GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sat Jan 25, 2020

Good Morning. This is Ian Hoyer with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Saturday, January 25th at 7:15 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by **Grizzly Outfitters** and **Spark R&D**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

One to two inches of snow fell yesterday. Winds this morning are westerly at 10-20 mph. Temperatures are high teens to mid-20s F. Winds today will be out of the west at 20-30 mph. Temperatures will rise into the high-20s and 30s F. Snow showers will drop 1-2" by tomorrow morning.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

All Regions

Yesterday, the Big Sky Ski Patrol used explosives to trigger a very large deep slab avalanche on the North Summit Snowfield (**details and photos**). It broke up to 10 feet deep, on weak snow near the ground. While it has been close to a week since a similar slide was triggered in the backcountry, this demonstrates that it remains possible if you find just the wrong spot. There are widespread weak layers near the ground capped by hard slabs of wind drifted snow. Warm temperatures will help heal the weak snow at the ground, but this is a painfully slow process. While we're waiting, we need to keep traveling very conservatively (**video**). These large slides will be triggered from thinner areas, whether that's near rocks or low on the slope where the wind slab thins (**video**).

Travelling in avalanche terrain today is like a game of Russian roulette. A couple chambers of the gun have been emptied since last weekend (reflecting the lowering likelihood of triggering a slide), but the potential consequences of pulling the trigger remain huge (**video**, **video**, **video**). Avoiding steep slopes is the safest plan today.

Alex was at Mt. Ellis yesterday in a snowpack at the opposite end of the spectrum. Instead of a deep hard slab problem he found a very weak, shallow snowpack (**video**). In these areas, we're worried about places where wind loading or heavier snowfall has built a more cohesive slab on top of the facets.

Today, large avalanches are possible and the avalanche danger is rated MODERATE.

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).

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

January 27, **Avalanche Information and Demonstration Table**, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Montana Science Center.

January 29, **GNFAC Forecaster Chat: Avalanche Myth Busters**, 6-8 p.m. at Uphill Pursuits.

January 31, Women's Only Companion Rescue Clinic, 6 - 8 pm at REI followed by a field day February 1. **More info and Register Here**.

February 1, **King and Queen of the Ridge** at Bridger Bowl (fundraiser). This is the Friends of the Avalanche Center's second biggest fundraiser of the year. Come on out and help us raise money by hiking and skiing laps on the ridge. Prizes, camaraderie and a good time is guaranteed. **Register with Bridger** to hike in the event, and **create a pledge page** to raise funds with your Ridge laps.

DILLON

January 29 and 30, **Introduction to Avalanche w/ Field Course**, evenings of January 29 & 30 plus a field day February 1. Snowmobile specific field day offered February 2. **More Info and Register Here**.

WEST YELLOWSTONE

TONIGHT! January 25, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at West Yellowstone Holiday Inn.

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

HELENA

January 28, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7 p.m. Carroll College.

LIVINGSTON

January 30, **Introduction to Avalanche w/ Field Course**, evening of January 30 plus a field day February 2. **More info and Register Here**.