



## LEVEL 1 BACKCOUNTRY AVALANCHE TURNAGAIN ARM COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Alaska Avalanche School is a non-profit organization created for the purpose of promoting public safety in and around the mountain environment through education, research, publishing, and consulting. You have our commitment that we'll provide you with the highest quality of training possible. What you learn during the workshop will depend upon how hard you work during and prior to the course. We'll provide you with the opportunity, the tools, and the encouragement. The rest is up to you. Please read the following information carefully.

### DETAILS:

Cost of the Course: \$345.00 Per Person

Course Duration: 3 Full Days

Tuition Includes: Instruction, and instructional handouts.

Tuition Does Not Include: Round trip transportation to and from the class-site, "Snow Sense" by Fesler & Fredston, food for the duration of the course, all personal gear and clothing (see the Equipment List for more information).

Required Reading: "Snow Sense" by Jill Fredston & Doug Fesler

Recommended Reading: "Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain" by Bruce Tremper

### COURSE CURRICULUM:

This course is geared towards skiers, boarders, climbers, and other backcountry enthusiasts and is an intensive, hands-on course, which will provide students with the skills necessary to recognize and evaluate potential avalanche hazard. This course consists of 33 hours of classroom and field training.

#### Program curriculum consists of:

Group rescue techniques

Beacon use

Beacon Park practice (EasySearcher) for multiple beacon searches

Terrain analysis

Snow stability evaluation

Decision making

Route selection

Safe travel procedures

### PRE-REQUISITES:

Students are required to read "Snow Sense" by Fredston & Fesler prior to the course start date.

There is a pre-test that is sent to course participants upon enrollment, which is based on the required reading. Those who thoroughly study their pre-course material before the workshop can expect to absorb more during the course. Participants must be able to ski or snowshoe up and downhill in variable terrain and changing snow conditions and should be prepared to remain outdoors in foul weather all day. We also recommend that you track the weather in Turnagain Arm as closely as possible in the weeks prior to the course and get out and travel a bit on the equipment you will be using for the course so there are no surprises.

### RISK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT / WAIVER FORM:

While the Alaska Avalanche School's 30 year track record in safety has been exceptional, a reflection of the times is that each field course participant must sign a detailed waiver of liability. Signing the AAS waiver form means that you acknowledge the inherent risks associated with the activities you will be undertaking, accept responsibility for your actions, and waive any claim for damages against the Alaska Avalanche School and its staff for accidents suffered while participating in the workshop. AAS will send waiver forms to participants prior to the course. **Please read, and sign the form and bring to the first day of the course.**

*If you are a minor you must have the Waiver signed by your legal guardian before you arrive at the course. If you do not wish to sign the waiver, your tuition will be refunded less the \$50 processing fee, (as long as you notify us at least 14 days prior to the start of the course) and you will not be permitted to attend the workshop. Please read the registration and cancellation*

policies on the AAS registration form for more information and details regarding our policies.

## **COURSES HELD AT THE CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST RANGER STATION IN GIRDWOOD & TURNAGAIN ARM:**

*Please keep your dogs at home during the course!*

The classroom portion of the course will take place in Girdwood at the Chugach National Forest Ranger Station. Field portions of this course will be held in the Turnagain Arm at a location chosen each morning.

*Directions:* To get to the Chugach National Forest Ranger Station, take the Seward Highway to the Alyeska Highway. Once on the Alyeska Highway travel 300 yards and take the first left. There is a U.S. Forest Service sign at the turn. The majority of the class time will be spent in the main building to the South of the compound. Field portions of this course will be held in the Turnagain Arm. If possible, plan on driving a 4-wheel drive vehicle.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Since this course is intense, and consists of long days we strongly encourage participants from Anchorage or places other than Girdwood NOT to commute. If need be beg a friend in Girdwood for floor space! Below are a few accommodation options.

*Bunkhouse at the Ranger Station:* There is a heated Ranger's bunkhouse located at the Chugach National Forest Ranger Station in Girdwood that is available to students for a small fee. There is limited space so if you're interested in reserving a bed please let us know as soon as possible.

*Camping:* There is no outside camping allowed at the Visitor Center.

*Alyeska Hostel:* Another economical accommodation option is the Alyeska Hostel in Girdwood, which has bunks, and showers available for a reasonable fee. Call 907-783-2222 for more information or to make reservations.

*Other:* There are many other accommodation options in Girdwood such as the Alyeska Prince Hotel: 907-754-2111, or you can check with Alyeska Accommodations: 907-783-2000.

### **FOOD:**

Students are responsible for all of their food and water for the duration of the course. Bring enough food to feed yourself for three full days. We will have a **potluck dinner** on the first night of the course so bring your BEST, MOST TASTY DISH (no freeze-dried allowed) to share with others. If everyone puts some effort into their dish we can feast like kings! Crock-pot dishes work out well as do pans of food that just need to be heated up. Please plan on bringing your potluck dish with you on the first morning. The second night, dinner is the responsibility of the students.

Lunches will be in the field so plan your menu accordingly. You might also want to bring some snack food to keep your stomach in check between the end of each day's field session and when we break for dinner.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE:**

*The Night Before the Course Begins:* The Bunkhouse will be open as of 8 pm the night before the course begins for those wishing to come early and stay the night before the course begins. Again, if you'd like to stay at the bunkhouse please contact the AAS office to make a reservation.

*The First Day of the Course:* **Everyone should be in the classroom ready to go at 7:59 am on this morning since we will start on time and if you're late, you will miss important information.** Registration check-in will take place from 8 to 8:25 am. The course curriculum will start PROMPTLY at 8:30 am. We'll have a couple of hours of classroom session followed by field sessions until 5 pm. We'll then have class until around 7 pm when we'll break for dinner and the night.

*The Second and Third day of the Course:* These two days will start promptly at 8:00 am will run very similarly to the first with the exception of the registration. On the last day of the course, we will end by 7 pm.

### **PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS AND EQUIPMENT:**

Plan to bring all the necessary clothing and equipment you require to stay outside all day in foul weather while traveling uphill and down through variable terrain and changing snow conditions. For more information on participant equipment requirements please review the course equipment handout.

**TO REGISTER FOR A COURSE:**

If you have not already registered for a course and wish to, please call the AAS office to check availability. You can either register by phone or print off the registration form from the AAS Website and send it into the AAS office via post, or fax.

**AAS CANCELLATION, REFUND, AND TRANSFER POLICIES:**

*We highly encourage all participants to review the Cancellation, Refund, and Transfer Policies found on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of the AAS Registration form prior to enrollment.*

*Cancellation Insurance:* If for any reason you anticipate a cancellation please consider cancellation insurance. A few recommendations include:

TravelEx: [www.travelex-insurance.com](http://www.travelex-insurance.com)

Travel Guard: [www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com)

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Student tuition alone does not cover the total course cost. Funding for these programs is derived from individual donations, in-kind contributions, and program receipts from educational workshops. If you desire to contribute to the school we graciously accept donations of monetary value as well as gear that can be put towards our rental program.

Our goal at the Alaska Avalanche School is to provide you with the best possible opportunity for learning about avalanche hazard evaluation in the backcountry.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 907-345-0878 or email: [AlaskaAvalanche@mac.com](mailto:AlaskaAvalanche@mac.com).

We look forward to seeing you in the mountains!