

## **GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Wed Apr 6, 2016**

Good morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Wednesday, April 6, at 6:45 AM. Today's advisory is sponsored by [\*\*Yellowstone Arctic Yamaha and Yamaha Motor Corp.\*\*](#) This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

### Mountain Weather

Yesterday morning a snow squall dropped 2-4" in the Bridger Range, up Hyalite and at Big Sky. In the mountains, temperatures barely cracked above freezing as west winds blew 20-30 mph with gusts of 45 mph. At 5 a.m. temperatures are in the low 20s under partly cloudy skies. Today will become mostly sunny with mountain temperatures reaching 50F before lightly freezing tonight as ridgetop winds decreasing to 15-25 mph. Today through Friday we are on track to get hit with a massive storm...a solar storm, with temperatures hitting a record breaking 70+F. My pasty white skin doesn't stand a chance and wearing my favorite tank top is probably a bad idea, and not just because of sunburn.

### Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

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

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

Today's avalanche danger will increase with the rising sun. **Wet snow avalanches** are the primary concern over the next few days. New snow that fell Monday night and Tuesday (8" in the Bridger Range and 2-4" elsewhere) will moisten and avalanche as temperatures rise above freezing. The winter snowpack is in transition. In the coming days melting snow will percolate and saturate the snowpack creating a homogenous, unsupportable Slurpee during the sunny daytime hours. Today, I expect widespread wet-loose avalanches. These are also called point-release slides because they start at one point (they look like an inverted V) and entrain wet snow as they slide downhill. They can be large and easily sweep a skier away. Slopes getting the brunt of the sun will be susceptible to sliding. Rolling and growing pinwheels of snow are a sign that wet-loose avalanches are primed to release. Sinking into wet snow past your boot tops is another. Rocky out-croppings, trees and thinner, darker, solar absorbing areas are all prime spots to trigger wet avalanches.

Timing is everything regarding wet avalanches: if it's getting wet, stay clear. Today, the **WET SNOW** avalanche danger will start out as **LOW** and rise to **CONSIDERABLE** by this afternoon.

Shaded, high elevation slopes will hold onto powder for another day or two. Weak layers in the snowpack are not widespread, but a few slopes have facets buried 2-4 feet deep that can avalanche. Look no further than the large slide in the northern Bridger Range over the weekend for evidence ([photo1](#), [photo2](#)). It broke at least 3 feet deep and 1,000 feet wide. Given these lurking instabilities, the **DRY SNOW** avalanche danger is rated **MODERATE** today.

Finally, as if there's not enough to worry about, **cornices on the ridgelines** are susceptible to breaking with the warm temperatures. These truck-sized overhangs of snow will be primed to break and trigger avalanches, both wet and dry. These are dangerous and have a habit of peeling away from the ridge much further back than you may expect, taking you with them.

**Our last advisory of the season is Sunday, April 10.**

Alex will issue the next advisory tomorrow morning by 7:30 a.m. If you have any snowpack or avalanche observations to share, drop us a line at [mtavalanche@gmail.com](mailto:mtavalanche@gmail.com) or leave a message at 587-6984.

## **EVENTS and AVALANCHE EDUCATION**

*A complete calendar of classes can be found [HERE](#).*