

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Wed Feb 7, 2018

Good Morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Wednesday, February 7th at 7:15 a.m. Today's advisory is sponsored by [Grizzly Outfitters](#) in partnership with the Friends of the Avalanche Center. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

Since yesterday morning 3-4" fell in the mountains around Bozeman, Big Sky, Cooke City and 1-2" outside West Yellowstone. Under cloudy skies, west winds are averaging 25-30 mph with gusts of 55 mph in the north and 15-30 mph in the south. By tomorrow morning expect 2-4" in the mountains around Bozeman and Big Sky, and 4-8" around West Yellowstone and Cooke City. Temperatures will reach the low 20's this afternoon with strong westerly winds.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



Cooke City

Cooke City

Yesterday a large avalanche was triggered by a cornice on east Woody Ridge south of town. The wind-loaded slope broke up to 10' deep at the ridgeline ([photo](#)). The mountains have gotten over 4' of snow in the last 5 days with wind loading slopes even more ([photo](#)). The slide on Woody was large and destructive and it is still possible for similar avalanches to occur. Wind loads are found near ridges, and not just on east-facing slopes from west winds: they will be found on many aspects underneath cornices and along ridges where winds cross-loaded and drifted snow into gullies. On slopes without a wind load it's possible to trigger a slide within the new snow or on a weak layer buried underneath it. For today, the avalanche danger is rated [CONSIDERABLE](#) on wind-loaded terrain and [MODERATE](#) elsewhere.



Bridger Range Northern Gallatin Northern Madison

Bridger Range Northern Madison Range Northern Gallatin Range

In the Bridger Range about 2" of [snow water equivalent](#) fell north of Bridger Bowl since Sunday night which has settled to 10" of snow depth. Yesterday, Eric and Gabrielle (our intern) rode and skied into the bowl below Naya Nuki and measured the water content and found relatively good stability which is outlined in their [video](#). West winds are gusting into the 50s and wind-loaded slopes are the main avalanche concern. There has been snowfall in the northern mountains every day for the last 8 days ([weather log](#)) and today's winds have drifted this snow and increased the avalanche danger. On non-wind-loaded slopes the stability is good, but with all the steady snowfall avalanches are still possible. For today, the avalanche danger is rated [CONSIDERABLE](#) on wind-loaded slopes and [MODERATE](#) on all others.



Southern Madison Southern Gallatin Lionhead Range

Southern Madison Range Southern Gallatin Range Lionhead area near West Yellowstone

The southern mountains, including the West Yellowstone area, have a couple weak layers that are problematic. The first is a layer of surface hoar buried 1-2' deep. It is not easy to spot in a snowpit wall, nor is it widespread. The second is sugary facets near the ground that is getting more stubborn to trigger. Both of these layers broke in our stability tests on Sunday when Alex and I skied near Hebgen Lake ([video](#), [snowpit](#)), so we decided to adjust our intended descent to a more conservative line. For today, the avalanche danger is **MODERATE** since avalanches are still possible.

If you get out and have any avalanche or snowpack observations to share, drop a line via our [website](#), email (mtavalanche@gmail.com), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram ([#gnfacobs](#)).

White Heat Tracks Project seeks your input

The aim of the White Heat Project is to generate new and usable knowledge on risk-taking behavior, and on factors behind decision errors in avalanche terrain in particular. The White Heat Tracks project is an extension to the previous "SkiTracks" project, and is a collaboration between a group of researchers at UiT The Arctic University of Norway, in Tromsø; Montana State University, in Bozeman, USA; and Umeå University, in Umeå, Sweden. We are asking people to complete a decision-making survey: (https://montana.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_74aRQuWMj0wbJHv) and if they have time and energy, also submit GPX tracks of their backcountry trips to "tracks@montana.edu"
More information can be found here:
<http://www.montana.edu/snowscience/tracks.html>
And here: <http://www.montana.edu/news/17430>

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Events and Education Calendar

BOZEMAN

TONIGHT! Feb. 7th, **Woman's specific avalanche awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m. @ REI in Bozeman

TONIGHT! Feb. 7th, **Avalanche awareness**, 6-7:00 p.m. @ Roskie Hall MSU

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

Feb. 28th, **Know Before You Go** avalanche awareness, 7:00 p.m. @ Procrastinator Theater, MSU

March 2nd and 3rd, **SheJumps Companion Rescue Clinic**, [Info and Register HERE](#)

March 2nd, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:00 p.m. Bozeman Split Fest

March 7th, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m. @ REI

PHILLIPSBURG

TOMORROW! Feb. 8th, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6:30-8:30 p.m. @ the new Fire Hall

DILLON

Feb. 24th and 25th, **Snowmobile intro to avalanches w/ field course**. More info:
<https://msuextension.org/conference/>.

WEST YELLOWSTONE

Feb. 10th, **Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at West Yellowstone Holiday Inn Conference Center

COOKE CITY

Every Friday and Saturday, **Current Conditions Update and Avalanche Rescue**, Friday 6:30-7:30 p.m. at The Soda Butte Lodge in February. Saturday anytime between 10-2 @ Round Lake.