Search & Rescue Impact & Cost Summary

Teton Valley Workshop | Teton County Idaho Search and Rescue | July 2026

Teton County Idaho Search and Rescue (SAR) has 30 operational members and 3 validated avalanche rescue dogs. Our rescue capabilities include high angle and vertical ropes and rigging rescue, swift water rescue, as well as overland search and rescue training.

SAR has 8 snowmobiles, 5 ATVs, 1 side-by-side RZR, 4 trail motorcycles, 1 rescue raft, and 1 jet drive outboard motorboat. SAR has 3 operational 4-wheel drive trucks and a fleet of equipment trailers including one enclosed trailer that can function as a remote command center.

As a registered agency with the Idaho EMS Bureau, SAR has 12 members who are currently licensed at the Emergency Medical Responder Level. In addition, SAR has 3 licensed EMT's, 1 paramedic, 1 physician's assistant, and 2 emergency medicine doctors on the team. All team members have, as a minimum, completed Recreational Avalanche 1 formal training. The cross section of advanced avalanche training held by team members includes Avalanche Professional 1 and 2, Avalanche Forecasting. One SAR team member is an internationally recognized avalanche safety consultant. SAR trains annually in the aspects of companion avalanche rescue. 7 members of our operations team are employed as ski patrollers at Grand Targhee and are intimately familiar with the terrain in the proposed expansion areas. There are 2 team members who were recently active as ski patrollers at Grand Targhee and 1 member who is a ski patroller at Jackson Hole Mountain Resort.

Over the last 8 years the average number of SAR calls for assistance has increased from 8 per year to 18 and peaked at 24 calls during the pandemic. Apart from a short window during the pandemic, all of the calls were within Teton County Idaho. SAR supported Teton County Wyoming on 3 calls during that time.

SAR does anticipate future demand for services to increase in the current area of operations, much like it has over the last 8 years. In general, the increase in growth that the Valley has experienced, coupled with our outreach and educational efforts, has resulted in this increase. We do not foresee a noticeable increase as a direct result of the proposed expansion. The area outlined will be patrolled by Targhee ski patrol. As will avalanche mitigation efforts, something not currently afforded this terrain. Targhee currently attends to individual who may need assistance in this resort "side country". The expanded terrain will afford skiers the opportunity to be in closer proximity to out-of-bounds terrain that poses additional occasion for rescue needs, should they elect to violate established rope lines. If extraction assistance beyond Grand Targhee's ski patrol is required, SAR anticipates Teton County Wyoming's SAR team will respond as it is within its designated area of operations. However, as noted earlier ,Teton County Idaho's SAR is well capable of responding. SAR is not only in closer proximity but also has members who are familiar with the terrain.