

National avalanche bulletin no. 118

for Thursday, 22 March 2012

issue date 21.3.2012, 18:30 hours

Considerable avalanche danger on Main Alpine Ridge

Current conditions

On Tuesday night the skies were partly overcast. In the Simplon region and in Ticino there was a few centimeters of snowfall. During the day on Wednesday it was sunny everywhere in the Swiss Alps. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were plus 5 degrees in northern regions and plus 3 degrees in southern regions. The southerly wind was blowing generally at light to moderate strength, at high altitudes and on the northern Alpine Ridge up to strong velocity.

The layers of new fallen snow from the last few days are still inadequately bonded with the old snowpack from place to place on north facing slopes in particular. In addition, the southerly wind in the same aspects has brought about snowdrift accumulations which are prone to triggering in some regions.

In places where the snow is shallow, the snowpack is faceted and weak. Elsewhere, the more deeply embedded layers of the snowpack are well consolidated for the most part; next to no pronounced weak layers are evident.

Short-term development

Following a night of clear skies, it will be sunny on Thursday. The midday temperatures at 2000 m will be plus 5 degrees in northern regions and plus 2 degrees in southern regions. The wind will be blowing at light to moderate strength from southerly directions.

Avalanche danger forecast for Thursday

Main Alpine Ridge; regions of Bivio and St. Moritz:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on steep slopes of western to northern to eastern aspects above approximately 2200 m. Avalanches can be triggered even by a single backcountry skier or freerider in places, particularly where there are snowdrift accumulations. The drifted masses usually fracture at the point of transition to a faceted old snowpack. In addition, avalanches can in isolated cases be triggered in the old snowpack where the snow is shallow in particular. Avalanches can reach medium size. Experience in evaluating avalanche danger is imperative.

Entire region of the Swiss Alps not including Main Alpine Ridge and not including the regions of Bivio and St. Moritz:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on steep slopes in western to northern to eastern aspects. On the northern flank of the Alps not including the Gotthard region as well as in the regions south of the Main Alpine Ridge, the danger zones are above approximately 1800 m; in the remaining regions of this danger level, the hazardous zones are above approximately 2000 m. Particular caution is urged towards snowdrift accumulations which have formed in the last few days as well as towards steep, shady slopes where the snow is shallow. In those spots, avalanches can be triggered even by a single backcountry skier or freerider in isolated cases. The avalanche prone locations tend to increase in frequency with ascending altitude. A cautious route selection is essential.

In all regions of the Swiss Alps, naturally triggered, wet slides and wet snow avalanches can be expected during the course of the day. This applies particularly to sun-drenched slopes below about 2800 m. Full depth snowslides which attain medium size continue to be possible. Caution is urged below glide cracks in the snowpack.

Trend for Friday and Saturday

On Friday it will be partly sunny. The danger of dry avalanches is expected to subside. The danger of moist avalanches will increase during the course of the day. For Saturday, the developments are still uncertain. In southern regions more than anywhere else, there may be some snowfall, and the danger of dry avalanches may increase.

National avalanche bulletin as an MMS (Fr. 0.50/MMS)

Send an SMS with the corresponding key word to the speed dial number 162.

LAWINE overview of the keywords
LAWCHD national avalanche bulletin (german)

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0900 162 138 / 338 Alpine Weather Report MeteoSwiss phone/fax
(phone: CHF 1.20/min) (fax: CHF 2.--/min)

Regional avalanche bulletins (Fr. 0.50/MMS)

LAWZCH Central Switzerland
LAWBVS Lower Valais / VD
LAWOVS Upper Valais
LAWNGR North and Central Grisons
LAWSGR South Grisons
LAWBEO Bernese Oberland
LAWEAN Eastern Part of the Northern Slope of the Alps

Internet: <http://www.slf.ch>

WAP: wap.slf.ch

Teletext: Page 782 (SF DRS)

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Feedback information:

Email: lwp@slf.ch

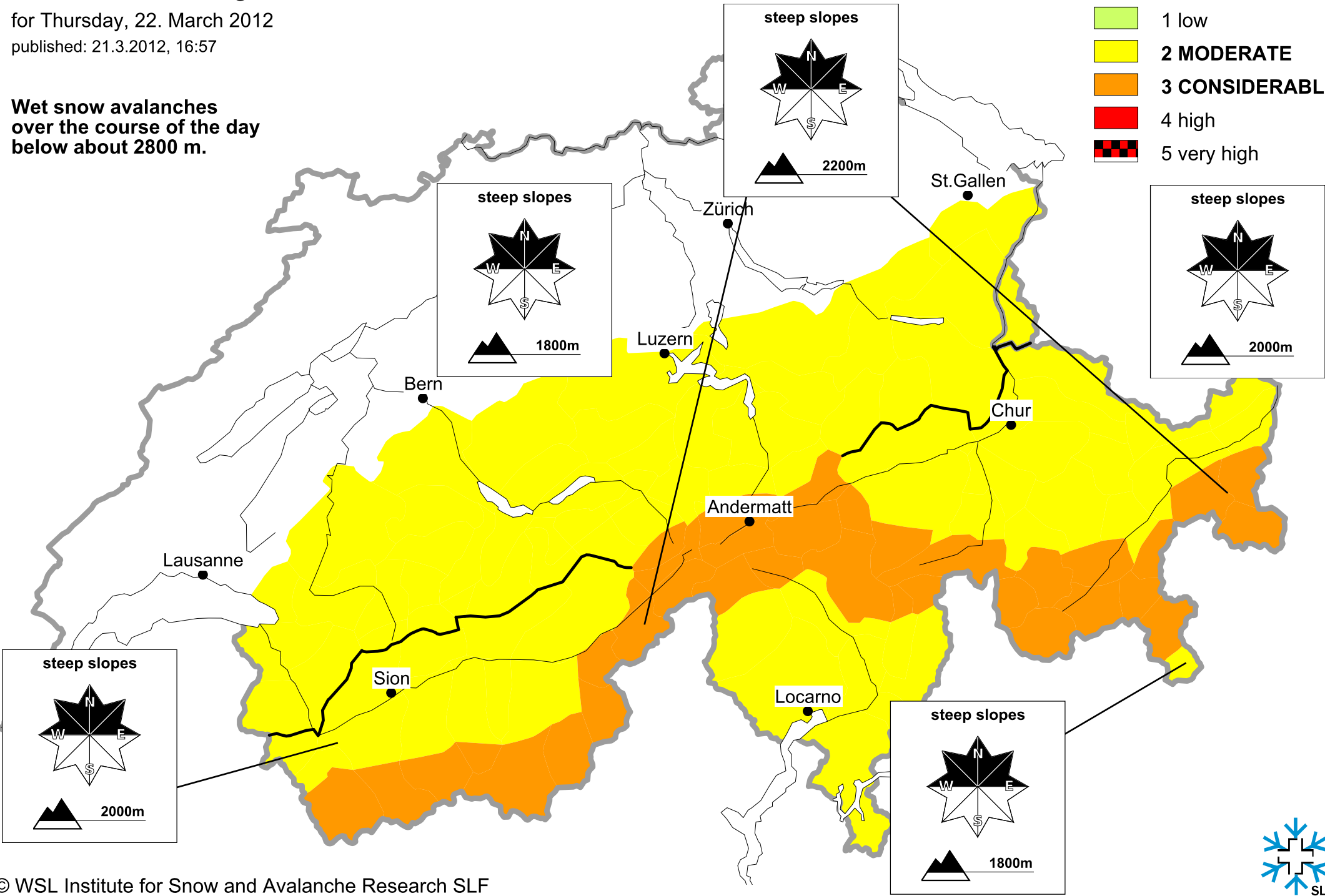
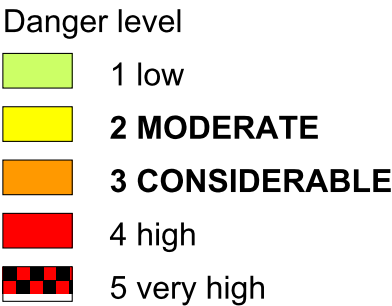
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Avalanche danger forecast

for Thursday, 22. March 2012

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Wet snow avalanches
over the course of the day
below about 2800 m.



Avalanche danger forecast

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