

[GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Thu Feb 2, 2023](#)

Good morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Thursday, February 2nd at 6:45 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by the [Avalanche Alliance](#) and [Cooke City Super 8/Bearclaw Bob's](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

In the last 24 hours most mountains received a trace to 1" of snow with 2" falling in Cooke City. Wind is westerly at 15 mph and gusting to 35 mph. Temperatures are in the teens in the northern mountains and single digits down south. Today will be sunny with temperatures reaching the high 20s F as high pressure builds. Westerly wind will increase later this afternoon and gust 40+ mph tonight under clear skies.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



[Bridger Range](#) [Gallatin Range](#) [Madison Range](#) [Lionhead Range](#) [Cooke City](#)

In the mountains of southwest Montana two competing forces are at play. On one hand, after getting a good wallop of snowfall Friday and Saturday, buried weak layers that did not avalanche will become less reactive. On the other hand, the wind continues to blow and load slopes at all elevations and aspects which hinder this process. Additionally, we are untrusting souls at the moment. Weak layers of buried facets continued to break in every snowpit Dave and his partner dug in Cooke City ([avalanche details and videos](#)), and on Tuesday I was able to trigger a small avalanche in Lionhead from 50 feet away, a crystal clear sign of dangerous conditions ([video](#)). Further evidence of our snowpack's instability include Saddle Peak avalanching twice in a week and all the avalanche activity that blanketed our area as recently as Tuesday ([avalanche and weather log](#)).

Avalanche conditions remain dangerous today. Wind is blowing snow and loading slopes. Weak layers in the top 3 feet of the snowpack, as well as sugary, weak snow at the ground, are still adjusting to the weight of the weekend snow and recent wind-drifting. I recommend you do as Ian I did on Tuesday: we consciously avoided avalanche terrain and runout zones (slopes underneath). Be patient. Stability will improve and slopes will become relatively safer as high pressure settles over us, but we are not there yet. A wise avalanche professional wrote last night, "Decision-making is currently difficult. There are multiple hazards to consider, conditions are dynamic, and obvious."

For today, the avalanche danger is rated [CONSIDERABLE](#), [which means](#) careful snowpack evaluation, cautious route-finding, and conservative decision making are essential.

Watch our [recent videos](#) and read the [observations page](#) for detailed information about additional field locations. Browse the [Avalanche Activity Log](#) and note nearly thirty entries since January 25, many of which include multiple avalanches.

Please share avalanche, snowpack or weather observations via our [website](#), email (mtavalanche@gmail.com), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram ([#gnfacobs](#)).



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KING AND QUEEN OF THE RIDGE, FEBRUARY 4TH

The King and Queen is this Saturday and we have filled all of our participant slots. We can not take any more hikers, **but we can definitely take pledges!** Help support the Friends of the Avalanche Center by making a donation.

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

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

February 4, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., LIVINGSTON Avalanche Fundamentals. Information and course registration are [HERE.](#)

February 5, 10 a.m.-2p.m. Companion Rescue Clinic Field Day in the Bozeman area. Required Online Classroom Session at 6 p.m. on Feb 3. Information and course registration are [HERE.](#)

February 9, FREE Avalanche Awareness at REI Bozeman. More details to come.

February 11, 10 a.m.-2p.m. Companion Rescue Clinic Field Day in the Bozeman area. Required Online Classroom Session at 6 p.m. on Feb 10. Information and course registration are [HERE.](#)

Every Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. ***Avalanche Rescue Training***, drop in for any amount of time. Round Lake Warming Hut, Cooke City. Free.

[Loss in the Outdoors](#), is a support group for those who have been affected by grief and loss related to outdoor pursuits. Check out the link for more information.