting the permitting process.”

A Mountain with a Long History

Snowland's history reaches back to 1967, when the ski area first opened through the vision and hard work of the Jerry Nelson family. For more than a decade, Snowland provided a place for local families, students, and outdoor enthusiasts to learn to ski and enjoy winter in the mountains.

In 1980, Snowland closed to public ski operations, yet the mountain continued to have an important role in the community. For more than four decades, Wasatch Academy (a private school based in Mt. Pleasant, Utah) used and maintained Snowland facilities for its students. The mountain remained an important part of the school's outdoor recreation and education programs, helping preserve the ski area and its infrastructure.

During the years Snowland was closed to the public, local skiers continued to find ways to enjoy the winter mountains. The unique layout of Highway 31, just north of the resort, provided a natural way for locals to access the backcountry. Skiers used private shuttle vehicles to gain access to the top of the canyon, then skied downhill through the backcountry, where they were picked up and shuttled to the top again. For generations of local skiers, these informal outings kept the tradition of skiing alive in the canyon.

A Community Effort Brings Snowland Back

In 2025, community members came together to form the Snowland Foundation, with the goal of revitalizing the resort and returning the mountain to public operation. The effort brought together important partners, including Wasatch Academy, Snow College, the Manti-La Sal National Forest, elected officials from Sanpete County - Commissioner Jim Cheney and Fairview City Mayor, Brad Welch, many community volunteers, and supporters of outdoor recreation.

The project also received significant financial support through two Utah Outdoor Recreation Grants, and other grants and private contributions followed. Snowland welcomed the public back to the mountain on January 17, 2026, for a limited season, with a remodeled lodge and rope tow.

The new Special Use Permit will expand the skiable area and allow for the construction of a 2,450-foot surface lift. Additional improvements are also planned for the resort in coming years, including upgrades to parking, tubing opportunities, lodging facilities, and other recreational amenities as Snowland develops. Summer programs are also in planning stages.

A Different Kind of Utah Ski Experience

While Snowland is investing in its future, its vision is not to become a large destination resort. The goal is to create a welcoming, community-oriented mountain where families can spend time together, young people can learn to ski and snowboard, students can participate in outdoor education, and visitors can experience the mountains of central Utah. For the 2026-27 season, children 12 and younger ski free; teen and adult tickets will be $20 for a day pass.

“Snowland has always been about the people who use this mountain,” Lange said. “We want to preserve that spirit while giving people new reasons to come here, spend time together, and make their own memories.”

The return of Snowland is more than the reopening of a ski area. It is the continuation of a place that has been part of the Sanpete County community for generations. That philosophy is at the heart of the Snowland Foundation's work.

For information about Snowland, including operating information, upcoming improvements, and opportunities to support the mountain, visit https://www.snowlandutah.com/ .

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