GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Tue Jan 2, 2018

Good Morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Tuesday, January 2nd, 2018 at 7:00 a.m. Today's advisory is sponsored by **Swiss Fit Montana** and **Ph.D. Skis**. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

There has been no snowfall in the last 24 hours. At 5 a.m. under clear skies, mountain temperatures are in the teens with near zero in the valleys. Wind is west at 10-20 mph in the southern ranges and 20-30 mph in the north. Today will be sunny with temperatures reaching the low 20s before dropping to near zero tonight and winds will ease to 10-20 mph from the west.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Bridger Range Gallatin Range Madison Range Lionhead Range Cooke City

The storm ended on Saturday and dropped over 4' of snow outside Cooke City, 2-3' in other ranges and a foot near West Yellowstone. Yesterday was the first day in almost a week without recent avalanches or signs of instability. Many natural avalanches and human triggered slides occurred during the storm. There were a couple of close calls when a skier was caught and injured in Truman Gulch on the west side of the Bridger Range on Friday (**video**, **photo**) and a skier was partially buried outside Cooke City after remotely triggering an avalanche from below on Thursday. For an inventory of the avalanche cycle, check out our **Photos page** or daily synopsis of avalanche activity in our **Weather and Avalanche Log**.

Avalanches were especially numerous on slopes with a shallow snowpack, typically at lower elevations, since they harbor weak snow near the ground and also around an ice crust that formed over Thanksgiving. Some avalanches in the alpine were large and deep and broke on weak, faceted snow that formed at the surface mid-December.

On Sunday skiers reported collapsing and cracking near Lionhead (Hebgen Lake area) and Cooke City. As the days pass without new snow or significant wind-loading, the likelihood of triggering avalanches decreases, but my hackles are raised. Seeing avalanche crowns is exciting, but should serve as a reminder to be extra careful, even with stability getting better. Yesterday, folks in the northern Bridger Range did not ski their intended line after seeing avalanches from the storm and facets in the snowpack (**photo**). I recommend 2 things to stay safe out there today:

1. Stay off of wind-loaded slopes.
2. Do a stability test before committing to avalanche terrain. If the test breaks easy and clean, go elsewhere. *If you have no idea what I'm talking about, check out our **How-To video playlist**.*

To dive deeper into our current concern regarding snowpack structure, check out our recent videos from the **Yellow Mountain**, **Bacon Rind** and **Lionhead** as well as our **snowpits**. For today, the avalanche danger is rated **MODERATE** on all slopes since human triggered avalanches are still possible.

If you get out and have any avalanche or snowpack observations to share, drop a line via our website, email (mtavalanche@gmail.com), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Events and Education Calendar

BOZEMAN

TOMORROW, Jan. 3, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7 p.m. at REI Bozeman

Jan. 12 and 13, **Companion Rescue Clinic**, **Info and Register**

Jan. 17, 18 and 20 or 21, **Introduction to Avalanches w/ Field Day**, **Info and Register Here**

Jan. 24, 25 and 27, **Advanced Avalanche Workshop w. Field Day**, **Info and Register Here**

Feb. 9 and 10, **Companion Rescue Clinic**, **Info and Register**

WEST YELLOWSTONE

Jan. 6, **Avalanche Awareness,** 7-8 p.m. at West Yellowstone Holiday Inn Conference Center

BIG TIMBER

Jan. 11, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7 p.m. at Sweet Grass County High School

BUTTE

Jan. 13, **Rescue Clinic**, 10 a.m. at Homestake Lodge

Dillon

Jan. 16, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6:30-8 p.m. at U.M. Western Library

COOKE CITY

Every Friday and Saturday**, Current Conditions Update and Avalanche Rescue,** Friday 6:30-7:30 p.m. at The Antler's Lodge in January. Saturday anytime between 10-2 @ Lulu Pass road.