GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Mon Mar 8, 2021

Good Morning. This is Alex Marienthal with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Monday, March 8th at 7:15 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by **Montana Chevy Dealers** and **Yellowstone Ski Tours**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

This morning the mountains have no new snow, temperatures are high teens to mid-20s F and wind is southerly at 5-15 mph with gusts to 20 mph. Today will be mostly cloudy with temperatures reaching high 30s to low 40s F and east to southeast wind at 10-25 mph. Light snow and some rain are possible this afternoon and tonight with 1-3" of snow possible by morning.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Bridger Range Gallatin Range Madison Range Lionhead Range Island Park

The sugary, weak layer of facets near the bottom of the snowpack is still there, but the past week without snow and wind-loading has allowed the snowpack to adjust and makes it difficult to collapse this deeply buried layer. The last avalanches we know of that broke on this layer were eight days ago, triggered by skiers and riders in the Madison Range (**avalanche/weather log**). There is a small chance you can trigger a large to very large avalanche if you get unlucky and find the wrong spot on a slope. The odds have greatly improved, but potentially deadly consequences remain.

If you venture into steep terrain, diligently assess the snowpack, choose terrain thoughtfully and expose only one person at a time to steep slopes. Choose slopes that minimizes consequences of a potential slide. Look for less complex terrain where the snowpack has less variability due to exposure to wind or other elements. Yesterday Dave and I skied near Maid of the Mist in Hyalite and looked at an old deep slab avalanche (**video, photo**). We saw two other groups skiing in steep terrain, and we were glad to see them digging multiple snowpits to inform their decision. When all other factors give the green light to enter steep terrain, digging and testing is our final chance to find something we may have missed.

Today you are unlikely to trigger a deep slab avalanche on weak, sugary snow near the ground and avalanche danger is LOW.

WET AVALANCHES

Today has an exciting range of possible weather which requires us to keep wet snow in mind before a couple days of cold and snow. Throughout the advisory area above freezing temperatures will make the snow surface wet, but increasing clouds should minimize wet snow avalanches. If it is sunny this afternoon be cautious of small wet loose slides on slopes that receive direct sun. If it rains, avoid travel on and underneath steep slopes.

Cooke City

In the mountains near Cooke City, there has been no snow the last nine days, the snowpack lacks widespread buried weak layers and avalanches are unlikely. A couple natural avalanches that broke last week west of Cooke City, outside our advisory area, show the type of slopes where unstable weak layers may exist (**photo and details**, **photo**). Before riding steep slopes, assess the snowpack for buried weak layers and consider the consequences of a slide. Be cautious of small wet loose avalanches later in the day on slopes that receive direct sun. The avalanche danger is LOW in the mountains near Cooke City.

If you get out, please send us your observations no matter how brief. You can submit them via our **website**, email (**mtavalanche@gmail.com**), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

The Beacon Park at Beall Park in Bozeman is running!

The Friends of the Avalanche Center in partnership with the City of Bozeman put in a **Beacon Park at Beall Park**. It is located on the north side of the Beall building between N. Bozeman Ave. and the ice rink. Stop by with your avalanche transceiver and do a few practice rescue drills. Your partner will thank you.

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

See our **education calendar** for an up-to-date list of all local classes.