GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Fri Nov 3, 2023

This is Ian Hoyer with pre-season avalanche, weather and event information for the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center on Friday, November 2nd. This information is sponsored by **Basecamp Gallatin and Yamaha** and the **Yellowstone Club Community Foundation.**

Mountain Weather

Since yesterday morning, many higher elevation areas received 3-6" of new snow (0.2-0.7" of snow water equivalent) while the Big Sky area got only 1" of snow and rain fell at lower elevations (**Weather and Avalanche Log**). Winds have been strong out of the west. This morning temperatures are hovering around freezing. High temperatures in the mountains will generally be in the 30s F with lows in the 20s F over the next few days. A few inches of snow is expected at higher elevations Saturday with valley rain and another round of precipitation expected early next week.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Bridger Range   Gallatin Range   Madison Range   Lionhead Range   Cooke City

While it's raining in the valleys again and many slopes are still bare dirt, avalanche season has begun. Some high elevation slopes are starting to build a layered snowpack (**Hyalite observation**, **photo**).A couple of avalanches have already been reported this year (**Mt. Blackmore**, **Pine Creek**). If you are planning to travel in the mountains this weekend, you need to consider the potential for avalanches before crossing any steep, snow-covered slopes. If there is enough snow that rocks and bushes are buried, avalanches are a concern. Take these early season conditions seriously. Early season avalanches in southwest Montana have seriously injured and buried skiers (**2012 Incident Report**), caught and injured hunters (**2015 Incident Report**), and resulted in tragic fatalities (**2017 Incident Report**).

Your safe travel options are either to completely avoid steep snow-covered slopes (which is a very viable option in most places right now, depending on your goals for the day) or to follow avalanche safety protocols. This means having a partner, traveling one at a time in terrain steeper than 30 degrees, and carrying rescue gear that you've practiced using (avalanche beacon, shovel, and probe). These guidelines apply regardless of the activity that you're pursuing and apply even to crossing steep wind drifts while the surrounding terrain is bare ground. Be especially cautious of slopes that have fresh drifts of snow and slopes that had snow cover prior to this latest round of snowfall. Be alert for changing conditions as more snow falls over the coming days, especially if it ends up being more than a few inches.

Your observations are more important than ever during the early season as we get to know this season's developing snowpack. If you get out, please share avalanche, snowpack or weather observations via our **website**, email (**mtavalanche@gmail.com**), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

We'll be updating the **Weather and Avalanche Log** daily and issuing pre-season bulletins as needed throughout the fall as conditions warrant.

◆ Island Park

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Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Our education calendar is full of awareness lectures and field courses. Check it out: **Events and Education Calendar.**

Wednesday, November 8, 5 p.m. **MSU Snow and Avalanche Workshop** in the SUB at MSU and live streamed online.

We are offering an *Avalanche Fundamentals with Field Session* course targeted towards non-motorized users in **December** and **January**, and one geared towards **motorized users** in January. Sign up early before they fill up.