GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Thu Jan 27, 2022

Good morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Thursday, January 27th at 6:45 a.m. This information is sponsored by **Blitz Motorsports and Yamaha** and **onX**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

This morning a dusting of snow occurred in the Bridger Range and West Yellowstone, 2" at Big Sky Resort and an inch everywhere else. Wind is averaging 10-15 mph with gusts of 30-40 mph from the north to west and mountain temperatures are in the single digits to low teens. Today will become mostly sunny with temperatures climbing towards 30F and calmer wind. No snow is expected until Monday.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

All Regions

Today, there is not much wind and not much new snow. You may find isolated wind slabs near the ridgelines that could be triggered, but these would be few and far between. Yesterday skiers backed out of avalanche terrain in Hyalite and south of Cooke City when they got wind drifts to crack. Today these drifts will be less likely to fracture.

A couple days ago a thin and wide avalanche broke free on Saddle Peak. Alex took a **picture** yesterday and its width caught our attention. Slides that propagate far typically have a weak layer underlying the slab and we are hypothesizing that a razor-thin layer of facets might have been responsible. We will check it out today. The odds of getting caught in a slide like this can be lessened with a quick stability test of the new/old snow interface. *Throughout the forecast area our avalanche concerns are limited to the upper foot of the snowpack.* In the Bridger, northern Gallatin and northern Madison Ranges this interface is where instability will show itself. In the southern Madison and southern Gallatin Ranges, Lionhead and Cooke City, in addition to this interface there's a weak layer of surface hoar buried about 8" deep. We mitigate both concerns the same way, by digging and testing instead of blindly throwing ourselves into avalanche terrain.

Avalanches are unlikely throughout our forecast area today and the danger is rated LOW on all slopes. As always, retreat if you find instability (cracking, poor test scores), and when you find good slopes to slide and ride on only expose one person at a time.

If you get out, please send us your observations no matter how brief. You can submit them via our **website**, email (**mtavalanche@gmail.com**), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

Upcoming Education Opportunities

See our **education calendar** for an up-to-date list of all local classes. Here are a few select upcoming events and opportunities to check out:

February 4th, Dillon Montana Avalanche Fundamentals, three-part series of pre-recorded lectures, virtual Q&A and an in-person field session. Pre-registration and more information **HERE.**

February 5th, King and Queen of the Ridge at Bridger Bowl. Come hike and ski with your friends for avalanche awareness and fun! Details below.

Every Saturday near Cooke City, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. FREE snowpack update and transceiver/rescue training. Stop by for 20 minutes or more at the Round Lake Warming Hut.

KING AND QUEEN OF THE RIDGE, FEBRUARY 5TH

Do you like to hike? Do you like to ski? Then the King & Queen of the Ridge is for you. Hike, ski and raise money for the Friends of the Avalanche Center in their 2nd biggest fundraiser of the year. Join the effort to promote and support avalanche safety and awareness! Fundraising prizes for top 5 individuals who raise over $500. *No racing is necessary to compete for the fundraising prizes*. Info is **HERE**. Race participants for the February 5th event must register separately with Bridger Bowl **HERE**.