

## **GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Fri Mar 9, 2018**

Good Morning. This is Eric Knoff with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 a.m. Today's advisory is sponsored by [Mystery Ranch](#) and [World Boards](#). This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

### Mountain Weather

Over the past 24 hours the mountains around Big Sky, West Yellowstone and Cooke City picked up 2-4" of new snow. The mountains around Bozeman remained mostly dry. At 5 a.m. temps range from the teens to mid-20's F and wind are blowing 15-30 mph out of the W-SW. Today, highs will warm into the upper 20's to low 30's F and winds will continue to blow 15-30 mph out of the W-SW. There will be a quick break in the weather this morning, but snow returns this afternoon and evening. By tomorrow morning the southern mountains will see 2-4" of new snow while the north will see 1-2".

### Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



#### **Bridger Range**

The Bridger Range got completely missed by the weak storm that impacted the mountains south of Bozeman. The snowpack is generally stable and likelihood of triggering a slide is low. The main concern in the Bridger Range is large cornices. Give these monsters ample distance along the ridgelines and limit exposure time on slopes below ([video](#), [photo](#)).

Today, natural and human triggered avalanches are unlikely and the avalanche danger is rated **[LOW](#)**.



#### **Gallatin Range   Madison Range   Lionhead Range   Cooke City**

A fast-moving storm dropped 2-4" of snow in the mountains south of Bozeman including Cooke City. This quick shot of snow was accompanied by winds gusting 40+ mph out of the W-SW. The combination of new snow and strong winds formed fresh wind slabs in upper elevation terrain.

Today, wind slabs will be the primary avalanche concern ([photo](#)). Fresh drifts will be possible to trigger, primarily on the leeward side of upper elevation ridgelines and cross loaded sub-ridges. Watch for and avoid areas of wind drifted snow, especially in steep, higher consequence terrain.

A less likely but more dangerous problem is slides failing on weak layers buried 2-3' deep. On Wednesday, a snowmobiler up Red Canyon north of West Yellowstone triggered and was caught in a large persistent slab avalanche. He deployed his airbag and fortunately wasn't buried. The slide broke 2-3' deep, 2-300' wide and occurred on a southwest facing slope. A similar slide occurred yesterday near Mt Jefferson in the Centennial Range. These are the first persistent slab avalanches reported in weeks. Although buried persistent weak layers are not a widespread problem, they do exist in isolated areas. It's always worth digging to assess the snowpack structure before jumping into avalanche terrain ([video](#)).

Today, human triggered avalanches are possible on wind loaded slopes which have a **MODERATE** avalanche danger. Non-wind loaded slopes have a **LOW** avalanche danger.

If you get out and have any avalanche or snowpack observations to share, drop a line via our [website](#), email ([mtavalanche@gmail.com](mailto:mtavalanche@gmail.com)), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

## Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

### **Events and Education Calendar**

#### **LIVINGSTON**

March 20, **Beer for a Cause Night at Katabatic Brewing**, 4-8p.m. A dollar from every pint will be donated to The Friends of the Avalanche Center.

#### **COOKE CITY**

March 10<sup>th</sup>, **Upper Yellowstone Snowmobile Club Annual Hog Roast**, Cooke City, festivities from 7am – 7pm. [Schedule Here](#).

Friday and Saturday, **Current Conditions Update and Avalanche Rescue**, Friday 6:30-7:30 p.m. at The Soda Butte Lodge. Saturday anytime between 10-2 @ Round Lake.