



TETON COUNTY SEARCH & RESCUE

MISSION **CRITICAL**

SECURING A YEAR-ROUND SAR-DEDICATED HELICOPTER FOR TETON COUNTY





Photo: David Bowers

“In the world of Search & Rescue, there is no substitute for a helicopter. It puts fewer people in harm’s way and allows us to safely respond to emergencies in complex and challenging terrain. We can get to critical and life-threatening injuries faster, and, ultimately, a helicopter provides a higher level of SAR service to our community.

But it needs to be year-round for two very important reasons:

First, TCSAR is seeing an annual increase in rescue calls as more people recreate in our surrounding public lands.

Secondly, leasing a seasonal helicopter is unpredictable and leaves the team short-handed at certain times of the year. Having a rescue-ready ship for 365 days a year will enable TCSAR to fulfill its responsibility of serving the community over the long term.”

*—Cody Lockhart
TCSAR Chief Advisor*

MISSION CRITICAL

- 1) Essential elements of an organization, business or entity where failure or lack of existence is not an option.
- 2) A SAR mission where a patient’s life is at risk, requiring the utmost in care and efficiency.
- 3) Teton County Search & Rescue’s urgent pursuit to bring a year-round SAR-dedicated helicopter to Teton County, Wyoming.





Photo: KC Bess

Why Now?

“Mission Critical” — SAR terminology to indicate a life-or-death scenario — is the vital need to establish a consistent, predictable and accessible rescue helicopter for 365 days a year in Teton County.

The moment is historic and worth celebrating as TCSAR continues to build on its legacy of providing the best emergency rescue service possible for our community. But as with everything the 40-plus volunteers do, they can't do it alone. Establishing this much-needed SAR resource for our community will require support from within and outside the organization.

Since it was founded in 1993, Teton County Search & Rescue has never had a year-round SAR-dedicated helicopter. For many years, the team contracted helicopters based on need. This service slowly expanded to include the winter months, and for the last five years, the team has contracted a rescue helicopter from October 1 to May 31.

Though the current operation certainly fills a need, it leaves

a critical gap for the summer and fall when the ship is on contract with the U.S. Forest Service and Grand Teton National Park.

Mission Critical comes at a time when we are seeing a year-round spike in rescue calls, including during summers on the western slope of the Tetons. With the team's ground response impacted by distance to callouts, traffic congestion, and a growing recreating public, having a rescue-ready helicopter in Teton County can be the difference between life or death.

Even during contract months, TCSAR can lose its helicopter due to extended fire seasons. With fires becoming a year-round and more destructive phenomenon in our region, we expect helicopter access to be increasingly unavailable despite our county's needs.

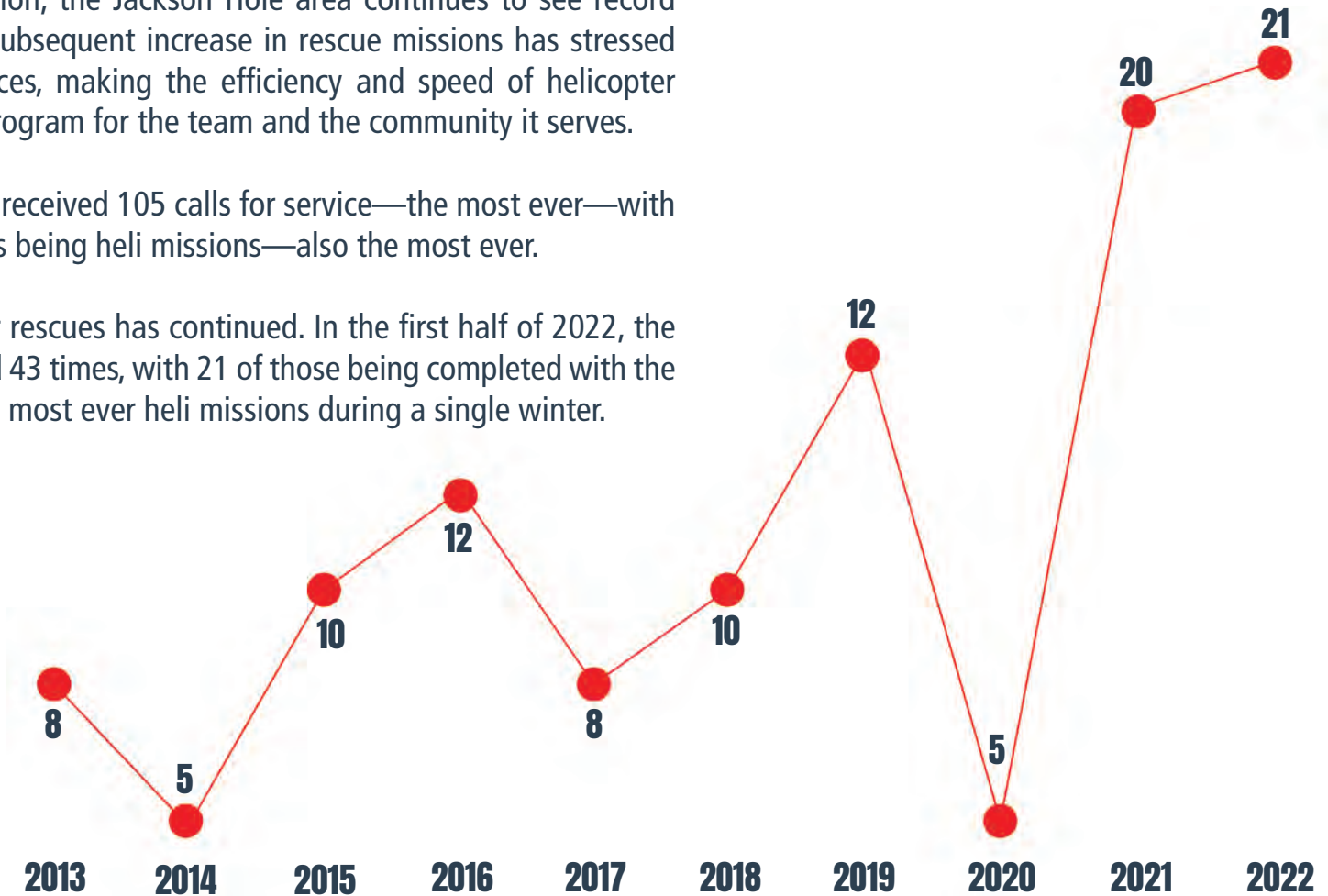


Winter Heli Missions Since 2013

With its wildlife, scenic vistas, access to public lands, and world-class outdoor recreation, the Jackson Hole area continues to see record visitation. The subsequent increase in rescue missions has stressed TCSAR's resources, making the efficiency and speed of helicopter rescue a vital program for the team and the community it serves.

In 2021, TCSAR received 105 calls for service—the most ever—with 35 of those calls being heli missions—also the most ever.

The demand for rescues has continued. In the first half of 2022, the team was called 43 times, with 21 of those being completed with the helicopter—the most ever heli missions during a single winter.



Helicopters have been a part of the rescue toolkit since TCSAR was founded in 1993. As the recreating public expanded farther into the backcountry, TCSAR's need for a helicopter has also grown.

1993-1998: Requested as needed

Mountain Rotors, Harrison Ford, EIRMC, National Guard
Bell B3, Bell 407, Aérospatiale, Black Hawk



Photo: TCSAR Archive

2007: Heli Q

Bell L4



Photo: TCSAR Archive



1999-2006: Hawkins & Powers Aviation

Bell Jet Ranger and Bell Long Ranger B3



Photo: Eric Helgoth

2008-2010: Minute Man Aviation

Bell L4



Photo: Eric Helgoth

2011-2018: Hillsboro Aviation

Bell 407



Photo: Eric Helgoth

2019-Present: Helicopter Express

Airbus H125



Photo: David Bowers





Photo: Dirk Collins

“Using helicopters has drastically changed our rescue profile.

In years past, technical rescues such as avalanche burials, rope access in vertical or technical terrain in winter or summer, swiftwater, and missing person searches required an entire team effort and hundreds of pounds of gear all carried in on foot.

Today, with a helicopter, we can often accomplish similar rescues, even in more technical terrain, in just an hour or two and do so with fewer rescuers. By increasing our response time and decreasing rescuer exposure, we not only mitigate hazards to the rescuer, but we are bringing those in need to definitive care much quicker and increase their chances for a better outcome.”

*—Tim Ciocarlan
TCSAR Founding Member*

Helicopters have enabled TCSAR to perform rescues that previously weren't possible. After severe injury, patients can be extracted from complex terrain in a timeframe that greatly increases their chances for survival. Terrain can be accessed from above and teams can be inserted into the field without traveling through unsafe environments. Teams can go farther distances quicker, making multi-day rescues possible in a matter of hours.



Photo: Dirk Collins



The Top Priority Will Always Be Saving Lives

"The way I see it, the helicopter was the only way I was getting out of the backcountry."

—**Tanner Ellis, 23, snowmobiler**

Togwotee Pass, February 6, 2022

"When I fell while hiking in the Tetons, I was simply glad to be alive. However, after a short attempt at walking, I realized that I was far from safe. With shooting pain in my left knee, I knew I would not be able to walk down the mountain myself. Fortunately, TCSAR volunteers and GTNP rangers were able to evacuate me from the mountain by helicopter. I do not know if I would be here today without the gracious and careful help of these emergency first responders."

—**Alex Curry, 22, hiker**

Delta Lake, May 29, 2020

"Without the helicopter, that could've shaped up to have been one of the worst days of my life. But it was so smooth and so quick that I was at the ambulance within an hour of breaking my leg. It took something that was scary and potentially life-changing, and became something that was not that bad of an experience."

—**Kevin Flueger, 33, skier**

JHMR backcountry, February 7, 2022

"The level of care was top notch. They kept me warm and informed with everything they were doing as they were doing it. Believe it or not, for such a horrible experience, my rescue out of there was a good experience."

—**Eva Murphy, 63, snowmobiler**

Granite Creek, January 12, 2022

"Without TCSAR's helicopter and the doctor that was able to fly directly to the scene of my accident, I definitely wouldn't be here today. The doctor, a TCSAR volunteer, was able to intubate me on site, knew the extent of my injuries, and was able to provide me the care I needed. That doctor started a chain of events that helped make me who I am today. I am so grateful and humbled he was able to fly directly to the scene of the accident."

—**Sally Francklyn, 34, skier**

JHMR backcountry, March 24, 2012

"I can't tell you how much I appreciate Teton County Search & Rescue. If my accident hadn't happened on Teton Pass, in Teton County, it probably would've had a different outcome."

—**Paul Rachele, 35, climber**

Teton Pass, February 20, 2018



The Best Ship for Teton County: Airbus H125

The H125 outclasses all other single-engine helicopters for performance, versatility, low maintenance, and low acquisition costs, while excelling in high altitudes and extreme environments. It is a member of the Airbus Écureuil (French for squirrel) family, which has accumulated nearly 36 million flight hours worldwide.

The AS350 B3 has the current world record for highest-altitude landing and takeoff, performed at 29,029 feet on Mount Everest in 2005. (The AS350 B3 is the same as the H125. In North America, this single-engine design is commonly known as the A-Star.)



Photo: Airbus



Photo: Chris Leigh

Purchasing a Helicopter vs. Leasing

TCSAR has looked carefully into the cost analysis between purchasing and leasing a SAR helicopter. Though there are advantages and disadvantages to each, the purchase plan provides a greater level of service while reducing annual costs in the long run. Moreover, helicopters hold their value and can be traded and upgraded with little additional expenditure.

Currently, TCSAR contracts a helicopter for eight months—October 1 to May 31. The Teton County Sheriff's Office funds these annual operating costs with the State of Wyoming and National Park Service providing reimbursements for helicopter rescues. TCSAR Foundation provides financial support through private fundraising to help keep volunteers trained and ready to go. This multi-agency public/private partnership is integral to TCSAR's helicopter program, and would continue with a helicopter purchase.

Buy

Airbus H125 Purchase

- Helicopter purchase: \$4.9 million
- Cost per flight hour: \$602
- Projected annual operating costs: \$524,000

By owning a ship, the cost per flight hour is based primarily on what we need to fly (variable costs such as fuel, warranty, etc). Under a lease agreement, the cost per flight hour is set and controlled by the leasing company.

Lease

Airbus H125 12-month Lease

- Annual operating cost: \$1.2 million
- Cost per flight hour: \$1,500-\$4,000
- Annual contract variance: \$865,000

The cost of leasing the ship for an additional four summer months increases annual costs from roughly \$335,000 to \$1.2 million due to the demand for helicopters during fire season, when the helicopter leases for \$214,000 per month.



Photo: TCSAR

The Best Program for Our Community

Part 135

TCSAR has spent many years developing and maintaining relationships with our federal partners. To continue this integral relationship for public safety, TCSAR seeks a helicopter operation known as Part 135. This federal license requires an aviation operator to work within a much more detailed and strict operational and legal framework and is subject to FAA approvals. Currently, Grand Teton National Park's standard practice is to contract with Part 135 operators.

Part 135 also enables TCSAR to expand its partnerships and enable the heli to fight fires that threaten local homes and buildings. While the helicopter would primarily be used for SAR, the flexibility and seamless integration of Part 135 benefits the entire community.

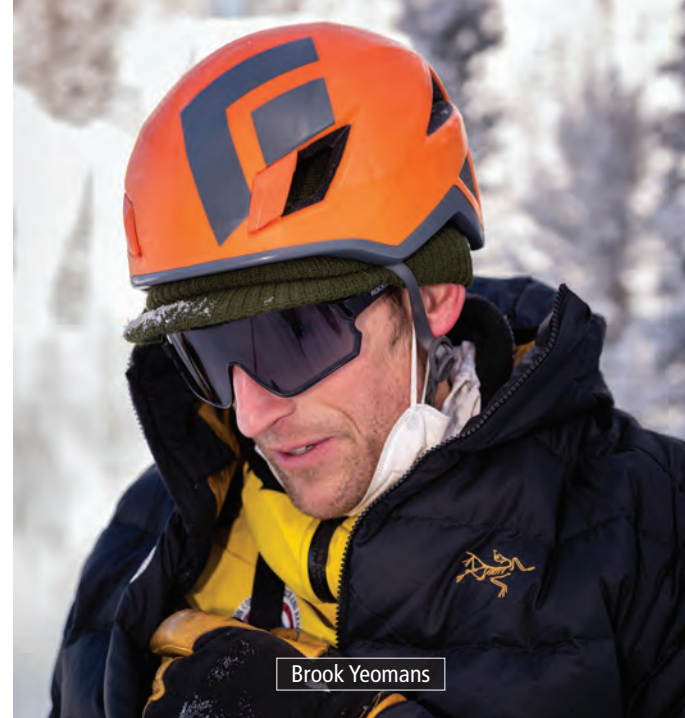




Mike Moyer



Anthony Stevens



Brook Yeomans



Carol Viau



Doug Van Houten



Jenn Sparks

Mission Critical Has Full Support from the Team

“The sheer size of Teton County and its amazing backcountry have always provided a daunting environment for rescues. I have seen again and again how the helicopter has provided us the ability to rapidly gain access to significantly injured and lost persons in remote and technical terrain that would take many hours to reach on foot, ski, or snowmachine. As more people recreate and work in these remote settings during every month of the year, having helicopter availability year-round ensures that we have the capability on any day of the year.”

—Mike Moyer

TCSAR Founding Member

“Boots on the ground will always be an important element of this team. But it can take a lot of time to get to the patient’s location, and in an emergency situation, the helicopter is the fastest way to get someone to higher medical care.”

—Carol Viau

TCSAR Volunteer since 2000

“For the past several summers, increased use on the west slope of the Tetons has led to numerous rescues. There is easy access to trailheads but not always the easiest hikes. We’ve had many people who have been seriously injured or become unable to return under their own power. Having a readily available helicopter saves time, is better for the patient, and puts fewer people at risk.”

—Doug Van Houten

TCSAR Volunteer since 2015

“I’ve been on both sides of Teton County Search & Rescue and cannot stress enough the value of having a year-round ship. I’ve seen incredible anguish turned into swift care that is profoundly better for the patient and rescuers alike.”

—Brook Yeomans

TCSAR Volunteer since 2021

“There are more people today with the ability to push farther and faster into our backcountry. When they get into trouble—for whatever reason—the helicopter is a vital piece of equipment.”

—Anthony Stevens

TCSAR Volunteer since 2015

“The team is seeing an increase in people going deeper into the backcountry, exploring new areas, and pushing their physical and mental limits. Modern equipment and mapping technology has allowed this to be the case year-round. If they have an accident, it makes it more challenging for our team to access them quickly and efficiently. The SAR team still loves an old-fashioned non-mechanized rescue, but the helicopter is a necessity in challenging situations.”

—Jennifer Sparks

TCSAR Volunteer since 1998



Be Part of TCSAR History

During the fall and winter of 2021/22, the TCSAR Board of Advisors spearheaded the effort to begin the process of securing a year-round SAR-dedicated helicopter. After months of digging into the feasibility, they presented the plan to the rest of the team on April 12, 2022. The team gave its full endorsement. Having executed due diligence and thoughtful analysis, the TCSAR Foundation Board of Directors then voted unanimously to approve the TCSAR team's plan to purchase a year-round SAR helicopter. Shortly after, the Foundation Board submitted a Letter of Intent and initial deposit toward the purchase of an Airbus H125 helicopter.

With the historic vote, TCSAR and the Foundation committed to raising the funds necessary to complete the purchase and reaffirmed its support for the helicopter program over the long term. TCSAR Foundation is qualified as a charitable foundation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, with the mission of supporting TCSAR volunteers through direct support, education and advocacy. A copy of the Foundation's exemption qualification letter is available upon request. TCSAR Foundation (Tax ID: 46-1402367) welcomes gifts of cash, securities, or negotiable instruments. For instructions on transferring securities, please contact the Foundation office.

Upon delivery of the completed ship in the summer/fall of 2023, the Foundation will provide final payment to Airbus, allowing TCSAR volunteers to seamlessly train, conduct rescues, and continue to save lives.

Please join us.

To learn more about how you can support this historic opportunity,
contact us at (307) 204-3775 | info@TetonCountySAR.org |
www.TetonCountySAR.org

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING TCSAR.



Photo: George Hedreen

Mission Critical Leadership



Cody Lockhart
TCSAR Chief Advisor



Matt Carr
Teton County Sheriff

Mike Estes, TCSO SAR Coordinator
KC Bess, Membership Advisor
Galen Parke, Planning Advisor

Anthony Stevens, Training Advisor
Doug Van Houten, Logistics Advisor
AJ Wheeler, M.D., Medical Advisor

TCSAR FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Hugh O'Halloran, Vice President
Sara Adamson, Secretary
Don Watkins, Treasurer
Matt Chandler
Tom Chapman

Hadley Hammer
David Landes
Fio Lazarte
Dana Macy
Leslie Mattson
Jennifer Sparks

Stephanie Williams
Bill Heglund, Emeritus
Ned Jannotta, Emeritus
Missy Whelan, Emeritus

TCSAR FOUNDATION STAFF

Stephanie Thomas, Executive Director
Liz King, PSAR Manager
Matt Hansen, Communications Director
Caryn Flanagan, Direct Support Coordinator
Connor Nolan, Donor Relations Coordinator



The effort to secure year-round helicopter operations is undoubtedly a heavy lift. TCSAR founding member and longtime training director Ray Shriver, seen here in the early days of short-haul training in the Tetons, would be proud to see the hard work and commitment of all involved in making TCSAR the best possible organization it can be for the community.



Frequently Asked Questions



What is the SO/County role in this program?

By Wyoming state statute, the County Sheriff has oversight of SAR services. That won't change with a year-round helicopter for TCSAR. The Teton County Sheriff's Office will continue to budget for annual operating costs of TCSAR through Teton County's normal budgeting process.

Who hires and manages the pilots?

The TCSAR team and Teton County Sheriff's Office will handle the hiring for two full-time pilots. The pilots will be employed by the Sheriff's Office.

Does this mean that TCSAR will become an aviation company?

No. As it has done since its inception in 1993, TCSAR will continue to provide Search & Rescue services for Teton County and the surrounding areas. A year-round helicopter simply means that our community has greater SAR service at more times of the year.

What is the normal life of an Airbus H125 helicopter? And what does replacement look like?

The Airbus H125's TBO (time between overhauls) is around 2,000 flight hours or about 8-10 years. Once that occurs, TCSAR will be able to trade in its ship for a new model or overhaul major components. Helicopters hold their value and can be traded and upgraded with little additional expenditure, making the purchase a good investment for our community's needs.

Will a year-round helicopter change the scope of Teton County Search & Rescue?

A year-round helicopter will only improve TCSAR's ability to provide the best service it can for Teton County. The volunteers will continue to train to utilize all of the tools and techniques available with the goal of providing a positive outcome for any backcountry emergency.

Why not SPET funding?

A frequent question is why TCSAR and TCSAR Foundation aren't pursuing SPET funding—the voter-approved one-penny sales tax—to help raise money for the SAR helicopter. After careful analysis, other fundraising avenues are being sought for the following reasons:

Every year, TCSAR must renegotiate its helicopter lease contract to cover eight months, but there's always the chance the Team won't get the ship due to wildland fire. Given the urgent need and unpredictability of this process, TCSAR believes it's imperative to have a reliable, full-time ship for the safety of its volunteers and the community within the next year.

In the Teton County 2022 General Election, 15 items are seeking a total of \$166.4 million in SPET funding. Though we are confident local voters would get behind a SAR helicopter, the delayed timing does not meet current rescue demand. Approved SPET items could potentially see their funding spread out across nine years. Loans could be secured to help bridge the financing for a helicopter, but then we'd be on the hook to pay thousands of dollars in interest over many years.

Ultimately, the Team and Foundation believe philanthropy and community support is the most efficient and reliable way to help TCSAR fulfill its responsibility of providing the best SAR service possible for our community.



Project Budget

TCSAR Foundation is committed to raising the necessary funds to purchase and outfit a new Airbus H125, and establish infrastructure for year-round aviation at the TCSAR hangar. The Teton County Sheriff's Office is working through county approvals to fund annual operating costs at approximately \$600,000 per year, while the State of Wyoming will continue to provide reimbursements for helicopter rescues.

 <p>Airbus H125 Aircraft</p> <p>\$4,900,000</p>	 <p>Heli Infrastructure</p> <p>\$450,000</p>	 <p>Startup & Operations</p> <p>\$1,025,000</p>	 <p>Contingency & Interest</p> <p>\$379,493</p>	 <p>Campaign Management</p> <p>\$445,507</p>
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TOTAL \$7,200,000



Expected Timeline to Delivery

The timeline for arrival of a TCSAR helicopter is based primarily on team needs and projected fundraising goals. In order to meet rescue demands and trainings for TCSAR, we expect the ship to arrive by October 2023, if not earlier.





Partnerships

A year-round Teton County Search & Rescue helicopter will be an asset for the entire community. With the Part 135 license, TCSAR will be able to partner with many different agencies, including Jackson Hole Fire/EMS, Wyoming Department of Transportation, Grand Teton National Park, the U.S. Forest Service, and others.

The SAR ship will be made available in the event of the following:

- Fighting fires that threaten homes and buildings in Teton County.
- A local on-call air resource in the event of an earthquake, wildfire, or other natural disaster, such as the devastating floods in communities around Yellowstone National Park in June 2022.
- Installing avalanche utilities on Teton Pass, Hoback and Snake River canyons.
- Additional avalanche control.
- Utility and communication installations.





Photo: David Bowers



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TetonCountySAR.org/mission-critical

