

# PLACE ADVOCACY AT SNOWSHOE MOUNTAIN RESORT: A CASE STUDY OF A DESTINATION SKI RESORT

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research was to gain a greater understanding of what is so special about Snowshoe Mountain Resort. Snowshoe Mountain has a unique sense of place that is established through the built, natural, and social environments that exist within the mountain development.

This case study utilized Grounded Theory Analysis. Through the review of qualitative responses to an open ended question about the clients' perceptions of the image of Snowshoe, it became evident that Snowshoe Mountain Resort has a special sense of place. Snowshoe visitors expressed feelings of attachment to the resort along with feelings of restoration. Snowshoe Mountain fulfills all of the characteristics of a restorative environment.

Based on an intimate understanding of the mountain location and the behaviors reported in the responses, a new theory emerged. Place Advocacy theory offers an explanation of the behaviors that result from both the development of place attachment feelings and self restoration feelings. Place advocacy behavior includes behaviors of repeated visitation, making recommendations and referrals to others, and feelings of protection, belongingness and ownership over that environment.