GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Tue Feb 6, 2024

Good morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Tuesday, February 6th at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by **Spark R&D** and **Yellowstone Club Community Foundation** . This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

AVALANCHE WARNING

We are continuing a Backcountry Avalanche Warning for the Centennial Mountains in Island Park, the Lionhead area near West Yellowstone, and the southern Madison and southern Gallatin Ranges (**video**). New snow and wind are forming drifts and overloading an exceptionally weak snowpack, creating very dangerous avalanche conditions. Human-triggered and natural avalanches are likely. Avoid avalanche terrain and avalanche runout zones. This warning will expire or be updated by 6:00 a.m. on Wednesday, February 7th.

Mountain Weather

In the last 24 hours, 1" of new snow fell around Big Sky, 2" in the southern Gallatin and Madison Ranges and 4-6" around West Yellowstone and Island Park. Temperatures at 6 a.m. are in the 20s F with SW-SE wind at 10-15 mph, gusting to 30 mph. It will snow today and the wind will remain steady. By morning, West Yellowstone and Island Park will have 6-8" of new snow with 1-3" everywhere else.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Southern Madison Southern Gallatin Lionhead Range Island Park

Avalanche Warning

We are continuing an Avalanche Warning in the southern Gallatin and southern Madison Ranges, the Lionhead area and Island Park. Very dangerous avalanche conditions exist. Dave and I toured into Bacon Rind and had constant collapsing and cracking as soon as we left the car (**video** and **observation**). Little trees would shake from the collapsing waves, which is a blaring warning from Mother Nature that avalanches were imminent. Further south in Lionhead and Island Park, the new snow is deeper and slopes will avalanche. Snow bikers in Island Park had wicked collapsing on Sunday (**observation**) and since then over a foot of new snow has fallen making it even more dangerous. A person could trigger slides from flat terrain as whumpfs travel uphill. Today is a day to avoid being on or underneath avalanche terrain. The avalanche danger is HIGH.

Bridger Range Northern Gallatin Northern Madison Cooke City

Since Friday, the mountains around Bozeman, Big Sky, and Cooke City received 5-8" of new snow (0.4-0.8" of snow water equivalent). Strong southwest wind yesterday created unstable wind drifts throughout. Skiers in the Bridger Range saw natural avalanches, had collapsing around Fairy Lake and Frazier Basin and poor test scores north of Bridger Bowl (**observation**). Further south in Beehive Basin, skiers on Sunday saw natural and skier-triggered loose snow slides and one slab avalanche (**photo and details**). In Cooke City, although the snowpack

is deeper than in the northern mountains, it is showing similar signs of instability with **natural avalanches**, collapses, and poor test scores (Friday's **weekly update video**). Alex is currently there, and his two videos, **one north** of town and the **other south**, unequivocally show us the lurking danger.

The snowpack is very weak and unstable. We have seen avalanches every time there is a couple inches of new snow. Traveling in avalanche terrain is dangerous and it is likely you would trigger an avalanche 1-2 feet deep. Even traveling underneath steep slopes is not advised as collapses warn us that we can trigger slides from flat ground. The avalanche danger is CONSIDERABLE.

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Our education calendar is full of awareness lectures and field courses. Check it out: **Events and Education Calendar.**

Every weekend in Cooke City: Friday at The Antlers at 7 p.m., Free Avalanche Awareness and Current Conditions talk, and Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Round Lake Warming Hut, Free Rescue Practice.

9-10 February. Companion Rescue Course. More information and registration **HERE**.

9-10 February. Dillon Montana Avalanche Fundamentals. More information and registration for the **MOTORIZED SECTION** and **NON-MOTORIZED SECTION**

POSTPONED: King and Queen of the Ridge. Bridger Bowl's community event series events this weekend are postponed, including King & Queen - stay tuned, details coming soon.

Loss in the Outdoors is a support group for those affected by loss and grief related to outdoor pursuits. Check out the link for more information.