

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Tue Jan 14, 2014

Good morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Tuesday, January 14 at 7:30 a.m. [Outlaw Partners](#) and [406 Brewery](#) sponsor today's advisory. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

In the last 24 hours the mountains have picked up an inch of new snow, except Cooke City which received another five inches. At 5 a.m. temperatures are in the high teens with ridgetop winds blowing from the west at 30-35 mph and gusting to 50-70 mph. Today is a day of transition as high pressure moves into Montana. Winds will decrease to 20-30 mph, temperatures will rise into the low thirties and skies will become partly sunny. The rest of the week's weather looks to be sunny, stable and quiet.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

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

Lionhead area near West Yellowstone

Snowfall every day for the last week followed by very strong winds has created avalanche activity in every mountain range. The "Best Of" list includes natural activity around Saddle Peak ([photo](#)), Mount Blackmore ripping to the ground up Hyalite ([photo](#)), a snowmobiler triggering a six foot deep wind slab on Buck Ridge two days after skiers trigger a large slide in Beehive Basin ([photo](#), [video](#)), and a motorist running into avalanche debris near Quake Lake ([photo](#)).

The reason for all this avalanche activity is simple: weak, faceted snow at or near the ground cannot hold up all the new snow, especially on slopes that have been wind-loaded. Eric and I saw this firsthand when we investigated a large avalanche off Lionhead ridge on Sunday during the Avalanche Warning ([photo](#), [video](#)). Strong winds while it was snowing spiked the avalanche danger over the last few days and prompted the Warning for the southern mountains Saturday afternoon through Sunday. Today, wind alone is a destabilizing factor and natural avalanche activity is possible on wind-loaded slopes near the ridgelines. Given the consistently poor snow structure, anyone playing in avalanche terrain today stands a good chance of triggering slides. For this reason the avalanche danger is rated **CONSIDERABLE** on all slopes.

Cooke City

If someone says the words "new snow" and "wind" the first thought that pops into my head is Cooke City! Since I was there last Thursday the mountains have received three inches of water weight which has settled to 1.5-2 feet of snow. Winds are strong out of the west-northwest and wind-loaded slopes are our biggest concern. Winds around Cooke City do not follow any rules, so expect loading at all elevations and across slopes. Anything wind-loaded will be easily triggered today and might even naturally avalanche. Three inches of water is a huge wallop of weight and snowpacks, even strong ones, can strain under this large load. With sunny skies and calm winds the danger will likely trend downward in the coming days, but snowpack assessment will get trickier as signs of instability become less obvious. For today, the avalanche danger is rated **CONSIDERABLE** on all wind-loaded slopes and on any slope steeper than 35 degrees. The danger is **MODERATE** on less steep slopes without a wind-load.

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.

ANDROID APP

If you have an android phone or tablet, you can download our new free app. It's a slick way to get the advisory. [Search Google Play for GNFAC](#). An iOS version is coming soon. Stay tuned.

MONTANA ALE WORKS FUNDRAISER DINNER, Wednesday, January 22

On Wednesday, January 22, Montana Ale Works is hosting the 6th Annual Fundraiser Dinner for the Friends of the Avalanche Center. Chef Roth is creating an elegant, multiple course menu. His culinary creation will be paired with wines from the Ale Works cellar. Seating is limited to 40. Get your tickets early.

<https://www.ticketriver.com/event/9572>

EVENTS/EDUCATION

January 15, BOZEMAN: Wednesday, 6:30-7:30 p.m., MSU Procrastinator Theater, **Sidecountry IS Backcountry** lecture.

January 16, BOZEMAN: Thursday, 6-8 p.m., Beall Park, **1-hour Avalanche Awareness and Transceiver Practice**.

January 18, COOKE CITY: Saturday, 6-7 p.m., Community Center, **1-hour Avalanche Awareness** lecture.

January 18 & 19, BOZEMAN: Saturday, 12-4:30 p.m. Bozeman Public Library; Sunday, all day in the field, **Snowmobiler Introduction to Avalanches with Field Course**. Pre-registration is required:

<https://www.ticketriver.com/event/8565-bozeman--snowmo-intro-to-avalanches-w-field>

January 22,23 & 25, BOZEMAN: Wednesday and Thursday 7-9:30 p.m.; all day Saturday in field, **Introduction to Avalanches with Field Course**. Pre-registration is required: <https://www.ticketriver.com/event/7113>

January 22 & 23 & 26, BILLINGS and COOKE CITY: Wednesday and Thursday 6-9 p.m.; all day Sunday in field, **Snowmobiler Introduction to Avalanches with Field Course**. Pre-registration is required:

<https://www.ticketriver.com/event/9380>

January 25, WEST YELLOWSTONE: Saturday, 7-8 p.m. at Holiday Inn, **1-hour Avalanche Awareness** lecture.

More information our complete calendar of events can be found [HERE](#).