GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sun Jan 16, 2022

Good morning. This is Alex Marienthal with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Sunday, January 16th at 6:45 a.m. This information is sponsored by **Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association**, **The First National Bank of Gilbert, MN**, and **Gaia GPS**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

This morning there is no new snow. Temperatures are 20s to low 30s F. Wind is westerly at 5-15 mph with gusts of 25-50 mph. Today will be mostly sunny with temperatures reaching high 20s to low 30s F and west-northwest wind at 10-25 mph. The next chance for snow is Tuesday.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

All Regions

It has been over a week since the mountains received major snowfall and strong wind, and almost as long without a fresh avalanche reported (**weather and avalanche log**). The snowpack has become generally stable during this break from loading, and today avalanches are unlikely (**video**). It is not impossible to trigger an avalanche if you find an isolated unstable slope. Remain cautious of slopes that have highly variable snow depth, where you might find a shallow spot where you could trigger an avalanche on weak snow near the ground. Before riding on steep slopes dig a quick snowpit to be sure you aren't on a slope with an isolated area of unstable snow. Watch out for small unstable drifts of snow if you ride or ski in terrain where the consequences are high if caught in even a small slide, like above cliffs. Give large cornices a wide berth if you travel along ridgelines (**photo**). Cornices can break off further back than you expect. Only expose one person at a time to steep slopes and make sure everyone in your group has rescue gear and knows how to use it. Today the avalanche danger is LOW.

Yesterday, riders near Lionhead Ridge and skiers near Hebgen Lake near West Yellowstone saw surface hoar (**photo**, **photo**) and sugary facets on the surface of the snowpack. Pay attention to what is happening to the snow surface during this period without new snow. On some slopes weak snow is forming which will create avalanches when the next snow forms a slab on top.

If you get out, please send us your observations no matter how brief. You can submit them via our **website**, email (**mtavalanche@gmail.com**), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

Upcoming Education Opportunities

The **West Yellowstone Beacon Park** is up and running! Stop by to check it out and practice with your rescue gear.

See our **education calendar** for an up-to-date list of all local classes. Here are a few select upcoming events and opportunities to check out:

TONIGHT! January 16th, 4-8 p.m., Pint Night benefiting the **Darren Johnson Avalanche Education Memorial Fund** at Beehive Brewery

January 20 + Field day. Our popular **Avalanche Fundamentals with Field Course** is perfect as a refresher or an introduction to avalanches. We are introducing a new format with four pre-recorded lectures to watch at your convenience, a live question and answer session, and a choice of a snowmobile or ski/ board-based field day occurring the following two weekends.

Every Saturday near Cooke City, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. FREE snowpack update and transceiver/rescue training. Stop by for 20 minutes or more at the Round Lake Warming Hut.