GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Fri Oct 30, 2020

Good Morning. This is Dave Zinn with pre-season avalanche, weather and event information for the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center on Friday, October 30th at 7:45 a.m. This information is sponsored by **Spark R&D**.

*Note: Bridger Bowl Ski Area is closed and there is no avalanche control or ski patrol services. Backcountry conditions exist. Workers are setting up for the season and making snow. Please stay clear of work areas, snow guns, chair lifts, and other equipment.

Mountain Weather

Wind and warmer temperatures were the stories of the week with the mountain ranges barely freezing for the last several days. Winds calmed in the previous 24 hours, but this week they blew from the southwest to the northwest with gusts reaching 45 to 50 MPH. There was no new snow.

Sunny and dry conditions will persist for the weekend. The most notable weather will be moderate to strong winds blowing 20-35 MPH from the west Friday afternoon into Saturday morning. Temperatures will range from the 20s to near 50 F for the weekend with no new snow in the near-term forecast.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

All Regions

Last weekend provided us an excellent opportunity to practice for winter. Collectively, we raced around, trying to find our warm clothes and avalanche gear. When people got into the mountains, they saw signs of instability and avalanches. Most recently, a skier had a scare when they triggered a wind-loaded slope at Bridger Bowl on Monday (**avalanche details**). Check out our **avalanche activity list** for more information about last weekend's slides. Since the weekend, winds transported the new snow, leaving some slopes bare and drifting others. This weekend wind-drifted slopes, where the snowpack is the deepest, are where avalanches will be the most likely. Assess slope stability before entering any avalanche terrain and build in an extra margin for error to account for early season uncertainty. With 1-3' of snow on the ground in the mountains, avalanche season is here. These slides will not discriminate between hunters, climbers, skiers, and riders.

I am considering the warm temperatures this week as an opportunity to reset, assess the condition of my safety equipment, and run through beacon drills and rescue scenarios. Check out Ian's **video** from last winter for some thoughts about checking your gear.

As winter sets in, remember the fundamentals:

1. ***Get the Gear*** and know how to use it before entering the backcountry – a beacon, shovel, and probe are our minimum safety equipment.
2. ***Get the Training*** by checking out our **education calendar** for free and low-cost programs along with certification classes from other local providers.
3. ***Get the Forecast*** before you head out each day – if you have gotten this far, you are probably already on that program!
4. ***Get the Picture*** by looking for signs of instability and digging snowpits.

5. ***Get out of Harm's Way*** by carefully managing your terrain choices and only exposing one person at a time to avalanche terrain.

We'll be updating the **weather log**, **photos page** and **avalanche activity list** daily and issuing early season updates throughout the fall as conditions merit. If you have avalanche, snowpack or weather observations to share, please submit them via our **website**, email (**mtavalanche@gmail.com**), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

See our **education calendar** for an up to date list of all local classes. Here are a few select upcoming events and opportunities to check out:

On Thursday, November 5 at 6 p.m. Uphill Pursuits is hosting a GNFAC Forecaster Chat with Doug Chabot who will discuss early season snowpack and avalanche accidents. Anyone can attend **via this link**.

The **6th Annual MSU Snow and Avalanche Workshop** will be an hour of live online talks each Monday evening in November.

Our popular **Avalanche Fundamentals with Field Course** will have online lectures the evening of December 2 and 3 with a choice of field days over the following two weekends. There are separate field sessions tailored for both skiers and splitboarders (Bridger Bowl) and snowmobilers (Buck Ridge).

Last year, the "Avalanche Hour" podcast interviewed **Alex** and **Doug** individually. Besides acting as a helpful refresher for the coming season, there's good information about our work at the GNFAC. Check out the Avalanche Hour's long list of other great interviews as well.

Support the Friends of the GNFAC

This year, The Friends of the Avalanche Center are unable to host an in-person Powder Blast due to COVID. In place of their biggest fund-raiser, the Friends of GNFAC launched an online **GoFundMe campaign**. Please consider a donation, and we look forward to having an in-person event again in the future.