

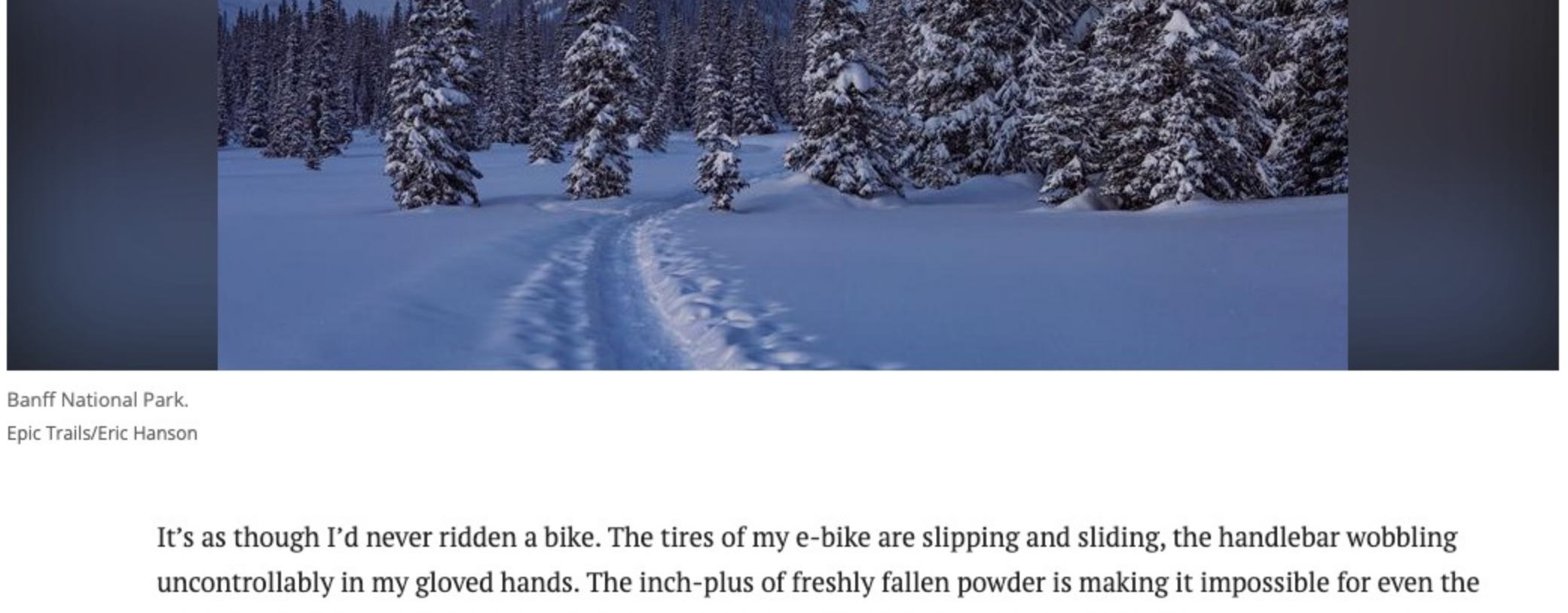
Banff & Lake Louise Tourism Wonders Await in Banff and Lake Louise...

Your Pitney Bowes Summary Story Explore the Wonders of Banff, Canada Plan Your Trip

Fat biking in Banff National Park: A winter adventure in the Canadian Rockies

Banff is a direct flight from Denver to Calgary, followed by a 1.5-hour drive. And shuttles are readily available.

By Daliah Singer Special to The Gazette Feb 23, 2025 Updated 23 hrs ago



Banff National Park. Epic Trails/Eric Hanson

It's as though I'd never ridden a bike. The tires of my e-bike are slipping and sliding, the handlebar wobbling uncontrollably in my gloved hands.

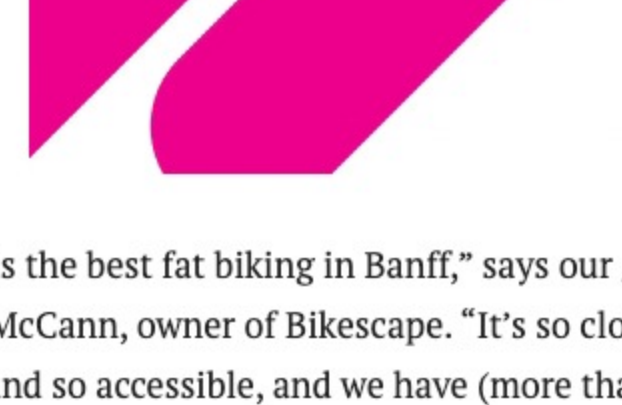


The general rule of thumb in the outdoors is it's easier going down than up. If only that were true at this moment.



Adventurers can book a day trip with Bikescape or venture to Sundance Lodge on their own. Courtesy of Bikescape

In the winter, Healy Creek is limited to fat bikes, snowshoes, cross-country skis and hiking, so there are no revving engines to distract from the wildness.



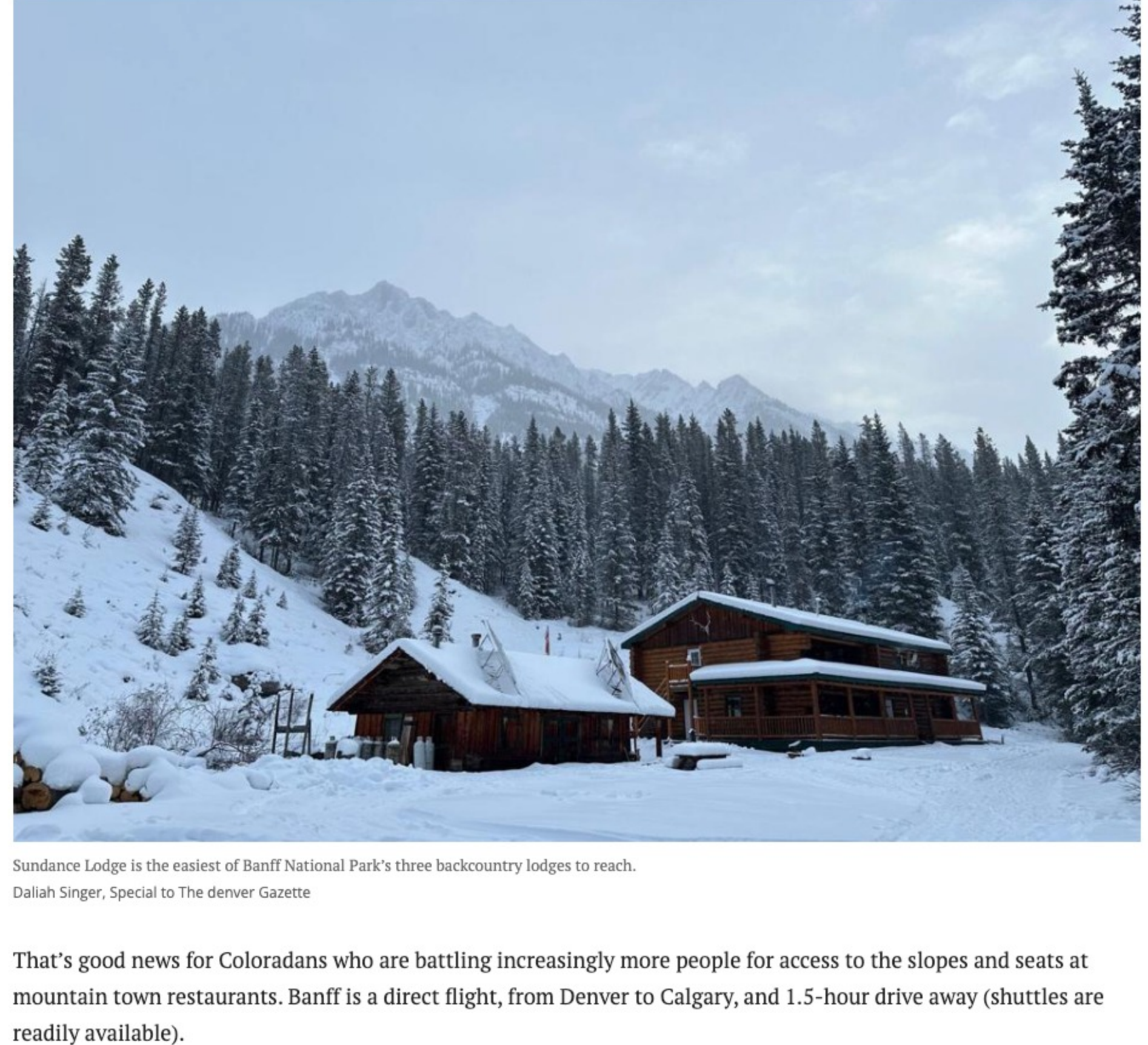
"This is the best fat biking in Banff," says our guide, Clare McCann, owner of Bikescape.

We'd seen that firsthand the day before on our 7.2-mile ride in to Sundance Lodge, the easiest of Banff National Park's three backcountry lodges to reach.



Sundance Lodge is only open from mid-January through mid-March. Daliah Singer, Special to The Gazette

Banff is a surprise in the winter. I'd expected to maneuver around an endless wave of ski pant-clad tourists while walking along the Canadian Rockies-surrounded main drag, but instead, I find myself sniffing hand-blended teas alone in Jolene's Tea House and nodding to only a handful of others during an evening walk along Johnston Canyon.



Sundance Lodge is the easiest of Banff National Park's three backcountry lodges to reach. Daliah Singer, Special to The Denver Gazette

That's good news for Coloradans who are battling increasingly more people for access to the slopes and seats at mountain town restaurants. Banff is a direct flight, from Denver to Calgary, and 1.5-hour drive away (shuttles are readily available).

Sundance Lodge is operated by Banff Trail Riders and, in the winter, is only open from mid-January through mid-March.

"There are a huge number of people who want a backcountry experience who don't want to risk their lives in the winter to do it," said Julie Canning, operating partner of Banff Trail Riders.

Adventurers can either book a day trip with Bikescape or venture to the cabin on their own after securing a room through Banff Trail Riders (starting around \$200 per person per night, with three meals included). Gear rentals are available in town.

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Though the experience is fully in the backcountry — bears, cougars and wolves call the area home, though we didn't see any — the trail is easy to follow, and e-bikes make it a more accessible adventure for generally fit people.

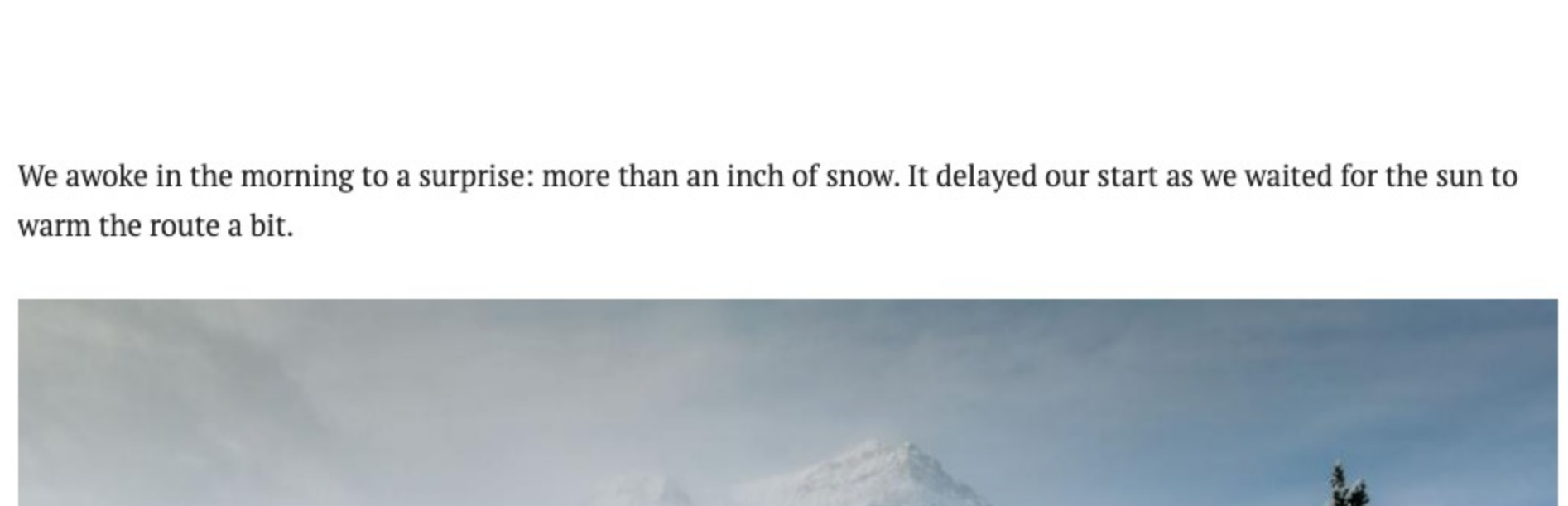
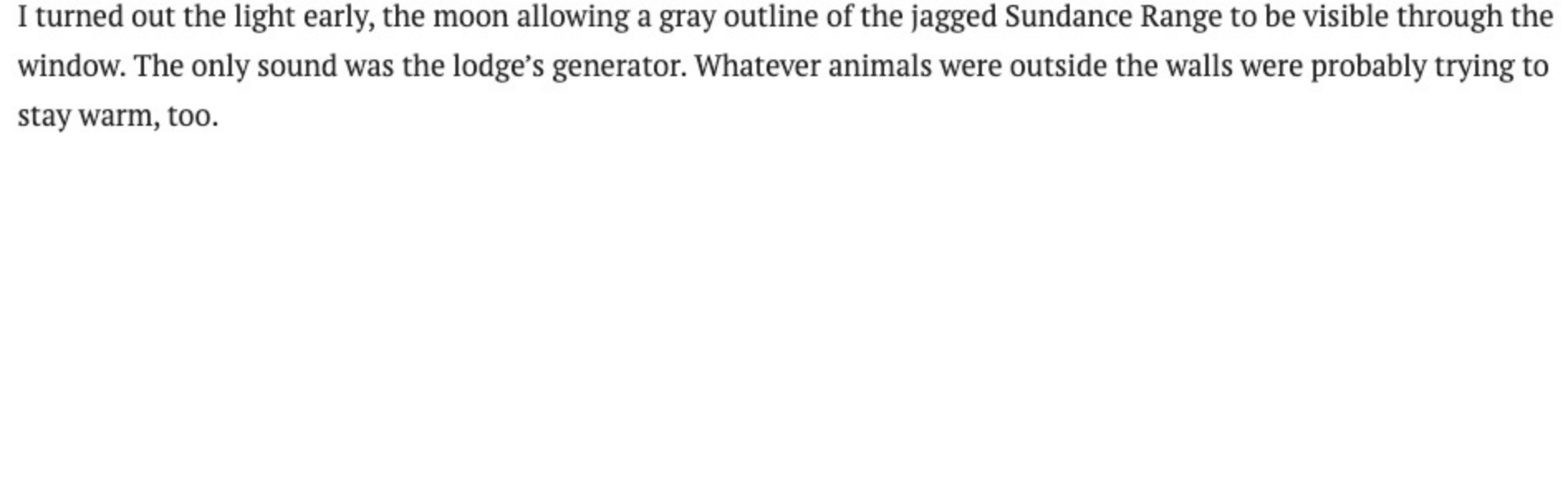
That's not to say it's a painless commute. E-biking multiple miles in freezing temperatures builds up a sweat despite the aid of a motor.

The route was relatively packed down, but the ground was soft, and it took a few minutes to get a handle, literally, on the heavy, battery-powered bike and find the right gears.

We arrived at Sundance in less than two hours, the two-story log cabin appearing like a mirage as we rounded Brewster Creek.

I turned out the light early, the moon allowing a gray outline of the jagged Sundance Range to be visible through the window.

We awoke in the morning to a surprise: more than an inch of snow. It delayed our start as we waited for the sun to warm the route a bit.



Shadow Lake in Banff National Park. Epic Trails/Lukas Warzecha

"You're going to fall," McCann told us over a breakfast spread of eggs, pancakes, hash browns and sausages.

Fresh powder makes fat biking more challenging. Reporter Daliah Singer fell at least five times on her return trip in Banff National Park.



Fresh powder makes fat biking more challenging. Reporter Daliah Singer fell at least five times on her return trip in Banff National Park. Courtesy of Daliah Singer

It was frustrating. I learned to bike as a kid, but I had to walk my e-fat bike across one of the bridges and along a section with a mild drop-off that unsettled my nerves.

By the time we reached the trailhead more than two hours later, I was an icicle. Even with heated gloves, my hands were frigid, and the sweat down my back was chilling me from the inside out.

But it was also the most fun I'd had in the snow in a while. Fat biking in subzero temperatures to a secret lodge in the woods was a new adventure and one well worth the effort — with the right attire, that is.



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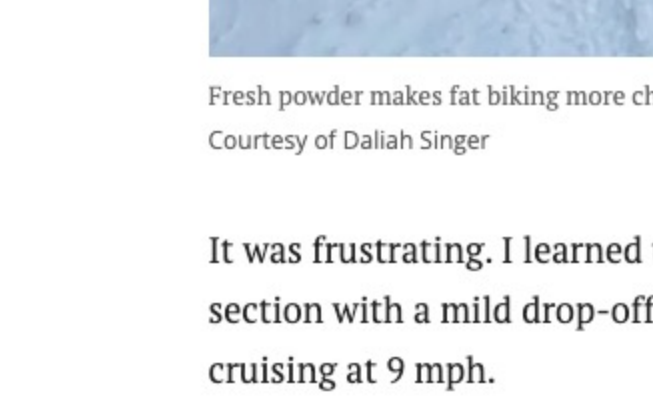
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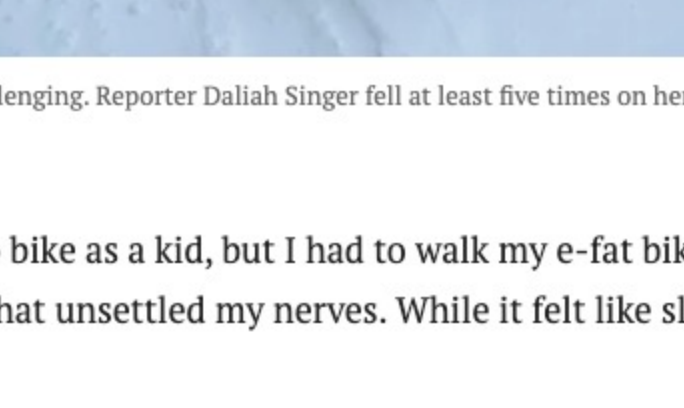
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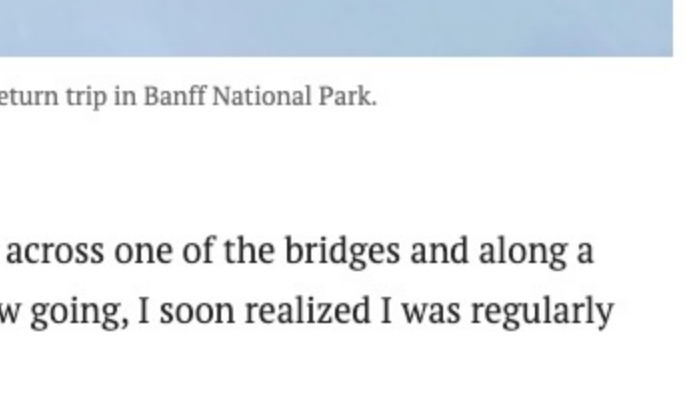
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MARGARET GRAYSON Special to The Gazette Updated 15 hrs ago

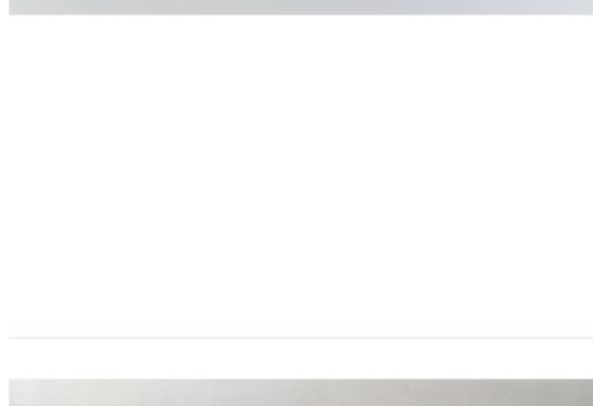
Teal Lehto is the first to describe herself as chronically online. The 27-year-old Durango content creator has carved out a niche on TikTok and Instagram where she's the self-styled Western Water Girl, commenting and educating on water and conservation issues in the American West.



The skiing soldiers who revolutionized the out-of-doors | Vince Bzdek

Vince Bzdek Updated 15 hrs ago

The 10th Mountain Division created the ski industry in Colorado



Year-round gardening: Selecting seeds for success

By Debra Stinton Othitis Colorado Master Gardener Updated Feb 22, 2025

With the holidays behind us, our mailboxes are overflowing with seed catalogs. The multitude of varieties can be overwhelming, but choosing good-quality seeds is important for successful gardening.



Porch Geese: Local artisan busy as people flock to Midwest lawn ornament

By Kelly Hayes kelly.hayes@gazette.com Updated Feb 22, 2025

With some extra time at home back in 2020, Lisa Mannion decided to learn a new skill (like many of us during COVID).

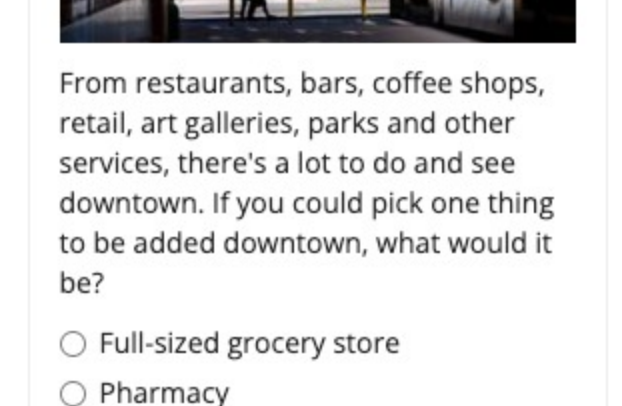


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Online Poll

What would you most like to see added in downtown Colorado Springs?



From restaurants, bars, coffee shops, retail, art galleries, parks and other services, there's a lot to do and see downtown. If you could pick one thing to be added downtown, what would it be?

- Full-sized grocery store
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