

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Fri Jan 2, 2015

Good morning. This is Mark Staples with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Friday, January 2, at 7:30 a.m. Today's advisory is sponsored by **Gallatin County Search and Rescue** in partnership with the Friends of the Avalanche Center. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

Another inversion this morning means the mountains have temperatures in the teens F while valley locations have temperatures below zero F. Today will have some sunshine and temperatures will rise into the 20s F. Winds should blow from the western half of the compass today 10-15 mph gusting to 25 mph. A storm will descend from the NW and snowfall should begin late this afternoon near Bozeman.

It's hard to predict when the Bridger Range gets clobbered with snow, but things are lining up for it tonight: NW flow, moisture, cold air, and good lifting. By tomorrow morning, 6-8 inches of snow could fall in the Bridger Range. South of Bozeman and near Big Sky 3-4 inches should fall. Further south near West Yellowstone and Cooke City, 1-3 inches should fall. Saturday should be mostly dry and cold with more snow coming Sunday during the day.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

[Bridger Range](#) [Gallatin Range](#) [Madison Range](#)

Lionhead area near West Yellowstone

Recently formed winds slabs seem to have stabilized yesterday. Some may rest on recently formed, small facets as the Big Sky Ski Patrol found and remain sensitive. Layers of facets buried about 1-2 feet deep, have gained strength on many slopes as Eric and his partner found on Mt. Ellis in the northern Gallatin Range yesterday ([snowpack photo](#)). On other slopes they may remain weak, but a lack of new snow in the last four days has reduced their sensitivity, and there has been almost no reported avalanche activity. Two separate groups of skiers in the northern Madison Range found stable conditions yesterday. They did observe one recent avalanche ([photo](#)) in terrain where you wouldn't normally go, but it served as a good reminder to not let your guard down.

Some winds slabs will remain sensitive today and some slopes will harbor weak facets that may produce an avalanche. It's worth taking 5 minutes and performing one quick test to double check stability. See how to do this in 2 minutes ([video from 2013](#)). For today the avalanche danger is rated **MODERATE**.

Cooke City

The mountains near Cooke City generally have a deep and stable snowpack. The main problem will be wind slabs that formed early this week during E winds ([photo](#)). Besides these small wind slabs, there have been no other reported avalanches. Today the avalanche danger on slopes steeper than 35 degrees is rated **MODERATE**. Less steep slopes have a **LOW** danger.

Two New Articles Posted:

Read Doug's article on ["Human-Factors and Digging"](#) and also Mark's companion article titled ["A survey of our class at MSU"](#).

Eric will issue the next advisory tomorrow morning at 7:30 a.m. If you have any snowpack or avalanche observations drop us a line at mtavalanche@gmail.com or call us at 587-6984.

AVALANCHE EDUCATION and EVENTS

Take a look at our [Education Calendar](#) for all our classes being offered.

1-hour Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers, West Yellowstone, 7 p.m., Saturday, January 3, Holiday Inn.

1-hour Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers, Cooke City, 6:30-8 p.m., Monday, January 5, Cooke City Community Center.

1-hour Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers, Billings, 6:30-8 p.m., Wednesday, January 7 at Hi-Tech Motor Sports.

Companion Rescue Clinic, Bozeman, Fri eve and Sat field, January 9 and 10, REI. Register for the class here: www.rei.com/stores/bozeman.html

1-hour Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers, West Yellowstone, 7 p.m., Saturday, January 10, Holiday Inn.

1-hour Avalanche Awareness, Three Forks, 7 p.m., Monday, January 12, Methodist Church Annex.

Women's Avalanche Awareness w/ Beacon Practice, Bozeman, 6:30- 8 p.m., Tuesday, January 13, Beal Park.

1-hour Avalanche Awareness, 4 Corners, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, January 14, GVSA Groomer Shed.

1- hour Sidecountry Avalanche Awareness, Bozeman, 6:30-8 p.m., Wednesday, January 14, REI.