

ULTIMATE SNOWBOARDING ATLAS

50 STATES / 50 STORIES
By Brooke Geery

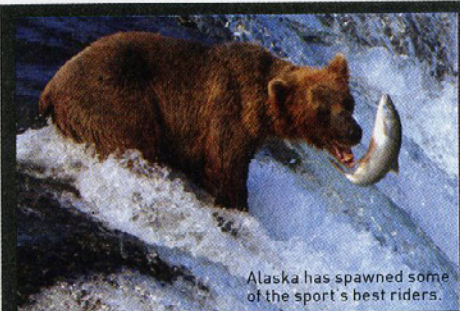
America truly is the birthplace of snowboarding. From the first rudimentary boards on the slopes of Utah, to makeshift halfpipes in California ditches, and disorganized events at Vermont resorts, both coasts and the mountains in between have had great influence on the sport we love. But what about Louisiana and Iowa? Does a place really need deep snowfall and massive mountains to make an impact on the sport? You might be surprised.

X Alabama

Population: 4,599,030

Shred connection:

If you learned to snowboard at the local golf course, then you should be able to appreciate Alabama's only ski resort, Cloudmont, which is both a ski and golf resort.



Alaska has spawned some of the sport's best riders.

X Alaska

Population: 670,053

Land area: 656,424 sq. miles

Political persuasion: Red

Key resorts:

Alaska's known more for its massive backcountry than its resort riding. Ever heard of Valdez? "The fact that there aren't very many (resorts) is unique," said AK-born snowboarder Jesse Burtner. "There is pretty much only one 'resort' and that's Alyeska."

Hometown heroes:

AK riders run the gamut from big mountain gnar dogs like Jay Liska to freestyle guys like Jason Borgstede. Maybe it's the mania brought on by the extreme changes in season, but you can be sure if it's an Alaskan rider doing it, they're doing it as big as possible.

Shred roots:

Alaska set the bar for big mountain riding in the states. "I think the King of The Hill competition in Valdez had a huge impact on our sport and especially on pushing the big mountain aspect," Burtner said.

Also worthy:

Considering that during the spring you can ride in sunlight until 11 p.m., you might not have much time, but you shouldn't leave Alaska without catching at least one fish.

X Arizona

Population: 6,166,318

Shred connection:

It all started with a shop called AZP (that's Arizona Pride) from which came Bonfire Founder Brad Steward, and Brian Harper, who imported the entire on-hill park staff of Windell's Snowboard Camp from here for years.

X Arkansas

Population: 2,810,872

Shred connection:

There are at least a few snow sports enthusiasts in Arkansas, otherwise why would the Little Rock Ski Club exist? If bus trips to Utah with rich old people don't do it for you though, you can stop by Snake World in Berryville and discuss how when curled up, snakes somewhat resemble moguls.

X California

Population: 36,457,549

Land area: 163,707 sq. miles

Political persuasion: Blue

Key resorts:

Whether in So Cal or Nor Cal, if you are at a California resort, you can pretty much expect to ride in the sun. That's not all. California pro Andy Finch said: "The snow is usually soft, we get a ton of it because of all the moisture, and there is a huge variety of killer resorts to ride." Check out classics like Mammoth, Heavenly, Northstar-at-Tahoe, or Squaw Valley. Park it up at Bear Mountain or Mountain High.

Hometown heroes:

"The stereotype is that all So Cal kids can do is ride rails...and if you had to turn to get to them it's not going to happen. But that's not true at all," So Cal local Matt Hammer said. California killers include Tommy Czechin, Hana Beaman, Shaun Palmer, and Tara Dakides—just to name a few.

Shred roots:

"Cali is one of the most influential places in the world when it comes to snowboarding," pro Gabe Taylor said. "The early Tahoe days paved the way for all of us. Those guys were so on it way back when. Watch an old Standard/Dawger video and watch the stuff those guys were doing in, like, 1988. Heavy lines, big cliffs—and I think I even saw Dave Hatchet do a BS 270 onto a metal pipe in hard boots."

Also worthy:

When you're done riding, head down to the beach for a quick surf session—where else can you do that?

X Colorado

Population: 4,753,377

Land area: 104,100 sq. miles

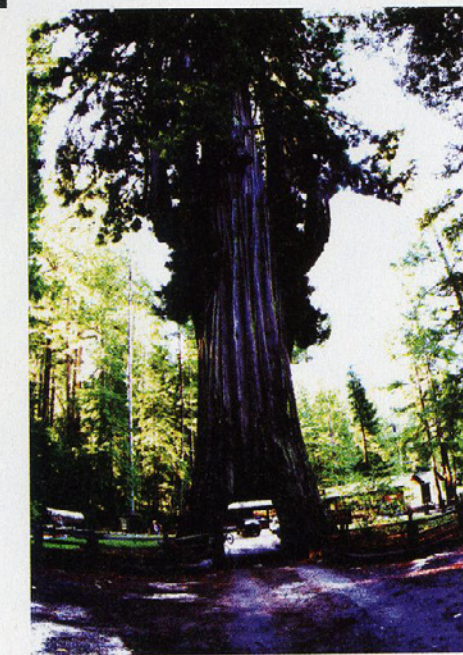
Political persuasion: Red

Key Resorts:

If you are looking for the best pipes and parks in the country, then look no further than Breckenridge, Vail, Aspen, and Keystone, and Winter Park.

Hometown heroes:

"Chad Otterstrom would be a good example of a solid Colorado rider," fellow statesman JJ Thomas said. "I think [this place] makes you well-rounded as hell." That includes being especially good at pipe, i.e. locals like Gretchen Bleiler, Steve Fisher, and Thomas himself.



California: the only place they'd put a drive-thru tree. Photo: Geery

Shred roots:

Colorado hosted a lot of snowboarding firsts: first snowboard park (at Vail) and one of the first competitions at Ski Cooper in '81. And in the early '90s, everyone who was anyone moved to Summit County to train on the best parks of the day. "It's pretty much the best training zone in the world," Thomas said. "Mark my words: you're going to hear about mad pro shreds moving to Summit County, just like the old days. Everything comes around full circle eventually."

Also worthy:

Many of Colorado's mountain towns also feature epic concrete skateparks such as Beaverton, Silverthorne and Vail.

X Connecticut

Population: 3,504,809

Shred connection:

Generation after generation, CT has churned out talented female snowboarders—along with Volvo-driving soccer moms. First it was Tricia Byrnes, then Lindsey Jacobellis and most recently Ellery Hollingsworth.

X Delaware

Population: 853,476

Shred connection:

Delaware apparently isn't big enough to have a whole mountain but, if you attend the University of Delaware, be sure to join the Snowboard Club.

X Florida

Population: 18,089,888

Shred connection:

In addition to being a surfing mecca, and surfing being a major influence on snowboarding back in the day, High Cascade Snowboard Camp Owner Preston Strout was also born in the sunshine state.

X Georgia

Population: 9,363,941

Shred connection:

Pro Ahmon Stamps resided in the peach state for 19 years, and he credits it for his interest in snowboarding: "It made me skateboard more and more, and since I skateboarded I got into snowboarding."

X Hawaii

Population: 1,285,498

Shred connection:

There're no ski lifts or grooming, but Mauna Kea's 13,796 foot summit on the Big Island gets enough snow to shred on. And with the right vehicle, anyone can drive to the top, no lift ticket required. "Aikola, brah..."

X Idaho

Population: 1,466,465

Shred connection:

Though you may think of Idaho as a favorite vacation spot for rich skiers, it is actually an under-hyped gem for snowboarding. In addition to having the only "new" ski resort in the country, Tamarack, there are plenty of resorts nearby where you may never wait in line, such as Grand Targhee just over the Wyoming border. Freestyle shred Andrew Crawford calls Idaho home these days, and it seems to be a breeding ground for the best snowboard-crossers; USSBX Team riders Nate and Pat Holland and Graham Watanabe live here.



Matt Hammer, Boreal, California. Photo: Tim Zimmerman/Standard

X Illinois

Population: 12,831,970

Shred connection:

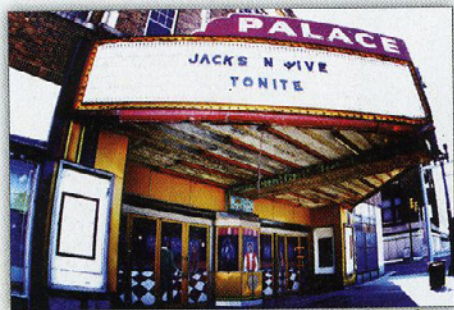
Raging Buffalo Snowboard Park in Algonquin, IL has been around since 1993, actually the world's first snowboard exclusive area. When they saw shredders being treated as second-class citizens by the ski establishment they went and did something about it. Very, very cool.

X Indiana

Population: 6,313,520

Shred connection:

Ski Paoli Peaks's Jurassic Snowboard Park is open 24 hours a day on the weekends. Be careful though, it's rated a double black diamond.



Gary, Indiana Photo: Geery

X Iowa

Population: 2,982,085

Shred connection:

"College-town USA," Ames, is home to an annual Campus Town Rail Jam, put on by the Iowa State University Snowboard Club. See, you don't need hills to snowboard!

X Kansas

Population: 2,764,075

Shred connection:

At the highest point, Kansas reaches over 4000 ft.—although it takes the entire state for the earth to gently slope up to that point. If you started on the west side, it's like the world's longest traverse.

X Kentucky

Population: 4,206,074

Shred connection:

If you enjoyed snowboard films such as *Decade*, *The Revival*, *Destroyer*, *Brainstorm*, *Chulksmack*, *From ____*, *With Love* or *Follow Me Around*, then thank Kentucky, as it brought the world filmer Brad Kremer. Of course he moved to Tahoe when he started to get serious, but he hasn't forgotten his roots: "Where I came from is a huge part of who I am and what I do, and Kentucky is a big part of that."

X Louisiana

Population: 4,287,768

Shred connection: OK, so it has nothing to do with the actual state of Louisiana, but the Louisiana Purchase gave the US parts of Colorado, Wyoming and Montana, and therefore plenty of shredding.

X Maine

Population: 1,321,574

Shred connection:

Home to East Coast Superpark, Carabassett Valley Snowboard Academy, the only above tree line lift-accessed skiing in the east, and the tallest snowman in the world, Maine is a snowboarder's haven.

X Maryland

Population: 5,615,727

Shred connection:

Check out Wisp resort. Maybe you'll run into Maryland local, pro Justin Heibel, back home for a visit.

X Massachusetts

Population: 6,437,193

Shred connection:

Massachusetts is the childhood home of Todd Richards, but he is not the state's most surprising resident. "It gave the world Jeremy Jones," Richards said. "Who would have thought that some dude out of flat-ass Mass would be the gnarliest big mountain dude ever?"

X Michigan

Population: 10,095,643

Shred connection:

Even though many Michigan resorts are little more than garbage dumps, UnInc pro Danny Davis managed to hone his skills at Alpine Valley. More importantly, Muskegon, Michigan gave the world Sherman Poppen, whose 1965 Snurfer was snowboarding's original cell.

X Minnesota

Population: 5,167,101

Shred connection:

Minnesota-bred Molly Aguirre said, "Minnesota and the midwest [are] very family-driven." Maybe that's why she and her brother Mason are both so good, as well as Bjorn and Erik Leines, who also grew up riding ice in 20 below.

X Mississippi

Population: 2,910,540

Shred connection:

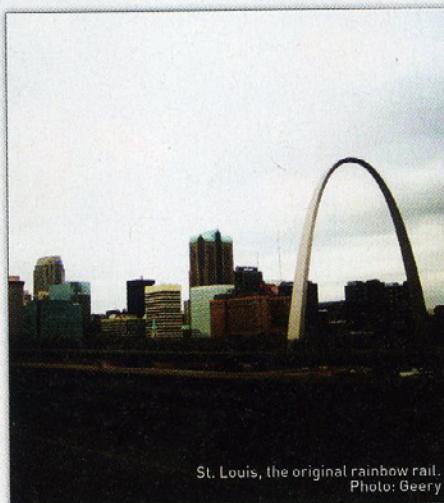
One of the few states with no snowboarding connection we could unearth. But, when in Natchez, you can dine at Mammy's Cupboard, a restaurant built inside a woman's skirt. And if there's ever a freak snowstorm, you could probably bomb drop down the side of it and get an all-time photo. OK, probably not...

X Missouri

Population: 5,842,713

Shred connection:

Don't let the town's name fool you: Snow Creek in Kansas City is all Missouri's. And Missourians have 300 ft. of vertical drop and 1,100 of elevation to brag about.



St. Louis, the original rainbow rail. Photo: Geery

X Montana

Population: 944,632

Shred connection:

Snowboarding in Montana is all about super light snow, seemingly endless in-bounds freeriding and figuring out how to keep your cowboy hat on while doing Mach 10 through chutes. Resorts like Big Sky and Bridger Bowl attract many pros each winter looking for a peaceful freeriding experience. And MSU in Bozeman is a great choice for the shred head who wants to learn.

X Nebraska

Population: 1,768,331

Shred connection:

Nebraska is to thank for the lawn dart—the stretched out front-flip that flickered across the screen at almost every Winter X Games in the late '90s. It is the home of the trick's purveyor, Ben Hinkley.

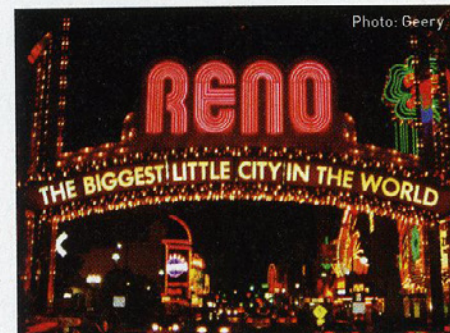


Photo: Geery

X Nevada

Population: 2,495,529

Shred connection:

If you are taking a trip to ride any of the prime Lake Tahoe resorts, then you will fly into Reno/Tahoe Airport, located in Nevada. Reno is also home to a number of pros, filmmakers, and n'er-do-wells. Nevada has some shredding of its own with Mt. Rose and Las Vegas Ski and Snowboard Resort, to name a few. And, finally, Nevada is also where your local shop makes most of its buying decisions; fabulous Las Vegas is home to SIA, snowboarding's biggest trade show, held since 1994.

X New

Hampshire

Population: 1,314,895

Land area: 9,351 sq. miles

Political persuasion: Red

Key resorts: "Since I can remember, Waterville Valley and Loon Mountain have always had good parks," local Scotty Arnold said. "They had quality parks before a lot of mountains on the east coast, and continue to have good parks." For the big mountain enthusiast stuck on the east coast, Tuckerman's Ravine is the most legitimate hike east of the Mississippi.

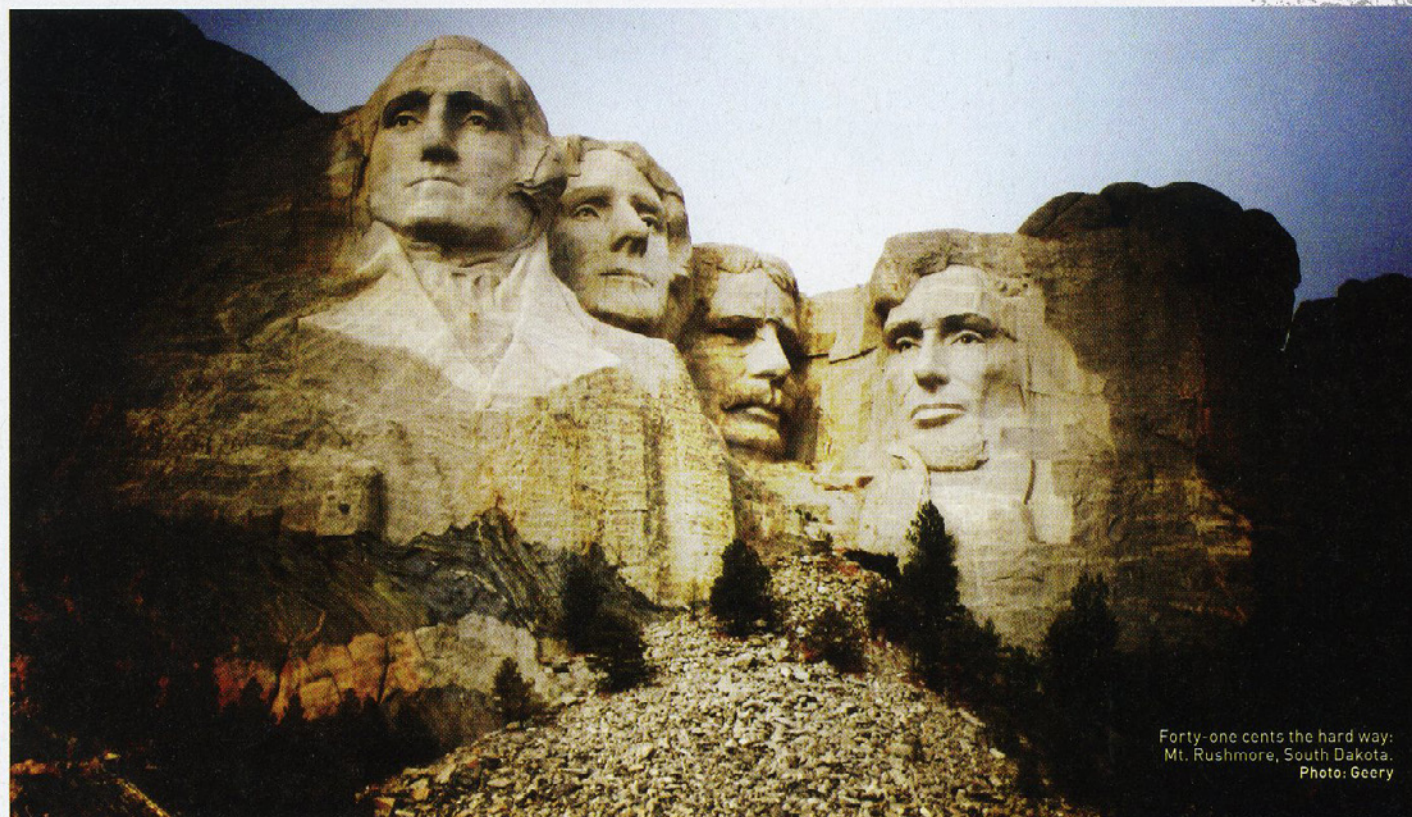
Hometown heroes: NH is responsible for a lot of the new heavyweights such as Scotty Arnold, Scott Lago, and Pat Moore.

Shred roots: For years, New Hampshire hosted the World Quarterpipe Championships, one of the premiere quarterpipe-only events. It's still the site of major spring jams such as *Eastern Boarder's Last Call* at Loon.

Also worthy: Pick up college chicks. New Hampshire resorts all seem to come with their own college party town nearby.



Casey Neefus, Montana Backcountry. Photo: Geoff Andruik



Forty-one cents the hard way:
Mt. Rushmore, South Dakota.
Photo: Geery

✕ New Jersey

Population: 8,724,560

Shred connection:

The Greners have successfully permeated the snowboard industry, and we have New Jersey to thank. "New Jersey seems to beget a lot of good snowboarders," Grenade co-founder and Jersey-ite Matt Kass said. "Pennsylvania is only responsible for lame ones."

✕ New Mexico

Population: 1,954,599

Shred connection:

Helping to mold the future of competitive snowboarding, NM's Angelfire Resort hosted the 2003 USASA Nationals. Taos, however, still does not allow our fine sport. What frickin' year is it, people?

✕ New York

Population: 19,306,183

Shred connection:

Whether it's a rail jam in Times Square, an FIS event at Lake Placid, or a stop at the major talk shows, most pro snowboarders spend some of their careers in New York. Check *The Drift* in FSM 3.2 for a taste of the Big Apple with some of snowboarding's finest female riders.

✕ North Carolina

Population: 8,856,505

Shred connection:

When the IOC introduced Snowboard Cross as an Olympic event, no one would have predicted the first gold medal would be awarded to someone born in North Carolina (or even America), but it was: Seth Wescott.

✕ North Dakota

Population: 635,867

Shred connection:

North Dakota has a few small ski resorts, but even those are a little on the flat side. Instead check out snow-kiting. At least you can use your snowboarding for something...

✕ Ohio

Population: 11,478,006

Shred connection:

Ohio actually has a bustling snowboard scene and is the home to Matt and Adam Porter of Autumn Line Cinema, who produced *This is For Everyone* in 2007.

✕ Oklahoma

Population: 3,579,212

Shred connection:

You might not be able to shred in Oklahoma, but if you are ever in Beaver, take out your aggression by throwing "cow chips," poop to the rest of us. If that doesn't do it for you, check out the world's largest peanut in Durant.

✕ Oregon

Population: 3,700,758

Land area: 98,386 sq. miles

Political persuasion: Blue

Key resorts: Oregon has a little bit of everything, from mountains to ocean, desert to rain forest, and the resorts are no different. "Summer riding at Hood is well above tree line," explains pro Janna Meyen. "Meadows is more roly with some really great terrain...and Bachelor, being located in central Oregon, tends to get way drier snow than people would expect."

Hometown heroes: Since the artistic city of Portland is where many pro riders live nowadays, Oregon can claim some of the most creative snowboarders like Scotty Whitlake and Corey Smith.

Shred roots: Two words: Mount Hood. "Summer riding at Mt. Hood has helped to push the progression of snowboarding more

than anything to date!" Meyen said. "With awesome camps like High Cascade, the level of riding has been greatly influenced by the hard work put into great jumps and pipes over the years at Hood."

Also worthy: The Oregon coast and its rocky shoreline are an awesome place to go reminisce about the greatness of *The Goonies*.

✕ Pennsylvania

Population: 12,440,621

Shred connection: The icy slopes of the Poconos have bred some of the most consistent pipe riders around, such as Keir Dillon and Luke Wynen.

✕ Rhode Island

Population: 1,067,610

Shred connection:

Snowboarding in Rhode Island, "is amazing 'cause there is no mountain...only a valley," said RI local, Pat Fenelon. "Yawgoo Valley can be fun sometimes. They put up some fun rails occasionally and even build a jump out of dirt that they blow snow on." Hey, it was good enough for Shane Flood.

✕ South Carolina

Population: 4,321,249

Shred connection:

When Kemper Snowboards was purchased by California Pro in-line skates in 1994, the new owners moved the headquarters to snowboard mecca Greenville, South Carolina.

✕ South Dakota

Population: 781,919

Shred connection:

South Dakota gets plenty of snow, why not try a first descent in the Badlands National Park? Or drop in from George Washington's nose on Mt. Rushmore? Either would probably only be slightly illegal.



Pat Moore, Mt. Hood Meadows, Oregon.
Photo: Abe Blair

50
STA
STO

X Tennessee

Population: 6,038,803

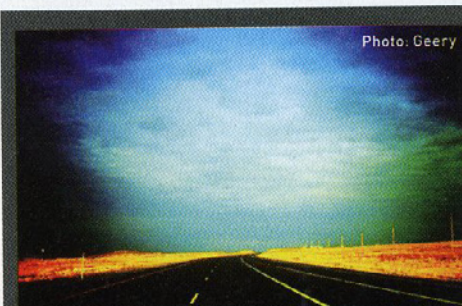
Shred connection: Ober Gatlinburg Ski Resort allows legal shredding in Tennessee, but it would be cooler to front-board the neck of the Grand Guitar, a three story, 70-foot-long guitar in Bristol.



X Texas

Population: 23,507,783

Shred connection: Texas inadvertently gave snowboarding a much-needed sense of humor when it brought pro Travis Parker into the world. And if all goes as planned, Fort Worth will soon be home to year-round riding with its own man-made mountain. Texans really are funny.



X Utah

Population: 2,550,063

Land area: 84,904 sq. miles

Political persuasion: Red

Key resorts: "You can have an amazing powder day at Snowbird or Brighton and, if there is no powder, you can go to Park City to ride a super fun park and a huge halfpipe," Utah rider Erin Comstock said.

Hometown heroes: Utah is a bastion of snowboard talent, and few states can match the number of international A-listers who have come up here. Riders such as J.P. Walker, Jeremy Jones, Mikey LeBlanc, and Jordan Mendenhall have set the standard for years, while a gang of others including Biittner, Bennee, Deadlung, Tomich, Kooley and Christensen are starting to get theirs. In Utah, the rider list is endless, but unfortunately our word count isn't.

Shred roots: Utah is the main set for many of Mack Dawg and Standard's world-class snowboard videos. "The Rail Garden, Grizzly Gulch, Muller Park Handrail...in my opinion it's the most historic place in snowboarding," J.P. Walker said.

Also worthy: Unlike other mountain areas, Utah offers the big city experience and all that urban-coolness that comes with. Or if you prefer the mountain town bit, Park City is a 20-minute drive from the downtown scene, where in January you can make like Turtle and Johnny Drama and crash all the exclusive parties at the Sundance Film Fest.

X Vermont

Population: 623,908

Land area: 9,615 sq. miles

Political persuasion: Blue

Key resorts: "Vermont resorts are rad because there is such a small town feel," Vermonter Kelly Clark said. Check out the off-the-beaten path resorts such as Bromley, Smugglers Notch, and Suicide Six or go straight to the big ones: Killington, Stratton, Stowe, Mt. Snow and Okemo.

Hometown heroes: Vermont seems to breed Olympic gold medalists: Ross Powers, Kelly Clark, and Hannah Teter all grew up there. But not all Vermont riders are polished champions: "There are sometimes the good old VT rippers out there in their flannels and work gloves ruling it," Ross Powers said.

Shred roots: Almost every pro makes at least one pilgrimage to Vermont for the US Open during their career. "I think Jake and Burton being from Vermont and still in Vermont has been huge for the history of snowboarding [here]," Powers said.

Also worthy: Cabot Cheese, Vermont Maple Syrup, Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream, and Long Trail Beer are all staples of the Green Mountain State.

X Virginia

Population: 7,642,884

Shred connection: Massanutten Resort in Shandoah hosts multiple terrain parks, the main of which are only open to snowboards, twin tip skis and snowblades. Apparently, people still snowblade in Virginia.

X Washington

Population: 6,395,798

Land area: 71,303 sq. miles

Political persuasion: Blue

Key resorts: "The unique thing about Washington's resorts is that they don't feel like resorts," Seattle resident Jesse Burtner said. "They are for the most part humble and quaint with a hardcore group of locals and weekend warriors pouring in from nearby cities riding together, mellow style, with little to no on-hill conflict." Washington is home to the legendary Mt. Baker, the Summit-at-Snoqualmie, Stevens Pass and Crystal Mountain. It is also where you'll find North Cascade Heli, one of the premier chopper-ops in the world.



Seattle, Washington, with Mt. Rainier in the background.

Hometown heroes: Burtner describes Washington riders as, "Hippies who rip or, as I say, 'Rippies.'" Some serious Washingtonian heavyweights in the history of snowboarding include the man, Craig Kelly, the Cummins, Jamie Lynn, Mike Ranquet, Dave Lee and Joey McGuire.

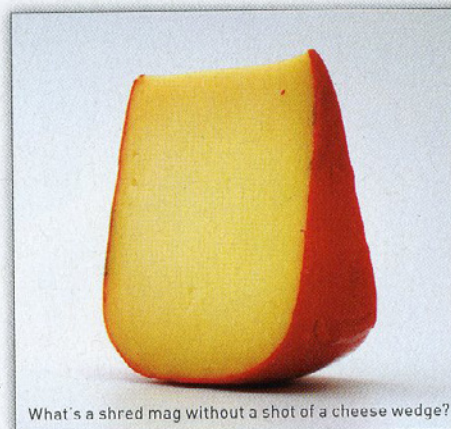
Shred roots: The Legendary Banked Slalom, held for more than 20 of the past years at Mt. Baker is the one "must-enter" contest for anyone who truly loves snowboarding (and riding powder).

Also worthy: The Grenade games moved to Snoqualmie this year. Or, watch salty fishermen throw salmon at Seattle's Pike Place Market. You can also take a ferry to a massive skatepark—only in Washington.

X West Virginia

Population: 1,818,470

Shred connection: Snowshoe Mountain, at 4,848 ft., is taller than most mountains in Vermont and gets 180 inches of snow a year. With stats like this, it's a shock more snowboarding superstars don't come from the Mountain State. Maybe they've had a little too much moonshine.



What's a shred mag without a shot of a cheese wedge?

X Wisconsin

Population: 5,556,506

Shred connection: Last year Josh Sherman held the Pee Wee Sherman Rail Jam at Wisconsin's Tyrol Basin. "Tyrol had one of the first [great] parks in the world. It gave riders like Nate Cole, Tom Gilles, Jeff Brushie, and a ton of dudes a playground before snowboarding was really accepted at resorts," Sherman said.

X Wyoming

Population: 515,004

Shred connection: The legendary Jackson Hole was not only home to the first snowboard school in the US, founded by Chris Pappas, but continues to challenge even the burliest pros. With its thousands of acres of terrain and open boundary policy, Jackson is responsible for some of the best in the world, like Travis Rice. And if you are going to ride there, you better be serious about snowboarding. It's a resort where you could easily die—in-bounds. "The riders around here are no-bullshit, big mountain chargers," local legend Rob Kingwill said. "The smallest board in their quiver is usually about a 162, they have a 20-inch stance and wear all black. No fashion show here, just solid snowboarding."

»ABOUT THE WRITER

Brooke Geery has been to 49 of the 50 United States, and plans to visit Hawaii as soon as the bridge is finished. (And no, airport stopovers don't count.)



Hampus Mosessen, Utah Backcountry.
Photo: Stan Evans