GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sat Feb 10, 2024

Good morning. This is Ian Hoyer with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Saturday, February 10th at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by **Spark R&D** and **Highline Partners**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

AVALANCHE WARNING

We are continuing a Backcountry Avalanche Warning for the Centennial Mountains in Island Park, the Lionhead area near West Yellowstone, and the southern Madison and southern Gallatin ranges. New and wind-drifted snow have overloaded an exceptionally weak snowpack, creating very dangerous avalanche conditions. Human-triggered avalanches are very likely. Avoid avalanche terrain and avalanche runout zones. The avalanche danger is **HIGH** on all slopes. This warning will expire or be updated by 6:00 a.m. on Sunday, February 11th.

Mountain Weather

There are 3-5" of new snow near Bozeman and 1-2" across the rest of the advisory area. Mountain temperatures are in the single digits and teens F this morning. Winds are 5-10 mph from the west and north. Today, temperatures will rise into the high teens and 20s F under mostly sunny skies with 5-15 mph winds out of the west and northwest. No new snow is expected today.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Southern Madison Southern Gallatin Lionhead Range Island Park

Avalanche Warning

Don't let today's sunny skies lull you into complacency. The avalanche conditions remain remarkably dangerous and we have continued the avalanche warning through tomorrow morning. If you get on, or even near, steep slopes, you are very likely going to trigger an avalanche.

Yesterday, after investigating an avalanche that was triggered in Tepee Basin on Wednesday, breaking 3/4 of a mile wide and 3-4 ft deep (**detail and video**), we remotely triggered an avalanche from the flats that broke 30 ft away below us, 2-3 ft deep, ~250 ft wide, and ran full path to the valley bottom (**video**). Riders in Lionhead yesterday triggered one slide from 100 ft away and saw several others break naturally (**observation**). Slides are breaking deeper and larger than they have all season and are being triggered from a long ways away.

Expect more of the same today. This season's extraordinarily weak snowpack will take a long time before it starts to stabilize. Stay off of and out from under all slopes steeper than 30 degrees.

Human triggered avalanches are very likely and the avalanche danger is HIGH.

Bridger Range Northern Gallatin Northern Madison Cooke City

Human triggered avalanches remain likely. Today's new snow builds on an incremental load that has been accumulating all week, now adding up to 1.5-2 ft of snowfall since last Saturday (with reports of more at higher elevations).

The snowpack has stayed touchy. Yesterday, a splitboarder remotely triggered a small avalanche south of Cooke City from 100 ft away and noted several recent small natural avalanches (**observation**). Riders on Buck Ridge yesterday got large collapses (**observation**). There have been many natural and human triggered avalanches over the last week (**wx. and avalanche log**)

Be skeptical of all steep slopes, but be even more wary of slopes where the recent snow has drifted into deeper, stiffer slabs. Avoiding all slopes steeper than 30 degrees is the best way to avoid triggering and being caught by a dangerous slide. Be cautious passing beneath these slopes as well since you can just as easily trigger a slide from below.

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.

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 TODAY

Bridger Bowl has rescheduled the King & Queen to be held on the Apron TODAY, February 10th. Registration is closed. All pledges must be made before 1:15 pm today. Please stop by the Apron to cheer on the participants!

Thank you to Bridger Bowl for working through weather and snowpack challenges to host this event. Thank you all for your flexibility. More information from Bridger Bowl is **HERE**. More fundraiser information or donate **HERE.**