

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Tue Nov 16, 2010

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Good Morning. This is Doug Chabot with an early season Avalanche Information Bulletin issued on Tuesday, November 16 at 7:30 a.m. This bulletin is sponsored by **Gallatin County Search and Rescue** in partnership with the **Friends of the Avalanche Center**. We will update this information tomorrow morning. Please remember that uphill traffic is not allowed at Big Sky or Moonlight Basin Ski Areas. Bridger Bowl is not open and has backcountry snow conditions.

Mountain Weather

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Rain in town and snow in the mountains means less shoveling, which is something I can get used to. Above 6,000 feet the weather stations show 6-7 inches of heavy 10% snow in the northern Gallatin and Bridger Ranges as well as Cooke City. The mountains from Big Sky to West Yellowstone got about 4 inches. Mountain temperatures have warmed into the mid to upper twenties and there's no doubt the snowfall amounts would be stouter if the air was colder. Winds have picked up out of the west-northwest at 25 mph with gusts in the 40s. Today will be snowy and windy with temperatures falling in the early afternoon. By late tonight temperatures will be in the low teens with light winds and 6-10 inches of new snow.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

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Ten percent density is pretty thick compared to 3% blower powder. But if I had to choose, I'd always go with the oatmeal snow in the early season since it lays a solid, thick foundation for the winter's storms. Dense snow has a hard time changing into weak faceted grains which was our nemesis last season. From Big Sky to the Bridger

Range we're finding a consistent pattern of strong snow near the ground. Further south we have no data yet, but speculate it's similar.

Since Sunday the mountains have gotten 12-16 inches of snow with closer to 2 feet in the upper bowls of Hyalite Canyon. Winds are now blowing strong and more snow is falling throughout the day. Even though I don't expect avalanches to break at the ground, I do expect them to break under this new snow, especially if the slope has been wind-loaded. Avalanche activity is likely during and immediately after a storm of this size.

Hunters need to be especially tuned in to the avalanche potential since they are crossing many paths and exposing themselves to terrain traps, many times solo. Unlike the thin snowpack of a few weeks ago, the higher elevations have enough snow to bury a hunter, skier, boarder or ice climber. No matter your recreation, be alert for signs of instability: recent avalanches and shooting cracks are telltale signs.

Mark Staples will issue another Avalanche Information Bulletin tomorrow morning. If you have any snowpack or avalanche observations, drop us a line at mtavalanche@gmail.com or call us at 587-6984.

Gallatin County Search and Rescue

Gallatin County Search and Rescue is looking for members to join the winter backcountry hasty team. Members need solid avalanche rescue skills, excellent ski skills and medical training. This group trains five times during the winter and makes themselves available for avalanche related accidents and winter SAR operations. There is a meeting this Sunday, November 21, at 6:30 p.m. Call Scott Gill, hasty team Grand Poo Bah at 585-9006 for more information.

Upcoming Avalanche Education

1 Hour Avalanche Awareness Class (Free) - Wed, November 17, 7:30pm - 8:30pm - Grizzly Outfitters, Big Sky, MT ([more information](#))

1 Hour Avalanche Awareness Class (Free) - Thu, November 18, 6:30pm - 7:30pm - Basecamp, Billings, MT ([more information](#))

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 ([more information](#))