



## *This is the West*

**Escape to our Landscape...**

**Steamboat Springs' Cultural Landscape**

**Recreation Culture: Wild about the Outdoors**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Recreation Culture: Outdoor Business**

Steamboat Springs is more than just a place to visit, many of our locals came here to play and ended up staying for good. "Work hard, play hard" is the way of life: ranchers become ski racers and tri-athletes become entrepreneurs.

For three decades Steamboat Springs' economy has thrived due mostly to the Steamboat Ski Area, however, skiing is not the only outdoor business headquartered in town:

#### **Moots Cycles ~ Hand built bikes in Steamboat Springs**

Since 1981 Moots Cycles have been handcrafted in Steamboat Springs by a talented group of dedicated riders who understand through years in the saddle, what a bike should do. They transfer that hard-earned knowledge from rides in and around Steamboat into building the finest bikes on the planet. For more information about Moots Cycles, stop by the factory for a tour! (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm) Moots loves visitors and they're never too busy to chat about bikes, offer suggestions on where to ride, or simply refill your water bottle. [www.moots.com](http://www.moots.com)

#### **SmartWool ~ "The unofficial sock of Steamboat"**

Founded in Steamboat Springs, the first SmartWool sock was introduced in 1994 by Patty and Peter Duke. As local ski instructors, they were tired of the cold wet feet they had to endure when they wore synthetic socks. Using the lush, strong fibers of pristine New Zealand merino sheep, they created a new sock that was soft, strong and shrink-free with natural moisture wicking and insulation properties.

From the success of the first SmartWool sock, a full product line was introduced including activity-specific socks, next-to-skin base layers, gloves and hats. With helpful feedback from SmartWool junkies, employees and local athletes, the line evolved to what it is today: a core group of performance products that provide the superior moisture management of SmartWool fibers. SmartWool is so ubiquitous it has recently been dubbed, "the unofficial sock of Steamboat."

[www.smartwool.com](http://www.smartwool.com)

#### **Profile: Bill Gamber ~ Tri-Athlete Turned Tri-Entrepreneur**

Tri-athletes have a different mindset: they cannot be satisfied with one challenge. When thirteen-time Ironman Tri-athlete Bill Gamber opened his first business, B-Wear Action Products (BAP!) in Steamboat Springs, it just wasn't enough. Bill also started Big Agnes, an award winning outdoor equipment manufacturer and Honey Stinger, maker of honey based energy foods.

All three are located under the same roof in a small red house in downtown Steamboat Springs. BAP! the small-town outdoor wear shop remains local, while he's reached global markets with the other two. Bill says there's no better place for an outdoor oriented business because he can field test on overnight trips or during his lunch hour.

"Operating our business in Steamboat makes sense because of the synergy between the products that we design and where we use it. The mountains here make excellent testing grounds and never leave us looking for inspiration."

It must be true. Since 2003, Big Agnes, Bill's second venture established in 2001 has received numerous awards for its innovative products and design. This year is their best yet receiving Backpacker Magazine's "Editors' Choice Award" for the Emerald Mountain SL3 tent and Outside Magazine's Buyer's Guide "Gear of the Year" award for the Emerald Mountain SL2 tent.

In addition to easy access to field testing, Steamboat Springs also provides the infrastructure: wireless internet, warehouse and shipping facilities as well as a regional airport just 22 miles away with a growing number of flights connecting to cities all over the U.S.

Always a competitor, Bill strives to improve his performance and this is not just about building a better tent. Bill is a local leader in sustainable business practices, taking a lead role in establishing the Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association's sustainable business program. Big Agnes received a "Green Gear of the Year" Award from Outside Magazine for their Battle Mountain -15 sleeping bag which features Bamboo Charcoal Synthetic Insulation, an Eco-friendly, synthetic insulation derived from bamboo.

As Bill's businesses grow, he aims to grow responsibly preserving the environment where he plays.