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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **BIG SKY RESORT AREA DISTRICT AND LOCAL FOUNDATIONS LAUNCH BIG SKY RELIEF EFFORT**

Big Sky, Montana, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – Effective today the Big Sky Resort Area District (District), Yellowstone Club Community Foundation (YCCF), Moonlight Community Foundation (MCF), and Spanish Peaks Community Foundation (SPCF) are announcing a joint relief effort to provide coordination and funding to assist Big Sky in response to the results of COVID-19. District Board Chair Kevin Germain commented, “Now more than ever, it is paramount that we work collaboratively to make strategic funding initiatives to help our community. Our community has a long history of coming together during a time of need and this is no exception. The coordination of key partners will help ensure Big Sky is poised to “weather this storm” and come out on the other side stronger than ever.” Effective today, the District has committed \$1,000,000 to the Big Sky Relief Fund helping to assist the Big Sky Medical Center manage the COVID-19 pandemic in Big Sky and mitigate social and economic impacts. In an extraordinary show of community support the Foundations have pledged \$1,000,000 to the effort.

All three Community Foundations stated that, they are pleased to announce the Big Sky Relief Fund. Montana communities pull together in a crisis. These efforts will immediately fund the purchase of eight ventilators for the Bozeman Deaconess system and Big Sky Medical Center. Additionally, they will soon provide immediate relief by addressing the lingering financial insecurities in our community – helping to provide recovery from this crisis. Funding partners and “on the ground” relief organizations are in daily communication regarding an ever-evolving analysis of needs and relief. Leaders of the Big Sky Relief Fund have consolidated information and resources through a partner launched website – [www.BigSkyRelief.org](http://www.BigSkyRelief.org).

Immediate concerns of the relief team are ensuring emergency and health needs are being addressed for a possible expanded COVID-19 impact on the community. Efforts are underway to provide immediate support to the Big Sky Medical Center (BSMC) including volunteers, supplies, ventilators, COVID-19 testing equipment, and facility improvements including the completion of four rooms to increase capacity. Additionally, the Big Sky Fire District and Big Sky Resort Area District are participating on Gallatin County Emergency communication calls that ensure coordination between Big Sky and the County Health Department. “We’re very fortunate as communities to have seen limited, confirmed cases of COVID-19 to this point, but we need to plan and prepare now for what could be challenging days ahead for Big Sky Medical Center and the patients we may see,” said Dr. Kathryn Bertany, president of BSMC and Deaconess Hospital in Bozeman. “We’re extremely proud to be part of what makes Big Sky so great. This community, once again, has come together in remarkable ways, rallied around us and our care team and provided us with the early support and confidence to be bold and innovative in our approaches. It’s clear to us, across Bozeman Health, that we’re in this together.”

We are constantly evolving our understanding and response to the community needs. Relief resources of “boots on the ground” efforts are consolidated on [www.BigSkyRelief.org](http://www.BigSkyRelief.org). If members of the Big Sky community identify needs not being addressed, please complete the contact us form on the website. It’s critical that the Foundations and the District have an informed understanding of what is not being addressed currently.



A host of social partners within the community are actively working to support:

- Volunteer Coordination (Big Sky Community Organization)
- Food Relief [Big Sky Community Food Bank, Big Sky School District #72 (BSSD#72)]
- Grocery and Delivery Services (SPCF, Big Sky Community Food Bank, Roxy's, Country Market, and Hungry Moose)
- Mental Health Services (Women in Action)
- Day Care/Education (BSSD#72, Morningstar Learning Center, Big Sky Discovery Academy)
- Business Relief and Economic Recover (Big Sky Chamber of Commerce and Visit Big Sky)

Relief Fund partners are working to create a single funnel for collecting donations online. This will be linked on the [www.BigSkyRelief.org](http://www.BigSkyRelief.org) website when available. To donate in the interim, please contact the Foundations directly. YCCF and other local charitable organizations are helping stand up the Relief Fund to meet the needs of local employees who have been directly impacted by an unexpected loss of income as a result of the COVID-19 virus. The legal entity for this is currently being formed and YCCF will host the platform online for the forthcoming applications. More information on the application process and Big Sky Relief Fund will be posted as available. An advisory council with representation from Big Sky Relief funding partners will recommend how funds are granted. Any Federal and State approved resources should be utilized first as the needs within Big Sky are likely to outweigh our local funds.

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*The Big Sky Resort Tax is a 3% tax passed in 1992. Since its inception, the money raised has played a significant role in the funding of community services and programs including infrastructure facilities, post office services, ambulance and emergency services, public transportation systems, parks and trails, community library, tourism development, public health, safety, and welfare services within the District. For more information on Big Sky Resort Tax, visit [www.resorttax.org](http://www.resorttax.org).*

*The Moonlight Community Foundation (MCF) is the non-profit charitable arm of the Moonlight Community, consisting of property owners, club members and developers that comprise the Moonlight area of Big Sky, Montana. MCF bridges the Moonlight Community to causes that matter by supporting initiatives for youth, education, conservation, and under-served needs benefiting the Big Sky Community.*

*Yellowstone Club Community Foundation (YCCF) is a 501(c)(3) registered non-profit organization. YCCF was established in 2010 to provide resources to nonprofit community organizations in the greater Big Sky area as a natural outgrowth of the long-standing commitment of club members to the Big Sky community. YCCF provides grants to nonprofit organizations that promote community services, arts and education, health, and conservation efforts.*

*What started as Spanish Peaks members reaching out to assist former Spanish Peaks employees through the LIFT program became Spanish Peaks Community Foundation (SPCF). LIFT made a dramatic difference to 47 families affected by the bankruptcy – SPCF will allow us to support even more individuals and 501(c)(3) organizations here in Big Sky.*

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**The impacts of COVID-19 are rapidly evolving in Big Sky. In response, the Big Resort Area District, Yellowstone Club Community Foundation, Moonlight Community Foundation, and Spanish Peaks Community Foundation have partnered to strengthen relief efforts and consolidate information. As we are responding to urgent community needs this website will be a resource for relief and support. For more information on Big Sky Relief, visit [www.BigSkyRelief.org](http://www.BigSkyRelief.org)**

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