
Economic and Financial Study of Quebec Ski Areas

2021-2022: The Second-Best Season for Quebec's Ski Areas in the Last 10 Years

Terrebonne, January 12, 2023 – Today's snowfalls forecast in Quebec is not the only good news for the ski industry. The Quebec Ski Areas Association (ASSQ) released its financial results for the 2021-2022 season, which saw a 47% increase in business volume over the previous year; a direct impact of the easing of sanitary measures that has plagued ski area operations since 2020. Attendance grew by 2.7% to 6.3 million skiers-days, the second-best result in the last 10 years for Quebec. Visitors from outside the province – mainly from Ontario - returned to Quebec's snowy slopes last season, accounting for 17.7% of total attendance at ski areas.

The 2021-2022 edition of the *Economic and Financial Study of Quebec Ski Areas* is once again conducted by Michel Archambault, Professor Emeritus of Tourism at the Université du Québec à Montréal, and his team. Here are the main highlights:

- The three largest ski destinations in Quebec remain the Laurentians, the Eastern Townships and Quebec-Charlevoix
- The Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region recorded a phenomenal 46% increase in attendance
- 130 operating days on average for major resorts in Quebec, compared with 112 days in the North East USA (-4 days)
- Season pass sales (unlimited access to the slopes) increased by 44%
- \$54.5 million in capital investments

The *Archambault Study* states that 84% of the revenue generated by ski areas comes from winter operations. As for summer activities, the increase in revenue associated with the warm season is 14.6% higher than in the 2019, the year prior to the pandemic. Also, the popularity for snow tubing was felt, showing a 33% increase in revenue at the 27 resorts that offer this activity, whereas alpine touring posted a 22% increase with 35,600 paid visits at the 36 resorts that welcome enthusiasts of this new sport.

Results show improved industry performance for Quebec

Resort investments were limited during the two pandemic years. However, the numbers are positive for the 21-22 season with a total of \$54.5 million in capital expenditures at 40 resorts, an increase of 146%. Improvements were stimulated by the Quebec government programs, mainly the *Programme de soutien aux stratégies de développement touristique (PSSDT)* and the *PADAT (programme d'aide au développement des attraits touristiques)*. Investments related to buildings and other winter equipment lead the way representing 43% of the amounts invested. Improvements to snowmaking systems ranked second at 23%, followed by grooming equipment at nearly 10%.

Mr. Yves Juneau, ASSQ's President and CEO, says he is encouraged by last season's results. "The improvement of the financial health of ski areas paves the way for the continued modernization of ski area infrastructures. There is a greater need for improved snowmaking systems that now allow more efficient snowmaking with reduced energy consumption. The challenges we face with Mother Nature are more significant and the optimization of snowmaking systems is one of the most viable solutions to allow ski areas to continue to act as the main economic development tool for the winter tourism," said Mr. Juneau.

Relieved to have overcome the pandemic

Beyond the numbers, ASSQ's president of the board of directors and president of Mont Sutton, Mr. Jean-Michel Ryan, says he is proud to have overcome the last two seasons in a difficult operating environment. "The challenges remain great for our industry, especially in dealing with climate change issues, integrating new technologies into our operations, reducing operating costs and implementing new ways of doing things to answer labor challenges," said Ryan. "The entire province of Quebec is stronger when our resorts achieve good results like those of the last season," he concluded.

About the Quebec Ski Areas Association

The ASSQ is a non-profit organization that represents and defends the interests of its 75-member ski areas, promotes the practice of snow sports and improves the quality of the product and the performance of the ski areas. Established in the ski industry for over 40 years, its mandate to develop the next generation of skiers and snowboarders in Quebec is achieved mainly through sales of financing products such as the Ski Passe-Partout. Each year, more than 50,000 young people are introduced to snow sports through the various ASSQ programs.

-30-

Source :

Sophie Leblanc-Leroux
Digital Communications Coordinator
Quebec Ski Areas Association (ASSQ)
media@assq.qc.ca
450 765-2020
www.maneige.ski

Media requests :

Lisa Marie Lacasse
Lisa Marie Communications
418 573-6198
info@lisamariemunications.com

Photo : An excellent season in the ski areas.
Credit: Pierre-Nicolas Lessard

