GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Mon Oct 19, 2020

This is Ian Hoyer with pre-season avalanche, weather and event information for the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center on Monday, October 19th. This information is sponsored by **The Friends of the Avalanche Center.**

Mountain Weather

The mountains are starting to turn white. 8 to 17" of wet, heavy snow fell this weekend at lower elevations in the mountains around Bozeman and Cooke City, totaling 1.7" to 2.8" of Snow Water Equivalent. At higher elevations, 1-2 feet of new snow likely fell. Less than 6" fell around Big Sky and West Yellowstone. Winds have been westerly at 15-25 mph with gusts up to 50 mph.

Light snow flurries will continue today and tomorrow without much accumulation (rain may fall at lower elevations). More substantial snowfall is expected starting Wednesday and continuing through the weekend.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

All Regions

Avalanche season is here. While most slopes still have rocks and grass poking through a shallow coat of fresh snow, especially at lower elevations, there are some higher elevation slopes with dense, wind drifted snow that hold the potential to avalanche. Right now the hazard is still localized. Slopes where new snow is drifted deeper may provide enough coverage to eke out a few turns, but are also the most likely place to trigger an avalanche.

Avalanches don't discriminate - they don't care if you're trying to get a head start on the ski season, looking for early season ice to climb, or out scouting for game before the start of rifle season. Either choose to avoid steep, snow covered slopes entirely or prepare for avalanches like you would in the middle of winter.

Bring a partner, carry rescue gear (beacon, shovel and probe) and travel one at a time in avalanche terrain. Cracking and collapsing of the snow is bulls-eye information that the snow is unstable. Avalanches will likely be small, but the many exposed rocks and hazards make small slides season ending at best and deadly at worst.

We are preparing for winter, scheduling avalanche classes, and setting up weather stations. 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:

Doug will do an online Forecaster Chat about early season snowpack and avalanche accidents on Thursday, November 5 at 6 p.m. It is hosted by Uphill Pursuits and details will be posted soon.

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.