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### Warming may shorten winters

Skiing, local real estate likely to suffer scientists say  
**Edward Stoner**  
Vail, CO Colorado

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Friday, July 25, 2008

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Snow levels could rise hundreds of feet over the next century if climate change isn't curtailed, a new report from the University of Maryland says.  
*Dominique Taylor/Daily file photo*



#### Economic impacts of climate change

VAIL, Colorado – If greenhouse gas emissions aren't curtailed, climate change will reduce Eagle County's snowpack by 57 percent by 2085, according to a new report.

"The state's most popular tourist activity is at risk from climate change," said the report, published Wednesday by the Center for Integrative Environmental Research at the University of Maryland.

The report, "Economic Impacts of Climate Change on Colorado," does not paint a pretty picture for skiing – and the attendant industry of real estate – over the next century.

The "snow season" could become 30 days shorter and the snowline could rise by 328 to 1,312 feet if emissions continue at the current rate, the study said.

Also, because of a projected global temperature increase, less precipitation will fall as snow, the report said.

"Given all of these factors, skiing in Colorado will become less reliable and the industry as a whole will take a loss as the effects of climate change become more tangible," the report said.

An earlier spring and more rain could also mean more mudslides and avalanches, the report said.

A 1 percent decrease in the number of visitors to Colorado's ski resorts could result in a total economic loss of over \$375 million by 2017 and over 4,500 lost jobs, the report said.

And real estate, one of the biggest industries in Eagle County, could also be affected, the report said.

"The profitability of the real estate sector may decrease alongside reduced opportunities for skiing and winter recreation in Colorado," the report said.

The study goes beyond skiing to look at effects on forests, water and wildlife.

"Forests are probably the single most threatened natural resource, as foreign and native pests and diseases as well as forest fires will all thrive under a warmer climate," the report said.

The mountain pine beetle – which has already killed huge amounts of trees in Eagle County and is expected to infect as many as 90 percent of lodgepole pines in parts of Vail – benefits from an earlier spring and a longer autumn, the report noted.

Temperature changes could also threaten the diversity of plants and animals that live in Colorado's unique climate zones, according to the report.

Bears might migrate farther north, while trout populations may decline, the report said.

Large animals such as deer and moose may benefit from the warmer temperatures, though, it added.

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**auto4sale** Score: 0  
 6:18 AM on July 26, 2008  
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**bill g** Score: 0  
 8:15 AM on July 25, 2008  
 Since I'll be 130 then I'm not too worried. And since they did such a good job of completely missing the forecast for this past season. In December they couldn't even predict January. But in 77 years it will be precisely 57% decrease. Get off the band wagon and buy a clue.

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