

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Mon Feb 19, 2024

Good morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Monday, February 19th at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by [World Boards](#) and [Mystery Ranch](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

In the last 24 hours the mountains have gotten 1-2" of new snow with westerly wind at 10-15 mph and gusts to 30 mph. Temperatures are in the high teens under partly cloudy skies. Today will remain partly cloudy and the southern mountains could get a trace to 1" of snow. High pressure builds through the week with no major storms predicted.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



All Regions

It is no secret that it is dangerous in the backcountry. Sledders and skiers are regularly triggering avalanches from hundreds of feet away. Yesterday, near [Cedar Mtn.](#), Alex and I saw over a dozen recent avalanches and likely triggered a slope ourselves from 500' away ([observation](#), [video](#)). We did not see the slide release during the 5-minutes we took our eyes off the slope, so it may have been a natural slide, which is even worse. No matter, the snowpack is fragile *throughout our entire forecast area* and traveling in or underneath slopes steeper than 30 degrees is hair-raising.

Triggering avalanches and collapsing (whumpfung) of the snowpack is all the "data" we need to determine its danger. No stability tests are required. There have been many close calls since Friday. People are getting bolder, but not necessarily wiser. Our [Weather and Avalanche Log](#) is breathtaking in its list of activity. Recent "greatest hits" include:

- [N. Gallatin Range](#): (Fri) Snowmobilers in Portal Creek remotely triggered 4 avalanches from ~900 ft away ([observation](#)),
- [N. Madison Range](#): (Sat) Snowmobilers near Cedar Mtn. triggered two big avalanches ([observation 1](#), [observation 2](#)).
- [S. Madison Range](#): (Sat) In Taylor Fork a rider triggered a slide, was caught, deployed their airbag, got partially buried, and was uninjured ([observation](#)).
- [Lionhead](#): (Fri) At Lionhead, Ian and Alex saw a slide that was triggered by riders 150 ft away ([observation](#)).
- [Cooke City](#): (Fri) Dave investigated a snowmobiler triggered avalanche on Scotch Bonnet which broke 2-4 feet deep and hundreds of feet wide ([video](#)).

A nibble of new snow yesterday is not enough to raise the likelihood of triggering a slide, but it isn't helping either. Playing in avalanche terrain is serious and dangerous and rated [CONSIDERABLE](#) around Bozeman, Big Sky, West Yellowstone, Island Park, and Cooke City.

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.

[*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.