

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Mon Oct 2, 2017

Good Morning. This is Doug Chabot with pre-season avalanche, weather, and event information for the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center issued on Monday, October 2nd. This bulletin is sponsored by [The Friends of the Avalanche Center](#) and sponsors of [Powder Blast on October 27th, 2017](#).

Mountain Weather

After the snowstorms that ended 10 days ago I was wondering if we'd revert to an Indian summer or continue in a wintry pattern. Snowfall the last two nights points to winter, at least for now.

In the last 48 hours SNOTEL and ski area weather stations are showing 3-4" in the northern mountains, 6-7" around Big Sky, 3-6" outside West Yellowstone and 1-2" near Cooke City. Mountain temperatures are in the mid to high 20s and ridgetop winds are blowing N-NW at 10-20 mph. Tonight we'll get another 4-6" with winds blowing 15-25 mph out of the N-NW.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Bridger Range Gallatin Range Madison Range Lionhead Range Cooke City

This weekend's snowfall came in with wind. Wind creates drifts and when we have skiers hitting these drifts, we typically have avalanches. It is common to have avalanches with our early storms and I expect to hear of some in the coming days.

As I type this bulletin I have to admit that I am feeling rusty about avalanches, and imagine many of you are too. Over the years I have seen people make similar mistakes skiing early season so I lean on their errors to help scrub some of the rust away. Here are some things to consider:

- Equip yourself with all the tools you normally travel with mid-winter: beacon, shovel and probe at a minimum. Helmets are especially helpful with rocky runout zones and thin coverage.
- Travel one at a time in avalanche terrain.
- Small avalanches can be season-ending affairs at best and deadly at their worst. Be careful of getting swept into rocks or buried deeply in gullies or carried off cliffs. All of these have occurred early season in Montana.
- Avoid wind-loaded slopes. These slopes are the most inviting because they have full coverage, but they are also the likeliest area to trigger a slide.
- Cracking and collapsing of the snow is bulls-eye information that the snow is unstable.

There are two things you can do right now to prep yourself for successful backcountry travel. First, read [this accident report](#) from October 2012 in the northern Bridger Range. Its chock full of useful lessons. Second, look over our avalanche education courses which are listed below and [HERE](#).

This month we are preparing for winter, scheduling avalanche classes, and setting up weather stations. If you get outside send us an observation via our website, email (mtavalanche@gmail.com), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

Upcoming Events and Education

Powder Blast Fund-raiser

27 October, 6:30 p.m. at the Emerson Cultural Center. [Tickets and Info](#)

Grizzly Outfitters of Big Sky is title sponsor of this year's 19th Annual Powder Blast. **Mystery Ranch, World Boards, Community Food Co-op, Highline Partners, Spark R&D, Alpine Orthopedics, Stronghold,** and **Marcie Hahn-Knoff Real Estate** are our other key supporters. Join us for the best fundraiser of the year! All proceeds benefit the Friends of the Avalanche Center which supports avalanche awareness, education and information throughout southwest Montana.

Your \$30 donation gets you an unforgettable evening at the Emerson Cultural Center.

Beer from **Katabatic Brewing Company**; Wine from **Montana Ale Works**; Dinner by **Bountiful Table**; Music by **DJ Missy O'Malley**

And the best silent auction of outdoor gear in the valley!

[Events and Education Calendar](#) - Stay tuned as we will update our calendar with more classes over the next few months.

5 October, **Avalanche Awareness @ MSP Ski Movie**, 6:15 p.m. at Emerson Center

11 October, **MSU Snow and Avalanche Workshop**, 5-9 p.m. at M.S.U. **Free event!** [Info Here](#)

1 November, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m. at REI Bozeman

6 December, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m. at REI Bozeman

7 December, **Avalanche Awareness and Beacon Practice**, 6-8 p.m. at Beall Park, Bozeman

Nov. 29, 30 and Dec. 2, 3 or 9, **Introduction to Avalanches w/ Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#)

Jan. 12 and 13, **Companion Rescue Clinic**, [Info and Register](#)

Jan. 17, 18 and 20 or 21, **Introduction to Avalanches w/ Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#)

Jan. 24, 25 and 27, **Advanced Avalanche Workshop w. Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#)

Feb. 9 and 10, **Companion Rescue Clinic**, [Info and Register](#)