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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Environmental Leadership Program honors Aspen Skiing Company 2018 24-Karat Gold Award

DENVER -The [Environmental Leadership Program](#), administered by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, presented Aspen Skiing Company with the 2018 24-Karat Gold Award for the company's extraordinary efforts to reduce the use of coal-fired energy while increasing clean alternative energy sources.

The award was presented during the 19th Annual Colorado Environmental Leadership Program Awards ceremony at Infinity Park Event Center in Glendale on Tuesday.

The 24-Karat Gold Award recognizes Gold Leader members who have gone above and beyond to create and implement a program or initiative that has made a measurable contribution to the environment, the economy and the community. The [24-Karat Gold Award winner](#) is selected by Gold Leader peers.

For more than a decade, Aspen Skiing Company has been a leader in efforts to operate in an environmentally-friendly manner. The company has spent millions of dollars on energy-efficiency, including lighting, boilers, green buildings and controls. They've installed a 115 kW micro-hydro system generating power from spring run off, 170 kW of solar photovoltaics and a 3 MW methane capture system at the Elk Creek mine in Somerset, CO.

Company officials determined internal efforts to reduce energy usage, while valuable, would not do enough to combat climate change, a critical issue for the ski and outdoor industries that already have seen the effects of low-snow years. So Aspen Skiing Company created a coalition with [Protect Our Winters](#) and [Alterra Mountain Company](#) to advocate for the transitioning to a clean energy economy and away from coal-burning power generation.

Coal plants produce numerous airborne toxins and pollutants, including mercury, lead, and volatile organic compounds, which contribute to ground-level ozone.

"It's the biggest, most effective, most efficient lever business can pull," said Matthew Hamilton, sustainability director at Aspen Skiing Company.

They secured intervenor status and hired an attorney to help prepare written testimony before the Public Utility Commission in support of Xcel's Colorado Energy Plan. That plan, which included the retirement of two of Xcel's six coal-burning power plants, was approved by state regulators in August. More recently, Aspen Skiing Company launched its Give a Flake campaign, using their clout with outdoor enthusiasts to create a powerful public campaign encouraging political activism.

“While this approach represents a new way of tackling the climate problem for ski resorts, we want to succeed outright, not just get credit for intent,” Hamilton said. “We believe this is how ski resorts ought to be working in the climate arena, and we hope others follow suit in similar political ways.”

About Aspen Skiing Company

Aspen Skiing Company (ASC), based in Aspen, Colo., operates the four mountains in the Aspen Snowmass area - Snowmass, Aspen Mountain, Aspen Highlands and Buttermilk. For more information visit [Aspen Snowmass](#) or call 800-525-6200.

About the Environmental Leadership Program

This statewide environmental recognition program offers benefits and incentives to members who voluntarily go beyond compliance with state and federal regulations and who are committed to continual environmental improvement. It is open to all Colorado businesses, industries, offices, educational institutions, municipalities, government agencies, communities, nonprofits and other organizations.

Organizations work through three levels of membership: Bronze, Silver and Gold. For a complete list of organizations with Bronze, Silver and Gold designations and summaries of their environmental efforts, please contact Lynette Myers, Environmental Leadership Program manager, at lynette.myers@state.co.us, or visit the department’s [Environmental Leadership Program](#) website.

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