

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Wed Feb 11, 2015

Good morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Wednesday, February 11, at 7:30 a.m. [Community Food Coop](#) in partnership with the **Friends of the Avalanche Center** sponsors today's advisory. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

Yesterday morning four inches of dense snow fell in the Bridger and northern Gallatin Ranges while all other areas picked up 1-2 inches. Under clearing skies mountain temperatures are in the low to mid 20s with west to southwest winds averaging 10-15 mph. A strong high pressure system is building today and will block storms until Sunday. Mountain temperatures will reach 40F this afternoon under sunny skies.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Southern Madison Range Southern Gallatin Range

Lionhead Area near West Yellowstone Cooke City

In the past two days 4-6 inches fell in the southern mountains with Cooke City getting over a foot. Winds have tapered and are blowing light out of the southwest. Temperatures near or above freezing will help stabilize wind slabs that formed with the snowfall. Many slopes are strong and stable but a few have a thin layer of weak grains that could avalanche from the weight of a skier or rider. This layer is 1-2 feet deep and was formed a few weeks ago. It shows up as a stripe in the snowpit wall and is easily tested. I located it on Sunday in Taylor Fork and posted a [video](#), [photo](#) and [snowpit profile](#) of my findings. Later that day in the same vicinity a sledder triggered a small avalanche confirming the instability. Mark and Eric also found this layer in Teepee Creek on Saturday. Its distribution is spotty, but worth digging for, especially if you are thinking of punching a big line. For today, the avalanche danger is rated **MODERATE** on all slopes steeper than 35 degrees and **LOW** on less steep terrain.

Bridger Range Northern Madison Range Northern Gallatin Range

The northern mountains were freshened up with 4-6 inches of snow the last few days. Winds have died down and loading has been minimal. The strength and stability of the snowpack is very good and triggering an avalanche is unlikely, but not impossible. There are two minor concerns to keep in mind: wind-loads and facets buried a foot deep. Wind-loads are easy to spot under the ridgelines. The facets were found in a couple of bowls up Hyalite, but they are rare. The northern mountains have a **LOW** avalanche danger and generally safe conditions.

Wet Snow Avalanche Danger

Above freezing temperatures and sunshine will begin to melt yesterday's new snow creating wet loose avalanches on steep, sunny slopes. Roller balls and point releases are bull's-eye information the snowpack is losing strength. Today, the wet snow avalanche danger will rise to **MODERATE**.

Mark 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.

KING AND QUEEN OF THE RIDGE

Saturday, February 14th is the **13th Annual King and Queen of the Ridge** Hike/Ski-a-thon fundraiser at Bridger Bowl to support avalanche education in southwest Montana. Collect pledges for each lap of hiking to the ridge and skiing back down. 100% of the proceeds go to the Friends of Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center. Hike as an individual or form a team of your workmates or playmates or family! Prizes are awarded for Team and Individual categories. [Make a Pledge](#). [Sign Up and More Info](#).

AVALANCHE EDUCATION and EVENTS

Take a look at our [Education Calendar](#) for all classes being offered.

TONIGHT: Woman's 1-hour Avalanche Awareness, Bozeman, REI, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, February 11.

Snow Science and the Human Factor, Bozeman, MSU Procrastinator Theater, 6-8:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 17. The free event will feature a talk by Powder editor and MSU graduate John Stifter, multimedia presentations on the human factor in avalanche risk, a panel of experts from MSU's Snow & Avalanche Lab and Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center, as well as a Q & A session ([poster](#)).

Companion Rescue Clinic, Bozeman, REI, 6-8 p.m., Friday, February 20 and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday, February 21 (field location TBD). Pre-registration is required: www.rei.com/stores/bozeman.html

1-hour Avalanche Awareness, West Yellowstone, Holiday Inn, 7 p.m., Saturday, February 21.