



2026 COLORADO SNOW AND AVALANCHE WORKSHOP AGENDA

OCTOBER 16, 2026, 8:00 AM TO 4:00 PM MOUNTAIN TIME

RIVERWALK CENTER | BRECKENRIDGE, COLORADO

8:00	DOORS OPEN
8:30	Welcome - Ethan Greene, Director - Colorado Avalanche Information Center
8:35	The Past, Present, and Future of the Highway Avalanche Program in Colorado - Brian Gorsage, Avalanche Program Manager - Colorado Department of Transportation
9:00	From UAS Snow Depth Measurements to Runout Probability: A Decision-Support Model Chain for Operational Avalanche Hazard Assessment - Valerie Foley, Geospatial Data Specialist & Ryan Zarter, Northern Mountains Highway Forecaster - Colorado Avalanche Information Center
9:25	UAS for Search and Rescue, An Avalanche Incident Case Study - Austin Finnell & Drew Gibson - Summit County Rescue Group
9:50	BREAK
10:20	Talk Less, Listen More: Psychological Safety and Candor in the Mountains - Dr. Sara Boilen, Founder & Chief Psychologist - Sweetgrass Psychological Services
10:45	Beyond Better Decisions: Managing Emergent Risk in Avalanche Terrain - Ian McCammon - Ph.D. Retired
11:10	Founding and Legacy of the Colorado Snow and Avalanche Workshop - Knox Williams, Director (retired) - Colorado Avalanche Information Center
11:35	An Update from the American Avalanche Association - Jayne Thompson Nelson, Executive Director - American Avalanche Association



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11:45 - 1:15	LUNCH
1:15	To Probe Or Not To Probe: Evaluating Fine Search Standards and the Role of Probing in Shallow Burial Professional Rescue Scenarios - Benjamin Merkle, Ski Patrol - Copper Mountain Ski Patrol
1:40	A Look at the D-Scale: Can We Be More Objective With Our Size Estimates? - Erich Peitzsch, Research Physical Scientist - USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center
2:05	Stability Changes After Weak Layer Collapse: Insights From An Unexpected Dataset - Andrea Bruckmeier, Ph.D. Candidate - Montana State University
2:30	BREAK
3:00	CAIC Updates for Winter 2026-2027 - Spencer Logan, Science and Operations Officer - Colorado Avalanche Information Center
3:25	ENSO - What's So Super About It - Greg Heavener, Warning Coordination Meteorologist - National Weather Service
3:50	Closing - Ethan Greene, Director - Colorado Avalanche Information Center
Social Hour at the Riverwalk Center - Beverages provided by Breckenridge Brewery 4:00 to 5:00	