GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sat Jan 27, 2024

Good morning. This is Alex Marienthal with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Saturday, January 27th at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by **Cooke City Super 8/Bearclaw Bob's** and **World Boards**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

There is an inch of new snow near Island Park with none elsewhere. This morning, temperatures are teens to 20s F, and wind is out of the west-southwest at 10-20 mph with gusts of 20-40 mph. Today temperatures will reach high 20s to mid-30s F with west-southwest wind at 10-15 mph. Tonight through tomorrow there is a small chance for light snow showers at higher elevations south of Bozeman which could amount to 1-2" near Island Park and Cooke City.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

All Regions

Avalanche conditions are dangerous and a person can easily trigger avalanches on steep slopes. In the southern parts of our forecast area snowfall has been minimal for a few days, and in the Bridger Range nearly a week has passed without snow. Despite a lack of new snow to load the snowpack we continue to hear of recent avalanches and signs of instability. This shows a widespread unstable snowpack and the high potential to trigger an avalanche on any steep slope.

Yesterday we rode around Lionhead Ridge and saw dozens of avalanches that occurred on all aspects and elevations at various times over the last week, some as recent as Thursday (**photos and observation**, **video**). Also yesterday, Big Sky ski patrol triggered a very large avalanche on the North Summit Snowfield (**details**), and Bridger Ski Patrol triggered a couple 12-18" deep slabs, all with explosive mitigation in areas that have been closed so far this season.

We have had reports of avalanches and collapsing and cracking every day for the last three weeks (see the **weather and avalanche log** for the full list). Some notable recent activity includes:

- A slide likely triggered by a skier low on Saddle Peak on Thursday (**photos**).
- Apparently natural, large avalanches near Cooke City that likely broke on Thursday (**photos**).
- A large slide on Buck Ridge that appeared to have happened Thursday (**photo**).
- Riders in Tepee Basin had cracks shoot 100 ft in front of them while sidehilling a low angled slope (**details**).
- Skiers remotely triggered avalanches multiple days in a row near Cooke City (**details**).

Avalanches have been triggered from hundreds of feet away (**Woody Creek remote trigger**, **Buck Ridge avalanche**) which means you need to be cautious traveling near and underneath steep slopes. Carefully choose your route of travel. Find slopes less than 30 degrees steep which are not directly below or connected to anything steeper (**video about terrain assessment**). Human triggered avalanches are likely and the avalanche danger is CONSIDERABLE.

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Our education calendar is full of awareness lectures and field courses. Check it out: **Events and Education Calendar.**

Every weekend in Cooke City: Friday at The Antlers at 7 p.m., Free Avalanche Awareness and Current Conditions talk, and Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Round Lake Warming Hut, Free Rescue Practice.

We offer *Avalanche Fundamentals with Field Session* courses targeted towards non-motorized travelers in **January** and one geared towards **motorized users**. Sign up early before they fill up.

King & Queen 2024, 3 February 2024. Form a team or sign up individually to hike laps on the Bridger Bowl ridge to fundraise for the Friends of the Avalanche Center.

Loss in the Outdoors is a support group for those affected by loss and grief related to outdoor pursuits. Check out the link for more information.

KING AND QUEEN OF THE RIDGE, FEBRUARY 3rd

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 the 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 4th event must register separately with Bridger Bowl **HERE**.