GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sun Apr 3, 2022

Good morning. This is Alex Marienthal with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Sunday, April 3rd at 7:00 a.m. This information is sponsored by **Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association**, **Cooke City Motorsports** and **Beartooth Powder Guides**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

This morning the mountains have 4” of new snow in the Bridger Range, 2-3” near Big Sky and Hyalite, 1” near Cooke City and zero near West Yellowstone. Temperatures are low teens to mid-20s F and wind has been west-northwest at 15-25 mph with gusts reaching 40-60 mph overnight. Today will be mostly sunny with westerly wind at 10-25 mph and temperatures reaching mid-30s to low 40s F. The next chance for snow is tomorrow afternoon.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Bridger Range

In the Bridger Range, 4” of new snow will easily slide with above freezing temperatures and clear skies this afternoon. On steep slopes that have a firm crust under the new snow and receive direct sunshine later today, avalanches of the new snow could run far and become large enough to bury or injure a person. Monitor how wet or moist the snow surface is as temperatures warm, and get off steep slopes before the new snow becomes wet. Additionally, watch for signs of unstable fresh drifts, such as cracking across the snow around your feet or skis, rounded pillow-like snow features, or wind blowing snow off ridgelines. Fresh drifts will also be more reactive if they sit on a firm crust.

This morning large avalanches are unlikely and danger is LOW. Later today large wet loose avalanches will become possible and danger will rise to MODERATE.

Gallatin Range Madison Range Lionhead Range Cooke City Island Park

Through the rest of the forecast area a person can trigger a small slab of recently wind-drifted snow or a small loose snow avalanche. Similar avalanches were triggered by skiers in Beehive Basin yesterday (**details**), and on Black Mtn. on Friday (**details**). Avalanches will involve 1-3” of new snow and probably be too small to bury a person, but even the smallest avalanche can knock you off your feet. Be cautious of steep slopes that have high consequences of being caught in a small slide, like above cliffs, rocks or trees.

It is unlikely to trigger a larger avalanche on deeper weak layers, but not impossible. Dave found buried weak snow in Hyalite a couple days ago (**Flanders video**), and yesterday skiers north of Bridger Bowl found similar unstable snowpack test scores (**photo**). Before riding steep slopes, dig to double check that a poor or unstable snowpack structure does not exist. Stack the odds in your favor by only exposing one person at a time to avalanche terrain and always carrying proper rescue gear. Today, large avalanches are unlikely and the

avalanche danger is LOW.

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).