

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Tue Jan 1, 2019

Happy New Year! This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast issued on New Year's Day, Tuesday, January 1st at 7:10 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by [Yellowstone Club Community Foundation](#) and [Highline Partners](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

There's no new snow to report, just cold temperatures and wind. At 5 a.m. mountain temperatures are zero to -10F with west to north winds blowing 30-35 mph in the Bridger Range, 15-25 mph in Hyalite and Big Sky, and 5-10 mph in the southern ranges. Today will be partly cloudy and temperatures will rise into the double digits with increasing west to north wind. The rest of the week looks to be dry with warming temperatures.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



Southern Madison Southern Gallatin Lionhead Range Island Park

The southern mountains, including the Lionhead area had an avalanche warning on Sunday. The snowfall stopped and winds are light, but slopes are still dangerous. Over the weekend the winds blew and 11-18" of snow fell onto an unsupportive snowpack of sugary facets. Near Hebgen Lake on Friday, Alex, Eric, and a separate group of snowmobilers had cracking and collapsing on this layer which was *before* the storm ([video](#), [photo](#), [details](#)). Triggering slides is likely today, even from flat terrain at the bottom of the slope. Areas that are wind-loaded will be extra prone to triggering. For today, the avalanche danger is rated [CONSIDERABLE](#) on all slopes.



Bridger Range Northern Gallatin Northern Madison

In the last four days the northern mountains have gotten 1.5-2 feet of low density snow. The number one sign of instability is recent avalanche activity, with a close second being cracking and collapsing. In the last 48 hours we've had nine reports. The [full list](#) includes the [northern Bridger Range](#), the [Throne](#), [Buck Ridge](#), [Mt. Ellis](#), [Mt. Blackmore](#), [Beehive Basin](#), and the backcountry near the [Yellowstone Club](#). Most of the activity was confined to new and windblown snow ([video](#)). A few slides may have released on facets buried 1.5-2 feet deep ([video](#), [picture](#)) while other slopes had a thin and very weak snow structure that was conducive to collapsing (Ellis) and avalanching (Yellowstone Club).

West to north winds are continuing today and forecasted to get even stronger, both at the ridgetops and mid-mountain. Triggering slides on wind-loaded slopes is likely and the danger is rated [CONSIDERABLE](#). On slopes untouched by the wind, the danger is rated [MODERATE](#).



Cooke City

The mountains near Cooke City have received 8-10" of snow over the weekend with remarkably little wind. On Sunday skiers triggered many 2-4" slabs in the new snow in Yellowstone National Park and another skier triggered a small avalanche on Woody ridge ([details](#)). Yesterday, a few natural slides were seen near Lulu Pass ([details](#)) and also on the Fin ([photo](#)). Last week my snowpit on Scotch Bonnet revealed unstable facets 1-1.5 feet below the surface ([video](#), [photo](#)) and on Friday a snowmobiler triggered a slide on Mt Abundance on this layer ([photo](#)). I also found slopes with less than three feet deep to be exceptionally weak ([video](#)), similar to thin snowpacks in other ranges. Given the recent avalanche activity, buried weak layers, and likelihood of increasing wind-loading today, triggering avalanches is possible and the danger is rated [MODERATE](#).

If you get out and have any avalanche or snowpack observations to share, contact us via our [website](#), email (mtavalanche@gmail.com), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Our education calendar is full of awareness lectures and field courses. Check it out: [Events and Education Calendar](#).

BOZEMAN

January 2, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m. at REI, Bozeman. Pre-register at <https://www.rei.com/events>.

January 8, **Women's Specific Avalanche Awareness**, 6:30-8 p.m. Story Mill Park, Bozeman.

January 9, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. Spire Climbing Center, Bozeman.

January 16, 17 and 19 or 20, **Intro to Avalanches w/ Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#).

January 23, 24 and 26, **Advanced Avalanche Workshop w/ Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#).

February 2, **King and Queen of the Ridge** at Bridger Bowl (fundraiser). Info and registration is [here](#), and then you can sign up to get pledges [here](#).

WEST YELLOWSTONE

January 12 and 26, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers**, 7-8 p.m. Holiday Inn West Yellowstone.

DILLON

January 22, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 6:30-7:30 p.m. U.M. Western Library.

BILLINGS

January 22, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7 p.m. The Base Camp, Billings

COOKE CITY

Every Friday and Saturday, **Rescue Training and Snowpack Update**. Friday 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Soda Butte Lodge. Saturday anytime between 10-2 @ Round Lake.