

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Mon Jan 21, 2013

Good morning. This is Eric Knoff with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Monday, January 21 at 7:30 a.m. Today's advisory is sponsored by **World Boards** and the **Pinhead Classic Telemark Festival**. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

At 4 a.m. mountain temperatures are in the 20s F and winds are blowing 15-25 from the WNW. Today, temperatures will warm into the low 30s F under partly to mostly cloudy skies and winds will continue to blow 15-25 from the WNW. There is no chance for precipitation over the next 24 hours.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Bridger Range Madison Range Gallatin Range

Lionhead area near West Yellowstone Cooke City

It has been nearly a week since measurable snow has fallen over our advisory area. Despite the lack of precipitation, strong winds have been plentiful. This dry but windy pattern has blown snow into stiff hard slabs - now found on the leeward side of ridgelines and exposed terrain features ([photo](#)). On most slopes, dense slabs that formed earlier in the week have stabilized, but areas with wind deposited snow continue to deserve respect.

Yesterday, skiers near Lulu Pass outside of Cooke City observed a human triggered avalanche that occurred on a heavily wind loaded slope ([photo](#)). I also experienced a large collapse on a wind loaded slope while touring in Hyalite on Saturday. These blatant signs of instability are good reminders that pockets of unstable snow continue to linger.

The tricky part about this scenario is that most slopes are stable, but not all. Today, heightened avalanche conditions exist on slopes where wind deposited snow rests over a layer of facets formed in early January. Fortunately, this layer is not widespread and can be looked for and assessed quickly ([video](#)). If this layer is found, move to a different area or choose a slope with a lower angle.

Today, human triggered avalanches are possible on wind loaded slopes and slopes steeper than 35 degrees which have a **MODERATE** avalanche danger. All other slopes have a **LOW** avalanche danger.

Doug 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.

Practice using your beacon – The Friends of the Avalanche Center in partnership with the City of Bozeman Recreation Department recently installed a beacon training site at Beall Park. It's free and easy to use.

EDUCATION

Saturday, January 19, 6 -7 p.m., *1-hour Avalanche Awareness* at the **Cooke City** Community Center.

Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday, January 23, 24, and 26. **MSU Introduction to Avalanches with Field Course**. Wed and Thurs evenings and all day Saturday. For more information and to register, visit: <https://www.ticketriver.com/event/4970-introduction-to-avalanches-w--field-course>