

# **GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Wed Feb 14, 2024**

Good morning. This is Dave Zinn with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Wednesday, February 14th at 6:45 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by our Valentines. Thank you for putting up with us. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

## Mountain Weather

Mountain temperatures are in the single digits to teens F this morning, with 5-15 mph winds from the northwest to southwest. The mountains received a trace to an inch of new snow as yesterday's storm exited the area. Today, temperatures will be around 20 degrees F, with 5-15 mph winds from the west to southwest that increase toward the evening. Flurries will develop into accumulating snowfall overnight with 3-5" new around Cooke City, West Yellowstone, and Island Park, and 2-3" around Bozeman and Big Sky by tomorrow morning.

## Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



### All Regions

Dangerous avalanche conditions exist across the advisory area, and large, human-triggered avalanches failing 2-4 feet deep on persistent weak layers are likely. Smaller avalanches may fail within the new or wind-drifted snow, but the gutless foundation of the season's snowpack continues to drive decision-making.

In the last week alone, we have fifty entries from across the advisory area in our [avalanche activity log](#). Many of these describe multiple slides. The mountains are communicating the avalanche danger clearly.

Yesterday, I got another wake-up call to this reality at Buck Ridge when I triggered an avalanche in First Yellowmule that released 3 feet deep and hundreds of feet wide while I was safely away from the slope in flat terrain ([observation](#), [video](#)). In the backcountry near Big Sky Resort, a group triggered an avalanche that piled debris deeply in a terrain trap. Thankfully, no one was caught or injured ([observation and photo](#)). In Cooke City, a group observed a fresh, natural avalanche on Henderson Mountain ([observation and photo](#)).

Due to the nature of this season's persistent weak layers, triggering avalanches from long distances away is relatively common. This weekend, backcountry travelers remotely triggered avalanches in Cooke City ([photos and observation](#)), at Lionhead Ridge ([photo and observation](#)), near Big Sky ([photo and observation](#)), and in Island Park ([video](#)). Last week, riders triggered an avalanche from flat terrain that broke 4 feet deep and 4000 feet wide in Tepee Basin ([photos, video, and description](#)). Thankfully, everyone was far enough away from the runout zones, and no one was caught, injured or killed. Factor in the possibility of triggering avalanches on slopes far above your position, and use caution when traveling below steep slopes ([slope angle video](#)).

Conservative travel plans are essential. Selecting routes in terrain less than 30 degrees without steep slopes immediately above will keep you safe from avalanches. The danger is [CONSIDERABLE](#).

## King and Queen of The Ridge Results

We closed out King and Queen (of the Apron) with \$23,208 raised! A huge Thank You to Bridger Bowl and everyone who participated and raised funds for The Friends of the GNFAC! The community came out big after a

postponed event, participants were crushing bootpack laps and even getting some powder turns while fundraising for Friends of GNFAC.

## **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.