GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sat Jan 11, 2020

Good Morning. This is Ian Hoyer with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Saturday, January 11th at 7:30 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by **Mystery Ranch** and **Yellowstone Club Community Foundation**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

Overnight, the Yellowstone Club picked up 12" of new snow, 6" fell at Big Sky, and 1-2" across the rest of the advisory area. Winds are 20-30 mph out of the south and west, with gusts up to 50 mph. Temperatures are in the single digits to teens F. Winds today will be 20-30 mph from the southwest. An inch or two of snow will fall by this afternoon with 4-6" possible by tomorrow morning, favoring the southern ranges and Cooke City.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Northern Madison

6 to 12" of low density new snow fell near Big Sky overnight. Moderate to strong southwest winds have built thick drifts on windloaded slopes. Snowfall totals have been variable across zone over the last three days – the greatest danger is in areas with the most new snow. If you find deep new snow and thick wind drifts, avoid all avalanche terrain. Avalanches can break under the new snow, or much deeper, including all the way to the ground (**photo**, **video**). Human triggered avalanches are likely and the avalanche danger is CONSIDERABLE.

Cooke City

Triggering an avalanche is likely in Cooke City on any steep slope today. While the deep powder from this week's storm is settling, weak layers deeper in the snowpack will take longer to heal from the large load they've received since New Year's (40" of snow with 4" of snow water equivalent). Yesterday, riders near Daisy Pass saw a fresh snowmobile triggered avalanche on Chimney Rock and a larger natural avalanche that broke during the storm (**photo**, **photo**). Give these weak layers more time to adjust - stay off steep slopes today. Dangerous avalanche conditions exist and the avalanche danger is CONSIDERABLE.

Bridger Range Northern Gallatin

With little new snow overnight, the wind drifted slabs that formed in the Bridger and Northern Gallatin Ranges over the previous several days will be harder to trigger today. However, caution is still merited. Yesterday, Dave got a dramatic test result near the Throne and decided to stick to lower angled terrain (**video**). Stay on alert for signs that wind drifts have remained unstable – cracks shooting out from your ski tips are a clear sign to find a lower angled or less windloaded slope. The avalanche danger is MODERATE today.

Southern Madison Southern Gallatin Lionhead Range Island Park

The mountains around West Yellowstone haven't been seen much new snow this week. The snowpack is slowly adjusting and becoming less unstable (**video**). However, there is widespread weak snow at the ground that remains worrisome. On Thursday, I remotely triggered a small slide (6" deep and 10' wide) from 100' away on a low elevation slope near Hebgen Lake(**photo**). Triggering larger slides remains possible. For today, the avalanche danger is rated MODERATE.

If you get out, please send us your observations no matter how brief. You can fill out an **observation form**, email us (**mtavalanche@gmail.com**), leave a VM at 406-587-6984, or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

Webpage dedicated to the Centennial Range in Idaho and Montana

After the two snowmobiler avalanche fatalities on Reas Peak in the Centennial Range in January 2018 we created a webpage so riders could get good, relevant information regarding snowpack and avalanches. Although the Centennial Range is not part of the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center's forecast area, we are the closest avalanche center and have valuable information to share. **More…**

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Our education calendar is full of awareness lectures and field courses. Check it out and plan to attend one or two: Events and Education Calendar.

COOKE CITY

Every Friday and Saturday, **Snowpack Update and Rescue Training**. Friday, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Soda Butte Lodge. Saturday anytime between 10-2 @ Round Lake.

BOZEMAN

January 12, **1-hr Women's Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at SHINE Bottle Shop.

January 15 and 16, **Introduction to Avalanche w/ Field Course**, evenings of January 15 & 16 plus one field day either January 18, 19 or 25. Snowmobile specific field day offered January 25. **More Info and Register Here**.

January 27, **Avalanche Information and Demonstration Table**, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Montana Science Center.

January 29, **GNFAC Forecaster Chat: Avalanche Myth Busters**, 6-8 p.m. at Uphill Pursuits.

January 31, Women's Only Companion Rescue Clinic, 6 - 8 pm at REI followed by a field day February 1. **More info and Register Here**.

February 1, **King and Queen of the Ridge** at Bridger Bowl (fundraiser). This is the Friends of the Avalanche Center's second biggest fundraiser of the year. Come on out and help us raise money by hiking and skiing laps on the ridge. Prizes, camaraderie and a good time is guaranteed. **Register with Bridger** to hike in the event, and **create a pledge page** to raise funds with your Ridge laps.

BUTTE

January 15, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at 5518 Designs.

DILLON

January 15, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at University of Montana Western.

January 29 and 30, **Introduction to Avalanche w/ Field Course**, evenings of January 29 & 30 plus a field day February 1. Snowmobile specific field day offered February 2. **More Info and Register Here**.

WHITEHALL

January 18, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Homestake Lodge.

WEST YELLOWSTONE

January 25, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at West Yellowstone Holiday Inn.

February 1, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at West Yellowstone Holiday Inn.

HELENA

January 28, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7 p.m. Carroll College.

LIVINGSTON

January 30, **Introduction to Avalanche w/ Field Course**, evening of January 30 plus a field day February 2. **More info and Register Here**.