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Top Winter Athletes, Companies Join Forces in Environmental Push
New PSAs Ask Skiers, Snowboarders to Fight Global Warming; Leading Industry Companies Following Suit

WASHINGTON, DC (February 23, 2005) – Top winter sports athletes and major winter sports companies have joined forces with conservationists and ski areas to fight global warming with new public service announcements running across the country for the “Keep Winter Cool” campaign. The spots, featuring Olympic gold medalist Picabo Street and top snowboarders Dave Downing, Jeremy Jones and Romain De Marchi, ask people to help reduce warming pollution.

BETAs or DVDs of the six spots are available by emailing ebnsnyder@nrdc.org

Leading skiing and snowboarding companies like Burton and Rossignol are getting involved as well, supporting their athletes’ involvement and helping to raise awareness of the need for action on global warming.

“Some resorts this year have enjoyed fantastic snow, while others have struggled with erratic weather and are just now getting the consistent snow they need,” said Dr. Dan Lashof, Science Director for the Natural Resources Defense Council’s (NRDC) Climate Center. “These stars and businesses who are getting involved know global warming is a bottom-line issue for the ski industry. Global warming means shorter seasons, less snow, and changing weather patterns, and that’s not something anyone in this sport wants.”

The idea of producing a series of PSAs for the campaign got a big boost when Resort Sports Network offered to broadcast them on its network throughout the season. RSN’s affiliated stations in 100 resort markets around the country will begin airing the six spots February 21.

"It's important to the snow sports industry that people are aware that steps have to be taken now to ensure the viability of these sports fifty years from now," noted RSN President Jeff Dumais. "We're proud to be associated with the initiative and to be doing our part in keeping winter cool."

The PSAs combine the talents of the athletes, and some of the best cameramen and filmmakers in the skiing and snowboarding film industry. Picabo’s spots let her natural charisma shine through, and the snowboarding PSAs feature some of the most extreme footage ever laid down on celluloid.

“I’ve spent a lot of time on the slopes over the years, so I know the difference a few degrees can make between a great season and a bad season,” said Jeremy Jones, a top rider for Rossignol Snowboards and named Big Mountain Rider of the Year by Snowboarder magazine. “It’s great that the winter sports industry is calling for real solutions. Now we need car and power companies to get serious about cutting global warming pollution.”

"Ski resorts are thrilled to have new players on the team to address this important issue," said National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) President Michael Berry. "We are all passionate about snowsports and look forward to working together to solve the problem of global warming."

Keep Winter Cool is a partnership between NRDC and NSAA. Now in its third year, the campaign educates and engages the skiing and snowboarding community on global warming solutions. NSAA has over 300 member resorts and has encouraged resorts around the country to address the challenges of global warming. More information on the campaign can be found at www.KeepWinterCool.org.

Global warming, caused mainly by heat-trapping carbon dioxide pollution from cars and power plants, has greater effects at higher elevations and northern latitudes. Unless carbon dioxide emissions drop, we’ll be looking at warmer, shorter winters and more expensive snowmaking for resorts. Diminishing snowpack in the Mountain West also means less water for residents, since the snow serves as a frozen reservoir for the millions of citizens in the Western U.S. A United Nations Environment Program report released last winter assessing the impacts of global warming on ski resorts in Europe and Canada shows that many low altitude ski resorts face serious economic challenges in the decades ahead.

Skiing and snowboarding is a \$3 billion industry, and resorts alone employ tens of thousands of employees. In New Hampshire, for example, winter recreation accounts for more than 10% of jobs in the state. And with snowmaking already accounting for up to twenty percent of resorts’ budgets, warmer days and nights will only drive that figure higher.

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The Natural Resources Defense Council is a national, nonprofit organization of scientists, lawyers and environmental specialists dedicated to protecting public health and the environment. Founded in 1970, NRDC has more than 1 million members and e-activists nationwide, served from offices in New York, Washington, Santa Monica and San Francisco. More information is available at www.nrdc.org.