

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Sun Nov 28, 2010

Good Morning. This is Eric Knoff with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Sunday, November 28, at 7:30 a.m. The **Cliff Gullett Memorial Fund**, in cooperation with the **Friends of the Avalanche Center**, sponsor today's advisory. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas. Please remember uphill traffic is not allowed at any of the ski areas today.

Mountain Weather

A weak storm system has moved over southwest Montana bringing light precipitation to much of our forecast area. The mountains around West Yellowstone picked up 3 inches overnight while the rest of our advisory area picked up a trace to one inch. Currently, winds are light out of the W-SW at 5-15 mph and temperatures are in the high teens to low twenties F. Today, scattered snow showers will remain over southwest Montana delivering an additional 1-2 inches of snow. Winds will stay light out of the W-SW and daytime temperatures will climb into the low thirties F. A ridge of high pressure will build tonight into tomorrow bringing southwest Montana cooler and drier conditions.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

The Bridger, Gallatin and Madison Ranges, the Lionhead area near West Yellowstone, the mountains around Cooke City and the Washburn Range:

Mild and dry conditions over the past few days have continued to help the snowpack find equilibrium. Although 1-3 inches of snow fell throughout our advisory area last night, I do not expect this small load to upset the balance significantly. A fairly stable snowpack now exists in most areas with a few exceptions. Steep wind loaded terrain along ridgelines and upper elevation starting zones will still produce avalanches. Areas that have been loaded by wind deposited snow will likely look like rounded pillows and should be easy to recognize and avoid. Other areas to pay attention to are shallow spots in the snowpack, mainly around rock outcroppings and steep breakovers. Deeper layers in the snowpack should not be ignored and should be tested before skiing steep terrain.

Despite the great start to the season, now is now time to let your guard down. The saying "Seventy percent of all slopes are stable seventy percent of the time" is especially relevant to our current situation. Unfortunately accidents do happen, and we were reminded of this yesterday when we received the news of a snowmobiler who was caught and killed in an avalanche in the Uinta Mountains east of Salt Lake City. The tragic part about this accident was the victim and his partner left their rescue gear in the car because they did not plan on riding in avalanche terrain. You can read more by clicking this link ([accident](#)). This is a poignant reminder that following smart protocol, no matter what the avalanche danger, is essential to staying safe in the backcountry.

Today, human triggered avalanches are possible, mainly in wind loaded terrain, and the avalanche danger is rated **MODERATE**.

I will issue the next advisory tomorrow morning at 7:30 a.m. If you have any snowpack or avalanche observations, drop us a line at mtavalanche@gmail.com or call us at 587-6984.

Upcoming Avalanche Education

Basic Avalanche Awareness – Wed & Thurs, December 1 & 2, 7:00pm – 9:30pm at SUB Ballroom B&C; 12/4-Field day at Bridger Bowl ([more information](#)) ([Prepay \\$25 fee](#))

Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers – Wed & Thur, December 1 & 2, 7pm – 9:30pm at Team Bozeman, 2595 Simmental Way and a field session either Sunday, Dec 5th or 12th depending on snow ([more information](#))