GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Tue Feb 6, 2018

Good Morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Tuesday, February 6th at 7:30 a.m. Today's advisory is sponsored by **Yellowstone Arctic Yamaha and Yamaha Motor Corp** in partnership with the Friends of the Avalanche Center. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

Since yesterday morning 5-6" fell in the Bridger Range and Cooke City, 3" around Big Sky and 1" everywhere else. Winds have decreased and are blowing out of the west at 10-20 mph with gusts of 35. Under cloudy skies mountain temperatures are in the mid-teens. Occasional showers today and tonight will drop 2-4" by tomorrow morning with winds remaining the same and temperatures climbing into the low 20s.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Cooke City

Cooke City ("Snow Baron of the West") has received 4' of snow equaling near 4" of **snow water equivalent** (SWE) since Friday. Yesterday we issued an Avalanche Warning for the area because the amount and rate of snowfall was worrisome. A couple natural avalanches were seen and I expect a few more will be noticed with clearing skies (**photo1**, **photo2**). The snowfall is tapering off and winds are light and the warning has expired, but conditions are still dangerous. The mountains will take time to fully adjust to this load and it's likely you could trigger slides today. Four feet is a lot of snow and avalanches could be large and deep on par with the ones we saw last week (**video**, **photo**). My recommendation is to avoid avalanche terrain today. The danger is rated **CONSIDERABLE** on all slopes in the Cooke City area.

Bridger Range

The northern Bridger Range picked up 6" of snow in the last 24 hours which is in addition to 10" the night before (**Bracket Creek SNOTEL**), with half that amount falling at Bridger Bowl. Winds have calmed and snowfall has tapered off, but 1.8"of SWE is a large load. Slopes that were wind-loaded from west winds yesterday may still be triggered. Today the avalanche danger is **CONSIDERABLE** on all wind-loaded terrain and **MODERATE** elsewhere.

Southern Madison Southern Gallatin Lionhead Range

The southern mountains including the Lionhead area near West Yellowstone have a couple weak layers in the snowpack. Alex and I skied near Hebgen Lake on Sunday and got a layer of surface hoar (buried 1-2' deep) to break in our stability test, plus weak, sugary facets broke near the ground with a few more taps of the shovel (

video, **snowpit**). The surface hoar has spotty distribution and the facets at the ground are not easy to trigger, so digging and testing is especially valuable to determine a slopes stability. For today, the avalanche danger is **MODERATE** since avalanches are still possible.

Northern Gallatin Northern Madison

In the last 24 hours the mountains around Big Sky and Hyalite got another 1-3 inches of snow. I was up Hyalite yesterday and experienced swirly winds loading slopes at many elevations, not just the ridgelines. On Sunday, on Alex Lowe Peak, skiers saw the debris and crown of a wind slab avalanche in the couloir (**photo**). The snowpack in the northern Gallatin and northern Madison Ranges is generally strong and my main concern is triggering wind slabs (**video**). For today, the avalanche danger is rated **MODERATE** on wind-loaded slopes and **LOW** elsewhere.

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).

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Events and Education Calendar

BOZEMAN

Feb. 6th, **Sidecountry specific avalanche awareness for family and friends**. 6-8 p.m. @ Beall Park

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

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

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.