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PRESS RELEASE

PNSAA Announces 2014 Award Recipients

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La Conner, WA – The Pacific Northwest Ski Areas Association (PNSAA) is pleased to announce the 2014 recipients of the Tower of Excellence, Industrial Strength, and Forest Service Partner of the Year awards. The awards were presented at a reception at the 2014 PNSAA Spring Conference held April 22-24 in Hood River, Oregon. The conference was attended by more than 330 individuals from the ski and snowboard industry in the Pacific Northwest. There were more than 60 sessions over the course of three days for attendees to choose from in order to learn and further their skills.

Tower of Excellence

The 2014 recipient: *Melissa (Mel) Toney, Director of Ski Patrol and Risk Management, Mt Hood Meadows (MHM), Oregon.* This award recognizes and honors a ski resort employee, past or present, who has made significant contributions to the “outside operations” of their resort.

Toney was recognized for her leadership of the ski patrol and risk management departments with professionalism and excellence. Through her leadership of these departments, MHM has put in place state of the art patrol and medical facilities on mountain and in the base area, including an M105 howitzer installation on Shooting Star ridge for avalanche mitigation work above Heather Canyon, and a full medical treatment clinic in the base area. Even more significantly, Toney has consistently raised the training and performance standards for MHM Patrol. Toney’s career at MHM started in 1997 as a ski patroller.

Industrial Strength

The 2014 recipient: *Michael Weise, Leitner Poma of America.* This award is to recognize and honor an individual who is not an employee of a ski resort, but has made a valuable contribution to the Pacific Northwest industry.

Weise received this award in part because he has always been available and eager to share his knowledge and experience with everyone in the industry. He especially always makes time for teaching new mechanics and operations staff whenever asked at PNSAA and many other industry events coast to coast. Weise honestly loves to teach, discuss and share stories, ideas and processes to help everyone in the industry

whether it's discussing ski lifts, mountain operations, history or mechanics. His large vault of stories and experiences has earned him legendary late-night-story-teller status.

Forest Service Partner of the Year

The 2014 recipient: *Mike Lane, member of the National Ropeway Services Team, USDA Forest Service*. This award honors a Forest Service employee – past or present – who has made significant contributions to the Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region's (Region 6) winter sports offerings.

Lane is a critical link between lift manufacturers and the Forest Service nationally as well as regionally. His knowledge and expertise in design approval and structural integrity for all new ski lifts is excellent. Lane is an experienced inspector who has a keen attention to detail. He is also involved in teaching ski resort employees on proper maintenance and operations implementation and practices which confirms his dedication to the industry.

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The Pacific Northwest Ski Areas Association is a non-profit trade association, which represents the interests of 34 facilities located in Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Western Montana, and Northern California. The Association's member ski areas – most of which operate on public land – collectively host an estimated 5.5 million visits annually. For additional information on Pacific Northwest skiing and snowboarding, contact the PNSAA office at (877) 533-5520, or visit www.pnsaa.org to link to the website of your favorite mountain.