

Sugarloaf goes one better, adds environmental steward

By PETER BLAIS

CARRABASSETT VALLEY, Maine — Sugarloaf Golf Course here has taken environmental awareness to the next level by hiring environmental steward Kimberly Truskowski to keep the ski and golf resort in compliance with the Audubon International (AI) Cooperative Sanctuary Program and other environmental guidelines.

Having a full-time environmental steward at a golf/ski resort is rare. "I've run into a couple people who do some environmental education work at different resorts," Truskowski said. "But I think the numbers will grow. It just makes sense. A lot of these resorts are situated in areas of great natural beauty. It makes sense to combine that with an economic endeavor. We're trying to run a successful business here, but that doesn't mean we can't be sensitive to the natural environment and find better ways to do things."

"We have a Class A river here [the Carrabassett] and we want to make sure it stays that way. There is a sign you see as you drive up the access road to the resort that lets people know we have a commitment to the environment here and we would love their participation. We have an environmental code of conduct from top management on down. It is the 10 commandments of what we would like to see our management team do environmentally when they are planning a project."

The outdoor lifestyle first attracted Truskowski to Sugarloaf in the mid-1990s. She worked at the ski area through that initial winter and, with her experience working in greenhouses, applied for a job on the golf course as a landscaper.

Superintendent Ed Michaud was impressed with her background in environmental and recycling issues. Michaud had always wanted Sugarloaf to become involved in the AI program

GOLF AND THE ENVIRONMENT



Sugarloaf golf course superintendent Ed Michaud and environmental steward Kimberly Truskowski at the club.

and hired Truskowski to be both a landscaper and the point person to get the golf course involved with Audubon.

At the end of that first summer, then Sugarloaf President Warren Cook decided to expand Truskowski's duties on a resort-wide basis and made her position a year-round one.

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Renew America cites Signature Program

SELKIRK, N.Y. — Renew America has announced that the Audubon International Signature Program has received a Certificate of Environmental Achievement. It will be included in Renew America's Environmental Success Index, a database filled with successful environmental programs.

Each year, the national environmental non-profit Renew America conducts a nationwide search for programs that provide innovative solutions to tough environmental challenges.

Ann Slafer, Renew America's executive director, said: "The Environmental Success Index provides businesses, local governments and civic and environmental groups with practical proven models they can replicate. By recognizing the excellent work of these innovative programs, we help motivate the individuals involved to continue their efforts to improve the environmental quality of their communities and share their successes with others."

The index, available on the World Wide Web, includes programs under 20 different categories such as transportation efficiency, solid waste management, pollution Prevention and Open Space Protection. The Audubon International Signature Program is being honored in the category of Wildlife and Habitat Protection.

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