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2,100 MILE BIKE RIDE THROUGH MONTANA TO BENEFIT SKI ASSOCIATION, SKI MUSEUM

July 6, 2017, Whitefish, Montana. On July 22nd, Flathead Valley Ski Education Foundation Executive Director Tim Hinderman will depart on a month-long bike ride – *The Great Montana Ski Area Bike Tour* – to visit every ski area in Montana. The bike ride is dedicated to raising funds for two very specific causes: *Northern Division USSA Coaches Education Fund* and *The Ski Heritage Center Museum of Skiing*.

“Coaches are the backbone of our ski organization”, commented Hinderman. “This commitment to coaches’ education is a giant step toward keeping pace with the major ski racing development programs around the country. Concurrently, we’re raising the funds needed for the opening of our Ski Heritage Center Museum this fall, just in time to celebrate the opening of Whitefish Mountain Resort’s 70th Anniversary Season!”

The Ski Area Route spans nearly 2,100 miles along secondary highways, county and U.S. Forest Service roads and trails through 22 Montana counties plus portions of Wyoming and Idaho. While crossing the Continental Divide just four times, the route still features over 110,000 total vertical feet of climbing and reaches its highest point of 10,947 feet atop Beartooth Pass south of Red Lodge.

Hinderman, who completed the grueling 2,700 mile Tour Divide bike ride from the Mexican border to Banff in 30 days in 2014, says there will be many similarities between the rides. “Both will be wholly self-supported and primarily traversing mountainous terrain across both sides of the continental Divide. It’s also a great way to see much of our great state at 10 miles per hour, versus the view from 30,000 feet or through the windshield at 70 mph.”

The goal is \$25,000, and pledges have already been received totaling over \$6,200. Playing on the Ski Area theme, pledges are based on various combinations of lift ticket prices at the ski areas. Pledge packages range from \$93 to \$1,100, but pledges and donations will be accepted in ANY amount.

Pledges can be sent to tim.hinderman@fvsef.org and can be designated for the “Northern Division Coaches Education Fund” or the “Ski Museum Opening Fund”.

The Northern Division of the United States Ski and Snowboard Association was incorporated in the State of Montana in 1965 to provide a common corporate and administrative framework for snow sports, primarily ski racing, as conducted by affiliated clubs within several Montana communities and a few communities in Wyoming and South Dakota.

The Ski Heritage Center Museum of Skiing, located in Whitefish, plans to open in November. Exhibits, photo galleries, news archives and video libraries will tell rich and colorful the story of skiing in the Flathead Valley and throughout the state of Montana.

The Great Montana Ski Area Bike Tour is sponsored by Sportsman Ski Haus, Hammer Nutrition, and Great Northern Cycle & Ski. “Without the support of these sponsors, this whole project would not be possible”, Hinderman said.

For more information about the ride and the route visit these websites

- www.amazon.com/Downhill-Montana-Treasure-Yellowstone-National/dp/157510136X to order Stan Cohen's book about the history of ski areas in Montana
- www.30cdxings.com – Tim Hinderman's blog site with information about preparations and ride updates

For more information contact Tim Hinderman at 406-885-2730 or tim.hinderman@fvsef.org.

