

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Fri Jan 30, 2015

Good morning. This is Mark Staples with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Friday, January 30, at 7:30 a.m. A **Montana FWP Recreation Trails Grant** sponsors today's advisory. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

With a slight inversion in place this morning, mountain temperatures were in the low 20s F in most areas and high 20s F in the Bridger Range. Light winds were blowing 5-10 mph from the N and E. Today will be similar to yesterday with sunshine, light winds, and temperatures in the low 30s F. The weather pattern may start changing this weekend with a decent chance of snow Sunday night and more possibly early next week.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

[Bridger Range](#) [Madison Range](#) [Gallatin Range](#)

[Lionhead area near West Yellowstone](#) [Cooke City](#)

Generally safe avalanche conditions exist although you may find unstable snow in a isolated places. Fresh snow and increased winds a few days ago near Cooke City formed wind slabs. One was observed breaking naturally on Wednesday ([photo](#)) and another small one was triggered by a snowmobiler yesterday ([photo](#)). South of Big Sky and near West Yellowstone some weak layers of surface hoar and/or small facets near an ice crust buried 6-12 inches deep could also produce an avalanche.

For today avalanches are unlikely and the avalanche danger is rated **LOW**. We'll be paying close attention to the current snow surface when more snow falls as these conditions can affect future stability. Yesterday the Yellowstone Club Ski Patrol observed large surface hoar crystals and took some beautiful [photos](#).

For more details on past weather and avalanche events, check out the "[What's Been Happening](#)" page, a new resource this season.

Eric 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 to support avalanche education in southwest Montana. Collect pledges for one, two or the most ridge hikes you can do in the five hours of competition. 100% of the proceeds go to the Friends of Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center. Kids and families are encouraged to hike too! Hike as an Individual or Team. [Make a Pledge](#) . [Sign Up and More Info](#).

RESEARCH PROJECT ON UNDERSTANDING TRAVEL BEHAVIOR IN AVALANCHE TERRAIN NEEDS YOU!!

Scientists from the Snow and Avalanche Lab at Montana State University are seeking more participants for their project examining decision making and travel in avalanche terrain. Their project aims to collect GPS information

(from your smartphone) and survey responses from backcountry skiers and riders to better understand what types of terrain are used, and how decisions are made. Their focus is on backcountry skiers and riders of all abilities and experience. You need not be an expert backcountry skier to participate in this research.

To Participate or get more information: www.montana.edu/snowscience/tracks or their companion site directed toward snowmobilers at: www.montana.edu/snowscience/sleds

AVALANCHE EDUCATION and EVENTS

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

1-hour Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers, West Yellowstone, 7 p.m., Saturday, January 31, Holiday Inn.

1-hour Avalanche Awareness for Snowmobilers, Lewistown, 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., Saturday, January 31, Fergus County Trade Center. More info here: <http://www.mtavalanche.com/images/15/thunderstruck-13-premiere-and-avalanche-classes>