

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Thu Jan 5, 2017

Good Morning. This is Eric Knoff with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Thursday, January 5th at 6:45 a.m. Today's advisory is sponsored by [Bridger Bowl](#) and **Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association**. This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

Frigid temperatures and dangerous wind chills will be a concern today. At 5 a.m. temps range from 10 to 20 below zero F under clear skies and winds are blowing 5 mph to 20 mph out of the N-NE. Today, skies will remain mostly clear and highs will struggle to warm into the single digits above zero. Winds will remain light to moderate and shift to the N-NW. Cold temps are expected again tonight, but there will be a slight moderation in temperatures tomorrow.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

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

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

Cold, dry weather is helping to create a weaker snowpack. But without new snow, avalanches are becoming harder to trigger.

There are, however, a few avalanche concerns. Strong winds out of N-NE yesterday afternoon developed fresh wind slabs on upper elevation, leeward slopes. These slabs will be cold and stubborn, but could potentially fail under the weight of a skier or rider. Recently wind loaded slopes should be avoided, especially in steep-high consequence terrain.

A daily advisory wouldn't be complete without mentioning facets near the ground. This pervasive and problematic layer has become less reactive, but still warrants respect. If a slide is triggered on facets near the ground, it will likely be large and dangerous. Avoid rocky and scoured terrain where it will be easier to impact this weak layer. Doug explains this problem in a recent video from Cooke City ([video](#)).

Today, human triggered avalanches are possible on slopes steeper than 35 degrees which have a **MODERATE** avalanche danger. Less steep slopes have a **LOW** avalanche danger.

I will issue the next advisory tomorrow morning by 7:30 a.m.

We rely on your field observations. Send us an email with simple weather and snowpack information along the lines of what you might share with your friends: How much new snow? Was the skiing/riding any good? Did you see any avalanches or signs of instability? Was snow blowing at the ridgelines? If you have snowpit or test data we'll take that too, but this core info is super helpful! Email us at mtavalanche@gmail.com or leave a message at 406-587-6984.

Upcoming Events and Education

Month of January: Montana Ale Works has chosen the Friends of the Avalanche Center as January's "Round It Up America" recipient. Every time you round-up your bill the change gets donated to the Friends. Pennies equal

dollars!

BOZEMAN

Tuesday, January 10, **Women's Avalanche Awareness and Beacon Practice**, 6-8 p.m., Beall Park.

Friday and Saturday, January 13 and 14, **Companion Rescue Clinic**, REI Friday 6 p.m., field Saturday TBA.
Register here: <https://events.ticketprinting.com/event/21313>.

Tuesday, January 17, **Avalanche Center Forecaster's Social** at Montana Ale Works. A small-plate fare and beer tasting fundraiser for the Friends: \$40.00/person; 2 seatings (5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.). Get your tickets [HERE](#).

COOKE CITY

Weekly rescue training and snowpack update, 6-7:30 p.m., The Antlers Lodge on Friday, field location Saturday TBA.

GREAT FALLS

Friday, January 6, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m., Hi-Line Climbing Center.

WEST YELLOWSTONE

Saturday, January 7, **Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m., Holiday Inn West Yellowstone.

DILLON

Tuesday, January 10, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m., UM-Western Library.