GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Fri Mar 5, 2021

Good Morning. This is Ian Hoyer with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Friday, March 5th at 7:15 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by **Beartooth Powder Guides** and **Gallatin County Search and Rescue**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

There is no new snow to report. This morning, skies are clear and temperatures are in the mid-20s F with winds averaging 5-15 mph and gusts of 20 mph out of the south and west. Another mild spring day is in store with mountain temperatures rising into the 40s, light winds, and sunny skies.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Bridger Range Gallatin Range Madison Range Lionhead Range Island Park

It will certainly feel like spring today, with sunny skies and temperatures rising a couple degrees higher than yesterday, but for the lower snowpack it is still solidly winter. The weak layers at the ground remain our primary concern. This week's dry spell has given these layers a break from loading and the chance of triggering a slide is slowly decreasing. The problem is that while the likelihood is going down, the consequences of triggering a slide stay high and avalanches on this sort of weak layer (depth hoar) are sometimes triggered days after they've last been loaded (**Low Probability, High Consequences video**). If an avalanche breaks, it will likely break deeply, taking out the whole season's snowpack in a large and dangerous slide. The human triggered slides in Red Canyon and Buck Ridge last weekend provide good examples of this concern (**Red Canyon video**, **Buck Ridge video**). Stay diligent and remain conservative in your terrain choices.

The snow surface is likely to get a little bit wet this afternoon, especially on sunny slopes at lower elevations. Small, loose wet avalanches could release naturally or be triggered by a skier or rider. Watch for crusts breaking down and places where the snow surface is getting wet for the first time. These slides are unlikely to be large but are still worth your consideration as the day heats up.

From Bozeman to Big Sky and south to West Yellowstone, the avalanche danger is MODERATE.

Cooke City

The snowpack around Cooke City is mostly stable because it lacks widespread weak layers. However, yesterday, a recent avalanche that broke 3-4 ft deep on weak layers at the ground was seen just west of Cooke City, outside of our advisory area, in the generally shallower snowpack of Yellowstone National Park (**details**). This is a good reminder to remain diligent in case you find one of those isolated slopes that harbors weak snow at the ground. Also keep an eye out for pockets of unstable wind drifts or particularly warm and sunny slopes where you could trigger a small wet loose slide. Large avalanches are unlikely and 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. Here are a few select upcoming events and opportunities to check out:

Every Saturday in Cooke City, FREE snowpack update and rescue practice at the Round Lake Warming Hut between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. **Poster with More Info**.