

Powder Forecasting

Tips and Tricks

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1. **Watch the weather every day**, and match the forecast to actual conditions. How much snow fell?

SNOTEL (automated): <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/snotel/Colorado/colorado.html>

COCORAHs (user submitted reports): <http://www.cocorahs.org/>

NWS: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/view/prodsByState.php?state=CO&prodtype=public>

2. **Read the “Area Forecast Discussion”** from the National Weather Service. Available for Boulder (BOU), Pueblo (PUB), and Grand Junction (GJT) areas:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/view/prodsByState.php?state=CO&prodtype=discussion>

3. **Understand current conditions.** Hint: look at a 2-hour national radar animation and a 6-12 hour national satellite animation (water vapor or infrared).

NCAR: <http://www.rap.ucar.edu/weather/>

Where is the storm coming from? Is the storm pulling in lots of moisture? Is the storm pulling in cold air from the north or warmer air from the south?

MESOWEST (temperature & wind): <http://mesowest.utah.edu/index.html>

4. **Forecast the wind at 700mb.** The most important weather feature for snow in Colorado is orographic lifting (go to the education site for the presentation). Look at weather maps for the 700mb level, which is about 10,000ft. Wind of 20-30kts hitting a mountain head-on is good for snow (= lifting). Air descending down a mountain is bad for snow. Check out slide #22 for good 700mb wind directions for each mountain area.

FIREWEATHER: <http://www.fireweather.info/>

TWISTERDATA: <http://www.twisterdata.com/>

NCAR: <http://www.rap.ucar.edu/weather/model/>