



POSITION: Sawtooth Avalanche Center - Avalanche Forecaster

LOCATION: Ketchum or Stanley, ID

POSITION TYPE: Seasonal, full-time, November through April

RATE OF PAY: \$26.87/hr (GS8), Government housing is available

TO APPLY: Apply at USAjobs.gov between July 1-14, using vacancy number 27-TEMP1-R4-FS3796-8DT-WW

Contact Scott Savage at scott@sawtoothavalanche.com for more information.

The Forest Service Sawtooth Avalanche Center (SAC) is probably hiring an Avalanche Forecaster to join our team. Forecasters work in both field and office settings to independently issue daily Avalanche Forecasts for four zones spanning seven distinct mountain ranges and over 2 million acres. Work begins in November and ends in April.

POSITION SUMMARY: SAC Avalanche Forecasters' primary purpose is to promote public and Forest Service staff safety by producing concise avalanche and mountain weather forecasts for assigned areas. Forecasts help backcountry travelers make safer, informed decisions. Our written and oral risk communication products target diverse user groups via many avenues (e.g. daily Avalanche Forecasts, photo and video, social media, education events, and field outreach.) Forecasters conduct snowmobile and ski-based field missions to support and produce these products.

JOB DUTIES: Core work duties include but are not limited to the following:

- **Risk Communication Products:** Independently produce Avalanche Forecasts, Mountain Weather Forecasts, General Avalanche Information products, and supporting social media and radio content. These products are created in short, early morning time windows and must be concise, easily understood, and technically accurate.
- **Field Work:** Safely collect avalanche, snowpack, and weather information. Field work is performed solo and/or in small teams where, typically, the forecaster is the most experienced member and serves as group leader. Publish information as publicly viewable Field Observations.

- **Photo and Video:** Produce photo and video material to support, clarify, or augment written risk messaging products.
- **Collaboration:** Work with local, regional, and national partners. Actively participate in staff meetings and discussions on avalanche conditions and general topics. Work together to improve our products, platforms, and operations.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Strong written and oral communication skills, including the ability to concisely and effectively communicate with diverse audiences
- A demonstrated, in-depth knowledge of snow, mountain weather, and avalanche phenomena acquired during mentoring from professional avalanche workers
- Multiple full winter operating seasons (fall to spring) of proven full-time, field-based, professional experience safely traveling and working in significant avalanche terrain and adverse winter weather
- Multiple winter operating seasons of full-time experience making regional avalanche forecasting or operational avalanche decisions (e.g. assigning backcountry danger ratings; issuing backcountry warnings; opening/closing ski area terrain, roadways, industrial operations, or guided client run lists)
- Full-time experience working in an environment where weather and avalanche forecasts are tested, confirmed, or refuted using real-time observations or results—the incumbent will have observed and/or triggered many avalanches
- Advanced or expert off-trail snowmobile riding skills and a demonstrated ability and interest in interacting with motorized users
- Advanced or expert backcountry ski and travel skills
- Ability to thrive working independently within a team environment
- Excellent attention to detail
- Experience with MS Office, Google Workspace, media editing, digital mapping, and other technology platforms
- Ability to work effectively under time constraints, including early in the morning
- Demonstrated motivation to acquire applicable knowledge and skills beyond basic work requirements
- Ability to accept constructive criticism and use it to improve skills and job performance

TOP LEVEL CANDIDATES WILL MEET THE FOLLOWING “BEST FIT” CRITERIA:

- A demonstrated expertise in snow, mountain weather, and avalanche phenomena, often acquired during many years of professional experience and mentoring from members of the US avalanche community
- At least 10 full winter operating seasons (fall to spring) of proven full time, field-based experience safely traveling and working in significant avalanche terrain and adverse winter weather (or equivalent experience, e.g. several hundred days of backcountry winter travel in significant avalanche terrain)

- At least 5 winter operating seasons of full-time experience making and documenting significant regional avalanche forecasting or operational avalanche decisions (e.g. assigning backcountry danger ratings, issuing backcountry warnings, opening/closing significant avalanche terrain at ski areas, opening/closing roadways or industrial operations, deciding what avalanche terrain is safe for guided clients to access, etc.)
- Full time experience working in an environment where weather and avalanche forecasts are tested, confirmed, or refuted using real time observations or results (the incumbent will have observed and/or triggered many avalanches)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to concisely and effectively communicate with both professional and recreational audiences
- Advanced or expert off-trail snowmobile riding skills and a demonstrated ability and interest to engage and interact with motorized users
- Advanced or expert backcountry ski and travel skills
- Excellent attention to detail
- Web, coding, IT, AI, media, and/or other technical skills useful to SAC operations
- An understanding of remote weather station instrumentation and ability to troubleshoot weather station problems
- Proven ability to create and deliver quality, engaging education materials and presentations for professional users
- Ability to work effectively under time constraints, including early in the morning
- Demonstrated motivation to acquire applicable knowledge and skills beyond basic work requirements
- Ability to accept constructive criticism and use it to improve skills and job performance