

# SKIING

winter adventure

JANUARY 2005

## MAKING MOUNTAINS

A Sneak Peak at Five Future Resorts

## CAPTURED!

Seven Classic Ski Areas Caught on Film

## COLD FRONT

### SEGREGATION

## Separate But Equal?

A MAVERICK SNOWBOARD RESORT COULD MEAN A MORE COLORFUL TAOS.

FOR THE LAST DECADE, FRUSTRATED SNOWBOARDERS IN Taos—and all over the southern Rockies, for that matter—have tried to convince New Mexico's biggest and steepest ski resort to lift its ban on snowboards. Their approach? Plastering FREE TAOS bumper stickers all over northern New Mexico, and hosting heavily ironic snowboard demo-days at the ski area's base. All for naught. Despite the sustained outcry, Taos remains an anti-snowboarding anachronism.

There may be hope, however: Roger Pattison, who oversees a family trust that owns most of the land surrounding Taos Ski Valley, has hatched a plan to open a 600-acre, snowboard-friendly "guerilla ski area" just across from the resort. Pattison aims to build a terrain park and ropetow—and, later, a chairlift—on terrain he says is comparable in aspect, pitch, and snowpack to Al's Run, Taos's marquee bump slope. "Everybody wants it to happen," insists Pattison.

He may be right. Even Taos Ski Valley has rallied around the idea. "It would be an asset," says TSV's vice president of marketing, Chris Stagg. "It would offer some diversity, and let us keep Taos the way we want it." Meaning you'd be able to go to Taos with your snowboarding family members or friends, ride and ski separately all day, and reconvene at the base.

Pattison had hoped to open the terrain park this season (he has investors lined up), but first he has to convince the land trust that the ski area dovetails with its larger real-estate ambitions. "I think it's safe to say that it's a long-term project," he admits. It's also safe to say that the region is long overdue for a new influx of visitors. "We're becoming a weekend resort for geriatrics," says local skier-snowboarder Jamie Leeson, co-owner of Taos Cow Ice Cream. "On powder days I get fresh tracks all day, but it'd be nice to have the business." —HANNAH NORDHAUS



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