GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sun Mar 6, 2022

Good morning. This is Alex Marienthal with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Sunday, March 6th at 7:00 a.m. This information is sponsored by **Blitz Motorsports and Yamaha** and **World Boards**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

Yesterday the mountains near Bozeman and Big Sky got 1-2” of low density snow. Today you probably want a couple extra warm layers with the arrival of arctic air. This morning, temperatures range from below zero to low teens F, and wind is northerly at 5-15 mph with gusts to 25 mph. Near West Yellowstone wind is 15-25 mph with gusts to 35 mph. Today skies will be partly cloudy with less than a half inch of light snow falling. Temperatures will reach teens F with north-northeast wind at 5-20 mph.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Cooke City

Near Cooke City there has been steady avalanche activity over the last couple weeks (**weekly update video**, **activity log**), and today it remains possible to trigger avalanches that break on weak snow buried 1-2 feet deep. On Thursday natural avalanches broke ~100 feet wide on these weak layers in Republic Creek, Hayden Creek, and on Mineral Mountain (**photo**, **photo**, **details**). On Friday skiers triggered an avalanche remotely from a low angle ridgeline above the slope (**photo**). Yesterday skiers in Yellowstone had a large collapse of the snowpack on low angle terrain (**details**). These are signs avalanches can break wide and be triggered from lower angle slopes that are connected to steep slopes. Before you travel on or underneath steep slopes carefully assess the snowpack for unstable buried weak layers, and assess the consequences of being caught in an avalanche. Today avalanches are possible and avalanche danger is MODERATE.

Bridger Range Gallatin Range Madison Range Lionhead Range Island Park

Today avalanches are unlikely, but not impossible. Be on the lookout for isolated areas of instability like where wind has drifted snow into a thicker slab on top of weak snow 6-18” deep. Yesterday we rode at Buck Ridge and saw the weak snow that we’ve been talking about since January is still a problem (**video**), and on Thursday Ian saw similar conditions at Lionhead (**video**). There has been zero reported avalanche activity on this weak layer since last weekend, and a lack of snow over the last week has allowed the snowpack time to become more stable without added stress. The 1-4” of snow that fell yesterday is not enough to create more than a few isolated hazards.

Watch for cracks shooting out from your skis as a sign fresh drifts may be unstable. Before riding on steep slopes assess the snowpack to be sure there is not weak snow buried below a thick slab of snow. Be extra careful in terrain where even a small slide could have big consequences due to pushing you into trees, rocks, creek beds, gullies, or over cliffs. The avalanche danger today is LOW. Avalanches are unlikely, but not impossible if you find an isolated area of unstable snow.

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

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

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.