

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sun Feb 2, 2020

Good Morning. This is Alex Marienthal with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Sunday, February 2nd at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by [Bridger Bowl](#) and the participants of **King and Queen of the Ridge**. They raised over \$11,540 for the Friends of the Avalanche Center. **Emily Kipp** is Queen with 20 hikes, and **Mike Wolfe** is King, setting a new record with 32 hikes. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

Yesterday afternoon at the summit of Big Sky southwest wind was 40-80 mph with maximum gusts to 155 mph. For the last 24 hours throughout the forecast area southwest winds averaged 15-50 mph with gusts of 50-80+ mph. This morning snow is starting to fall and there is 2-3" in the Bridger Range and zero to a trace elsewhere. Temperatures are high teens to low 30s F. Today temperatures will drop to teens to mid-20s F with wind shifting northwest-north at 5-25 mph. Snow showers are expected through today with 6-10" possible by this evening and 3-7" more overnight.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



All Regions

Yesterday's strong to extreme southwest winds scoured snow from slopes and deposited snow into hard drifts on other slopes. Today these drifts are possible to trigger and avalanches can break deeper and wider on sugary weak layers near the base of the snowpack ([photo](#)).

Yesterday there were natural and human triggered avalanches that show similar avalanches are possible today. In the southern Madison Range on Skyline Ridge a snowmobiler triggered a deep and wide avalanche that sympathetically triggered two other large slides, the rider was not caught ([details and photo](#)). On Cedar Mountain near Big Sky a deep natural avalanche was triggered by a cornice ([details and photo](#)). And, near Cooke City a snowmobiler triggered a small wind slab on Crown Butte ([details](#)). To avoid similar slides avoid wind loaded slopes, identifiable by wavy textures on the snow surface, overhanging cornices or rounded pillows of snow ([photo](#)). On Thursday I triggered (remotely from low angle terrain above) a fresh wind slab near Lulu Pass outside Cooke City which is similar to fresh slabs that might form today ([details and media](#)).

Today snowfall could be heavy and avalanche danger will increase. As new snow piles deeper, fresh slabs and dry loose avalanches are possible to trigger. These slides will be larger and easier to trigger this afternoon. Take a step back from objectives that require travel through avalanche terrain. Anticipate decreasing stability, and minimize exposure and commitment to steep slopes.

Today avalanches are possible to trigger and the avalanche danger is rated [MODERATE](#). Stability will decrease through the day as new snow forms slabs and adds weight to buried weak layers. Dangerous avalanche conditions could develop by this afternoon.

If you get out, please send us your observations no matter how brief. You can fill out an [observation form](#), email us (mtavalanche@gmail.com), leave a VM at 406-587-6984, or Instagram ([#gnfacobs](#)).

Thank You, King and Queen of the Ridge Hikers!

Thanks to the 52 hikers and 9 Teams who rallied their supporters and fundraised for the event. "[Strange Cattle of Map Brewing](#)" raised the most money and [Mountain Project](#) hiked the most. [New Age Artisans](#) and [Highline Partners](#) rallied together for the second most hikes. The entire board of the Friends of the Avalanche Center and the avalanche forecasters thank you!

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Our education calendar is full of awareness lectures and field courses. Check it out and plan to attend one or two: [Events and Education Calendar](#).

COOKE CITY

Every Friday and Saturday, **Snowpack Update and Rescue Training**. Friday, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Soda Butte Lodge. Saturday anytime between 10-2 @ Round Lake.

BOZEMAN

February 4, **Sidecountry Avalanche Awareness**. 6-7 p.m. at the Story Mill Community Center.

February 4, **Women's Specific Avalanche Awareness**. 6-7 p.m. at REI.

February 7, Companion Rescue Clinic, 6 - 8 pm at REI followed by a field day February 8. [More info and Register Here](#).

February 10, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**. 5:30 p.m. at Gallatin Valley YMCA.

WEST YELLOWSTONE

February 8, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at West Yellowstone Holiday Inn.