

# Sierra experiencing rare avalanche conditions

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Unusual snowpack conditions in the Sierra Nevada are contributing to a type of avalanche problem that in the past decade has rarely been widespread in the region.

That's according to the Sierra Avalanche Center, a nonprofit organization that partners with the U.S. Forest Service to observe and analyze snow conditions in the Lake Tahoe area and beyond.

"There could be avalanches in places that have never seen avalanches before," said Brandon Schwartz, lead forecaster for the center.

The biggest contributor to unstable conditions is buried surface hoar which leads to persistent slabs.

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