

AVALANCHE FORECAST

U.S. FOREST SERVICE

FORECASTER: Olson/Morgan

IDAHO PANHANDLE AVALANCHE CENTER

EFFECTIVE DATE: 02/11/2011

DATE ISSUED: 02/11/2011

OUTLOOK: 02/12-13/2011

TIME ISSUED: 0730

WEATHER SUMMARY

TODAY: In the mountains, expect to see 10 percent chance of snow with temperatures up to 28 F and a southwest wind 8-11 mph. **TONIGHT:** 60 percent chance of snow. Temperatures dropping to 24 F and winds 14-17mph. **Saturday:** there will be 100 percent chance of snow with up to 4 inches and winds in the 20mph out of the west with gusts up to 45, and 50 percent chance of snow on Sunday with west wind in the teens with gusts up to 24.

DANGER RATING: Eric and I made a big traverse from Schweitzer to the Caribou Creek country yesterday. We started out in heavy fog which made route selection difficult. Luckily the fog broke out, we got the good visibility, the pit data showed moderate avalanche hazard and we had a great trip. Mike and Paul found similar conditions at Phoebe's tip on the Priest Lake side. Overall Avalanche Hazard is:

2 Moderate		Heightened avalanche conditions on specific terrain features. Evaluate snow and terrain carefully; identify features of concern	Natural avalanches unlikely; human-triggered avalanches possible.	Small avalanches in specific areas; or large avalanches in isolated areas.
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HOWEVER, route selection in the Selkirks is very important. Last weekend's wind loading and heavy wind slab on the **North and Easterly** exposed slopes failed naturally in several areas:

3 Considerable		Dangerous avalanche conditions. Careful snowpack evaluation, cautious route-finding and conservative	Natural avalanches possible; human-triggered avalanches likely.	Small avalanches in many areas; or large avalanches in specific areas; or very large avalanches in isolated areas.
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St. Regis Basin and Silver valley showed a much greater avalanche hazard. Carole and Dan headed out into the Lookout Pass area and found a much deeper and unstable snowpack with a density change in the snow about a foot down that was shearing variably but sometimes very easily. Carole called it "Dangerous conditions on some terrain features". Dave Alley and his crew found easy and moderate shears also. Overall the avalanche conditions:

3 Considerable		Dangerous avalanche conditions. Careful snowpack evaluation, cautious route-finding and conservative	Natural avalanches possible; human-triggered avalanches likely.	Small avalanches in many areas; or large avalanches in specific areas; or very large avalanches in isolated areas.
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There will be **pockets** of big cornices and wind loaded features where the hazard will be:

4 High		Very dangerous avalanche conditions. Travel in avalanche terrain not recommended.	Natural avalanches likely; human-triggered avalanches very likely.	Large avalanches in many areas; or very large avalanches in specific areas.
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EDUCATION: The State of Idaho Parks and Recreation Department in cooperation with the IPAC, is conducting (***the last Free***) avalanche workshop in our area for snowmobilers in Bonners Ferry this weekend, February 11th and 12th. Attendance to these excellent classes has been great this year. For more information, go to the Idaho Parks and Recreation Department website at www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov, or call Marc Hildesheim, North Region Trails Specialist, at (208) 769-1511.

Dan and Carole have been teaching to sold out shows in the Wallace area so contact Dan Frigard at 783-2130 for class schedules in the Silver Valley.

If you have a group or club that is interested in more education on avalanche safety we will be available for free avalanche awareness classes, so feel free to give us a call. As usual we would appreciate hearing from anyone who happens to observe any recent avalanche activity while out in the backcountry or just wants to let us know what is going on in their area.

Special thanks to Idaho Parks and Recreation for sponsoring this morning's avalanche advisory. Thanks to Silver Mountain Ski Patrol for the great pit data from several locations on the Mountain.

Contact: Kevin Davis (208) 265-6686, Ed Odegaard (208) 245-6209, or John Olson (208) 265-6635
This message is available by calling (208) 765-7323 or toll-free at 1-866-489-8664.

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Have a safe and pleasant weekend!!!!