

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sat Oct 14, 2017

Good Morning. This is Doug Chabot with pre-season avalanche, weather, and event information for the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center issued on Thursday, October 12 at 7:30 a.m. This bulletin is sponsored by [**The Friends of the Avalanche Center**](#) and sponsors of the [**Powder Blast on October 27, 2017**](#).

Mountain Weather

At 5 a.m., 24-hour snowfall measured 1-2" in the Bridger Range, 3-6" from Bozeman to West Yellowstone and 9" outside Cooke City. At the ridgetop, winds are blowing north to west at 10-20 mph, and temperatures are in the mid 20s. The storm will exit this morning and may drop another inch of snow. High pressure moves in today with Monday and Tuesday forecasted to be unseasonably warm with temperatures touching 60F the valleys.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Bridger Range Gallatin Range Madison Range Lionhead Range Cooke City

New snow and winds are creating drifts which will be easy to trigger this weekend. Underneath this new snow is a snowpack measuring 1-3 feet thick with layers of dense slabs overlying looser, weaker (slightly faceted) snow. This was the snowpack we found in the southern Madison Range on Imp Peak (**photo, snowpit**). Avalanches can be triggered and even small ones can be deadly. The avalanche last week was not very large and released on a steep rollover that was drifted with hard slabs of wind-blown snow.

SKIERS: Carry rescue gear as you normally would mid-winter (beacon shovel, probe) and turn your beacon on when you put your skis on, if not before. Be alert for cracking or collapsing of the snow which is a sign of instability. Stay off of wind-loaded terrain even though these slopes are attractive because they are deep, smooth and rock free, and only expose one person at a time to avalanche terrain.

ICE CLIMBERS: My biggest concern are those headed to the Sphinx in the southern Madison Range. The avalanche on Imp Peak was only 11 miles away and the snowpack is likely similar in structure. A small, 15' wide avalanche killed two climbers in October 2004. Assess the snow and turn around at the first sign of cracking on the traverse.

HUNTERS: Hunters typically travel solo and carry no rescue gear. Their primary line of defense is to avoid avalanche terrain. If you have to cross gullies, do so at the top versus mid-slope and if possible, have someone watch you.

No matter if you are a skier, climber or hunter, the snow does not care. Carry rescue gear and know how to use it, travel one at a time in avalanche terrain and pay particular attention to open slopes, especially where the wind has deposited thick slabs of snow.

AVALANCHE FATALITY

On October 7, two skiers were caught, one was fully buried and killed, and one was partially buried in an avalanche on Imp Peak in the southern Madison Range.

Video of the accident investigation can be found [here](#).

Read the full avalanche accident report [here](#).

This month we are preparing for winter, scheduling avalanche classes, and setting up weather stations. If you get outside send us an observation via our website, email (mtavalanche@gmail.com), phone (406-587-6984), or tag us with #gnfacobs on Instagram (@mtavalanche).

Upcoming Events and Education

Powder Blast Fund-raiser

Friday, 27 October, 6:30 p.m. at the Emerson Cultural Center. [Tickets and Info](#)

Grizzly Outfitters of Big Sky is title sponsor of this year's 19th Annual Powder Blast. **Mystery Ranch, World Boards, Community Food Co-op**, and **Spark R&D** are key sponsors along with **Alpine Orthopedics, Stronghold Fabrication, Highline Partners**, and **Marcie Hahn-Knoff Real Estate**. **Javaman, Edward Jones** and **Buck Products** are other long-time PB supporters.

Join us for the best fundraiser of the year! All proceeds benefit the Friends of the Avalanche Center which supports avalanche awareness, education and information throughout southwest Montana.

Your \$30 donation gets you an unforgettable evening at the Emerson Cultural Center.

Beer from **Katabatic Brewing Company**; Wine from **Montana Ale Works**; Dinner by **Bountiful Table**; Music by **DJ Missy O'Malley**, and the best silent auction of outdoor gear in the valley!

[Events and Education Calendar](#) - Stay tuned as we will update our calendar with more classes over the next few months.

1 November, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m. at REI Bozeman

6 December, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m. at REI Bozeman

7 December, **Avalanche Awareness and Beacon Practice**, 6-8 p.m. at Beall Park, Bozeman

Nov. 29, 30 and Dec. 2, 3 or 9, **Introduction to Avalanches w/ Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#)

Jan. 12 and 13, **Companion Rescue Clinic**, [Info and Register](#)

Jan. 17, 18 and 20 or 21, **Introduction to Avalanches w/ Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#)

Jan. 24, 25 and 27, **Advanced Avalanche Workshop w. Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#)

Feb. 9 and 10, **Companion Rescue Clinic**, [Info and Register](#)