HATCHER PASS AVALANCHE CENTER

POSITION: Avalanche Forecaster/Assistant Avalanche Forecaster

PAY: $26.00-27.00/hr DOE, Seasonal part-time, 30 hours/week

SEASON OF EMPLOYMENT: December 2026-April 2027 with additional training day in November

LOCATION: Hatcher Pass, AK

APPLICATION OPENS: September 26, 2026

APPLICATION CLOSES: October 15, 2026. Applications will be reviewed as received.

POSITION SUMMARY:

Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center (HPAC) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide avalanche information and advisories to assist and educate the general public in avoiding avalanches. The primary purpose of the forecaster position is to collect and analyze field, snow, and weather data to determine daily hazard ratings and provide avalanche forecasts for backcountry winter users.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Forecaster job duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to the following. Duties will be performed from a home office, in the field within the HPAC forecast area, and at the seasonal HPAC office in Hatcher Pass.

- **Field Work and Data Collection:** Collect field data on snow, weather, and avalanche conditions and ensure appropriate data is collected to inform avalanche forecasts. Practice established mountain and avalanche safety measures while collecting field data.
- **Data Analysis, Technical Writing, and Avalanche Forecasting:** Prepare and publish accessible and technically accurate backcountry avalanche forecasts. Analyze snow, weather, and avalanche observations and determine current and future trends in avalanche danger.
- **Community Education and Outreach:** Assist in the content development and presenting public avalanche awareness events as directed by the Lead Forecaster. Participate and assist with outreach and events. Teach backcountry avalanche awareness lectures as part of HPAC's school outreach program. Assist with the content development for the Center's website and social media, including photo and video documentation of backcountry conditions and observations.
- **Availability:** Must be available for 30 hours per week for the duration of the forecasting season (December through end of April). Weekly schedule will be established by the Lead Forecaster and will include early mornings, evenings, weekends and some holidays.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Two years experience in an occupational field related to avalanche forecasting for backcountry recreation (motorized or non-motorized guiding in avalanche terrain), winter recreation (ski area), or a transportation application (highway, railroad, etc.) or another workplace environment with winter field operations in avalanche terrain, or similar work experience.
- Professional avalanche training such as AAA Pro 1, CAA Professional Level I, or equivalent
- Current Wilderness First Responder and CPR certification
- Ability to collect field snow and weather observations and conduct snow stability analysis using snow pits and other standard techniques
- Ability to interpret and analyze snowpack, avalanche, and meteorological data from various sources
- Expert skills in winter non-motorized backcountry travel and avalanche safety protocol
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Technical writing experience; excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Experience with MS Office, Google Apps, and web-based software

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Strong skills in winter motorized backcountry travel
- Undergraduate degree in earth or physical science, engineering, communications, or English (writing)
- Digital media skills, including taking, editing, and publishing photographs and videos
- Familiarity with terrain in HPAC's forecast area
- American Avalanche Association Pro membership

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

- Employees must be willing and able to follow HPAC's Employee Handbook and Operational Safety Guidelines when performing all duties.
- Must possess and maintain a valid driver's license.
- This position will require winter driving. Employees must provide their own transportation in an appropriate and insured vehicle for winter travel throughout the HPAC forecast area.
- Ability to travel safely in winter conditions in mountainous environments for required fieldwork, including areas receiving large and frequent snowstorms, areas with low snow and a shallow snowpack, low visibility, and mid-winter rain events.
- Must possess equipment suitable for backcountry winter travel in avalanche terrain.

HPAC WILL PROVIDE:

- Training and mentorship, equipment stipend, workers compensation
- Opportunities for continued education and professional development
- Access to HPAC's network of qualified volunteer field partners
- Mileage reimbursement from an approved place of residence at the federal rate
- Paid time off accrued at the rate of 1 hour for every 10 hours of work

Applicants should submit a resume, cover letter, and three professional references to info@hpavalanche.org. Please also submit a previously published avalanche forecast (public or operational) or public observation if available.