

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sat Mar 28, 2015

Good morning. This is Eric Knoff with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Saturday, March 28, at 7:30 a.m. [Edward Jones](#) and [Outlaw Partners](#) sponsor today's advisory. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

This morning temperatures range from the mid-30s to low 40s F under mostly clear skies. Winds are blowing 15-30 mph out of the W-SW. Today, a weak weather disturbance will push into the region producing gusty winds and mostly cloudy skies. There is a slight chance for a mountain rain shower this afternoon. Temperatures will warm into the mid to upper 40s F today, but will drop as the storm system moves over the area. Winds will increase out of the W-SW throughout the day with gusts upwards of 40 mph possible with the frontal passage.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

[Bridger Range](#) [Madison Range](#) [Gallatin Range](#)

[Lionhead area near West Yellowstone](#) [Cooke City](#)

Snow conditions in the backcountry will be far from ideal today. During the morning hours, a thin and breakable ice crust may exist at on mid and upper elevation slopes. This would eliminate the potential for wet snow avalanches during the early part of the day. If a surface crust does not exist (due to above freezing temperatures overnight) wet snow avalanches will be a greater concern this morning.

Either way - loose, wet avalanches will be the primary problem today. Fortunately cooler temperatures, increasing clouds and stronger winds should help limit this problem. There are a few higher probability areas to look out for. Areas around cliff bands or steep rocky terrain where the snowpack is shallow and isothermal will be likely areas to trigger loose, wet avalanches.

A secondary problem will be dry slab avalanches failing on a thin layer of facets. This problem is confined to upper elevation, north facing slopes that still hold dry snow. Yesterday, my partner and I skied around Mt. Blackmore in the northern Gallatin Range and abandoned our first objective due to unstable results in stability tests. This matched closely to what Karl and his partners found near Palace Butte on Friday ([video](#)). While this problem does not seem to be widespread, it's worth looking into before dropping into upper elevation, north facing slopes.

Today, human triggered avalanches are possible 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.