

Sun Valley approved for 4 more Olympic training sites

SUN VALLEY, Idaho (AP) — The U.S. Olympic Committee has approved four new training sites in central Idaho.

Sun Valley will open Olympic training sites for alpine skiing, freestyle skiing, free-ride skiing and snowboarding starting this summer, The Idaho Mountain Express newspaper reported (<http://bit.ly/1HrivzE>).

Previously, the Sun Valley location was just approved for Nordic skiers. The site had served as Olympic and Paralympic training grounds for three years.

Sun Valley ski officials said it's unknown whether the new training sites will include programs for Paralympic athletes.

"Nordic was good, but this is bigger," said Rob Clayton, executive director of the Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation.

It's unprecedented for one location to have five approved Olympic training sites, said Luke Bodensteiner, executive vice president of athletics for the United States Ski and Snowboard Association.

The two biggest snow sport Olympic sites are at Copper Mountain in Colorado, for alpine skiing, and Mammoth Mountain in California, for freestyle skiing and snowboarding, Bodensteiner said.

"Nobody's got it all covered in that way," he said.

The U.S. Olympic Committee has approved 17 training sites throughout the country.

Opening the new sites requires the Sun Valley Co., which owns the facilities on the coveted ski hill, to designate 45 days a season for a group of 75 athletes, coaches and support staff to train in specific areas.

Sun Valley is one of the rare U.S. sites that offers moguls skiing in January, Clayton said.

"There are really good facilities in Sun Valley," he said. "There's a great halfpipe, and the moguls course on Baldy is advantageous from an access viewpoint and pitch of the hill."

Information from: Idaho Mountain Express, <http://www.mtexpress.com>

