

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Sat Jan 31, 2015

Good morning. This is Eric Knoff with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Saturday, January 31, at 7:30 a.m. [Montana Import Group](#) in partnership with the Friends of the Avalanche Center sponsors today's advisory. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

This morning temperatures are in the mid to upper 20s F under mostly clear skies and winds are light out of the W-NW. Today, a Canadian cold front will push into the area allowing temperatures to drop throughout the day. Highs will reach the upper 20s to low 30s by late morning, but will drop back into the low 20s F by this afternoon. Winds will remain light to moderate out of the W-NW and skies will become mostly cloudy later in the day. There is a slight chance of mountain snow showers by this evening with 1-2 inches is possible in the mountains by tomorrow.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

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

[Lionhead area near West Yellowstone](#) [Cooke City](#)

The lack of buried weak layers and absence of new snow is producing generally stable conditions. In isolated areas or extreme terrain, skiers or riders could still find unstable snow capable of producing an avalanche. On Thursday, a snowmobiler outside of Cooke City triggered a small wind slab in steep, wind loaded terrain ([photo](#)). South of Big Sky and near West Yellowstone, sporadic layers of surface hoar and/or small facets buried 6-12 inches deep could also produce small avalanches.

Although the snowpack has a few lingering problems, human triggered avalanches are unlikely today and the avalanche danger is rated **LOW**. We'll be paying close attention to a new crop of surface hoar that has now been observed in the mountains near Big Sky, West Yellowstone and Cooke City ([photos](#)). With snow in the forecast, this weak surface layer could become our next significant avalanche problem.

For more details on past weather and avalanche events, check out the "[What's Been Happening](#)" page, a new resource this season.

I 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.

KING AND QUEEN OF THE RIDGE

Saturday, February 14th is the **13th Annual King and Queen of the Ridge** Hike/Ski-a-thon fundraiser to support avalanche education in southwest Montana. Collect pledges for one, two or the most ridge hikes you can do in the five hours of competition. 100% of the proceeds go to the Friends of Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center. Kids and families are encouraged to hike too! Hike as an Individual or Team. [Make a Pledge](#). [Sign Up and More Info](#).

RESEARCH PROJECT ON UNDERSTANDING TRAVEL BEHAVIOR IN AVALANCHE TERRAIN NEEDS YOU!!

Scientists from the Snow and Avalanche Lab at Montana State University are seeking more participants for their project examining decision making and travel in avalanche terrain. Their project aims to collect GPS information (from your smartphone) and survey responses from backcountry skiers and riders to better understand what types of terrain are used, and how decisions are made. Their focus is on backcountry skiers and riders of all abilities and experience. You need not be an expert backcountry skier to participate in this research.

To Participate or get more information: www.montana.edu/snowscience/tracks or their companion site directed toward snowmobilers at: www.montana.edu/snowscience/sleds

AVALANCHE EDUCATION and EVENTS

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

Today - 1-hour Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers, West Yellowstone, 7 p.m., January 31, Holiday Inn.

1-hour Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers, Lewistown, 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., Saturday, January 31, Fergus Country Trade Center. More info here: <http://www.mtavalanche.com/images/15/thunderstruck-13-premiere-and-avalanche-classes>