

## **GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sat Mar 28, 2020**

Good Morning. This is Ian Hoyer with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by [Knoff Group Real Estate](#) and [World Boards](#).

Bridger Bowl is closed and strongly advises against uphill travel which could place first responders at greater risk. Backcountry conditions exist. Ski Patrol is NOT performing daily avalanche or rescue work. Please do not loiter or congregate in the parking lots.

A [Stay at Home order](#) has been issued for the State of Montana due to COVID-19.

### Mountain Weather

An inch of new snow fell overnight near Big Sky while most areas stayed dry. Winds are out of the west at 10-15 mph with gusts of 30 mph. Temperatures are in the teens and 20s F. Today will be partly cloudy with snow showers possible. Winds will be 10-20 mph out of the southwest and west. Temperatures will rise to around 30 F. An inch or two of new snow will accumulate by tomorrow morning.

### Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



#### All Regions

Avalanches can break today on weak layers buried 1-2 ft deep underneath this week's snow. These weak layers have been found across southwest Montana and we've seen quite few avalanches breaking on them ([Weather and Avalanche Log](#)). On Thursday, skiers in Hyalite triggered a slab that broke 2 ft deep on a north facing slope in the Twin Falls basin ([photo](#)).

Doug and Dave took down the Taylor Fork and Lionhead weather stations yesterday. In both areas they got unstable snowpack test results on the weak layers in the upper snowpack ([video](#)). In the Taylor Fork the weak layer was sitting above a crust, while there was no crust at Lionhead. In some area the weak layer is near surface facets and in others it is surface hoar. The grain type of the weak layer doesn't really matter. The important thing is that if the weak layers are there, they'll be just beneath the new snow. Use an Extended Column Test to look for and test the weak layer before getting onto a steep slope. Yesterday, multiple groups got unstable test result across the area and backed off steeper lines. Follow their example. The more deeply these weak layers are buried, the more problematic they will be, which means that wind-loaded slopes remain more worrisome than other slopes ([photo](#)).

Clouds and temperatures in the 20s F should keep the wet snow at bay today.

The [stay at home order](#) that goes into affect today across Montana 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)". Get out and enjoy the fresh air, but please dial back your objectives, slow down, and work to minimize the risk of injury or need for rescue.

Throughout our advisory area, the avalanche danger is rated [MODERATE](#).

We plan to end daily avalanche forecasts on Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> and continue with general bulletins every Monday and Friday through April. We have taken down most weather stations and will no longer receive observations

from guides and ski patrol. We need help gathering field data. Please send us your observations no matter how brief. You can fill out an observation form, email us (mtavalanche@gmail.com), leave a VM at 406-587-6984, or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

## **Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events**

The avalanche education season is winding down, but you can still find a few courses offered by other providers on our website on the [Events and Education Calendar](#).