



Flathead National Forest

Media Release

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Northwest Montana Early Season Backcountry Snow and Avalanche Safety Presentation

--Avalanche Advisories Underway--

The Flathead National Forest is hosting a free presentation about early-season backcountry snow and avalanche conditions in Northwest Montana on Tuesday, December 13, 6:30-9:30pm at the Flathead National Forest Office in Kalispell, 650 Wolfpack Way. Forest Service Avalanche Specialist Stan Bones will present the evening session.

The presentation will focus on the weather in Northwest Montana, including typical weather patterns, websites that display current mountain weather conditions and forecasts, and how to interpret the data and forecasts. A discussion regarding the fall and early winter weather to date, and how these conditions affect snow and avalanche conditions will also be held.

Bones will discuss last season's conditions and how the weather set the stage for the January 2011 Doris Ridge Fatal Avalanche Incident. Bones will also review how avalanche advisories are formulated, the North American Avalanche Danger Scale and the new local advisory format.

The session will be an open discussion with an emphasis on a question-and-answer format. **The session is free** and open to all. There is no registration. Please call the Flathead National Forest at 758-5284 or visit www.fs.usda.gov/flathead for more information.

Avalanche Advisories for Northwest Montana Underway

The Flathead National Forest issues avalanche advisories for Northwest Montana throughout the winter, beginning the first Friday in December or as weather conditions warrant. Advisories are issued once a week, on Friday mornings, until the third week in December, when they are issued Tuesday and Friday mornings (as weather conditions warrant) until April. Advisories include information about snowpack conditions, weather forecasts, and hazard evaluations.

Advisories are posted on the Flathead National Forest website, <http://www.fs.usda.gov/flathead> **and** on the Glacier Country Avalanche Center website, www.glacieravalanche.org. The advisory can also be accessed by calling 406-257-8702. Anyone traveling in the backcountry will always need to make their own time and site specific avalanche hazard evaluations.

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