

# **GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Fri Jan 19, 2024**

Good morning. This is Ian Hoyer with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Friday, January 19th at 7:00 a.m. This information is sponsored by [Cooke City Motorsports](#), [Beartooth Powder Guides](#) and [Yellowstone Ski Tours](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

## **AVALANCHE WARNING**

The Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center is issuing a Backcountry Avalanche Warning for the area around Cooke City. Over a foot of snowfall and strong wind are overloading an exceptionally weak snowpack, creating very dangerous avalanche conditions. Natural and human triggered avalanches are likely. Avalanche terrain and avalanche runout zones should be avoided. The avalanche danger is rated **HIGH** on all slopes. Contact the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center for more detailed information.

### Mountain Weather

There is no new snow. Winds have been west to northwest at 10-20 mph with gusts of 30-45 mph. Temperatures this morning are in the teens and 20s F. High temperatures will be in the 20s F. Winds will be light from the west to southwest. Today will be mostly cloudy with snow showers bringing a trace to 2" of new snow by this afternoon.

### Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



Cooke City

## **Avalanche Warning**

The Avalanche Warning in Cooke City continues and triggering avalanches is very likely. Yesterday, my partner and I remotely triggered a slide from hundreds of feet away while ascending a lower angled, forested, slope and it propagated up to 800 ft ([video](#)). We also saw at least a dozen avalanches that had broken naturally the night before, on every aspect we got a good view of ([info and photos](#)). These slides are breaking on exceptionally weak layers of surface hoar and facets that will not stabilize quickly. Expect to trigger avalanches if you get on, or even near, any slope steeper than 30 degrees. Even avoid traveling underneath these slopes (runout zones) since they can be triggered from below.

The avalanche danger is [HIGH](#) on all slopes.



Bridger Range   Gallatin Range   Madison Range   Lionhead Range   Island Park

Human triggered slides are likely today. A number of widely propagating remote triggers yesterday demonstrate that dangerous conditions exist. This last storm didn't put a huge load on the snowpack, but it was clearly

enough to push it to its breaking point, especially on wind-loaded slopes. Riders on Buck Ridge triggered a series of slides that propagated out more than half a mile ([video](#)). Remotely triggered slides were also reported near [Lionhead](#), [Taylor Fork](#), and in [Hyalite](#). These slides are being triggered from hundreds of feet away and breaking 1-3 ft deep. A small natural below treeline that broke during the day yesterday was also reported near Big Sky. Strong winds built cohesive slabs over the widespread, very weak, weak layers. Don't mess around with this weak, unstable snowpack. Avoid slopes steeper than 30 degrees. With the likelihood of triggering these slides from below also give steep slopes a wide berth if you're passing beneath them.

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.

January 18, 4 p.m., **Darren Johnson Avalanche Education Memorial Fund - Pint Night**, Beehive Basin Brewery, Big Sky. Information [HERE](#).

[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](#).