GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sat Apr 3, 2021

Good Morning. This is Ian Hoyer with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Saturday, April 3rd at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by **Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association** and **Uphill Pursuits**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

Temperatures this morning are near or above freezing (a few degrees warmer than yesterday morning). Winds are westerly at 10-15 mph with gusts of 25-35 mph. High temperatures today will be in the 40s and 50s F, similar to yesterday's. Moderate westerly winds will continue with mostly sunny skies. Tomorrow will also be warm and sunny before the next storm system hits early in the week.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

All Regions

Last night was the second night without a solid freeze. Thin crusts this morning will break down quickly with another day of warm temperatures and intense sun. The snowpack hasn't fallen apart from the warmth yet, but we've been close. Breezes and bits of cloud cover have helped keep the melting from getting out of control. Winds will be slightly lighter today and I expect few if any clouds. I don't anticipate widespread large wet avalanches today, but another warm night/day is making me a bit nervous. Pay close attention to the snow under your feet and have a safe bailout option planned in case melting is more advanced than anticipated.

Expect to trigger small wet loose avalanches if you're on steep sunny slopes this afternoon. These small slides will primarily be an issue in high consequence terrain where they could push you into a tree or rocks or off a cliff. The deeper surface snow is wet and sloppy, the larger and more problematic these loose slides will be.

There may be some slopes where water is beginning to pool in the lower snowpack and the possibility is developing for wet slab avalanches (**wet slab video**). Wet slabs are much harder to predict and are much more dangerous than loose avalanches. Even the slight possibility of triggering one of these slabs provides extra incentive to avoid the sunniest and warmest slopes with the most meltwater production in the late afternoon (**wet snow timing video**).

Dry slab avalanches are unlikely. Still, be mindful as you could trigger an isolated wind slab or slide on deeper weak layers. Remain alert, even on shady slopes.

Large avalanches are possible and the avalanche danger is rated MODERATE today.

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).

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:

THIS MONDAY: April 5, 6:30 p.m., Forecaster Chat with Alex Marienthal, hosted by Uphill Pursuits, “Spring Snowpack and Forecasting Tools”. **Link to Join**.