

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Thu Jan 29, 2015

Good morning. This is Mark Staples with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Thursday, January 29, at 7:30 a.m. The [Community Food Co-op](#) 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 mountain temperatures were in the high teens and low 20s F with light westerly winds blowing 5-10 mph. Today will have more sunshine, very light winds, and temperatures near 30 degrees F.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

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

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

Yesterday's few inches of new snow was a welcome sight. As always, a little new snow and a little wind can combine to form fresh wind slabs. These were not a widespread problem but one releasing naturally was observed north of Cooke City ([photo](#)). Today instabilities will be confined to the upper 6-12 inches of the snowpack. These instabilities may be a shallow wind slabs, a layer of surface hoar, or a thin layer of facets near an ice crust. There has been little avalanche activity associated with these instabilities, but they do exist and could produce an avalanche in isolated places.

The snowpack is mostly strong ([video](#)), and with generally safe avalanche conditions the danger is rated **[LOW](#)**. This means we can have fun and ride in avalanche terrain but we still need to be prepared in case of an avalanche.

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.

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

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