

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Fri Apr 3, 2020

Good Morning. This is Ian Hoyer with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Friday, April 3rd at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by [Gallatin County Search and Rescue](#) and [Beartooth Powder Guides](#).

Bridger Bowl is closed and advises against uphill travel which could place first responders at risk. Backcountry conditions exist. There is no avalanche control or ski patrol rescue. Please do not loiter or congregate in the parking lots.

Mountain Weather

After a couple cold wintery days, spring is on its way back today. We'll have mostly sunny skies and mountains temperatures a bit warmer than yesterday, rising to around 30 F. This morning, there is no new snow and temperatures are in the single digits and low teens F. Winds are 5-20 mph out of the southwest and west. Light to moderate southwest winds will continue today. Snow showers are possible this afternoon and tonight, but expect less than an inch of new snow accumulation.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



All Regions

With warmer temperatures, sunny skies, more than a foot of new snow this week and buried weak layers, we have a number of different avalanche concerns today ([video](#)).

All our concerns today are within the upper snowpack. Three different groups of skiers triggered avalanches yesterday within the new snow in the Bridger Range ([details](#)) and a small natural was seen near Cooke City ([photo](#)). Even more slides were reported the day before (see full list [here](#)). While instabilities within the new snow will be healing, you could still trigger a similar slide today, particularly on wind-loaded slopes. Be wary of wind-loaded pockets and watch for cracks shooting out from your skis as a sign the new snow remains unstable.

You could also trigger a slide on weak layers buried 2-3 feet deep. Depending on the slope you'll find surface hoar, near surface facets, or an ice crust with poor bonding. It doesn't really matter what the weak layer consists of, it won't stabilize as quickly as the new snow. With a patchy distribution, your best mitigation strategy is to dig down to look for and test these layers before getting into avalanche terrain.

With sunshine and warmer temperatures, wet avalanches are also a concern today, especially as the day heats up on sunny slopes. As the snow surface becomes wet and sticky, it's time to move out of steep terrain. Roller balls and pinwheels are telltale signs that the snow is on its way to becoming wet and unstable.

With both wet and dry avalanches possible, the avalanche danger is rated [MODERATE](#).

We are ending daily avalanche forecasts this Sunday, April 5th and will post general weather and avalanche bulletins every Monday and Friday through April. Continue to send us your observations. You can fill out an observation form, email us (mtavalanche@gmail.com), leave a VM at 406-587-6984, or Instagram ([#gnfacobs](#)).

Closures and Stay-at-home Order

A [Stay at Home order](#) is in effect for the State of Montana due to COVID-19. This order specifically discourages “outdoor recreation activities that pose enhanced risks of injury or could otherwise stress the ability of local first responders to address the COVID-19 emergency (e.g., backcountry skiing in a manner inconsistent with avalanche recommendations or in closed terrain)”.

Park County is requesting anyone who is not a permanent resident or provider of essential service to avoid travel to Cooke City/ Silvergate. This includes both single day and overnight visitors.

Hyalite Canyon is closed to vehicle traffic and will reopen on May 15th. This is the regular spring use closure.

Upcoming Events

[Give Big Gallatin Valley](#) is April 30th - May 1st this year. The Friends of the Avalanche Center are participating again this year and we'd really appreciate your support!

If you like to plan ahead, you can put the PowderBlast on your calendar for next fall (Friday, October 23rd, 2020). This event is always a good time and is our biggest fundraiser of the year. Hope to see you there!