GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Mon Sep 30, 2013

Good morning. This is Eric Knoff with an early season avalanche information bulletin issued Monday, September 30 at 10 a.m. Today's information is sponsored by Montana Import Group in partnership with the Friends of the Avalanche Center. This information will be updated as conditions change. Just a reminder - The 15th annual Powder Blast is just around the corner. Now is a great time to buy your tickets.

Mountain Weather

Over the past 24 hours the mountains of southwest Montana picked up roughly .5 inches of precipitation. In most areas this fell in the form of rain, but peaks above 9,000 ft. likely received a few inches of heavy, wet snow. Today, highs will warm into the 40s at 8,000 ft. and skies will remain partly to mostly cloudy. There is a slight chance of showers this morning, but the chance of precipitation will degrease throughout the day. The most pronounced weather factor will be the wind. Gusts up to 40 mph out of the WSW can be expected at upper elevations. The rest of the week looks to be breezy and unsettled.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

The first real snow storm of the season has come and gone. Thankfully, there were no skiing related accidents reported over the weekend. As we move into October, it's important that backcountry recreationalists, including hunters, continue to think about avalanches.

Although there is not a widespread avalanche problem, there is enough snow at upper elevations to make avalanches possible. With a few inches of new snow over the weekend and very strong winds, it's likely that there are wind loaded slopes holding enough snow to produce slides. The most likely areas to encounter unstable snow will be in alpine terrain above 9,000 ft. Areas to be wary of include slopes on the leeward side of ridgelines as well as cross loaded gullies.

Whether you're looking for the first turns of the season or chasing a big bull elk into high alpine terrain, never let your avalanche guard down. Just remember, if there's enough snow to ride, there's enough snow to slide.

Now is the time to start building good backcountry habits. Make sure your transceiver, shovel and probe are all functioning properly and always use good travel procedures when hiking in avalanche terrain. When you head into the backcountry, always tell someone where you are going and what time you plan on being home.

EVENTS/EDUCATION

Thursday, October 3rd, Ennis

Avalanche Awareness talk at the Ennis Fire Hall, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, November 13, HELENA

Avalanche Awareness talk at the Basecapmp, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 19, BOZEMAN

Avalanche Awarenss talk at Big Timber High School, 7-8 p.m.

Wednesday, November 20, BIG SKY

Avalanche Awareness talk at Grizzly Outfitters, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, November 20, Billings

Avalanche Awarenss talk at the Basecamp, 6 - 7:30 p.m.

Monday, December 2, BOZEMAN

Avalanche Awareness talk at Northern Lights Trading Company, 7 p.m.